

# **Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee**

## **Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2022**

### **Present:**

Councillor Shilton Godwin – in the Chair

Councillors Chohan, Doswell, Holt, Hughes, Ilyas, Jeavons, Nunney and Wright

**Apologies:** Councillor Lyons and Razaq

### **Also present:**

Councillor Rawlins, Executive Member for Environment and Transport

Councillor Foley, Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport

Councillor Igbon, Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods

Councillor A. Ali, Deputy Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods

Samantha Nicholson, Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency

### **ECCSC/22/33          Minutes**

The Chair requested that Councillor White's title be corrected to Executive Member for Housing and Development.

### **Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2022 as a correct record, noting the above amendment.

### **ECCSC/22/34          Manchester's Annual Climate Change Report 2022**

The Committee considered the report of the Manchester Climate Change Agency that provided a summary of Manchester's Annual Climate Change Report for 2022. This annual report was based on the latest emissions data released by the UK Government's Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

Key points and themes in the report included:

- The Annual Report enabled Manchester to track its progress against the carbon reduction targets, carbon budget and zero carbon date of 2038 that were set out in the city's Climate Change Framework, and its recent 2022 Update;
- Describing that the city achieved a 12% reduction in emissions in 2020 (the most recent data from BEIS) which, despite being a greater increase than previous years, was still below the original 13% per annum target and was largely driven by reduced activity during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns;
- Providing an estimate of emissions for 2021 which predicted an increase of 6% compared to 2020, driven by an increase in activity as we came out of lockdowns;
- Providing a high level summary of activity that had been carried out in support of the city's Framework by Manchester Climate Change Partnership, its Advisory Groups, and Manchester Climate Change Agency in 2022; and

- Noting that it did not identify new priorities for next year, as in previous Annual Reports, as these had been captured in granular detail in the 2022 Update to the Framework.

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

- Expressing concern that the situation in regard to the city's carbon budget was worse than anticipated;
- Noting that was even when the pandemic was taken into consideration;
- More information was sought on the next steps in response to the report;
- The need to report measurable milestones and progress against established targets, noting this was important to give residents confidence and keep people motivated;
- The need for the Council to lead on this agenda and seek to use all its powers of influence and leverage on the issue of carbon reduction, especially in regard to buildings and travel;
- The need to engage landlords in the Private Rented Sector on the issue of retrofitting;
- Everyone needed to take immediate actions and responsibility to address climate change;
- Further information and updates on the work of the Zero Carbon Coordination Group were requested for consideration by the Committee;
- More information was sought on the approach to Green Growth in the city;
- The need to promote the Manchester Climate Ready website, noting that this was a very useful resource;
- A report on indirect emissions should be submitted for consideration by the Committee; and
- The need for a just transition (A just transition seeks to ensure that the substantial benefits of a green economy transition are shared widely, while also supporting those who stand to lose economically – be they countries, regions, industries, communities, workers or consumers.)

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency supported the call for the Council to use all of its spheres of influence and their duties and powers to address climate change. She stated that the next steps and actions reported in the Framework remained, noting the need to prioritise the recommendations to realise the improvements required. She noted the request for a report on indirect emissions and key milestones. In response to establishing and reporting against measurable targets she stated that consideration was being given as to how this could be best achieved, noting the challenges presented in doing this in a meaningful way. She acknowledged and agreed with the comment made regarding the importance of messaging to keep citizens motivated on this important issue for the city.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer informed the Committee that the subject of Green Growth was regularly reported to the Economy Scrutiny Committee. In response to the issue of reporting against measurable outcomes she stated that activity and trend data would also provide information in regard to the city's direction of travel. She further added that the issue of Public Sector Funding remained a concern.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport noted that the Committee had raised a number of questions in relation to the Airport and the aviation industry. She stated that a substantive report was scheduled to be considered by the Committee at their January 2023 meeting and this would be the opportunity to discuss this subject area in more detail. She further commented that conversations were ongoing regarding school buildings and noted the discussion that had been held at the recent meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee. She advised that additional resources had been allocated to strengthen the communications and step-up campaigns. She further advised that there was a requirement in all cultural event and VCSE grant applications to demonstrate how they would mitigate climate change.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport concluded by thanking the Committee for their continued support and rigorous challenge on this important issue.

The Chair in closing this item advised that she would meet with the Executive Member for Environment and Transport to discuss and agree the scope of future reports to schedule into the Committee's Work Programme to pick up on the themes discussed during the meeting.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

### **ECCSC/22/35      Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan: Quarterly Progress Report, Quarter 2 2022-23 (July – Sept 2022)**

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that provided an update on progress in delivering the Council's Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) during Quarter 2 2022-23 (July - September 2022).

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Noting that a refresh of the CCAP 2020-25 was approved by the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee and Executive in September 2022;
- That the refreshed CCAP will be implemented across all workstreams from Quarter 3;
- Providing an introduction and background;
- Highlighting the key messages from the Quarter 2 Progress Report, noting that the Council was making good progress in meeting its target to reduce its direct CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 50% by 2025; and
- Key achievements.

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

- Noting the progress reported and thanking all officers involved for their continued commitment on this important work;

- Noting that emissions associated with business travel had increased and virtual meetings should be prioritised;
- Further information on the Fallowfield Loop/Manchester Cycleway was requested;
- An update was requested on the activities of the Zero Carbon Finance and Investment Sub-Group;
- The need for the Council to lead on this agenda and seek to use all its powers of influence and leverage on the issue of carbon reduction;
- Despite the reluctance from government to adequately respond to the climate crisis, Manchester and the wider city region were taking action to address climate change;
- Active travel, including safe pavements to promote walking and that installing bike stands in appropriate places needed to be prioritised;
- Specific resources should be allocated to deliver active travel in the city; and
- Good practice and lessons learnt from other cities needed to be shared and consideration given as to how they could be implemented across Manchester.

In response to the Committee's discussion, the Executive Member for Environment and Transport stated that she was in discussions with other Core Cities regarding good practice and lessons learnt and commented that Manchester was regarded as leading on this agenda. She advised that she was committed to the issue of Active Travel and that a report on this was scheduled to be considered by the Committee in January 2023, and this would include information on the findings of the public consultation. She advised that Climate Change was embedded across all Council strategies, such as Public Health. In regard to funding to support Active Travel she advised that in addition to the continued lobbying of government for fair funding, all opportunities for funding were explored across Greater Manchester. The Committee noted that budget related reports were scheduled for consideration. She further advised that Highways was reported to the Economy Scrutiny Committee.

In response to the questions raised regarding the Fallowfield Loop the Executive Member for Environment and Transport advised that all affected ward Members had been consulted and updated, however if Members had specific questions they could contact her directly. She further added that she would pick up the issue raised in relation to parks outside of the meeting and update the Member directly.

The Strategic Lead – Resources & Programmes provided an update on the Zero Carbon Finance and Investment Sub-Group by advising that this work had progressed over the previous months and involved UK Core Cities. He stated that the intention was to work together to maximise private sector investment to support and deliver programmes of work to address climate change. He advised that a business case would be developed and submitted to government to secure investment to support this work. He advised that there were significant potential and interest from the private sector to progress this. The Committee welcomed and supported Manchester's involvement in these important discussions.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing that provided an overview of the draft Manchester Biodiversity Strategy.

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;
- Providing a definition of biodiversity;
- Describing the benefits of biodiversity;
- Information on the new Environment Act requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain and Nature Recovery Networks;
- Providing a narrative on the development of the Biodiversity Strategy; and
- Describing the aims and objectives of the Biodiversity Strategy, noting that the Council was committed to supporting the new biodiversity strategy.

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

- Welcoming the legal commitment to improve biodiversity on development initiatives by 10%;
- What monitoring of these developments would be undertaken and would developers be held to account;
- Did these initiatives have to be delivered on the site or could they be delivered in other locations;
- Could we ask developers to commit to more than 10%;
- More needed to be done with partners, such as Transport for Greater Manchester and Metrolink, to ensure the land they owned was managed to support biodiversity and to act as nature corridors;
- Noting the importance and need for nature corridors to support biodiversity;
- The need to 'retrofit' the city centre, noting the lack of shade from trees and the support these offered to biodiversity;
- The need to lobby government for appropriate funding to support improvements to biodiversity;
- Recognising the importance of green spaces for the mental health of all residents; and
- Noting the positive example of delivering quality green space in the Mayfield development and that this should be used as an exemplar model for developers.

The Planning and Infrastructure Manager advised that ideally the 10% biodiversity improvement would be delivered on the site but recognised that this would not always be practical. He advised that in those circumstances alternative sites would be considered in Manchester, or in Greater Manchester if a site could not be identified in the city. He said that an action plan for the agreed site and project would be agreed and this would be a mechanism to monitor the project. He stated that 10% was the minimum requirement; however, the Local Plan could be used as a mechanism to increase this ask if it was felt to be appropriate.

The Senior Policy Officer stated that the concept of connectivity was understood, adding that every space was part of the wider network and this evidence-based Strategy would inform all decision making. He advised that there were a number of stakeholders who were committed to the Strategy, and this would serve as an important catalyst to improve biodiversity across the city and the wider city region. He further stated that the Strategy would also improve the wider environment and also address social inequalities. He stated that ultimately nature would be the barometer to measure success of this approach.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer advised that this Strategy would complement and sit alongside the Manchester Green and Blue Strategy and Implementation Plan and the Tree Action Plan.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport stated that a partnership approach to deliver nature-based solutions and all levers of influence and sources of funding would be accessed to support this activity.

## **Decision**

The Committee recommend that the Executive approve and endorse the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy.

## **ECCSC/22/37      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 future.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- Information on a variety of activities, including the waste strategy; recycling contamination rates; food waste, textiles and fly-tipping;
- Key updates in relation to Recycle for Greater Manchester (R4GM) activity;
- Key updates in relation to the Waste Collection and Street Cleansing contract;
- Information in relation to the investment in the Waste Collection and Street Cleansing Services;
- Information on a range of Waste and Recycling Campaigns and Initiatives, including case studies; and
- Listing the priorities identified for 2023/24.

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

- Waste and Recycling Centres should be open to all to dispose of waste and to reduce incidents of flytipping;
- Providing an example of inconsistent messaging provided by staff employed at Household Waste and Recycling Centres;

- More compliance and enforcement activity was required to address flytipping and influence behaviour change;
- Communication between officers within the compliance team with both residents and Members needed to be improved;
- More information was sought in regard to the investment in alleyways;
- More information was sought as to where the 200 new litter bins would be situated;
- The call for attention to those areas that were not designated as formal district centres but were well used in neighbourhoods;
- How many full time contract monitoring officers were employed;
- Questioning the compliance rate figures provided in relation to contract monitoring;
- Recognising the significant contribution local volunteers played in keeping the city tidy and thanking the Keep Manchester Tidy team for their continued support;
- Had consideration been given to underground waste storage;
- The need to ensure cycle lanes were cleaned regularly to ensure they were safe for all users; and
- More needed to be done to address the issues related to commercial waste, particularly that experienced in the city centre.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing noted the issues reported by the Member following his recent experience when attending a Household Waste and Recycling Centre. She stated that she would raise the issue with SUEZ. She stated that it was important to reiterate that these centres were for household waste only and businesses were required to have their own waste management arrangements. In response to the comments raised in relation to compliance and enforcement activity she stated that she would relay the comments from the Committee back to the relevant strategic lead with responsibility for this activity, adding that enforcement and compliance activity was reported to the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee. She added that both services did work closely together and added that prosecutions for flytipping were publicised.

In response to the point raised regarding underground waste storage, the Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing advised that consideration had been given to this however this would be very costly to deliver in Manchester due to all of what was currently underground, however opportunities to think creatively were being considered in areas of new developments.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing noted the comment made in regard to commercial waste. She advised that the lessons of the previous commercial waste project that had been delivered would be reviewed to take this forward. She further commented that good practice from other cities would be reviewed to inform this approach also. She advised that Members would be kept informed of this activity.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing informed the Members that there were two full time contract monitoring officers employed. Noting the comments from the Committee she stated that Members could accompany officers when undertaking these inspections. If Members were interested in taking up this offer to contact her and these would be arranged.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing advised that initially the new litter bins would be deployed within the city centre but would then be rolled out through wards and district centres. She advised that potential locations would be visited and assessed to ensure bins were placed at appropriate sites. In response to specific issues raised regarding the Fallowfield ward she stated that she would discuss this with the Members outside of the meeting with a view to addressing the concerns they had.

The Contract Manager (Waste) described that the approach to alleyways was twofold, namely using compliance action where appropriate through the Neighbourhood Teams to take action and influence behaviour change, and secondly through a review of the Biffa inspection model to ensure this was fit for purpose.

The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods stated that she continued to raise the concerns and issues experienced by Members at meetings at a Greater Manchester level. She further advised that Biffa were held to account and were challenged. She advised Members that the leaf sweeping schedule had been circulated for information. She acknowledged that resident behaviour change in relation to waste and recycling was essential, and she further paid tribute to all residents who were proactive in their neighbourhoods on this issue. She further paid tribute to the Keep Manchester Tidy Project Officer for her continued commitment and enthusiasm.

The Chair stated that she welcomed the consideration of textiles in the report. She further advised that she would meet with the Executive Member for Environment and Transport to discuss and agree the scope of reports to schedule into the Committee's Work Programme to pick up on the themes discussed during the meeting.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

## **ECCSC/22/38      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.

As stated during consideration of the previous agenda items the Chair advised that she would meet with the Executive Member for Environment and Transport to discuss and agree the scope of reports to schedule into the Committee's Work Programme to pick up on the themes discussed during the meeting.

## **Decision**

The Committee notes the report and agrees the work programme.