

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 12 January 2022

Subject: Climate Emergency and the Education Sector

Report of: The Director of Education

Summary

This report outlines the work being undertaken by the Council to support the Education Sector in responding to the Climate Emergency declared by the City Council in July 2019, with a focus on decarbonisation. It also outlines the plans to develop this as a theme of Our Year 2022 in response to feedback from children and young people. This will enable children and young people to have their say and contribute to achieving the zero-carbon target for the city.

Please note the word setting is used to include all education providers including Early Years, schools, colleges, alternative and training providers and supplementary schools.

Recommendation

That members of the committee read the report and action plan.

Wards Affected: All

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

Focus of the report.

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	
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	

A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy, please contact one of the contact officers above.

Manchester Climate Change Action Plan
DfE Sustainability and Climate Change, Draft Strategy 2021

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Schools and Early Years settings have a key role in educating children and young people about sustainability and climate change and there are many examples across the city where schools prioritise this agenda both in and out of the curriculum to demonstrate their commitment to change and to make a contribution to Manchester becoming carbon neutral by 2038.
- 1.2 Children and Young people in Manchester alongside their peers nationally and internationally have voiced their concerns about the future of the planet and the need for decision makers and politicians to act and accelerate the progress needed to reduce carbon levels and prevent the increase in global average temperatures. Educators have a key responsibility to work in partnership with students to improve their school buildings, grounds and local neighbourhoods.
- 1.3 Manchester City Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019 and recognised it has a role in working with partners to achieve its ambitious target of becoming zero carbon city by 2038. Currently education settings contribute to over 50% of carbon emissions from public buildings. The City Council procures energy for over 90% of the schools and is therefore well placed to work with and support schools in reducing their carbon footprints. Although we are working with a very mixed landscape of maintained schools and academies in Manchester, on the whole the system is open and appreciative of the leadership, advice and support that the Council can provide. Due to the complexity of the school system, it is difficult to accurately quantify and develop an accurate picture the level of investment that schools are making to ensure their own green recovery. However, it is clear from having conversations at strategic forums and with individual schools that the Council has a clear role in helping schools to develop a road map for how they can work towards environmental sustainability.
- 1.4 In the summer term of 2020 the Director of Education requested a piece of work to identify ways that the Education Team could support schools in responding to climate change and contribute to the Councils net zero target. This initial scoping exercise informed the development of an action plan (appendix A). The action plan is linked to the five priorities of the Our Manchester Climate Change Action Plan. The plan has four main objectives:
 1. To raise awareness, build capacity and skills across the workforce to implement change.
 2. To support the sector in securing additional resources.
 3. To enable children and young people to have a voice and be active partners in making sustainable changes to their school / college environments.
 4. To equip children and young people with the skills and behaviours to prepare them for the green economy.
- 1.5 The action plan will be achieved by developing a collaborative / partnership approach between the Council, the education sector and other key partners.

The partnership approach will promote the sharing of practice, the mobilising of resources and development of tools that schools can use to develop their own action plans.

- 1.6 In November (2021) the DfE published a draft strategy, Sustainability and Climate Change for education and children's services systems. The strategy outlines four priority areas: the education of children and young people about the importance of sustainability and impact of climate change, preparing young people for green skills and jobs, helping children and young people to connect with nature and the climate adaptation and decarbonisation of buildings. It is proposed that the strategy will be reviewed in 2030 and provides a plan of how schools may progress to achieving the high-level strategic aims of providing an excellent education for a changing world, net zero, resilient to climate change and with a better environment for future generations. The government is proposing two initiatives to drive the strategy, a virtual National Education Park and a Climate Leaders Award. The consultation on the draft strategy will run until March 2022 and a final strategy will be published in April 2022. Manchester is working closely with the DfE on piloting work to support schools to decarbonise (see 2.4).

2.0 Progress to date

This section of the report describes the progress that has been made towards the completion of actions in the plan and next steps for remainder of the academic year.

2.1 Conference

The Governors Support team are planning a conference for Manchester Schools in the Summer Term 2022. The conference would bring together Head Teachers, Governors and Business managers with the purpose of helping them to develop their own 'Green Recovery' action plans. We are in the process of finding out from all partners what they would like to be included in the conference and to identify potential settings who can provide a case study of their environmental improvements. A conference planning group with representation from all three parties is being set up to ensure that the conference will be of real practical use to enable schools to develop realistic plans of how to reduce their carbon emissions. Children and young people will be given the opportunity to have a voice at the conference. They will be invited to participate in the main programme but will also be supported to develop and lead their own 'zone' that will be led and run by children and young people.

2.2 Carbon Literacy Training

A communication was sent to all schools in September to inform them of the Carbon Literacy (CLT) training programme being delivered by the Council. So far, a handful of teachers have accessed this training. To increase the numbers of school staff accessing the training we are looking to try three new methods of delivery in the Spring Term these include:

1. Targeted reach out to schools to publicise the CLT training programme and encourage individual teachers to complete two sessions (total of 5 hours) to receive a certificate.
2. To deliver 2 sessions (equivalent to 5 hours) to school staff as a part of their inset / CPD programme that will include specific references where appropriate to their setting and develop actions that the staff can drive and action to decarbonise their school. All staff attending will receive a certificate,
3. To adapt the current course and reduce to a one 2-hour session aimed at school staff (and perhaps students) that will raise awareness and generate ideas for reducing carbon levels both in their personal lives and at school. This course would not be accredited.

2.3 De-Carbonisation

The five priority areas of the Manchester Climate Change Action plans provide a useful framework for settings to identify the areas where there is potential to reduce their carbon emissions. There are also several departments across the City Council who are also working with schools to support schools in making good decisions about improvements to their buildings and energy use. Work is underway to complete condition surveys for day care settings based in Council owned buildings as part of a £3m investment approved by Executive to make improvements to these buildings. There is also a proposal currently being costed to carry out a programme of condition surveys for all of our maintained school buildings from 2022. Both of these programmes will focus on big ticket areas such as boilers, condition of roofs and windows all of which impact on carbon emissions. This will give us a clearer picture about the condition and efficiency of our school and early years estate and where to prioritise capital funding.

- 2.3.1 There is a clear potential to strengthen relationships between schools and key Council departments and to work with business managers and governors to provide them with information and advice to make good decisions that will have significant impact on their carbon use. Work is underway to map out the key relationships in and outside of Council, to identify potential funding streams that schools can access and to develop case studies of good practice.

2.4 Partnership working with DfE and GMCA

Manchester has been identified as one of two Local Authorities to work with the DfE to test out ideas that will inform how the DfE will support schools in the future to reduce their carbon emissions. The first project that Manchester will be working on is the Electric Vehicle Charge Point Pilot Project. Thirty-five schools will be offered free surveys that will provide them with all the information, including the estimated cost of installing EVCP in their staff car parks and 10 schools will have EVCPs installed free of charge and the associated costs including software and licences provided for a further three years. The purpose of this pilot is to gain insight into end user behavioural

change, monetary and carbon reductions. Schools will be identified for this pilot in January and the surveys will take place in the Spring Term. The DfE are currently awaiting approval for funding for a SMART Meters Project which will also be piloted in Manchester. Approximately 20% of our schools do not have SMART meters, this is mainly to do with the cost of residual work needed to fit a meter. The DfE are proposing to provide grants of up to £1,000 towards the cost of the residual work and they have appointed a company (EDF) to carry out the work on their behalf. This project is programmed to be completed in this academic year.

The final pilot is to identify a Special School who would be prepared to test out the use of an Electric Minibus to use for transporting students to and from school as well as in the day for educational visits etc.

- 2.4.1 GMCA have also been looking at ways to support schools in developing plans for environmental sustainability. Last March they commissioned the Charity - Global Action Plan (GAP) to develop an online resource to help schools set priorities and generate their own action plans. Manchester Environment Education Network (MEEN) worked with GAP to input local information to ensure that schools could access resources, support and advice from companies and partner organisations in the Northwest. Manchester schools were invited to test out the online platform and provide feedback. The tool is now available for schools to use and will be promoted on the school's hub and other school forums.

2.5 Young People's Offer

Across the city there are a wide range of VCS partners who have an 'offer' for children and young people to educate them about the impact of climate change and the importance of sustainable environments these include Groundwork, City of Trees, Lancashire Wildlife Trust, MEEN, Manchester Museum, Forest Schools and RHS. We have established a 'Green' partners network to share information, promote collaborative working and to look at developing a more co-ordinated offer to schools. MEEN and 5 partners were successful in being awarded Holiday Activity Funding (HAF) to run workshops in schools and youth and play settings across the summer. The 'Grow your future' workshops had a focus on food and the environment and delivered 24 workshops, engaging over 700 children and young people.

- 2.5.1 Over the last two years there has been an increase in numbers of workers appointed who have a role in supporting children and young people in being active in tackling climate emergency within the city council and key partner agencies including Groundwork, Young Manchester, and the Manchester Climate Change Agency. These officers are meeting regularly to co-ordinate and strengthen the offer to children and young people, schools, and youth groups. A good example of this is the work being co-ordinated through the Keep Manchester Tidy Officer based in the Highways Team, working with Climate Change Officers and Neighbourhood Teams to promote Clean Air Days and Litter Picking schemes.

- 2.5.2 There are also a growing number of frameworks that promote a whole school approach to tackling climate change and environmental sustainability including ECO Schools, Green Schools Project, Transforming the World. All these frameworks and awards encourage the participation of students in driving change. In September last year we hosted a briefing event for ECO schools to re-launch their refreshed programme and awards and so far, 108 schools and early years settings have signed up this year to work on their Green Flag awards.
- 2.5.3 The Local Authority has a key role in communicating the offer and brokering opportunities to schools.

2.6 Our Year

Children and Young People's concerns about Climate Change and impact it will have on their futures has been highlighted as a theme emerging from the consultation carried out to inform the plans for our dedicated year for children and young people.

The Council, with partners ran two children and young people's Climate Change Summits in 2019 that provided them with the opportunity to raise their concerns with decision makers and politicians. Our Year provides another opportunity for the voice of young people to be heard and to create opportunities for Children and Young People to run social action projects that will have a positive impact on the environment.

- 2.6.1 Several key partners including MEEN, Groundwork, City of Trees, Manchester Museum and the Manchester Climate Change Agency have already started to identify ways to increase the number of opportunities for children and young people to engage and co-design projects. MCC Business partners and contractors will also be approached to support many of these projects through their social value contribution.
- 2.6.2 The year will also provide a platform for schools to reengage with the Skills for Life project including the relaunch of the Skills for the Planet resource and Climate Change Wheel. All Children and Young People engaged with environmental projects will be supported to reflect and record their own skills development and to co-design new Skills for Life projects linked to climate action. It will also be useful to explore the link between Skills for Life project and the Climate Leaders Award mentioned in the DfE draft strategy.

2.7 Green Skills

In 2019 the Work and Skills Team and Education Team started to do work with Career Leads about reviewing their Careers Education programmes to include the Green Industrial Revolution and the jobs of the future. To now regain momentum, the Work and Skills Team have commissioned Groundwork to work with our secondary schools to help them to access existing high-quality resources that educate students about existing and emerging 'Green' jobs. They have also been asked to co-design with schools

and students a resource titled Every job a 'Green' job which focuses on the behaviours and skills that future employees will require to manage their own carbon footprint.

- 2.7.1 The Work and Skills Team will work closely with GMCA Enterprise Co-ordinators and other key partners to lift this important area of a schools Careers Education Programme to ensure all students and staff are kept up to speed with jobs and careers as the Green Revolution gathers momentum.

2.8 Early Years Settings

The Early Years Teams are also looking at ways to support the sector in reducing their carbon emissions and the environmental education of young children. There are two pieces of work underway. The first is auditing the private voluntary and independent Sector (PVI) in ascertaining the opportunities and challenges facing the sector regarding change and implementing improvements so that the team can build a more accurate picture of the current position and prioritise areas that they want to focus on this year. The learning from this piece of work and the conditions survey mentioned in 2.3 will be used to encourage other parts of the Education Sector including Alternative Providers and Supplementary Schools to make improvements to their own Carbon footprints.

3.0 Promoting Active Travel

In addition to the work outlined above, there have been a number of actions to promote active travel led by Neighbourhood Services working in partnership with schools and settings and their local communities which encourage people to walk and cycle. Active travel is an essential element of the Council's vision for a sustainable transport system and reducing carbon emissions through a mode shift away from private car journey towards cycling and walking.

- 3.1 Promoting Active Travel Choices on the School Run – School Streets and Walk to School Programmes. The Neighbourhood Teams work closely with schools and parents to promote active travel choices and increase climate change awareness. The activities at schools have included:
- Delivering school assemblies to talk about active travel choices and carbon impact of short car journeys to school.
 - Producing articles for school newsletters.
 - Supporting applications for the nationally Accredited Active Travel Schemes such as the "WOW" Walk to School Project by Living Streets Organisation and the Modeshift STARS education Scheme.
- 3.2 School Streets Sessions – "providing Traffic Free Space outside Schools" One Day Taster Sessions
- The Neighbourhood Teams, alongside Highways, have supported 20 primary schools in 13 wards across Manchester to hold one day taster "School Street" Sessions. These sessions help to promote active travel, transform the school run and encourage safe, healthy school travel whilst improving air quality

around school sites. A “School Street” taster session followed invitations to schools to request that the Council introduce temporary restrictions on motor traffic at school drop off and pick up times providing a traffic free safe space that encourages active travel. These are one day trial sessions with the Council waiving normal fees and providing expertise, legal notices, training for volunteers, signage, and barriers for the school to allow them to successfully manage the session. One Day Taster School Street Sessions have typically been held on climate change campaign days such as Clean Air Day or Car Free Day. These are opportunities for Schools, parents, and residents to come together to provide safe traffic free school travel supported by volunteer traffic marshals. Over 6,600 pupils have been able to enjoy at least one day of car free space outside their school at drop off and pick up times on the school street trial sessions across Manchester.

- 3.3 **School Streets – Moving towards sessions every school day**
Following successful one day trials, many schools have asked that they hold them more regularly. The Council was successful in September 2021 in a funding application to TFGM and has been granted £50k to roll out a pilot programme at 7 schools in Manchester that will see School Streets Sessions held every school term day. The School Streets initiative at these 7 schools will be supported by permanent Traffic Restriction Orders (TRO) and additional fixed signage. The Council will provide accredited marshal training and resources for school staff and parent volunteers. In the lead in period the participating schools as well as other schools across the city, will be encouraged to hold further one day taster sessions. These TRO orders are subject to a statutory consultation process; it is anticipated that the move to daily sessions will take place over the Summer and Autumn terms in 2022.
- 3.4 In addition to School Street Road Closures the Neighbourhood Teams will continue their engagement with schools to develop active travel resources, school travel plans and support packages. As schools develop more experience of active travel initiatives, they will be supported to progress to the option of School Street one day taster sessions. As the schools become more experienced through the delivery of taster sessions and other Active Travel events such as walk to school days the Council will develop a pipeline of potential applications for regular and permanent School Streets should further funding become available.

4.0 Conclusion

Climate Change was one of the key themes identified by children and young people that should be a focus for Our Year 2022. In addition to continuing to work with children and young people on this agenda, a priority going forward is working with schools and settings to ensure they are taking positive and practical actions to reduce their carbon emissions and providing them with information and tools to enable them to do this. This includes providing access to training such as the carbon literacy training and mobilising resources where available including ensuring that Manchester is proactive in working with government departments such as the DFE to access any grants or pilot schemes for our schools and settings. We are aware that many of our schools

have already prioritised this work and have produced ambitious plans to reduce their carbon emissions and it is also important that we facilitate the sharing of this practice across all schools and settings.

5.0 Recommendations

Elected members are asked to take note of the content of this report and to comment on the action plan which is attached as an appendix to the report.