

Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2022

Present:

Councillor Shilton Godwin – in the Chair

Councillors Chohan, Doswell, Holt, Hughes, Lyons, Nunney, Sheikh and Wright

Apologies: Councillor Razaq

Also present:

Councillor Rawlins, Executive Member for Environment and Transport

Councillor Foley, Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport

Councillor A. Ali, Deputy Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods

Samantha Nicholson, Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency

Mike Wilton, Chair, Manchester Climate Change Partnership

Simon Warburton, Transport Strategy Director, TfGM (Transport for Greater Manchester)

ECCSC/22/22 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2022 as a correct record.

ECCSC/22/23 Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan Review

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive & City Treasurer and the City Solicitor that provided an update on progress made on the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan (GM CAP) policy review and sought comments from Members to inform finalisation of the review submission to government.

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

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- An overview of the impacts of poor air quality, noting that improving air quality was a key objective for Manchester City Council;
- The rationale for the new plan;
- The core objectives of the new Clean Air Plan, noting that the new GM CAP would target investment in vehicle upgrades rather than imposing daily charges;
- Describing that the primary focus of the new plan was to achieve compliance in a way that considered the current cost of living crisis and associated economic challenges faced by businesses and residents;
- Describing the approach to the development of the new plan;
- NO2 exceedances forecast for the period 2023-2026 and monitoring data;
- An overview of the changes in economic context since Summer 2021 and the emerging conclusions to changes in an economic context;

- The changed conditions within the vehicle market;
- Equality considerations;
- The asks of Government, particularly the specific new 'ask' to remove out-of-area operation by private hire drivers/vehicles;
- Feedback for targeted engagement undertaken to test support for the case for a new GM CAP; and
- Next steps.

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

- Continuing the call for an Ultra Low Emissions Zone, particularly in the city centre area;
- Recognising the cost of compliant taxi vehicles;
- Noting the levels of emissions from the bus fleet what was the timescale for the roll out of replacement vehicles;
- Was the £115m earmarked for a third of the bus fleet in GM to be zero emission by 2027 sufficient;
- What work was being done to address the issues associated with the strategic road network;
- Fully supporting the 'ask' to remove out-of-area operation by private hire drivers/vehicles;
- Clarification was sought as to the proposed use of the ANPR cameras;
- Information was sought as to the provision of electric vehicle charging points;
- The importance of considering this topic through the lens of public health; and
- The importance of capturing the existing creativity and enthusiasm in the city, particularly amongst young people to inform plans to address emissions and climate change.

The Transport Strategy Director, TfGM (Transport for Greater Manchester) advised that the greater control of the regional bus fleet that would be achieved through the franchising of this service would allow for granular control of the service. He stated that the ability to control this network would address the issues associated with buses, particularly in the city centre area. He advised that the £115m referred to by the Member was additional funding above the core funding proposition.

The Transport Strategy Director, TfGM described the work underway to address the issues associated with the strategic road network. He gave the example of the work to understand the flow of commercial traffic on Regent Road and the options available to address this. He advised that this analysis was being undertaken with Highways England. Members welcomed this and advised that the lessons learnt from previous schemes involving Regent Road needed be used to inform any proposals, particularly in regard to communications with local residents and elected Members. The Transport Strategy Director, TfGM stated that this was fully understood, and the approach would be to capture views and comments to inform any formal consultation exercise.

The Chair noted that it was important to recognise that Regent Road was only one strategic road network route that impacted significantly on the city. She commented that it was important to consider all road users, including promoting active travel

when considering alternative options for these routes. She commented that a report on the Active Travel Strategy would be considered by the Committee later in the municipal year.

The Transport Strategy Director, TfGM commented that the issues associated with the wider strategic road network across Greater Manchester was understood and they continued to make representations to the Government on this issue.

The Transport Strategy Director, TfGM addressed the issue of the cost of replacement vehicles for business and advised that they were working closely with business representatives to map the inflationary pressures experienced by businesses and this would inform the funding ask from government. With reference to taxis, he advised that the funding available would be used to target the worst polluting vehicles, using an evidenced based approach.

The Transport Strategy Director, TfGM described that the proposed use of the ANPR cameras would help identify directed marketing possibilities with business and Greater Manchester Police had expressed an interest in the wider use of ANPR.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport advised that a report on the provision of electric vehicle charging points would be submitted to the Committee for consideration in the new year.

In concluding this item of business, a Member suggested that an additional recommendation be added. The Member noted that the report discussed measures to address NO2 emissions with no reference to carbon emissions. She recommended that the Executive consider all emissions, including carbon when considering future transport and active travel strategies so that they contribute to the Council's stated zero carbon ambitions by 2038.

Decisions

1. The Committee recommend that the Executive consider all emissions, including carbon when considering future transport and active travel strategies so that they contribute to the Council's stated zero carbon ambitions by 2038.

2. The Committee endorse the recommendations that the Executive:

- (1) Note the 'Case for a new Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan' document attached as Appendix 1 and associated appendices 2 to 6 has been submitted to the Secretary of State as a draft document subject to any comments from Manchester City Council ahead of the next Air Quality Administration Committee.
- (2) Note that Cllr Tracey Rawlins as the Manchester City Council appointed representative on the Air Quality Administration Committee will represent Manchester City Council's comments.
- (3) Note the initial screening undertaken to assess which protected characteristics are likely to be impacted by the new GM Clean Air Plan, and in scope for the Equalities Impact Assessment.

- (4) Note the updated Do Minimum position for 2023 and 2025 and the forecasted points of exceedance in GM in 2023 and 2025; and
- (5) Note the participatory policy development approach and the next steps for the GM CAP.
- (6) Note the new 'ask' from Government to remove out-of-area operation by private hire drivers/vehicles to support the new GM Clean Air Plan.
- (7) Note feedback from early engagement activity with vehicle owner representative groups.
- (8) Note the NO₂ monitoring results and the exceedances of the annual mean across sites set up for GM CAP purposes between 2018 and 2021.

**ECCSC/22/24 Manchester Climate Change Agency / Partnership
Framework 2.0**

The Committee considered the report of the Manchester Climate Change Partnership and Agency that described the key contents of the 2022 Update to the Manchester Climate Change Framework (2020–2025).

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background, noting that The Manchester Climate Change Framework (2020-25) was the city's high-level strategy for tackling climate change;
- Manchester's Climate Change Framework 2020-25 (the Framework) sets a science-based target for the city to reach zero carbon emissions by 2038 and sets a total carbon budget for our direct emissions, noting that the first milestone on this pathway was for the city to reduce its direct emissions by 50% by 2025;
- The Framework was being updated to ensure it remained responsive to a changing city and evolving local and national policy, to improving data and modelling, plus to the increasing need for urgent action to tackle the climate emergency;
- The update would include an overview of research to move the city forwards on climate adaptation and resilience; and Health and Wellbeing;
- Information in relation to direct and indirect emissions;
- Information on the approach to the proposed engagement with stakeholders; and
- Next steps, noting that comments and feedback would be collated from this Committee, Manchester Climate Change Partnership members and wider city stakeholders, including residents and business and feed into the final publication, due for release in September.

To accompany the report the Committee also received a presentation that summarised the key themes of the report.

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

- The Committee welcomed the report and accompanying presentation, noting the content was clear and concise;
- The importance of the communications strategy to residents on the issue of climate change, particularly the use of appropriate language and terminology;
- What was being done to engage those private sector businesses who were not currently signed up to the Partnership;
- Had any consideration been given to enforcement activity;
- What lessons had been learnt to date;
- What could be done to influence the Greater Manchester Pension Fund to divest from fossil fuels;
- Was there a Green Work and Skills strategy;
- Had consideration been given to develop an action plan to accompany the Update to the Manchester Climate Change Framework (2020–2025); and
- The report did not address the issues of food sustainability or biodiversity;

The Chair, Manchester Climate Change Partnership described the importance of partnership working to deliver the changes required to address climate change and keep the city with the agreed carbon budget. He stated that in Manchester there were many good practices and examples of businesses actively enacting strategies to reduce their carbon emissions, particularly in the construction industry. He stated that these examples of good practice could influence other businesses.

The Head of City Policy informed the Committee that a significant amount of work had been delivered around the issue of green skills and training and this was regularly reported to the Economy Scrutiny Committee, adding that an update report on this topic was scheduled to be considered at their September meeting.

The Chair, Manchester Climate Change Partnership stated that many lessons had been learnt over previous years, and he made particular reference to the ineffective national domestic retrofitting scheme. He advised that following this, a Greater Manchester initiative was being developed on this important issue, making reference to the Your Home Better scheme and the work done to engage directly with the supply chain. The Committee noted that a report on this subject was scheduled for consideration at the September meeting. With regard to the issue of enforcement he made reference to the work that was being undertaken across Manchester to work with landlords in the private rented sector to improve property standards.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency stated that the need for immediate action to address the climate crisis was acutely understood, she further commented on the scale of the issue and called for a national and global systematic change to address carbon emissions. With regard to wider engagement with the private sector she stated that Manchester, and Greater Manchester had a strong track record in supporting and developing green businesses, particularly in regard to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

The Chair, Manchester Climate Change Partnership advised that businesses were recognising the threat to their business that climate change represented, and this increased awareness across different sectors was accelerating change, he further commented that this increased realisation amongst shareholders would also support the argument and act as a lever to influence the Greater Manchester Pension Fund

to divest from fossil fuels, recognising that the Committee had continued to call for this.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency stated that the issue of meaningful communications with residents on the issue of climate change was understood and advised that whilst the strategy document was written in a particular 'high level' style, the language used in all communications would be appropriate and accessible. She described that a bespoke communications strategy, addressing a range of issues would be devised and delivered to accompany the launch of the updated framework, and this would also include a questionnaire to capture feedback.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency commented on the challenges of reporting outcomes and progress due the time lags in the availability of the range of data sets and metrics used to report against. She advised that a comprehensive annual report was produced and would continue to be submitted to the Committee for consideration. She commented that the Partnership comprised of different sectors from across the city to ensure a range of voices were captured.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency stated that the Manchester Food Board were represented on the Partnership and the updated Framework would include consideration of food and biodiversity.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer commented that the city had a stated and explicit ambition to address climate change, adding that it was one of the first cities to establish a carbon budget. She advised that the Partnership was the lead for the city on this issue. She further added that the refreshed Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan would be aligned to the refreshed Manchester Climate Change Framework.

The Deputy Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods spoke in support of the report and the importance of addressing climate change.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport welcomed the comments from the Committee and recognised the points raised regarding the need for appropriate language to be used in all communications on the issue of climate change. She advised that regular communications would be provided to Members that contained useful links and sign posting that could be shared with interested residents and groups in their respective wards. She reiterated that it was everyone's responsibility to adopt behaviours to address climate change. She recognised the comments made by Members on the importance of active travel and improved public transport, noting the importance of the need to address climate change was implicit across all Council decision making considerations.

Decision

To note the report.

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that provided an update on progress in delivery of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) in Quarter 1 2022-23 (April – June 2022).

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- Describing Quarter 1 Progress against individual actions within the CCAP during the first quarter of 2022-23, with the Council's direct carbon emissions data covering the previous quarter, in this case, January – March 2022, due to the availability of billing and data monitoring which was drawn from billing information from the previous quarter;
- Describing key achievements; and
- Next steps.

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

- Information was sought on the approach to decarbonising Council owned buildings that had been leased to community groups;
- What type of projects had been proposed to the UK Cities Climate Investment Commission;
- Noting the recent heatwave and the importance of foliage cover and shade provided by trees, what was the policy for ensuring trees were suitable maintained during periods of extreme weather events;
- An update was sought on the plans to deliver Large Scale Renewable Energy Generation;
- Welcoming the appointment of a Sustainability Project Manager to deliver the Council's commitment to be Single Use Plastic Free by 2024;
- Recognising and welcoming the Staff Travel Policy that was referred to in the report, and asking if it was appropriate to offer free city centre parking for Councillors;
- An explanation was sought as to the reasons for the reported flight to Ireland; and
- Why had some Councillors still not completed the Carbon Literacy Training.

The Strategic Lead, Resources & Programmes advised that there were a range of projects submitted to UK Cities Climate Investment Commission that reflected and supported the range of activities described within the action plan, these included, but not restricted to retrofitting and energy generation. He stated that the plans to deliver Large Scale Renewable Energy Generation were still ongoing and viable options were being considered, and an update would be provided to the Committee at an appropriate time.

The Strategic Lead Policy and Partnerships advised the Committee that he would enquire with the Corporate Property Team on the approach to the retrofitting of those Council owned properties leased to community groups and a briefing note would be circulated to the Committee.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer paid tribute to all of the team involved in delivering the Climate Change Action Plan, advising that this work had been recognised nationally as an example of good practice. The Chair on behalf of the Committee supported this acknowledgement and appreciation of all staff involved in this important area of work.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport welcomed the ongoing support and challenge of the Committee on this important area of work. She advised that a note would be provided following the meeting that described the approach to maintaining trees during periods of extreme weather events, noting her appreciation to those residents who had watered trees during the recent heatwave.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport advised that all Councillors, like every resident needed to take personal responsibility for their travel choices and stated that individual circumstances needed to be considered, and it would be inappropriate for her to comment any further. She advised that Councillor Foley, Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport would be looking into Councillor take up of the Carbon Literacy Training to understand any barriers experienced so that these could be addressed with a view to maximising take up of this training. With regard to the reported flight to Ireland an explanation was provided, however recognising the need for the reporting of context was required in future updates if this occurred again.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCSC/22/26 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.

The Chair informed the Committee that following discussions between herself and Cllr Reid, Chair of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee it had been agreed to remove the item that was listed on the Work Programme for the November meeting as 'Working with Schools - To receive a report on the Council's work to support schools in relation to the climate emergency.'

The Chair was satisfied that this report sat within the remit of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee (CYPS), further noting that the CYPS Committee had recently considered this item at their 12 January 2022 meeting.

Decision

The Committee notes the report and agrees the work programme, noting the comments above.