

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2022

Present:

Councillor Hitchen - In the Chair

Councillors Azra Ali, Benham, Connolly, M Dar, Hilal, Hussain, Iqbal, Johnson, Ogunbambo, Rawson and Wilson

Also present:

Councillor Midgley, Deputy Leader

Councillor Hacking, Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure

Councillor Reid, Chair of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Judge, Lead Member for the Armed Forces

Louise Harding, MCRactive

Apologies:

Councillors Chambers, Evans, H Priest, Whiston and Wills

CESC/22/37 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2022 as a correct record.

CESC/22/38 Homelessness Update

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Housing Operations that provided an update on the plans for winter for people who slept rough and the Homelessness Commissioning Strategy.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Updates on the transformation progress;
- Describing the Enabling Independence Strategy, the Council wide strategy on supported accommodation; and
- Noting that Members had requested that a full homeless scrutiny update report be presented to the 10 January 2023 meeting.

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

- Recognising that people experiencing homelessness often also had complex needs associated with substance misuse and mental health, and the response and support to this needed to be appropriate;
- Recognising the importance of prevention initiatives to avoid people experiencing homelessness;
- Prevention Hubs needed to be established across all areas of the city;
- The need to reduce the use of Bed and Breakfast (B&B) accommodation, especially for families;

- Private Landlords needed to do more to improve the quality of their properties and respond to repairs in a timely manner;
- Housing Associations should improve the turn around times to re-let vacant properties to reduce the reliance on the Private Rented Sector;
- Data was sought on ethnicity and temporary accommodation occupancy;
- How equalities considerations informed the approach to address homelessness; and
- More information was requested on the Peony Project.

The Committee heard from Councillor Reid, Chair of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee. She reiterated the concerns raised regarding the impact on rates of homelessness of the cost-of-living crisis and rising childcare costs that had been articulated by the Members. She stated that it was important that families who were placed in temporary accommodation were housed close to the child's school and support network. She called for an end to housing families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation and called for more Social Housing to be delivered across the city. She also supported a call for an immediate end to no fault Section 21 evictions and called for the use of Council controlled advertising boards to promote help and advice.

The Deputy Leader informed the Committee that the Manchester Homelessness Partnership had been relaunched on 10 October 2022. She stated that homelessness presented a significant challenge for the city and would be exacerbated by the current cost of living crisis. She stated that if Manchester residents wished to support homeless people, they should contact the many voluntary support organisations or donate to the Real Change MCR campaign. She further commented that people could also donate goods to the Mustard Tree. She further commented that the Council continued to lobby government to adequately fund services to support homeless people. She called for an end to no fault Section 21 evictions, an increase in the Local Housing Allowance Rate and for developers to build more affordable homes.

The Assistant Director for Homelessness advised that it was recognised that people experiencing homelessness often had complex needs and the response and support offered needed to be appropriate to meet their needs and provide wrap around support. He reiterated the importance of prevention work to avoid homelessness, adding that this was everyone's responsibility. He stated for example that if a landlord did serve a notice to quit officers would work on behalf of the tenant to negotiate and engage with the landlord to maintain the tenancy, adding the need for professional, quality landlords to operate in the Private Rented Sector. In response to a specific question, he provided a definition of the term 'intentionally homeless' and the duty on the authority in such cases.

The Assistant Director for Homelessness advised that B&B accommodation was only used in exceptional cases and for no more than six weeks; however, there were circumstances when this this period was extended. He advised that the average length of stay was 25 days. He stated that different departments did work closely together such as Children's, Adults and Community Mental Health services.

The Director of Housing Operations stated that, following the meeting, he would circulate information on the Housing Strategy that described the approach to refurbishing the Council's own assets to accommodate homeless people. In regard to Registered Social Housing voids, he stated this could be attributed to issues with the supply chain; however, he acknowledged this was an issue that needed addressing. He further advised that the intention was to build upon and expand the Prevention Hubs model. In response to a question asked regarding commissioned accommodation, Members were informed that this was Housing Related Support services delivered by third party Registered Housing Providers.

The Strategic Lead for Homelessness described that the Peony Project was a project that provided supported accommodation for women with complex needs. She said this provided intensive support to enable people to move on into suitable alternative accommodation. She advised that more information would be provided in the report scheduled for the January 2023 meeting. In response to a question regarding Floating Support, she advised that this was a new model of service delivery and would be evaluated with the intention being to roll this model out more widely across the city. She reiterated the point raised earlier that homelessness prevention was everyone's responsibility and provided an example of primary care signposting people to appropriate sources of support and advice.

The Assistant Director for Homelessness paid tribute to the staff working in the homelessness teams and paid tribute to their dedication and commitment to supporting some of the most vulnerable residents in the city. He said the team collectively had a vast knowledge and experience and he was keen to listen to their suggestions as to how the service could be improved.

The Chair advised that Members would be discussing and agreeing the scope of the report scheduled for January 2023 at the rise of this meeting. She requested that the report authors liaise with both Lead Members for Race as this report was being written to ensure the points raised regarding equalities were addressed.

The Chair stated that she would write to the Secretary of State Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and invite them to visit Manchester to witness the experience of homelessness in Manchester. She further called on all Manchester MPs to lobby the Secretary of State on this issue.

Decisions

1. The Committee note the report and would be agreeing the scope of the report scheduled for January 2023 at the rise of this meeting.
2. That the Chair, in conjunction with the Deputy Leader, write to the Secretary of State Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and invite them to visit Manchester to witness the experience of homelessness in Manchester.

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services and Strategic Management Team Armed Forces Champion that introduced the Armed Forces Covenant Annual Report for 2021/22.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Noting that the report would be presented to Council;
- Providing an introduction and background;
- Information on the formation of the Armed Forces Covenant Steering Group;
- Describing that the Armed Forces Act 2021 placed new statutory duties upon councils and other statutory bodies to have due regard to the principles of the Covenant when exercising certain housing, education, or healthcare functions; and
- Next steps.

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

- The Committee welcomed the report and the progress described;
- Welcoming that the Council had achieved Gold Status from the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme due to significant progress in becoming a forces friendly employer;
- Did the other boroughs across Greater Manchester have the Gold Status;
- What was being done to support those ex-service personnel who experienced homelessness in Manchester;
- Were soldiers from the Commonwealth entitled to access the same support; and
- Welcoming that the Armed Forces had been added to the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment template to ensure all services had due regard to the impact their service had on this community.

Councillor Judge, Lead Member for the Armed Forces, spoke of his pride in the report and paid tribute to the team who had delivered this important area of work. He stated that it was a 'living' report which reflected the lived experience of ex-service men and women. He stated that he had immense pride in the Armed Forces Day each year and stated that this was very well attended in Manchester. He stated that it was his ambition to have the national Armed Forces Day event held in Manchester, and he would continue to lobby for that.

In response to the specific questions, Councillor Judge advised that eight of the ten boroughs across Greater Manchester had obtained the Gold Status from the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. He further stated that those ex-service personnel who experienced homelessness in Manchester were known to services and voluntary groups and there was regular engagement to offer support. He further advised that Commonwealth soldiers were entitled to the same support and made reference to his experience of working with a Commonwealth soldier and his family who now lived in the Help For Heroes housing scheme delivered at Canada Street. He further advised the Committee that any omitted names from war memorials could be added and if Members were aware of any such cases to contact him directly.

The Committee also heard from the Equalities Specialist Officer who spoke of his experience since leaving the Armed Forces. He further commented that the refresh of the online Armed Forces Toolkit had been important to ensure the Council provided necessary and improved information, links, and signposting for veterans, reservists, their families, and professionals working with the armed forces community.

Decision

The Committee welcome the report and support the call for the national Armed Forces Day event to be held in Manchester.

CESC/22/40 Manchester Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) that provided an update on the key findings identified in Manchester Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy (PPOSS), specifically regarding sport specific playing pitches and courts. The site-specific action plan that accompanied the strategy would remain a live document managed by the Council and partners for the lifespan of the Strategy (2022 – 2031).

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- Describing how Places for Everyone linked with the PPOSS;
- Analysis of population and housing growth to calculate likely future demand on a sport by sport and area basis;
- An update on the Manchester Capital Schools Programme (2021 – 2026);
- Information on the Manchester's Sport & Physical Activity Strategy 2019-2028, noting that this set out a vision to get all residents moving more across the life course helping to transform their health and wellbeing;
- Governance arrangements;
- Describing the vision and strategic aims;
- An update on supply and demand, and sports specific key recommendations;
- Investment opportunities; and
- Conclusions.

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

- Third generation artificial grass (3G) pitches in South and Wythenshawe areas, including plans underway for Hough End and Wythenshawe Park sites;
- The need for access to 3G pitches to be affordable to all residents;
- The need to consider all environmental implications;
- The need to work with all schools to ensure that community groups and clubs could access their pitches at weekends;
- Had population demographics been taken into consideration when devising this strategy;
- Recognising the importance of getting more Manchester residents active; and

- The need to improve 'non official' pitches in parks, by installing markings and improvements to the pitch surfaces.

The Commercial Manager (Neighbourhoods) noted that a report entitled 'Manchester Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Update and Proposed Refresh' had been considered at the Committee's September meeting and this had included consideration of affordability. She further confirmed that consideration was given to gender specific provision.

Louise Harding from MCRactive advised that demographics had been taken into consideration when devising the strategy and that the strategy would address inequalities in provision. She further advised that work was underway with the Football Association to consider the approach to pitches. Discussions were ongoing with schools regarding the issue of use of school pitches at weekends. In response to a question from the Chair regarding provision in the north of the city, she advised that she would discuss this further outside of the meeting.

The Chair asked that a written response be provided to Councillor Evans in answer to a question he had submitted regarding 3G pitches in Wythenshawe. Officers confirmed that this would be done following the meeting.

Decision

The Committee endorse the Manchester Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy.

[Councillor Ogunbambo declared a personal interest as Chair of Blackley FC]

CESC/22/41 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.

Decision

To note the report and agree the work programme.

Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 11 October 2022

Present:

Councillor Simcock (Chair) – in the Chair
Councillors Andrews, Davies, Good, Kirkpatrick and Rowles

Also present:

Councillor Craig, Leader of the Council
Councillor Rahman, Deputy Leader (Statutory)
Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Finance and Resources
Councillor Stanton, Deputy Executive Member for Finance and Resources
Randel Bryan, Executive Director and Deputy Chief Executive – Factory International

Apologies: Councillor Lanchbury, B Priest and Wheeler

RGSC/22/39 Interests

Councillor Joan Davies declared a personal interest in item 5 – Factory International.

RGSC/22/40 Minutes

Decision:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Thursday, 6 September 2022, be approved as a correct record.

RGSC/22/41 Factory International

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer and the Strategic Director of Growth and Development which provided an update on progress with the delivery of The Factory Arts Centre, progress with the redevelopment of St John's and the preparations for the opening of the building.

Key themes and points in the report included:

- Creative industries are the fastest growing sector in Manchester and the creation of Factory International will sustain and grow this vital sector as well as strengthening Manchester's reputation as a nationally and internationally important centre for culture and creativity;
- Anticipated visitor figures both in a festival year and non-festival year;
- The number of jobs provided by the development of Factory International and St John's Quarter;
- The work of The Factory Academy in providing training and skills;
- Cost pressures facing the project, despite tight management and work to preserve completion dates;

- The total forecast outturn position for the project is a shortfall of £19.7m excluding the acceleration works, additional contingencies and risks;
- The strategic principles underpinning a five-year campaign from 2021 to support projected income targets for commercial sponsorship and philanthropic support;
- Contractual arrangements between the Council and Manchester International Festival;
- Inspiring local communities is central to the vision for Factory International and a creative engagement strategy will be delivered to focus on several workstreams; and
- How Factory International will be environmentally sustainable.

Key points and queries that arose from the committee's discussions included:

- The positive benefits of the project;
- What was meant by 'management contracts';
- Requesting more information on the Kickstart scheme and whether this had started;
- Seeking reassurance that there will be no requirement for future capital expenditure increases for the project, particularly given current price uncertainties;
- Whether officers remained confident that the Factory International remained set to open in June 2023;
- If a broad prediction of income generation from sharing the naming rights to Factory International was available;
- How Factory International would be inclusive and inviting to all residents, given the current cost-of-living crisis;
- If any further requests would be made for central government funding; and
- Requesting clarification on the breakdown of costs that the additional £25 million would be spent on.

The Director of Capital Programmes explained that management contracts consisted of the main contractor acting as an agent for the employer and has responsibility for entering into individual supply chain contracts on the employers behalf as opposed to undertaking construction themselves. The contractor would advise on the programme and costs and manage individual contracts. In this instance, a contractor would have no input into design and the Council employs a separate design team.

The Executive Director of Factory International explained that the Kickstart programme reflected Factory International's continued commitment to providing access for those traditionally socially and culturally excluded from the arts. It will provide hands-on experience and improve confidence needed to get jobs within the cultural sector.

Factory Academy was highlighted as being central to the work of Factory International and has ran for a number of years. Apprenticeships, traineeships and other opportunities were also offered.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer acknowledged that the volatility of the current economic climate meant that they were unable to guarantee there would be no further requests for increased expenditure for the project but advised members that final cost estimates were stable.

Officers were also confident that Factory International would meet its target completion date of June 2023 and members were advised that the Council and partners endeavoured to accelerate works to ensure comfort around the target date.

Much of the committee's discussion focused on naming rights. The Executive Director of Factory International informed members that an initial independent analysis had been undertaken to survey similar venues which have previously secured sponsorship to provide an accurate assessment of the value of naming rights. The valuation for Factory International amounted to £25 million. Market challenges were acknowledged but were not anticipated to impact fundraising ambitions.

Advanced conversations with leading brands for naming rights had taken place and were being developed. Members were advised that this would be a long-term collaboration and Factory International would seek to meet and exceed its fundraising target through naming rights.

The Statutory Deputy Leader also assured members that he sits on two Ethics Committees – one for Manchester International Festival and one for the Council – which scrutinises potential sponsorship partners to ensure they are appropriate and relevant.

In response to a query regarding how Factory International would appeal to different communities and interests, particularly given the current cost-of-living crisis, the Executive Director of Factory International explained that a broad programme of music, commercial events and free public events would be offered to cater for all interests.

There were also initiatives such as £10 or less tickets for main artistic experiences and consideration was being given to how the space could be used by the public and community groups during the day at low or no cost.

The Leader of the Council explained that the Council had worked closely with the Arts Council and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) and the Minister for Culture had attended the launch of the programme. Members were also advised that whilst there was currently no indication of additional government funding, the Council would consistently endeavour to secure funding for all cultural programmes.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer advised that the report outlined the reasons for all cost increases since the project commenced, including the additional £25 million required. This could be split into work package commitments and the works programme, which are confirmed, and the potential costs until project completion.

In summarising the discussion the Chair emphasised the positive aspects of the project. However, he also noted that there had been a number of previous requests for additional funding and that since the NTP there had been significant and expensive changes to the design. He expressed the hope that there would be no further requests for additional funding and that the building would open on time in 2023.

Decision:

That the Committee

1. notes the report and
2. endorses the recommendations being made to the Executive.

RGSC/22/42 Our Town Hall Progress Update

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer which provided an update on the refurbishment and partial restoration of the Town Hall and Albert Square under the Our Town Hall (OTH) project.

Key themes and points in the report included:

- Increase from 74% to 90% cost surety of the project at the end of June 2022;
- Acknowledgement of a very challenging period for the construction industry;
- The Date for completion (25 June 2024) is under review following a series of delay claims from contractors;
- The project cost plan for construction is reporting within budget, but significant risk pressures have arose in the period since Notice to Proceed (NTP), such as the conflict in Ukraine, energy prices and labour and material shortages;
- Progress made with Social Value, with a number of the project's Social Value KPIs already over-delivered;
- The project has been recognised as an exemplar model of construction industry best practice that is delivering first rate quality, opportunities for the people of Manchester and is respectful of the environmental impact construction can have on neighbouring businesses;
- Work under way to develop the operating model for the building, including revenue costs and planned occupants; and
- The Mitigation Action Plan 2021-22 and its focus and outcomes.

Key points and queries that arose from the committee's discussions included:

- How baseline targets for local labour and spend were formulated;
- How the number of apprentices who are Manchester residents could be increased;
- Commending the social value work of the project;
- The current volatility of the construction industry, and how confident officers were that the project could overcome these pressures;

- Plans to showcase the heritage assets within the Town Hall and whether these would be accessible to the public;
- Increasing publicity of the project and works;
- Welcoming the partial reopening of Albert Square, and what the ongoing maintenance arrangements would be;
- Whether the Sculpture Hall inside the Town Hall would be reopened to the public and whether the names of recent Lord Mayors would be incorporated;
- How confident officers were that no further budget increases would be required;
- Whether the project was on-track for completion in 2024;
- Requesting an update on the nesting falcons found in the Town Hall; and
- Clarification on what was meant by the '*Monte Carlo simulation*'.

The Project Director explained that 6-8 months of market testing and a tender engagement process with two shortlisted bidders had been undertaken to test which contractor could provide best value and meet the key performance indicators (KPIs) for local labour and spend. Members were informed that the KPIs were significantly better than anticipated prior to the procurement process.

In response to a query regarding increasing the number of apprentices who are Manchester residents, it was explained that £28 million-worth of works were still to be procured and a social value clause is included in every contract with contractors held to account on this. This would help to increase the number of locally-based apprentices working on the Our Town Hall project.

The Project Director acknowledged that the project was halfway to completion and that a number of things were driving volatility but the project was progressively working towards a level of surety and confidence.

Members were advised that an inventory of heritage assets in the Town Hall had been recorded prior to the works commencing and many of these, such as paintings and furniture, were being stored safely or under conservation and restoration and would be returned to the Town Hall upon its reopening. These would be located around the building and in spaces that are accessible on a day-to-day basis. A visitor experience was also planned for the Town Hall to showcase many exhibits and the history of the building.

The Statutory Deputy Leader highlighted that the Town Hall was the civic heart of Manchester and that the Council had a duty to preserve this and ensure it is accessible to residents.

The Project Director acknowledged the opportunity for more publicity of the project but explained that it could be difficult to communicate with certain communities. As the project progressed, planning was underway for the launch and reopening of the Town Hall and this would increase the amount of publicity.

With regards to the maintenance of Albert Square, Members were advised that there are plans for tree-planting at the appropriate time and installation of street furniture and lighting. A maintenance schedule had been devised for hard finishes and drainage and this forms part of the Council's planning for overall maintenance costs

for the Town Hall and Albert Square. No solution had been found to alleviate damage to statues caused by skateboarding but the project team continued to look into this.

Assurances were provided that the only traffic entering the Square would be pre-booked deliveries for businesses and the Town Hall and construction vehicles for events in the Square, such as the Christmas Markets with access and egress controlled.

The Project Director advised the committee that officers have been prudent in identifying potential risks and have assigned financial allowances for contingencies.

It was explained that the *Monte Carlo* simulation is a computer programme that runs 10,000 simulations ranging from low-probability to absolute certainty for individual risks. This then provides cost figures for completion if the unfactored value of 100% of risk is realised and when factored for a more likely position. The Project Director provided assurances that it would be highly unlikely that 100% of risk would be realised.

The Project Director advised that nesting falcons are a protected species and that all work had ceased upon discovery. Access was secured to prevent future nesting and the building was covered in scaffolding and a wrap.

It was confirmed that the project would be delayed beyond June 2024 but it was not yet known when this would be delayed until. Work had been undertaken to mitigate embedded delays and this had been reduced by three months already with officers hopeful of reducing further.

The Statutory Deputy Leader expressed his thanks to officers for their work on the project.

Decision:

That the Committee

1. notes the report;
2. requests that a report on maintenance schedules for public realms be brought to a future meeting; and
3. requests that a further update on the Our Town Hall project be provided in 12 months.

RGSC/22/43 ICT and Digital Strategy

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer which provided an update on the development of the ICT and Digital Strategy.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- The ICT and Digital Strategy and technology road map are important in the delivery of council priorities to make sure that investment is prioritised and that infrastructure is robust and secure;
- How the Strategy would enable delivery of the next phase of the Future Shape of the Council programme such as
 - Delivering an improved service to our residents and businesses through an implementation of a new Customer relationship Management (CRM) system and website through the Resident and Business Digital Experience Programme.
 - The replacement of the council's main Finance, Procurement and Human Resources system (SAP) which will be at end of life in 2027.
 - Moving away from our current data centres to a hybrid cloud approach
 - Further embedding the systems and processes from the old Northwards Housing organisation into Housing Operations.
- Feedback from consultation undertaken with service users, Directorates and member panels;
- The role of the ICT and Digital Design Authority Board in the implementation of the strategy, its membership and terms of reference; and
- The development of the ICT & Digital Future Operating Model.

The Universal Technology Programme Manager also provided a presentation on the End User Device project at the meeting, which highlighted objectives, outcomes delivered to date, the type of devices deployed and carbon savings.

Key points and queries that arose from the committee's discussion included:

- Commending the comprehensive and well-written report;
- How users are embedded into the project and whether this is stakeholder-led;
- The Digital and ICT Design Authority Board, and whether the Council had considered a more decentralised structure to reduce risk;
- Whether the Strategy would be '*project management-based*' or '*project-based*';
- How the Strategy would reduce carbon output; and
- Device security, and whether increased use of laptops and hybrid working practices would lead to higher risks of data breaches.

The Director of ICT informed members that stakeholder engagement would differ between projects and some would involve consulting with residents. The roll-out of Office 365, which was an internal system, was cited as a positive example of stakeholders with officers and members involved at the earliest opportunity.

The Director of ICT confirmed that the Digital and ICT Design Authority Board was a centralised group and there was no current intention to consider a decentralised approach. It was explained that a centralised approach would help to prioritise and identify areas across the Council service for investment.

In response to whether the projects within the Strategy would be '*project management-based*' or '*project-based*', members were advised that large-scale programmes would be run as projects with an established process for undertaking

these. Product owners would also be identified to own the entire lifecycle and to manage implementation and assess benefits.

The presentation provided by the Universal Technology Programme Manager highlighted that all equipment rolled out as part of the End User Device project was modern and future-proofed to meet or exceed current requirements.

New computer monitors rolled out as part of the End User Device project would help to reduce carbon output by using detection software to dim or switch off when a user was not present. The new monitors also used half the amount of power compared to previous infrastructure.

The Universal Technology Programme Manager explained that these improvements would save 63 tonnes of CO² per year.

Members were advised that all computers are encrypted and an internet connection is required to access any data and files on the Council's network, which mitigated the risk of data breaches if the equipment was lost or stolen.

Assurances were also provided that there had not been any increase in incidents of theft or loss of equipment or any increase in risk or threat of data breaches since the increase of home and hybrid working practices. Officers were provided with locks to secure devices to desks and access to lockers in the Council's offices. Safe bags were also provided to carry equipment to and from the workplace.

Although officers have a personal responsibility to look after Council-owned equipment, it was reiterated that they should surrender the device if they are threatened or at harm.

The Deputy Executive Member for Finance and Resources commented that the Council takes cybersecurity extremely seriously.

Decision:

That the report be noted.

RGSC/22/44 Resident and Business Digital Experience Programme (RBDxP)

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer which provided an update on the Resident and Business Digital Experience Programme (RBDxP).

The key points and themes within the report included:

- RBDxP forms part of the Future Shape transformation programme which aims to enable the Council to be in the best possible shape to deliver its ambitions whilst meeting external challenges as a result of budget pressures;
- RBDxP will see the replacement of the existing customer relationship management system, content management system (website) and integration layer in one single integrated platform;

- The works will allow the Council's front-facing systems to interact to the benefit of residents and businesses;
- 3 core user groups have been devised, made up of service users, residents and businesses, to help design digital services, support implementation and ensure that solutions meet user requirements and accessibility needs;
- Key progress of the programme to date; and
- Next steps and an indicative implementation plan.

The Programme Manager also provided a presentation at the meeting, which highlighted objectives, examples of improvements, progress to date, the engagement approach and next steps.

Key points and queries that arose from the committee's discussion included:

- Reiterating the importance of co-designing the system with users;
- How the new system would improve usability and what benefits it will provide residents;
- The work that core user groups would be involved in and what this would entail;
- How the Council could reduce the number of digitally-excluded residents; and
- Welcoming the Technology and Implementation Partner which the Council has contracted to support the programme; and
- Whether the Council was confident that the Technology and Implementation Partner was a suitably sized organisation to work with.

The Programme Manager acknowledged that the current services were fragmented and users had to login multiple times to reach Council services. RBDxP would create a single system for data to be held in and this would allow future works to offer richer services to residents and business and to identify trends in what services customers are accessing through the Council's website. It would also enable the Council to react quicker to changes.

The Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Service explained that feedback from engagement sessions with members and residents had been incorporated into the aims of RBDxP. Suggestions which the Council was looking to enable included uploading photographs when reporting issues and reporting on behalf of someone else and being informed of outcomes.

The Deputy Member for Finance and Resources also advised that the programme would enable the growth of the Council's in-house digital expertise.

In response to a query regarding the work of the core user groups and what this would entail, members were informed that respective Neighbourhood Area Managers would advise members in their neighbourhood meetings on what this work involved.

The Digital Social Inclusion Lead informed the Committee that there was an estimated decrease in the number of digitally-excluded residents since 2019 but a widening skills gap was acknowledged. The Digital Social Inclusion team was working closely with the ICT team to ensure that service design meets the needs of those digitally-excluded.

The Digital Social Inclusion Lead also expressed a desire to work with voluntary and community sector organisations to help those who are less likely to seek out digital inclusion opportunities.

It was also highlighted that RBDxP would improve service delivery through traditional routes and channels such as telephony as a result of staff delivering services via these channels using the new and improved technology introduced as part of the programme. A recent example of new technology improving service provision through the telephony access channel was the option to request a call back from the customer service centre without having to wait on the line.

The Programme Manager expressed confidence that the Technology and Implementation Partner organisation was suitably sized to work with the Council and that this allows them to meet the needs of Manchester City Council compared to other, larger tenders who were inflexible to the Council's requirements.

The Deputy Executive Member for Finance and Resources expressed his thanks to the presenting officers and to those in the customer service centre who provide advice and help for Manchester residents.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources commented that ICT is one of the Council's most complex services which undertakes transformative work to provide residents and businesses with a seamless digital experience. He expressed his thanks to the Deputy Executive Member and officers and wished them luck with the further rollout of the programme.

Decision:

That the report be noted.

RGSC/22/45 Budget Process and Revenue Budget Update 2023/24 to 2025/26

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer which provided a summary of the impact on revenue budget position following recent government announcements and the proposed budget process for the update of the Medium-Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy.

The key points and themes within the report included:

- An overview of government's recent budget announcements;
- Expectations of the government's Medium-Term Fiscal Plan, which is scheduled to be announced on or around 23 November 2022;
- The deferral of the Spending Review (SR) and indications that the Fair Funding review of how local government funding is allocated will not happen during the current SR period;
- The unlikelihood that there will be resources to cover the cost of the inflationary increases and pay awards which amounts to an additional £42 million to be funded for Manchester City Council;

- The Adult Social Care Discharge Fund, which can be used flexibly by local health and care systems to improve pathways for people to leave hospital when they are ready;
- A part year cost reduction in 2022/23 of £0.6 million as a result of no longer requiring the £1.5 million which was added to directorate budgets to fund the employer contribution to National Insurance due to reductions in this;
- The impact of the energy price cap on the Council's utilities contracts is being assessed but initial indications are that this will reduce the 2022/23 electricity costs by an estimated £2.4 million; and
- A full budget update and an overview of the savings and cuts options under development will be presented to the Resources and Scrutiny Committee on 8 November 2022.

The key points and queries that arose from the committee's discussion included:

- Recognising the announcement of the government's Medium-Term Financial Statement has been brought forward, and
- Commending officers for their work in extremely challenging circumstances.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources commented that the Council would continue to lobby government for fair funding for local authorities. This was vital to the delivery of services and to protecting the most vulnerable members of society.

It was also stated that 1-year Government Finance Settlements did not provide certainty and prevented forward planning.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer stated that the Council's budget process would continue as planned and it was likely that further options for budgetary cuts would have to be considered.

It was also anticipated that the Government Finance Settlement would be received later than usual.

In summarising, the Chair wished officers luck going forwards.

Decision:

That the report be noted.

RGSC/22/46 Overview Report

The Committee considered the report by the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which provided details of key decisions that fall within the Committee's remit and an update on actions resulting from the Committee's recommendations. The report also included the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to amend as appropriate and agree.

Decision:

That the Committee note the report and agree the work programme.

Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 8 November 2022

Present:

Councillor Simcock (Chair) – in the Chair
Councillors Andrews, Davies, Good, Kirkpatrick, Lanchbury, B Priest, Rowles and Wheeler

Also present:

Councillor Craig, Leader of the Council
Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Finance and Resources
Councillor Stanton, Deputy Executive Member for Finance and Resources
Councillor Reid
Councillor Russell

RGSC/22/47 [14.00-14.05] Minutes

Decision:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Tuesday, 11 October 2022, be approved as a correct record.

RGSC/22/48 [14.05-14.50] Workforce Equality Strategy Implementation Update

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation which provided an update on progress to date to increase diversity, to ensure the Council is an inclusive employer and to challenge discrimination.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- The context and background to the development of the Workforce Equality Strategy;
- How the Council had created a more diverse workforce at all levels by developing existing staff and opening opportunities out to Manchester residents through:
 - The Leadership Pathway Programme
 - Apprenticeships
 - Work experience
 - Involvement in career fairs across schools, colleges, universities and within the community;
- Engagement and communications on the Strategy;
- The development and embedding of the Our Manchester fifth behaviour (OM5B), which reinforces the Council's commitment to being an equal, inclusive, and fair organisation;
- Staff attendance at Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)-related training;

- Works to transform the ways in which the Council recruits and selects, including:
 - Procuring and implementing a new Applicant Tracking System, which will be more intuitive and easier for managers and applicants to use and will provide the data needed to plan improvements;
 - Improvements to recruitment processes;
 - Requesting that all selection panels are diverse in terms of gender and race; and
 - Creating a new website and developing a more compelling and appealing brand for the City Council as an employer.
- Progress and feedback from staff networks, equality champions and allies;
- Setting and monitoring targets across a range of measures;
- Workplace adjustments and trans inclusion; and
- New and existing policies and the Policy Forward Plan for the next 12 months.

A number of guests from the Council's Leadership Pathways Programme, Diverse Panels, Women's Equality Network, Pregnancy & Parenting Group, Neurodiverse Employees Group and the Race Equality Network Assurance Working Party attended the meeting and shared their experiences and achievements.

Key points and queries which arose from the Committee's discussion included:

- Expressing thanks to the guests who attended to share their experiences;
- Acknowledging potential implications from the Retained EU Law Bill, where EU derived law will expire on 31/12/2023 unless the government retains it;
- Whether some of the rights and protections identified in staff contracts would be revoked upon the expiry of the Retained EU Law Bill;
- Concern over some testimonials, particularly from female employees who felt they needed to take annual leave rather than sick leave for women's health reasons;
- Inconsistencies in managers' approaches to and understanding of equalities and how this could be resolved;
- Requesting that a future update report includes reference to the work and progress made by senior and middle managers to implement the Strategy;
- Noting the progress made on diverse interview panels, and querying what could be done to increase the number of these;
- Whether staff still self-define their equalities information;
- Recognising an increase in the number of disabled employees, and querying whether this was due to the Council proactively hiring more disabled people or current employees receiving a disability diagnosis during their employment;
- The need to raise understanding and awareness of a father's role and caring responsibility, particularly in male-dominated teams;
- Commending the Menopause Policy, but acknowledging a need to continue raising awareness and to address period-shaming;
- Whether the Council specifically recruits care-leavers;
- Requesting that a future update report examines progress to date against the schedule of actions from 2021/22; and
- The need to have a series of measures to track progress.

The Chair opened discussion on the item by thanking guests for their attendance and presentations.

The Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation (HRODT) explained that nearly all of the Council's policies are embedded into employment contracts. The Council would be unable to vary these without employee consent and trade union agreement.

It was explained that employment contracts were based on English employment law and a set of terms and conditions, known as the 'Green Book', which are negotiated nationally through collective bargaining arrangements with the National Joint Council (NJC).

The Talent and Diversity Lead acknowledged the need for managers to be consistent in their approach to and understanding of equalities but that there also needed to be understanding and confidence. He acknowledged that some work was needed around supporting managers, being clear around unacceptable behaviour and what was expected of managers.

The Director of HRODT emphasised that there was not a 'one size fits all' approach to achieving consistency amongst managers. The new Our Manchester fifth behaviour - '*We show that we value our differences and treat people fairly*' – was important in raising expectations of staff and work was underway on identifying expectations of managers.

In response to a query regarding how the Council could increase the number of diverse interview panels, the Talent and Diversity Lead suggested that more could be done to highlight the purpose and importance of diverse panels and how these help the Council's decision-making processes.

Early discussions had been held with trade unions regarding the Council's recruitment and selection policy, which would enshrine the mandate for diverse panels, and this would be considered by Personnel Committee in the future. A new learning and development course would also be launched for managers who recruit, which the Director of HRODT hoped would help to embed understanding of the need for and advantages of diverse panels.

The Director of HRODT commented that many employees had found participating on a diverse recruitment panel hugely beneficial.

Reassurances were provided that the work over the past 12 months had tried to build understanding, buy-in and commitment and that this was essential to continue making progress.

In response to a query regarding whether staff still self-define their equalities information, the Director of HRODT advised that work had been undertaken to change the categories for those self-declaring their race, ethnicity and other equalities information because many of the previous categories were not felt to be correct. It was confirmed that staff could self-declare their equality information online and that this was confidential.

Officers were currently unable to assess whether the increase in the number of disabled employees was due to the Council proactively hiring more disabled people or current employees receiving a disability diagnosis during their employment. It was explained that the new recruitment system would be able to track different groups and how they progress through the recruitment process.

The Talent and Diversity Lead also clarified that the Employee Equality Networks individually define their membership criteria and not the HROD team.

The Director of HRODT acknowledged that a lack of understanding and awareness of a father's role and caring responsibility was a societal issue and that HROD would address individual examples on a case-by-case basis.

Members were also informed that the Council has an interview guarantee scheme for care-leavers, disabled people, and those leaving the armed forces. Statistics on the number of guaranteed interviews which have been held would be provided outside the meeting.

The Director of HRODT highlighted that progress was being made against the 2021/22 schedule and the team assessed this monthly. There was a range of measures in the Strategy, the majority of which are tracked, and a future update report could examine progress to date against the schedule of actions from 2021/22.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer commented that it was important for the Council to encourage staff to be able and feel comfortable to express their views in order to make the necessary changes and progress.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources thanked officers for the report and their work and expressed his gratitude to the guest speakers for their attendance and their honest, powerful and brave testimonies. He stated his belief that a talented and diverse workforce was essential for the Council to reflect the city's population and to provide better services for residents.

He welcomed the challenge from the Committee and highlighted the Council's journey since the Independent Race Review in 2019. It was important not to lose sight of this work as the country faced another period of austerity.

Decision:

That

1. the report and progress to date be noted and
2. the Committee requests the next update on the implementation of the Workforce Equalities Strategy examines the work of middle and senior management in achieving the priorities outlined in the Strategy.

RGSC/22/49 [14.50-15.20] Update on Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation which outlined the Council's progress on delivering the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, the impact of the pandemic on the workforce and to the delivery of the strategy. The report also set out a plan to review the strategy and provided an insight into the Council's sickness absence rates.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Promoting and supporting employee wellbeing is a key workforce priority for the Council;
- The Strategy is split into two thematic areas; '*high quality working life*' and '*mentally and physically healthy people*';
- The impact of COVID-19 on the delivery of the Strategy, and how the Council protected the health and safety of the workforce whilst continuing to deliver services to Manchester residents;
- The achievements of the Strategy to date;
- Improving the financial wellbeing offer for staff is a key priority in the context of the cost-of-living crisis with the Council providing access to financial education programmes, counselling, debt management, affordable borrowing, salary advances and a meaningful staff benefit package;
- How the Strategy will be reviewed through a model of best practice, staff engagement and workforce intelligence;
- 93,296 days were lost due to sickness absence in 2022, 27.4% of which were due to stress/depression and 13.5% due to Covid-19;
- Adults, Neighbourhoods and Children's Services have the highest levels of sickness;
- Mixed/multiple ethnic employees have the highest sickness absence rates of all ethnicities and employees aged over 50 have the highest sickness absence rates.
- Female staff also have higher sickness absence rates than males; and
- The Management Attendance Policy and role of HR in managing attendance.

Key points and queries that arose from the Committee's discussion included:

- Whether remote working had improved employees work-life balances;
- How many employees worked fully remotely and whether the Council would ever offer fully-remote working contracts;
- The Council's expectation that staff work from the office for half of the week, and whether this was operationally-led;
- The process for employees reapplying for flexible working if their initial request is denied;
- How consistency on flexible and remote working requests is managed between services;
- Whether the staff survey included sections on health and wellbeing and flexible working; and
- The significance of disability on absence and sickness rates; and
- A lack of statistics within the report related to the number of sickness days caused by disability; and

- What data the Council had on Return-to-Work meetings and the impact these had on recurrent sickness absence.

The Head of Workforce Strategy explained that the Health and Wellbeing Strategy was developed in 2018 based on the Council's understanding of the challenges faced by the workforce at that time. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the workforce and delivery of the Strategy was highlighted and this was reflected in some of the sickness absence rates.

Some key achievements arising from the delivery of the Strategy to date included membership of the Good Employment Charter, the development of a Menopause Policy, the roll-out of Leadership and Development Programmes and a Mental Health First Aid programme.

The Head of Workforce Strategy also advised the Committee that the Council had improved its financial wellbeing offer to support staff with the cost-of-living crisis.

A review of the Strategy would be undertaken soon and would be informed by workforce engagement and sickness absence trends.

In response to queries around remote and hybrid working, the Head of Workforce Strategy explained that sickness absence rates decreased during the pandemic when some employees worked from home.

The Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation (HRODT) explained that both currently and throughout the pandemic, approximately 50% of the staff worked from the workplace due to the nature of their role. It was confirmed that approximately 20-30 employees were permitted to work from home fully due to either medical conditions or the nature of their work, although they were required to physically attend team meetings.

Members were advised that the approach to hybrid working and office presence was both operationally-led, in that managers examined the nature of their workforce and the work they do, and the benefits of working in the office on team-building and socialisation.

The City Solicitor provided an example of how lawyers within the Children and Families Legal Group often benefitted from working from home whilst attending virtual court hearings, as this provided a level of quietness and confidentiality and allowed better focus. She explained that the operational element of working and the needs of the service and staff were key.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer advised that the expectation for staff to work in the office 50% of their working week was a rule-of-thumb and that staff often felt differently about working practices. Some roles were difficult to recruit as candidates often wanted to work from home.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer commented that the Council needed to support staff to work well, regardless of their location, but there needed to be a

connection between the workforce and workplace. It was her preference that team meetings and 1-2-1s were held in person.

In response to a query around the process for employees reapplying for flexible working if their initial request is denied, the Head of Workforce Strategy informed the Committee that a rejected application could be appealed to a senior manager within the service and that if new information or changes to circumstances had arisen, a new application could be submitted.

The Head of Workforce Strategy acknowledged issues around consistency in approving flexible working requests but commented that HR can provide support where applications are shared with them. Understanding and awareness of flexible and home working needed to be increased and a record of all approved requests was maintained. Figures on the number of flexible working requests that were approved could be provided following the meeting.

Members were also advised that there was a focus on health and wellbeing within the 2022 staff survey to understand the impact of work on this and these findings would be built into the Strategy.

The figures for Return-to-Work meetings were included in the HR Dashboard and shared monthly with Directorate Management Teams. Assurances were provided that HR Business Partners worked with Heads of Service in areas with high sickness absence rates and low Return-to-Work completion rates to understand patterns and impacts and how improvements could be made.

It was acknowledged that more work could and would be undertaken to address the equality impact of sickness absence. It was also confirmed that statistics related to the number of sickness days caused by disability were available and could be provided following the meeting.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources took the opportunity to thank officers for their work on the Strategy. He recognised the need for the Strategy to benefit all Council employees and stated his belief that staff were the Council's biggest asset and that every employee should be able to fulfil their potential, develop their career and provide the most effective service for residents.

Decision:

That the report and progress to date be noted.

RGSC/22/50 [15.20-15.50] Revenue Budget Update

In introducing the item, the Chair proposed to take items 7 and 8 together.

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which outlined the priorities for the services in the remit of the Committee and detailed the initial revenue budget changes proposed by officers.

Key points and themes within the Revenue Budget Update report included:

- The Council is forecasting an estimated budget shortfall of £44 million in 2023/24, £85 million in 2024/25, and £112 million by 2025/26;
- After the use of circa £16 million smoothing reserves in each of the three years, the estimated budget shortfall reduces to £28 million in 2023/24, £69 million in 2024/25 and £96 million by 2025/26;
- There remained a budget gap of £7 million to close to get to a balanced budget in 2023/24 despite proposals outlined in the report;
- The Council's 2023/24 funding from central government will be confirmed in the provisional finance settlement, expected late in December 2022;
- Increases in interest rates will have a significant impact on the cost of borrowing and the ability to support the future capital programme;
- The Council's robust reserves strategy has proven successful in managing risk and timing differences to deliver balanced and sustainable budgets and provide the time necessary to deliver on its planned savings
- The anticipated reduction in usable earmarked reserves over the next four years to under £100 million;
- Resources required as a result of inflationary pressures, service pressures and the reversal of the 1.25% National Insurance increase;
- Investment in anti-poverty measures, amounting to £1.8m in 2022/23 and £3.55m in 2023/24;
- Progress on identifying savings and cuts options;
- Public consultation on proposed Council Tax levels and the savings and cuts measures put forward by officers will take place between November 2022 and January 2023; and
- Next steps for the budget process.

Key points and queries which arose from the Committee's discussion included:

- Acknowledging that £24 million had been reincorporated into the budget position from business rates, and queried why this was not reflected for subsequent years;
- Whether there was any indication that the business rates pilot scheme was to continue;
- If the staff pay award had been agreed and whether this was more than budgeted for;
- The financial position of the Council if the period of austerity between 2010 and 2019 had not occurred;
- Whether it could be assumed that there would be no budget gap around gas inflation from 2024/25 onwards, given the volatility of energy prices;
- The cumulative effect of budget cuts year-on-year was powerful;
- The need to make more assumptions due to delays from government and the instability this causes;
- How the government's mini budget in October 2022 impacted the Council's borrowing costs; and
- Commending the Council on continuing to fund and support the welfare support budget and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCSE).

The Deputy City Treasurer explained that the business rates pilot was due to end and had been removed from forward budget assumptions. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities had strongly indicated that the pilot scheme was unlikely to end next year and £12 million had been factored into the budget assumption for this.

Members were informed that the Council had collected more money from business rates last year than anticipated. This could only be spent in arrears and £12.649 million had been factored into the forecast business rates surplus for 2023/24

The Deputy City Treasurer explained that the government was intending to review the business rates pilot as it reviewed business rates more generally and had suggested the possibility of changing the baseline of the percentage of rates which councils could keep, which could detrimentally impact the Council's budget if increased. This was unlikely to change for 2023/24 due to delays to business rates reform and receiving the Finance Settlement.

The Deputy City Treasurer confirmed that the staff pay award had been agreed and was a flat increase of £1,925 for all employees, except the Chief Executive and craft workers, regardless of their position on their pay grade. Members were also advised that a 4% salary increase had been forecasted for subsequent years, compared to 2% usually budgeted for.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources acknowledged that Manchester City Council was a well-managed and financially-responsible authority and stated that the fault was the direct result of ideological decisions taken by the government over the previous decade. He explained that the Council's budget had been unfairly cut by £428 million since 2010/11 and that if Manchester had received the average cuts to funding the city council budget would be £77 million per year better off.

Members were informed that the problem was not solely experienced by Labour Councils and there was a £3 billion shortfall and gap for local authorities across the country next year. A recent survey conducted by Grant Thornton found that 1 in 6 councils would run out of money in 2023/24.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources provided assurances that the Council would continue to provide fundamental services for residents and focus on priorities which residents want. He called on the government to support councils during this period to enable them to continue providing essential services, driving local economic growth and support the most vulnerable in our communities.

In response to a query around gas inflation, the Deputy City Treasurer explained that the Council had been prudent in its assumptions, prices had fallen since the contract was entered into and it was anticipated that energy prices would reduce from the peak levels seen as the economy went into recession.

The Committee was also informed that interest rates had stabilised upon the current Prime Minister going into office and there was sufficient funding capacity within the capital financing budgets to fund the current programme. However, it was

acknowledged that there would be an impact on funding future programmes. It was difficult to predict the impact on future years' given current uncertainty.

The Leader of the Council reiterated that this was the most unpredictable financial year which the Council had faced in a considerable amount of time. She stated that there had been an intentional and ideological approach to the role and services of local authorities from the central government, which did not match with the support provided by local authorities during the pandemic. She reiterated that budget pressures were felt by local authorities across the country, regardless of political leadership, and asked that central government matched inflationary pressures and included inflationary uplifts in addition to a flat funding figure, which would enable local authorities to protect services.

The Leader of the Council also thanked staff for identifying savings in a thoughtful and considerate way which minimised the risk of impacting residents' lives, which the Executive Member for Finance and Resources and the Chair echoed.

Decision:

That the report be noted.

RGSC/22/51 [15.20-15.50] Corporate Core Budget Proposal 2023/24

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, the City Solicitor and the Assistant Chief Executive, which outlined the priorities for the services in the remit of this committee and detailed the initial revenue budget changes proposed by officers.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The Council needed to identify savings/cuts/cost avoidance of over £100 million over the next three years;
- The Corporate Core is made up of Chief Executives and Corporate Services and has a gross budget of circa £329 million and a net budget of circa £79.8 million and employs over 2,000 Full-Time Employees (FTE);
- Traded services within Operations and Commissioning are also within the remit of the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee, and have a gross budget of £22.2 million, a net credit budget of £14.4 million and 126 employees;
- Core budget savings will be delivered through a combination of:
 - Transformation delivered through the Future Shape Programme.
 - Review of workforce structures and capacity
 - Good housekeeping and delivery of efficiencies.
 - Delivering a corporate programme of work on ensuring the basics are right, sound and competitive procurement, approach to managing inflation, ensuring income budgets are maximised and charges appropriate.
- Further budget savings and efficiencies made up £300k additional income generation and £3.29 million efficiencies;
- Budget pressures and workforce implications; and

- Future opportunities and risks.

The Committee discussed this report with item 7 – Revenue Budget Update.

RGSC/22/52 [15.50-16.00] Overview Report

The Committee considered the report by the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which provided details of key decisions that fell within the Committee's remit and the Committee's work programme, which was to be amended as appropriate and agreed.

An update was requested on the progress of a previous recommendation that a Major Contracts Oversight Board be established. It was confirmed that the Board was due to hold its first meeting at the end of November 2022.

The Chair also requested that a report on the Council's Complaints Policy be added to the Committee's work programme.

Decision:

That the report be noted and the work programme agreed and amended to include a report on the Complaints Policy.

Health Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2022

Present:

Councillor Green – in the Chair

Councillors N.Ali, Appleby, Bayunu, Curley, Karney, Newman, Reeves, Riasat, Richards and Russell

Also present:

Councillor T. Robinson, Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care

Councillor White, Executive Member for Employment and Development

Professor Sir Michael Marmot, Institute of Health Equity (virtually)

Andrew Maloney, Deputy Chief Executive, Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust

Guy Cresswell, Executive Director, Great Places Housing Group (virtually)

HSC/22/39 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2022 as a correct record.

HSC/22/40 Making Manchester Fairer: Tackling Health Inequalities in Manchester 2022-2027

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Public Health that provided an update on the work of the Making Manchester Fairer Task Group.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Making Manchester Fairer 2022-27 described the actions that the city would take to reduce inequalities, with a focus on the social determinants of health;
- The Making Manchester Fairer Action Plan would be launched for staff within the wider population health system at The Making Manchester Fairer Conference on Monday 31 October 2022;
- The final version would be accompanied by a communications campaign;
- Providing a summary of themes, plans and key actions;
- Information on the Kickstarters, four schemes that could be implemented quickly to give the plan momentum;
- Information on the Making Manchester Fairer Task Group and Network, noting that they would have oversight of the collective development and delivery of the plan;
- The agreed mechanism to undertake the evaluation and monitoring of the plan;
- The approach to workforce engagement;
- The approach to resident and community involvement; and
- Providing a selection of case studies.

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

- Welcoming the report and recognising the important work that was being delivered on behalf of the residents of the city to address health inequalities;
- Condemning the Government for failing to address health inequalities;
- Calling for a coalition of voices, hosted in Manchester to challenge the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on this issue;
- Noting that in New Zealand, the Prime Minister had challenged all policy makers to address health and wellbeing in all their decision making;
- Welcoming the inclusion of businesses in the work to address health inequalities and recognising the relationship between good employment and health outcomes; and
- Noting the good work provided by the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise sector, however noting that they would need to be supported to change and adapt to the cost-of-living crisis.

The Committee heard from Professor Sir Michael Marmot, Institute of Health Equity. He reiterated the stark health outcomes and inequalities experienced by Manchester residents and how Covid had exacerbated and further highlighted these. He stated that health inequalities had been subject to three significant factors, namely austerity, the pandemic and now the cost-of-living crisis. He stated that currently there was no indication from government that they were seeking to address health inequalities and were following ideological economic policies rather than the overwhelming evidence, adding that this was ultimately dangerous for the health of the population.

Professor Sir Michael Marmot commented on the progress and approach adopted in Manchester adding that this experience was used as an exemplar model, and that other regions, particularly in the North East were keen to develop similar plans to address health inequalities. He said that as more regions adopted this evidence-based model it would provide leverage to persuade the government to engage seriously on this issue. He stated that he would support the call for a coalition of voices that brought together all partners and different regions to then invite the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to listen to the case for addressing health inequalities. He suggested this could involve the Mayor of Greater Manchester and the Universities.

Professor Sir Michael Marmot welcomed the insightful contribution from the Deputy Director of Public Health to recent discussions at an Advisory Board on the issue of structural racism. He stated that this Board had provided a clear steer for the need for a detailed understanding of this issue, and the importance of doing this 'with' communities affected by racism.

In response to comments raised by a Member in regard to health inequalities experienced by older residents, he acknowledged this and stated that he fully supported any activity to address this. He commented that it was evidenced that social isolation was as harmful to health outcomes as smoking cigarettes. In response to a Member's comment regarding the impact of damp homes on people's health, particularly respiratory conditions, Professor Sir Michael Marmot stated that this was understood. He added that the Institute of Health Equity had recently

published a report entitled 'Fuel Poverty, Cold Homes and Health Inequalities in the UK'.

Professor Sir Michael Marmot advised that the Health Equity Network had recently been launched that had been hosted by the University of Manchester. He described that this network sought to bring businesses, in partnership with the Public Sector, Health and the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise sector into the discussion and actions to address health inequalities. He stated that the three domains that the Network would consider were in relation to Good Employment, including pay and conditions; Goods and Services and the impact of Anchor Institutions. He stated that Legal & General had joined the Health Equity Network which was a very positive development. He advised that the work and outcomes of this network would be assessed and reported.

The Deputy Director of Public Health discussed the importance of tackling structural discrimination and racism. She stated that this could only be achieved through meaningful commitment, collaboration and coordination across all systems. She reiterated the importance of involving all communities and all voices, noting that this would include those that were traditionally regarded as being overtly challenging or difficult. She stated that it was recognised that a 'one size fits all' approach was not appropriate and bespoke and appropriate engagement would be required. She stated that it was important to establish trusted relationships and dialogue with communities acknowledging their lived experience of racism. She said these conversations and listening would be assisted by connecting through trusted community networks and neighbourhood teams, using a Community Development approach. She stated this would build on the lessons learnt from the Winning Hearts and Minds activities and the work of Covid Health Equity Manchester that arose in response to the pandemic. The Director of Public Health commented that the lessons learnt and experience of delivering the vaccination programme would also help inform this approach to community engagement.

The Deputy Director of Public Health acknowledged the comment raised regarding older people and advised that the final plan would include a specific element regarding the life course, that included older people.

The Director of Public Health advised that the Plan was a system wide plan that involved all Council Departments, including housing.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care paid tribute to the Director and the Deputy Director of Public Health and all staff involved in producing the report. He further welcomed the Members' ongoing challenge and scrutiny of this important area of work. He further commented that GP's were now included as members of the Provider Collaborative Board and the issue of fair work was included on the Board's agenda for discussion. He stated that addressing health inequalities was central to the work of health and social care integration in Manchester. He further paid tribute and appreciation to Professor Sir Michael Marmot for his continued support and contribution to the work of the city.

The Chair in closing this item of business thanked Professor Sir Michael Marmot for his continued support for the work being progressed in Manchester and for attending

the meeting. She further thanked the Director of Public Health, the Deputy Director of Public Health and all staff involved in this work. She further stated that she would be attending the Making Manchester Fairer Conference on Monday 31 October 2022.

Decision

The Committee recommend that the Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care organise a coalition of voices event, hosted in Manchester by the Mayor of Greater Manchester to invite and challenge the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on the issue of health inequalities.

HSC/22/41 The Edenfield Centre

The Chair introduced this item of business by stating that following the recent Panorama programme, where an undercover reporter had filmed inside the hospital showing disturbing and upsetting scenes, a senior representative from the Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust had been invited to the meeting to address the Committee.

In addition, the Committee would hear from the Council's Executive Director of Adult Social Services and Interim Deputy Place Based Lead, Manchester Locality.

The Chair further explained that the role of Health Scrutiny Committee was to consider how the Council and its partners in the NHS delivered health and social care services to improve the health and wellbeing of Manchester residents. The Committee could make recommendations about how they could improve these services.

The Chair advised that for anyone concerned about the care they were receiving or someone they cared for or has been affected by the issues raised in the BBC Panorama programme, they should not hesitate to contact the dedicated free helpline on 0808 175 3323. This was a confidential service staffed by trained and skilled practitioners who would be able to offer advice and support.

For completeness the statements are provided in full below:

Statement from the Deputy Chief Executive, Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust

Thank you for inviting me to speak to the Committee.

As you will no doubt be aware, the issues I'm about to speak to are extremely sensitive and are also subject to a number of ongoing investigations, including by Greater Manchester Police. As these proceedings are being live streamed and public, I therefore have to be cautious in what I can say to you today. I'm sure you will have questions and I will come on to how you can raise these formally, through our Programme Management Office, as I conclude.

By way of context

The Edenfield Centre is a secure hospital unit which provides inpatient treatment on our Prestwich site. Edenfield is approximately 1 mile away from the Trust HQ, situated near Phillips Park and Waterdale Meadow. The Centre has 12 wards within the secure perimeter, with around 160 inpatient beds and 600 staff.

On the afternoon of 8 September 2022, the BBC first informed us in writing that Panorama had conducted secret filming at Edenfield earlier this year (between March and June). They provided detailed information which listed a number of allegations about behaviours witnessed during their undercover filming – not of all which, we were told, would be broadcast. We formally requested to view the footage, but the BBC refused access to the programme in advance of broadcast.

However, we immediately notified Greater Manchester Police and Bury Safeguarding (who had also received a letter) and used the written allegations to take immediate action to protect patients.

At that point, it was clear that the BBC were alleging poor provision of services at the Edenfield Centre, including inappropriate or neglectful behaviour and a toxic staff culture. The information provided in advance by the BBC related to approximately 40 patients and approximately 25 staff.

We immediately recognised the seriousness of the allegations and set about taking immediate action. From a practical point of view, a Daily Executive Management Team was set up, chaired by Professor Craig Harris (deployed in from NHS Greater Manchester), who also took on the role of Programme Director for the newly created Programme Management Office. Our first and immediate priority was to ensure patient safety, so we acted quickly to:

- Conduct detailed, senior clinical reviews of all the affected patients to ensure their safety*
- Put in place additional advocacy support for patients, their carers and their families*
- Deploy additional senior clinical and operational management to the Edenfield Centre to ensure that appropriate working practices are being followed – some of our most experienced and senior staff from other areas were redeployed to the centre itself*
- Close the Edenfield Centre to new admissions and close a number of beds*
- We also suspended a significant number of staff, without prejudice, pending investigations – I'll return to this point in a moment.*
- And we commissioned an independent clinical review of the Edenfield Centre, led by Dr David Fearnley (Chief Medical Officer at Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust).*

We anticipate that this review will present its findings to the Trust Board at the end of this month.

On the day of broadcast, 28 September, we opened a new, confidential freephone helpline for people who were affected by the issues raised in Panorama or those who wanted to report anything that they thought would be relevant to the investigations. Details of this, and other sources of support and routes for reporting crimes were

published on the GMMH website – and publicised by partner organisations including Greater Manchester Police.

Partnership working has been absolutely central to our response. Straight away we established close, regular contact with local and national partner organisations including NHS England, the Ministry of Justice, NHS Greater Manchester (the Integrated Care Board), neighbouring mental health Trusts (such as Pennine Care) and the Bury Safeguarding Unit – all of this to ensure the safety of our services.

The CQC – who also received a letter from the BBC on 8 September and whose response was included alongside our own in the broadcast – have also been in contact frequently. You might have seen that the CQC have also been criticised in recent media reports on this matter. Last week, the BBC reported that the CQC noted “strong” leadership at the Edenfield Centre and only suspended its “good” rating of the Centre in September, after the BBC had given the CQC information arising from its secret filming.

Separately, Greater Manchester Police began an investigation into the allegations contained in the BBC programme. This is ongoing. We are working with GMP to see if further footage can be obtained from the BBC to ensure that we have covered every base in ensuring patient safety and taking forward the necessary remedial, including disciplinary, action that may be required. Between gathering the secret footage in March through June 2022, the BBC only first notified us two-to-three months later - on 8 September - of their findings and allegations.

The police assured us last week that there was no reason why their own investigation should prevent us from making progress with our internal disciplinary processes. I am sure you will understand that I cannot say much more than has already been published in partner briefings with regards to disciplinary processes at the present time - because I do not want to prejudice them in any way. We expect to have some more news on this matter very soon. Suffice to say, disciplinary procedures began immediately on receipt of the Panorama letter a month ago, and we are making rapid progress in this respect.

You will also no doubt appreciate that we have rightly been inundated with requests for information and assurance from multiple sources. Because of the nature of how the Edenfield Centre is commissioned, our patients come from across the Greater Manchester region and beyond. As such there are various routes of governance and assurance, and we are doing everything we can to ensure that all interested parties receive updates and information when we can share them.

This incident has, as you can imagine, put even more pressure on our limited capacity and resources – both from an operational and management perspective – but it’s safe to say that we have all been working tirelessly to do what is necessary to ensure our patients are safe and to put things right.

At this point, I should add a personal reflection. So let me be very clear: what we all saw on Panorama was utterly appalling and shocking. It was extremely uncomfortable to watch.

It's fair to say that this has been, without a doubt, the most challenging period in the Trust's history to date. Everyone has been shocked by the allegations and our colleagues were as horrified as everyone to view the programme. You only need a cursory glance at social media to see the kind of reaction from the public – and, unfortunately, some of our staff have been subject to a high level of abuse, which makes the duty of protecting our services and service users even more pressing. We have a responsibility to all our staff and service users to ensure a safe and proper working and therapeutic environment.

And it's important to recognise that, whilst Edenfield is part of GMMH, the Trust is extremely large, with over 6000 staff and serving 60,000 patients across multiple boroughs and many geographical sites. You may be aware of other challenges we are facing in our other services, not least in Manchester on which you were briefed by my colleagues at your last meeting. Arguably this speaks to the wider picture of the pressures on the NHS in general, and on mental health services in particular which has been widely reported in recent months, and in the aftermath of the pandemic. We are focused on improvement and recovery.

We do not believe that the behaviours depicted at the Edenfield Centre on BBC Panorama are reflective of the vast majority of our services, or our staff. But of course we are not complacent about this and we are all working extremely hard to ensure that no one ever experiences this kind of poor care within our services.

With that in mind, I must emphasise that we are in constant contact with partners across the system. And we are very grateful for the support, the challenge and the guidance we are receiving from local, regional and national stakeholders – including some in this room today.

Let me end by saying that we are wholeheartedly committed to doing whatever it takes to put right these wrongs – and to preventing them from happening again. Our Chief Executive, Neil Thwaite, has promised honesty, candour and transparency as we go forward. And through our relationships, with your Chair and with other colleagues across the council, we will continue to keep you updated on progress.

I unfortunately can't take questions. But if you do have any further questions please contact the Programme Management Office at progofficeEC@gmmh.nhs.uk

Thank you.

Statement from the Executive Director of Adult Social Services, Manchester City Council

Due to the significant serious nature of the concerns raised this incident is categorised as a safeguarding enquiry; this involves a coordinated response across GM Local Authorities. This is being led by the Director of Adult Social Services – Bury Council and the Bury Safeguarding Partnership with support from Manchester City Council and other local authorities. An ongoing series of weekly directors' strategy meetings is taking place to monitor and coordinate interventions and work with partner agencies to ensure the safety of patients on the wards.

We have mobilised a team of Senior Social Workers who are in the process of undertaking multidisciplinary care and wellbeing reviews with patients. We have a small number of Manchester patients identified at present, but we are expecting this number to increase in the coming weeks and months.

We have provided guidance to our workforce including contact centre staff and front-line practitioners across our teams, to ensure that we can give information and advice to patients and families who may require our support. We have established systems and processes to capture all relevant incoming information that is relevant to the enquiry.

Statement from the Interim Deputy Place Based Lead, Manchester Locality

Edenfield was discussed at the meeting of the Manchester Partnership Board on Friday 7th October and the Chief Executive of Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust provided the Board with an update. NHS and social care partner organisations in Manchester are supporting the work to ensure that patient safety is prioritised in partnership with the NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board.

Finally a copy of these statements will be circulated to members of the Committee after the meeting

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

- The Committee unanimously condemned the appalling treatment and abuse of vulnerable patients entrusted to the care of the Trust;
- The Panorama programme demonstrated a systemic failure at the Trust;
- The Committee could not be confident that these failings were isolated to the Edenfield Centre;
- The senior leadership at the Trust were ultimately accountable for the failings witnessed, describing what was reported as a catastrophic failure on behalf of the Trust;
- Noting that when the Trust had previously presented to the Committee they had portrayed themselves as making significant improvements in the care of patients, the Committee were of the opinion that this was evidently not correct and trust and confidence between the Committee and the Trust had been lost;
- The Trust needed to engage with and meet all patient groups, community activists, families and carers, and local Councillors to hear and respond to all concerns raised in regard to the care of patients;
- Members questioned the efficacy of the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy and the Trust needed to review these cases to consider any patterns that should have alerted management to issues within the organisation; and
- The Committee unanimously called for a Public Inquiry to consider the issues at Trust.

The Deputy Chief Executive, Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust replied by stating that the Trust and its Board accepted that they were ultimately responsible for the quality of service. He stated that he had listened to the views of the Committee and these, along with those of all stakeholders would be reflected upon and included

in the improvement plan. He advised that the Committee would be kept informed of this work.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care stated that there was a duty to support all the victims and their families who had experienced abuse and neglect. He advised that he would be lobbying the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to launch a Public Inquiry to consider the issues raised in the BBC programme.

Decision

The Committee recommend that the Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to ask that a Public Inquiry is launched to examine the issues raised in the BBC programme.

HSC/22/42 The Impact of the Recent Heatwave

The Chair recommended that this item of business be deferred to the December meeting of the Committee. This recommendation was supported by the Committee.

Decision

To defer consideration of this item of business to the December meeting of the Committee.

HSC/22/43 Enabling Independence Accommodation Strategy (2022-2032)

The Committee considered the joint report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Services, the Strategic Director Growth & Development, the Strategic Lead for Commissioning, Children and Education and the Strategic Lead for Homelessness.

The report provided an update on the development of an Enabling Independence Accommodation Strategy for Manchester (2022-2032). Describing that its key aim was to improve housing with care and support options to meet people's needs and better enable their independence.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- Describing that this was a partnership strategy, developed between Adults, Children's, Homelessness, Strategic Housing and Manchester Housing Providers' Partnership (MHPP) provider;
- The strategy was the product of an extensive consultation, with both internal and external key stakeholders;
- Describing the four key objectives of the strategy; and
- Next steps.

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

- Planning policy needed to include a requirement for developers to ensure all new build homes were adaptable in the future;
- Recognising the need and challenge to engage with the Private Rented Sector on this issue;
- Noting the importance for people to remain in their homes so they could remain connected to their community and support networks; and
- The need to consider the support offered to older residents who were owner occupiers and had limited resources.

The Deputy Director Adult Social Services informed the Committee that people were at the heart of Strategy, adding that it was recognised that housing was a significant contribution to a person's health and wellbeing. She further made reference to the report 'Extra Care Growth and Developments in Manchester' that had been considered at the Committee's June meeting, that had described the activities to support residents to right size and remain in or close to their community. She further commented that the Better Outcomes Better Lives programme would also support people to remain in their homes where appropriate.

In regard to the issue of new developments the Head of Housing Services stated that developers were challenged on the issue of future adaptability, however it was often an issue of affordability for developers. He stated as the Council developed and sought to approve the Local Plan this would be an opportunity to consider if this should be included as a planning condition. He further noted the comments from the Committee in regard to the challenge presented by the Private Rented Sector on this issue. In response to a comment raised regarding the Housing Allocations Policy he stated that this had been amended in November 2020 and a report on the outcome of the policy changes would be considered by the Economy Scrutiny Committee in the new year. It was noted that if the Council decided that it wanted to review the policy again this could take approximately 2 years based on the previous review.

Guy Cresswell, Executive Director, Great Places Housing Group spoke on behalf of Manchester Housing Providers' Partnership. He stated that the strategy was fully endorsed by the Partnership. He stated that the Partnership supported the evidenced based strategy and welcomed the whole system approach to deliver the best outcomes for Manchester residents.

Decision

The Committee agree that the final version of the Enabling Independence Accommodation Strategy (2022-2032) be taken for consideration by the Executive in November 2022.

HSC/22/44 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.

Appended to the report for information was the Manchester Autumn and Winter Vaccination Plan 2022-3.

Decision

The Committee notes the report and agrees the work programme.

Health Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2022

Present:

Councillor Green – in the Chair

Councillors Appleby, Bayunu, Curley, Karney, Newman, Riasat, Richards and Russell

Apologies: Councillor Reeves

Also present:

Councillor T. Robinson, Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care

Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Finance and Resources

HSC/22/45 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2022 as a correct record.

HSC/22/46 Public Health Annual Report 2022

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Public Health that explained that, as part of the statutory role of the Director of Public Health, there was a requirement to produce an annual report on the health and wellbeing of the local population, highlighting key issues.

The Committee were informed that the annual report could either be a broad overview of a wide range of public health programmes or may have a focus on a particular theme. This year the focus continued to be on the City's response to Covid-19, capturing our response during the second year of the pandemic. This report was a successor to the 2021 Annual Report, *The Manchester Difference*. The two were designed to be viewed together as a complete reflection on the most acute stages of the pandemic and the beginning of our efforts to recover, from January 2020 to August 2022.

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

- To place on record their continued confidence, support and appreciation to the Director of Public Health and all of his team;
- Stating that the report was excellent and was testimony to the importance of public services;
- Recommending that this report be shared across all directorate leads as an example of best practice when reporting activity;
- Supporting the person-centred approach evidenced throughout the report;
- That cuts to public services resulted in increased deaths, adding that it was important that the national enquiry recognised this important point; and

- Recognising the important decision taken in Manchester to test patients for COVID prior to them being discharged to a care home setting, noting this this important decision taken locally had saved lives.

In introducing his report, the Director of Public Health paid tribute to all those professionals and volunteers across the city who had responded collectively to the pandemic. He commented that the report would be submitted as evidence to inform the national inquiry into the pandemic.

The Director of Public Health stated that the decision taken locally by Manchester and Trafford to introduce testing prior to a patients discharge from a hospital into care home was captured in Volume 1 of the report, adding that this also would be submitted as evidence to the national inquiry. The Committee were advised that following final sign off, the report would be submitted to the national archives; printed copies made available in public buildings; published online and in different formats, including braille and other languages.

In response to a specific question regarding the legacy of the Sounding Boards, the Director of Public Health described these as being a positive legacy of the pandemic. He said that resources had been secured to continue these models, adding that these were recognised as an important vehicle to reach different communities on a range of public health issues, such as screening services.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care welcomed the report and stated that it was excellent both in terms of content, style and substance. He stated that this was an important document in terms of a historical record of Manchester's response to the pandemic. He also welcomed the person-centred approach to the document and how this captured personal testimonies that highlighted the Manchester spirit. He further recognised the importance of this document and the learning to inform any response to a potential future pandemic. He stated that the report was testament to the stated ambition for the city to address health inequalities. He referred to the quote in the report that 'The Manchester message had to be a bold, brave and trusted voice' and stated that the report demonstrated that it had been.

Decision

To note the report.

HSC/22/47 Revenue Budget Update - Cover Report

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that set out the financial challenge facing the Council, the latest forecast position, and the next steps.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- The Council was forecasting an estimated budget shortfall of £44m in 2023/24, £85m in 2024/25, and £112m by 2025/26. After the use of c£16m smoothing

reserves in each of the three years, this gap reduced to £28m in 2023/24, £69m in 2024/25 and £96m by 2025/26;

- Setting out the high-level position;
- Describing the officer identified potential savings options to reduce the budget gap totalling £42.3m over three years;
- Noting that even after these proposals there remained a budget gap of £7m to close to get to a balanced budget in 2023/24 and further savings options would be developed between now and January 2023 and be reported back to Scrutiny committees in February; and
- Each scrutiny committee were invited to consider the current proposed changes which were within its remit and to make recommendations to the Executive before it agrees to the final budget proposals in February 2023.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care introduced this item by giving an account of his personal experience of accessing social care to support a family member. He stated that his experience, both as a resident accessing services and as an elected Member, was that all staff across the service genuinely cared about the residents of Manchester and every decision taken by officers had this as their primary consideration.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources stated that the reports presented were currently officer proposals only. He stated that the Government's Autumn Statement and final financial settlement were still to be announced. He stated that the public consultation on the Council's Budget had commenced and would run until 7 January 2023, adding that difficult decisions would need to be taken and it was important to hear the views of Manchester residents. He commented that the financial situation the Council found itself was not the fault of the Council, adding the Council was a well managed and financially responsible organisation and this could be evidenced. He stated that the fault was the direct result of ideological decisions taken by the government over the previous decade. He stated that the budget cuts imposed on Manchester had been unfair. He stated that since 2010 Manchester had lost £438m from the budget and if Manchester had received the average cuts to funding the city council budget would be £77m per year better off. He stated that it was calculated that the gap in Local Authority funding nationally was in excess of £3bn, adding further that it was estimated that one in six councils could run out of money next year. He called upon the government to protect councils as these drove local economic growth and provided essential services for some of the most vulnerable in society, especially in the context of the worsening cost of living crisis.

Decision

To note the report.

HSC/22/48 Public Health Budget 2023-26

HSC/22/49 Adult Social Care Budget 2023-26

The Committee considered the report of the Director Public Health and Interim Deputy Place Based Lead (Manchester) and the Executive Director of Adult Social Services that explained that these reports were the first in the cycle for the budget programme 2023-26. They set out an overview of the services within the remit of this

scrutiny committee and the key priorities. The budget growth assumptions in the Medium-Term Financial Plan were set out. The report provided a draft set of officer proposals for further savings for 2023-26, developed in the context of the financial challenge facing the Council, for comments by Health Scrutiny.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an overview of the service and priorities;
- A description of the service budget and the proposed changes;
- Describing the proposed savings programme;
- Workforce implications;
- Equality and Anti-Poverty Impact; and
- Future opportunities, risk and policy considerations.

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

- Welcoming the very personal testimony given by the Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care, adding that this evidenced how Councillors were aware of, and responding to the challenges experienced by many Mancunians;
- That budget cuts imposed on the city had detrimental impacts on health outcomes and reduced the life expectancy of many Mancunians;
- That continued budget cuts had a direct impact on the wider determinants of health outcomes; and
- The importance of recognising that budget cuts had been imposed each year on the city for over ten years.

In response to a question regarding the savings proposal of £270k in Children's Public Health the Director of Public Health explained that the commissioning intention was to review and revise the service model and specification. This would be co-designed with stakeholders including the Local Care Organisation and the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services. He stated that the intention was to protect frontline services. He advised that monitoring of all decisions would be undertaken by the Local Care Organisation Accountability Board.

In response to specific savings proposals related to transport services; access to day services and extra care charges, the Executive Director of Adult Social Services stated that any proposed changes would involve conversations with affected individuals and their families and that an Equalities Impact Assessment would be undertaken for each eventual budget decision taken, noting that a further report on the budget proposals would be presented to the Committee at their February 2023 meeting. The Committee further noted that the Better Outcomes Better Lives programme, an invest-to-save programme of service delivery, would continue to be reported to the Committee along with other transformation work.

In response to a comment regarding workforce, the Executive Director of Adult Social Services commented that the importance of this was fully understood, adding that despite the continued challenges there was a strong and positive culture amongst the workforce. She added that the staff were the best asset she had and paid tribute to them. She further commented that Manchester was contributing to the ongoing work

at a Greater Manchester-level on the issue of staff retention. The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care echoed this statement and he further paid tribute to the senior leaders across the service.

In closing this item of business, the Chair recognised the difficult work undertaken by officers in bringing forward these proposals as they fully understood the impact these decisions had on residents. She welcomed the assurance given that conversations with effected individuals and their families would be had as any changes were implemented.

Decision

To note the report.

HSC/22/50 Charging Reforms and Fair Cost of Care

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Services that described that the social care white paper set out government plans with regard to adult social care funding reform. A revision to charging thresholds and the introduction of a care cap were due to take effect from October 2023. Progress was being made to fully understand the detailed requirements and make preparations covering process, establishment capacity and systems.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- A Fair Cost of Care programme had been undertaken in accordance with government requirements and the returns submitted accordingly;
- The results of this exercise would inform the government of the total likely cost;
- Funding for this change was to be funded from the health and social care levy (National Insurance) increase which had since been reversed by Government. However, they had committed to continue to invest the £13.8bn;
- The Council had assumed that the reforms would be fully funded from the £13.8bn and was therefore cost neutral;
- Failure to fully fund the changes from central government resources would present a significant financial risk to the Council with the implementation and transition arrangements impacted; and
- Further updates would be provided to the Committee into 2023 as the work progressed and specifically to cover the required policy changes.

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

- Recognising that the work described had been very intensive for officers; and
- Welcoming the brevity of the report, adding that it was succinct and very informative.

The Deputy Executive Director of Adult Social Services commented that the majority of the work involved had been delivered within existing teams and resources, adding that the exercise had been informative. The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care paid tribute to the work delivered by the Deputy Executive Director of Adult Social Services. The Committee were advised that update

reports would be provided to the Committee during 2023, adding that any changes to adult social care funding would be communicated nationally and staff appropriately updated as to any changes once finalised.

Decision

To note the report.

HSC/22/51 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 advised the Committee that a report on Gambling Related Harms would be included on the Work Programme for consideration at the 7 December 2022 meeting.

A Member requested that the report listed for the 7 December 2022 meeting on Learning Disability also provides information on the local response to the recent CQC report that looked at what people with a learning disability and autistic people experienced when they needed physical health care and treatment in hospital. The Committee supported this recommendation.

A Member also discussed the need to scrutinise the provision and delivery of acute health services across a range of activities. The Chair stated that she would discuss the most appropriate way to progress this with the Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care.

Decision

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

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2022

Present:

Councillor Reid – in the Chair

Councillors Abdullatif, Alijah, Amin, Bano, Gartside, Hewitson, Johnson, Lovecy and Sadler

Co-opted Voting Members:

Mr G Cleworth, Parent Governor Representative

Co-opted Non-Voting Members:

Miss S Iltaf, Secondary Sector Teacher Representative

Ms L Smith, Primary Sector Teacher Representative

Also present:

Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Children Services

Councillor Foley, Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport

Councillor Shilton Godwin, Chair of the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Wright, Member of the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee

CYP/22/44 Minutes

Decision

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2022.

CYP/22/45 Bee Green summit update and Education Green Climate Change Action Plan 2022-24

The Committee received a report of the Director of Education which provided an update on work done by the Council to support the education sector with decarbonisation since the previous report to the Committee on the Climate Emergency in January 2022. It also outlined the plans for this work moving forwards, with the action plan refreshed bi-annually following on from several review points within the two years.

The main points and themes within the report included:

- Background information;
- Progress to date in relation to:
 - Bee Green Education Summit;
 - Green Bee Assembly;
 - Schools Hub;
 - Education Services' Climate Change Action Plan 2022-24; and

- Plan Launch and World Car Free Day; and
- Future opportunities.

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

- Plans to work with schools who had not engaged with the Bee Green event;
- School carbon emission figures and whether the Key Performance Indicators in the appendix should include a specific target for reducing carbon emissions;
- How the Council could help schools to focus on the climate change crisis, given the other pressures on schools, their pupils and families at the present time;
- Travel to school, including the safety of pupils walking and cycling to school;
- The role of Ward Councillors, including how they could engage with schools and sharing information with Ward Councillors about the work the schools in their wards were doing;
- To request that school governors be given carbon literacy training; and
- Recognising the important role of the Manchester Environmental Education Network.

The Director of Education advised that there were always competing priorities and challenges for schools but that the Council was committed to keeping this issue high on the agenda, making it a priority and supporting schools to do the same. She informed Members that an audit was taking place on the progress schools in Manchester had made so far in addressing climate change. She reported that some schools had already made a lot of progress with this while some were still at a very early stage with this work, not because they were unwilling to address it but because they did not know how to start to approach this. She reported that, following the audit, the Council would look to group schools together to provide support.

The Graduate Management Trainee reported that there was not currently a tool available to calculate school emissions but that work was taking place to look at how this could be achieved and to try to calculate energy use per pupil and that a clearer picture of emission levels was needed before setting targets. In response to Members' comments on rising energy bills and funding available to help schools reduce the amount of carbon produced by their heating systems, he informed Members about some of the funding which was available, that information on this was available on the online schools hub and that the Council could assist schools with applying for these funding streams. The Director of Education informed Members that information was being sent to schools the following week about how they could reduce their energy use. The Graduate Management Trainee reported that procurement was another area where schools could reduce their carbon emissions through working together to source sustainable, local providers. The Chair suggested that schools sign up to the Council's Ethical Procurement Policy and Social Value Policy.

In response to a Member's question, the Post-16 Lead outlined how the Council, schools and settings worked together to understand and respond to labour market intelligence on green skills and green jobs. In response to a Member's question about figures on the level of engagement with the online schools hub, he advised that

he would look at what data was available on this. In response to a question about ward-level work on climate change, he advised that he and his colleagues were working in conjunction with ward action plans and liaising with other teams, including Neighbourhood Teams, and the Highways Service, to ensure a joined-up approach. He informed Members that this included working together on a pilot project in relation to active travel. The Chair expressed concern that Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) had so far not been able to find funding for some sustainable travel projects.

The Executive Member for Children's Services highlighted that integrating the school action plans with the ward action plans was referred to in the action plan and he encouraged the Ward Councillors to ensure that this was taking place in their ward. He recognised the important role of Ward Councillors and advised that he would email all Councillors to encourage them to engage with schools on climate change and that he would arrange for Ward Councillors to have access to school action plans. He reported that carbon literacy training was available for school governors and that this would be made clear and that the Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport was working to increase the number of carbon literate people in schools. He confirmed that the Council was working with the Manchester Environmental Education Network.

The Graduate Management Trainee acknowledged a Member's comment about parental engagement, reporting that the Green Bee Relay referred to in the report would be a good way of initiating this.

The Chair of the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee welcomed the work outlined in the report, in particular the focus on children and young people's voices and giving them ways of taking action to address climate change. She advised that some actions to address climate change were more easily achieved than others and that this should be taken into account when prioritising actions. She highlighted a report by the Manchester Climate Change Partnership which was going to the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee meeting the following day and which indicated that the city was failing to meet its targets on its journey to reach zero carbon by 2038. She reported that the age, design and condition of school buildings was a challenge and that schools would need a lot of support to address this. She encouraged the Council to be more ambitious than the targets set by the Department for Education (DfE) on rolling out carbon literacy training. She reported that she had attended the Bee Green event and asked whether it would be better to spend the money on trying to engage with the schools who were not currently engaged in this work.

Councillor Wright, Member of the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee, stated that it would be useful to have a breakdown of the current position in relation to school buildings and which were likely to require more work to reduce carbon emissions and what access to funding was available. She asked to see the information that was on the schools hub in relation to climate change.

In response to a question from Councillor Wright, the Graduate Management Trainee clarified that the figure on the percentage of education emissions which came from travel and transport, included all school travel, relating to both pupils and staff. He proposed a travel survey to better understand how pupils were travelling to school

and informed Members about the school streets toolkit which was being developed. He reported that a task group was looking at installing solar panels on school buildings and overcoming the barriers that schools faced in doing this.

The Chair informed the Committee that she and the Chair of the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee had been working with TfGM to ensure a more equitable provision of school buses across Greater Manchester by September 2023. She advised that a report would be brought to either this Committee or the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee once this work had been completed. She advised that this would have a significant impact on the number of car journeys by parents to take children to school. She also stated that it would be beneficial to have a RAG rating for schools, to monitor the progress they had made in relation to addressing climate change and support them to improve. The Post-16 Lead reported that this would be done through the audit process.

The Executive Member for Children's Services explained that the Bee Green summit had been a form of quality engagement which had informed the action plan and that it was the actions arising out of the summit that were important, rather than the event itself.

The Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport thanked the Director of Education, the Executive Member for Children's Services and all those involved for their work on this, which went beyond that which was outlined in the report. She advised that the information and resources on the schools hub was the legacy of the Bee Green summit and asked officers to provide a briefing to Members on this.

Decision

To note the report.

CYP/22/46 Admission Policies for 2024/25 for community and voluntary controlled primary schools and community high schools

The Committee received a report of the Director of Education which sought approval to commence consultation on revised admissions arrangements for community and voluntary controlled primary schools and community high schools. The Committee was invited to comment on the report prior to its submission to the Executive on 19 October 2022.

The main points and themes within the report included:

- Background;
- Main issues;
- The proposal to change the re-application process from three times per year to one and the benefits of this;
- Oversubscription criterion, which were not changing;
- Consultation; and
- Other admission authorities.

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

were:

- To support the proposal that applicant details remained on the waiting lists for the higher preference school for the whole or remainder of that academic year, rather than parents having to re-apply each term;
- Families who had to move, sometimes more than once, due to domestic abuse and what was being done to support them in obtaining a suitable school place;
- The medical evidence required to be classed as Category 2 (children with exceptional medical/social needs) under the oversubscription criterion and costs associated with this;
- Children in a school nursery who were not successful at getting a place in the Reception year of the school;
- The importance of communication to parents on applying on time and putting more than one preference on the admissions form; and
- Travel to school and further education settings, including the financial costs for families, and the environmental costs.

The Head of Access and Sufficiency reported that, where families were placed in temporary accommodation, the Council worked to provide travel solutions to enable the children to continue to attend their existing school but, where this was not possible, they would look to provide a more local school place as quickly as possible and the process for this had recently been improved. She advised that parents were usually able to provide documents that they already had, such as letters about hospital appointments, as evidence that their child should be classed under Category 2 and, therefore, there was no additional cost to the family. In response to Members' questions, she reported that a high proportion of in-year applications were offered a place at one of their preferred schools but that this was more difficult at secondary level and that, as more secondary places were made available, this should improve. In response to a question about families re-applying for a preferred school, she reported that, once children had started attending at a school which was an alternative offer, most families chose for their child to continue at that school, rather than continuing to re-apply for the school they had originally preferred. She advised that there was currently more availability for primary school places but, if Members had concerns about particular primary schools where children from the school nursery were not getting a place in Reception, she could look into it to see if parents were applying after the deadline and whether more needed to be done with those nurseries to communicate the importance of submitting an application on time. The Director of Education clarified that attending a school nursery did not guarantee a place in the school's Reception year; however, there was now better sufficiency of places at Reception level and sometimes the reason for not getting a place was because parents thought they did not need to submit an application because their child already attended the nursery, or because they did not submit it on time, and all the places were allocated to families who had submitted the application on time. The Chair advised that nurseries could help to communicate this information to the parents.

The Committee discussed secondary school places, in particular in the north of the city, and a Member shared concerns about children who had not started secondary school because the school they had been offered was of a different faith from the

family's. The Executive Member for Children's Services offered to discuss the specific cases raised with the Member. He emphasised the importance of the Council and primary schools communicating strongly to parents about the importance of including more than one school preference on the admissions form. The Chair suggested that this issue be discussed with Ward Councillors in the north of the city as it was likely that other primary schools were aware of issues with parents not accepting the secondary school places that were offered. She expressed concern about children who were not in school, including those whose parents had chosen Elective Home Education (EHE) and asked for up-to-date figures on this, including a breakdown by areas of the city. The Director of Education reported that school attendance was improving and that her service was looking at children who had not returned to school. She stated that, where families had not got a place at their preferred school, they were advised to send the child to the offered school and that they could still try to obtain a place at their preferred school through the waiting list or an appeal, or look for another alternative school. A Member commented that some families would be concerned about the cost of buying a school uniform for their offered school if their child might later get a place at the preferred school.

Decisions

1. To support the proposal that applicant details remain on the waiting lists for the higher preference school for the whole or remainder of that academic year, rather than parents having to re-apply each term.
2. To note the formal consultation on changing the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled primary schools and community high schools will commence on 31 October 2022.
3. To ask that up-to-date figures on children who are not in school, including those whose parents have chosen Elective Home Education (EHE) be included in a future report and that this include a breakdown by areas of the city.

CYP/22/47 School Places

The Committee received a report of the Director of Education and the Head of Access and Sufficiency which provided an overview of Manchester's current school age population and the numbers forecast for future academic years. It also detailed work previously undertaken and that which was planned to achieve a sufficiency of school places. The Committee was invited to comment on the report prior to its submission to the Executive on 19 October 2022.

The main points and themes within the report included:

- The school age population;
- Approach to securing sufficient school places; and
- Actions to secure sufficient school places, including work to progress the establishment of a new secondary special school at a site identified in north Manchester.

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

- The impact of the growth of the city centre on inner city wards and the need to consider the sufficient provision of schools and medical facilities for the expanding population;
- Could the Department for Education (DfE) override the Council's proposals in relation to the new secondary special school; and
- Timescales in relation to Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

The Director of Education advised that her service was being included more in the planning related to residential developments and she highlighted that a city centre school was being built. She reported that the Council had involved the DfE when undertaking the Free School Presumption Process so that they were assured about the way the Council was carrying out the process. Therefore, she advised, it was less likely that they would overrule it and they had never overruled the Council on this previously.

The Head of Access and Sufficiency informed Members about the statutory 20-week process for EHCPs, advising that currently the Council was delivering about 80% of EHCP requests within this timeframe. She reported that the Council was working with schools to improve support to children before and during the time taken for the EHCP application process, with a focus on early intervention and support before the child had an EHCP in place.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Executive Member for Children's Services highlighted the demand for more school places in Wythenshawe, due to the closure of Newall Green High School, and that this was being addressed through the opening of a new school next year. Referring to the Newton Heath school, he reported that the need for an additional school in north Manchester had been identified some time ago and that the Council had worked very hard to identify a site for it. The Head of Access and Sufficiency reported that the Co-op Academy Belle Vue was already open in temporary accommodation with a reduced number of places and would offer the full number of places from next year. In response to a further question from the Chair, she advised that, once these new high schools were fully open, there should not be a need for any further new high schools, unless there were any long-term major residential developments in future, in which case her service would be involved in planning for this. In response to a question from the Chair about whether the new high school in Belle Vue could open up to other year groups, she advised that this was an option which could be considered.

In response to a question from the Chair about special schools, the Head of Access and Sufficiency drew Members' attention to the information in the table at 5.9 in the report which outlined what had been done to increase specialist provision in the city, as well as the proposed new special school. She reported that the vast majority of children attending the city's specialist provision were Manchester children.

The Chair advised that Ward Councillors needed to ensure that they were aware of developments in their area and the impact on infrastructure, including the need for sufficient schools.

Decision

To note the report.

CYP/22/48 Update on the Independent Review of Children's Social Care

The Committee received a presentation of the Deputy Strategic Director for Children's Services which provided an update on the Independent Review of Children's Social Care.

The main points and themes within the presentation included:

- A reset in children's social care;
- A revolution in family help;
- A just and decisive child protection system;
- Unlocking the potential of family networks;
- Transforming care;
- The care experience;
- Realising the potential of the workforce;
- A system that was relentlessly focused on children and families;
- Implementation; and
- Manchester's readiness.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Deputy Strategic Director for Children's Services advised that there were aspects of the report which he welcomed, in particular the call for investment in services, but that the Council was waiting for the details of the policy before being able to form a fuller view of it. The Strategic Director of Children and Education Services reported that the outcome of the Review was welcomed overall by the social work profession but that there were concerns about some of the proposals, which they would need to see the details of before forming an opinion, including the regional care consortiums and plans for the social work workforce. The Executive Member for Children's Services welcomed the discussion on reform and investment in children's services which this had raised but expressed concern about how the national government would respond to the call for investment and the impact of the current backlog of legislation waiting to go through parliament, as some elements of this would require additional legislation.

In response to a Member's question about the proposal for a windfall tax on profits in the children's social care market, the Deputy Strategic Director for Children's Services referred Members to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission's report on children's homes and a recent article on the difference in Ofsted judgements between private providers and local authority providers; however, he advised that there were some very good private providers which the Council wanted to work with and he outlined how quality of care and value for money were monitored through commissioning arrangements and commissioning officers, social workers and Independent Reviewing Officers and Ofsted. The Strategic Director of Children and Education Services reported that the Council had significantly reduced the number of children who were Looked After and those who were in residential provision, which was the primary area where there was the issue of profiteering. He advised that next

month's budget report would include the costs relating to individual children due to the complexity and range of their needs. He reported that his service was not waiting for a response from the national government to make improvements and outlined work already taking place to continuously improve, working collaboratively with a range of partners within the city and across Greater Manchester.

Decision

To note the report.

CYP/22/49 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.

The Chair invited Members to contact her with any suggestions for the work programme and she suggested that the Committee might want to look at Multi-Systemic Therapy at a future meeting.

Decision

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

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 CO₂ 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.

Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2022

Present:

Councillor Shilton Godwin – in the Chair

Councillors Doswell, Holt, Hughes, Ilyas, Lyons, Nunney, Razaq and Wright

Apologies: Councillor Chohan

Also present:

Councillor Foley, Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport

Councillor Igbon, Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods

Councillor Ahmed Ali, Deputy Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods

ECCSC/22/39 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2022 as a correct record.

ECCSC/22/40 Revenue Budget Update - Cover Report

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that set out the financial challenge facing the Council, the latest forecast position, and the next steps.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- The Council was forecasting an estimated budget shortfall of £44m in 2023/24, £85m in 2024/25, and £112m by 2025/26. After the use of c£16m smoothing reserves in each of the three years, this gap reduced to £28m in 2023/24, £69m in 2024/25 and £96m by 2025/26;
- Setting out the high-level position;
- Describing the officer identified potential savings options to reduce the budget gap totalling £42.3m over three years;
- Noting that even after these proposals there remained a budget gap of £7m to close to get to a balanced budget in 2023/24 and further savings options would be developed between now and January 2023 and be reported back to Scrutiny committees in February; and
- Each scrutiny committee was invited to consider the current proposed changes which were within its remit and to make recommendations to the Executive before it agrees to the final budget proposals in February 2023.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCSC/22/41 Neighbourhood Directorate 2023/24 Budget

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director Neighbourhood Services that described that this report was the first in the cycle for the budget programme 2023-26. It set out an overview of the services within the remit of this scrutiny committee and their key priorities. The budget growth assumptions in the Medium Term Financial Plan were set out. The report provided a draft set of officer proposals for further savings for 2023-26, developed in the context of the financial challenge facing the Council.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an overview of the service and priorities;
- A description of the service budget and the proposed changes;
- Describing the proposed savings programme;
- Workforce implications;
- Equality and Anti Poverty Impact; and
- Future opportunities and risk.

The Chair in opening this item of business stated that the Leader, Councillor Craig, had written an open letter to the PM, Rishi Sunak to discuss the role cities could play in addressing the urgent challenge of climate change and what the Government needed to do to support it.

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

- The Committee condemned the government for failing to adequately fund Local Authorities;
- Stating that the current government was not committed to addressing climate change;
- Noting that the continued imposed budget cuts on the city could potentially hamper the good work underway by the Council to deliver on its carbon reduction ambitions;
- Noting that these budget cuts were being imposed at the time of a cost of living crisis;
- Noting that continued imposed budget cuts harmed the residents of the city;
- Consideration needed to be given to maximising revenue to the Council from commercial events that were delivered in Manchester parks;
- Information was requested on the decision not to host bonfire events across Manchester parks;
- A concern was expressed that charging residents for replacement recycling bins could result in increased incidents of flytipping;
- Were abandoned domestic bins reused;
- Could any savings be realised through a review of the Biffa contract;
- An assurance was sought that there was currently no proposal to withdraw any of the Climate Change Priorities listed; and
- Concern was raised in regard to the proposal to temporarily suspend gulley cleaning, especially at this time of year.

In response to the comments and questions from the Committee, the Parks Lead informed the Members that an assessment of the savings achieved through

withdrawing bonfire events compared to any further demand of community safety interventions, noting the discussion regarding anti-social behaviour associated with bonfire period, would be undertaken. She advised that analysis of this would inform future budget proposals. The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods stated that bonfires also needed to be considered in terms of the environment and emissions. Members were also advised that a commercial strategy related to parks did exist, noting that this was in the process of being reviewed. Members recommended that an update report on this would be provided to the Committee at an appropriate time, adding that it was important to recognise that parks were invaluable spaces for residents of Manchester, especially at this time of a cost of living crisis.

In response to the discussion on bins, the Director of Commercial and Operations, Waste Recycling and Street Cleaning advised that where possible, abandoned bins were collected, emptied, cleaned and reused, adding that there was a significant cost associated to this process. He advised that most other authorities charged for replacement recycling bins and there currently was a charge for replacement grey bins. The Committee were advised that the Biffa contract was closely monitored and opportunities for efficiency savings were always considered, noting that there were currently no budget savings proposals to be achieved via this contract.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer stated that there were no proposals to reduce the resources allocated to deliver the Climate Change Priorities, however, she expressed caution that difficult decisions could not be ruled out in future years.

The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods stated that a briefing note on the approach to gulley cleansing would be circulated following the meeting.

In closing this item of business, the Chair noted that the discussion had prompted requests for additional reports, namely the item on parks and commercial activity and how this could be used to generate income and also a report on the incidents of flytipping and the introduction of charging for replacement domestic recycling bins. The Chair advised that the work programme would be updated to include the items requested by Members.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCSC/22/42 Embedding a Zero-Carbon Workforce Culture

The Committee considered the report of Human Resources, Organisational Development and Transformation that provided information on the progress being made towards embedding a zero-carbon culture within the Council (as part of the Carbon Literacy journey).

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background, noting that the '*Manchester City Council - Climate Change Action Plan - Work Plan 2022-23*' set out activity to be

progressed to support the delivery of the '*Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) 2020-25*';

- In 2020 the Our Manchester Strategy was reset, placing a more explicit focus on zero-carbon at the heart of the strategy which subsequently became a priority within the City Council's Corporate Plan;
- Providing an update on key progress to date, noting that Carbon Literacy training was developed with The Carbon Literacy Project and was launched in 2019;
- As of January 2022, the Carbon Literacy Training was a mandatory training course for all Council employees;
- Senior Leaders in the Council would continue to be a priority group, with steps to ensure that new senior starters (alongside all new starters) completed the training within 12 weeks of their start/move date;
- Having achieved Silver Accredited status earlier this year, the next target was to achieve Gold Accredited status by 2025 whereby 50% of our employees would be accredited as Carbon Literate;
- Elected Members were encouraged to complete the training and at the time of reporting, 53 of 96 members had been certified as carbon literate;
- Recognising that there was an appetite for the Carbon Literacy training to be upscaled beyond the City Council directly employed workforce as part of the next phase of the training;
- Noting there was an action to develop and implement a monitoring and evaluation framework for the Carbon Literacy training;
- Embedding zero-carbon as a Council priority within new and updated policies and strategies;
- Describing the approach to communications to articulate the Council's story of positive climate action;
- A summary of the work undertaken with schools and education settings across the city to support them to develop and deliver actions to reduce their carbon emissions; and
- Providing a number of Carbon Literacy case studies.

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

- Welcoming the progress reported to date;
- Welcoming the examples of how the carbon literacy training had been embedded across the workforce;
- Congratulating the team for achieving the Silver Accreditation status from the Carbon Literacy Project, noting that the City Council was still only one of three Local Authorities to be Silver Accredited alongside Dacorum Borough Council and North Somerset Council;
- Was the target of 50% of employees to be accredited as Carbon Literate by 2025 ambitious enough;
- Consideration should be given to extending the training as a potential revenue stream for the Council;
- Members should be involved in training of community groups, noting their role as community leaders; and
- Noting that consideration needed to be given to how training was delivered, noting the need for this to be delivered in different languages.

The Head of Organisational Development updated the Committee by advising that since the report had been published 1631 members of staff had completed their Carbon Literacy Training; and all of the officers at the Senior Leadership level would have completed their training by the end of December of this year. She further advised that 79 Councillors had completed the training to date and all of the remaining Members would have completed this by the end of December of this year. She advised that access to this training had been made easier to improve uptake and added that all new starters to the organisation and movers within the organisation were required to complete this mandatory training within 13 weeks of commencing their role. She advised that Carbon Literacy Training for Trainers opportunities were also being improved, with a commitment from managers that interested staff would be released from their role to facilitate this, noting that this was a good personal development opportunity for staff. She added that Carbon Literacy Training would also form part of the new Members induction programme. In terms of the targets for training staff she commented that it was important to recognise the levels of staff turnover, however this target for staff training was monitored and reviewed.

The Head of Organisational Development stated that there was an ambition to extend this training to groups and audiences outside of the Council, however this could not be done at the detriment to training the Manchester City Council workforce. The Assistant Chief Executive added that the Council worked closely with the Manchester Climate Change Partnership to consider delivering wider training opportunities, including working with schools.

The Head of Organisational Development stated that there was evidence that the carbon reduction had become embedded across teams, noting that this was reflected in conversations and decisions taken by teams. She stated that examples of good practice were communicated and shared between departments. The Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport informed the Committee that there was a cross council department working party to consider climate change, recognising that this issue was cross cutting and could not be considered in silos. She added that this group would include consideration of next steps and opportunities for rolling out carbon literacy training outside of the Council.

The Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport informed the Committee that there was a wealth of programmes and initiatives being delivered across the city to address climate change and consideration would be given as to how to best capture and record this wealth of activity, recognising the comments made regarding the need to articulate and promote examples of good practice.

The Head of Neighbourhoods advised the Committee that Neighbourhood Officers engaged in strength-based conversations with residents and community groups to understand their specific requirements and asks to support them develop environmental projects and initiatives.

Decision

To note the report.

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) that provided updated information on how the Neighbourhood Teams and Climate Change Neighbourhood Officers were supporting local communities to engage in local climate change activity and reduce their carbon footprint.

The report included an update on ward level Climate Change Action Plans and an update on the In Our Nature programme pilot schemes and future delivery of the programme.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an update on ward level Climate Change Action Plans;
- Examples of developing best practice to support local communities to deliver activities that contributed to the city's ambition of becoming a net zero carbon city by 2038;
- An update on the In Our Nature programme pilot schemes and future delivery of the programme;
- Community engagement and awareness raising update, noting that the Neighbourhood Investment Fund (NIF) provided local communities with funding to make their neighbourhoods better places to live. £20,000 of NIF was available for each ward in Manchester to help groups deliver events and initiatives that benefited the community;
- Examples of the work delivered with children and young people across the city;
- Describing initiatives on active travel, clean air and transport;
- The consideration and approach to inclusivity and diversity;
- An update on the communications campaign; and
- Conclusions and priorities for the next twelve months.

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

- Good practice and lessons learnt should be shared across Neighbourhood Teams working in wards;
- Recognising the need to maximise the impact and outcomes of this work whilst recognising the differences and challenges experienced by different neighbourhoods; and
- Noting feedback from residents in relation to ward level Climate Change Action Plans it was proposed to establish a Task and Finish Group, chaired by Cllr Wright to evaluate the plans and the associated Key Performance Indicators and other meaningful outcome measurements and reporting.

The Neighbourhoods Strategic Lead advised the Committee that an event had been recently held that brought staff from the different Neighbourhood Teams together to share their experiences and lessons learnt. She advised that this had been a very productive exercise and the intention was to repeat this periodically. She further advised that an outcome of this exercise was to create a library of best practice that would act as a resource for officers. The Head of Neighbourhoods advised that a similar event would be arranged for Members in the new year.

The Head of Neighbourhoods advised that there was challenge in providing ward specific emissions data, however work was underway with the Tyndall Centre and the Climate Change Partnership to develop more detailed analysis and modelling of this in the 6 areas where the Our Nature project had been delivered. She further referred to the CREDS online tool as useful resource for local groups and Councillors.

The Deputy Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods addressed the Committee and made reference to the work that was being delivered in his ward. He stated that it was important that businesses were actively engaged on the issue of climate change, in particular in regard to waste and litter.

The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods stated that Neighbourhood Officers were a vital link to communities, noting that they engaged with residents on a host of various issues however everything was underpinned by addressing climate change. She commented that she recognised that ward level Climate Change Action Plans needed to be led and informed by residents and they should respond to the concerns and ambitions of those residents, adding that these also needed to be culturally responsive and appropriate. She further commented that staff in the Neighbourhood Teams were pivotal in bringing groups and services together at a local level and an update on this activity could be provided to Committee at a future meeting.

The Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport stated that it was important to listen to and respond to the concerns of young people on the issue of climate change. She further paid tribute to the Manchester Climate Change Youth Board noting that they would be hosting a Youth Climate Change Conference, Saturday 12 November 2022.

The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods and the Committee paid tribute and appreciation to all of the staff working on behalf of our residents in the Neighbourhood Teams.

Decision

To recommend that a Task and Finish Group, chaired by Cllr Wright be established to evaluate the ward level Climate Change Action Plans and the associated Key Performance Indicators and other meaningful outcome measurements and reporting.

ECCSC/22/44 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 commented that a number of additional reports had been requested following discussion on the previous agenda items. The Chair stated that she would

speak with the relevant Executive Members regarding the appropriate scheduling of these items and the work programme would be updated accordingly.

Decision

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

Economy Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 13 October 2022

Present:

Councillor Johns (Chair) – in the Chair

Councillors Bell, Good, Moran, Noor, I Robinson and Shilton Godwin

Also present:

Councillor White, Executive Member for Housing and Development

Councillor Rawlins, Executive Member for Environment and Transport

Councillor Johnson

Councillor Judge

Councillor Lynch

Councillor Newman

Apologies: Councillor Raikes and Taylor

ESC/22/38 Minutes

Decision:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 8 September 2022, be approved as a correct record.

ESC/22/39 District Centres

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director of Growth and Development and the Director of Development which provided an update on regeneration, investment and development programmes focused on several district centres across the city.

The key points and themes within the report included:

- Manchester has 17 designated district centres within its Local Plan and each centre is distinctly individual, with a variety of economic and social characteristics;
- Funding opportunities available to kickstart district centre regeneration and investment, such as GMCA's Brownfield Housing Fund and Evergreen Fund, Levelling Up Funding, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the Council's Affordable Housing Programme;
- Works undertaken in Wythenshawe, Moston Lane, Gorton and Chorlton;
- The planned programme for future works and investment in Strangeways, Cheetham Hill, Harpurhey and Newton Heath; and
- As part of investment into district centres, Small Business Roadshows were held in Moston, Withington and Longsight and concentrated on digital skills, upskilling employees, financial training and wider business community networking.

In introducing the item, the Chair informed those present that each district centre would be focused on in turn with an opportunity to ask questions regarding each area. The Chair had also received statements from local ward members and would relay these at the appropriate time in proceedings.

The Chair also explained that members of the committee had undertaken a site visit in Wythenshawe town centre with officers and local ward members prior to the meeting and acknowledged the opportunities available.

The key points and queries that arose from the Committee's discussion on the general approach to district centres included:

- The strong sense of pride and community across Manchester;
- The need to consider permeability, accessibility, good signage, the quality of the public realm and cleanliness in district centres;
- How digitally-excluded residents will be consulted;
- Plans for additional Small Business Roadshows and whether these could be held in specific areas;
- The importance of the Business, People and Skills theme within the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF);
- Requesting an update on the progress of government discussions about SPF funding;
- Footfall monitors, and whether this data is shared with businesses;
- What support was available for the hospitality industry following the pandemic from both central and local government; and
- How the order of district centre works was prioritised and whether this is *need-led* or *opportunity-led*.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development highlighted the significant work that had been undertaken to improve district centres across Manchester and the value of the Institute of Place Management and the District Centres Subgroup's work.

The Committee was informed that common issues for district centres included footfall, residential provisions and diverse offers. It was acknowledged that the high street had changed as a consequence of a rise in online and out-of-town shopping.

Members were advised that the next Small Business Roadshow would be held in Hulme and that requests for other locations would be relayed to the Work and Skills team, who are eager to extend this to other areas.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development concurred with the need to share data on footfall with local businesses and explained that this had happened in Withington and resulted in some businesses changing their opening hours to when the district centre was busiest.

In response to queries regarding the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), the Strategic Director for Growth and Development explained that funding through the Business, People and Skills theme would be administered by Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and funding based on Skills was scheduled to be assessed towards the end of the SPF programme. Bid rounds would open in due course over

the next few years and both GMCA and Manchester City Council would work to protect valuable services and maximise the use of resources across Greater Manchester.

The Head of Neighbourhood Management recognised that not all residents had access to the internet to take part in consultations and advised that Neighbourhood teams understood the communities they worked in and had strong networks to provide a multi-form way of communicating plans.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development explained that support for the hospitality industry was available during the COVID pandemic but this had ended. The Executive Member supported the industry's calls for further intervention on business rates and VAT. The 6-month energy cap for businesses was welcomed but it was felt to not provide security for an appropriate amount of time.

The Strategic Director of Growth and Development also highlighted that The Growth Company offered an advice service for businesses and would circulate further information on this.

With regards to whether district centre works were *need-led* or *opportunity-led*, it was reiterated that a 'one size fits all' approach was not being taken. Some district centres had strong business or community networks and required Council support and empowerment to achieve their vision whereas others required deeper interventions to facilitate improvements.

It was stated that areas of deprivation and in need of support were identified in all Council decisions.

The Strategic Director of Growth and Development also advised that the schedule of improvements to district centres was devised through analysis of need, demand and opportunity and that where the Council had levers, such as land assets, a stronger basis for intervention was possible.

Decision:

That the report be noted.

a) Wythenshawe

The Committee was addressed by Councillors Eddy Newman and Astrid Johnson, ward members for Woodhouse Park, and Councillor Tommy Judge, ward member for Sharston. They raised issues including the history of Wythenshawe Civic Centre, their hopes for its regeneration, and asked questions regarding housing, active travel, and consultation processes.

The key points and queries that arose from the committee's discussion on Wythenshawe town centre included:

- Requesting an update on progress with Levelling Up Funding (LUF), and when a final decision on this was expected;

- How much of the LUF bid was capital funding and how much was revenue funding;
- Whether discussions had taken place with developers to identify alternative funding mechanisms should the LUF bid be unsuccessful;
- Housing plans for the area, what constituted 'mixed tenure' and whether this will include social housing;
- Acknowledging the challenges of a '*night-time economy*' and how these issues would be addressed;
- Whether sufficient education provisions were available to support increased housing development;
- Opportunities to incorporate nature-based solutions and meet zero carbon targets through regeneration schemes;
- The need for sufficiently-powered Electrical Vehicle charging points, and the percentage of provisions within the scheme;
- The impact of inflation in the construction industry on the scheme's budget; and
- The need to ensure an appropriate and socially-beneficial retail offer.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development reiterated the committee's comments on the importance of infrastructure and highlighted the reopening of Newall Green High School which would help to provide school places in Wythenshawe.

The Executive Member also acknowledged the opportunity to establish a '*night-time economy*' in Wythenshawe and explained that safety could be promoted and managed through planning and licensing regulations.

The Strategic Director of Growth and Development explained that the Council was identifying various workstreams to ensure that sustainability and biodiversity are factored into the new proposals for Wythenshawe town centre.

The Director of Development commented that the second round of Levelling Up funding was currently underway and a decision on whether this will be awarded to the Council was expected by the end of 2022. Some queries from central government had been received in respect of the Council's bid, which the Director of Development advised was a good sign.

In response to a query regarding how much of the LUF bid was capital funding and how much was revenue funding, the figures were not available to share at the meeting but assurances were provided that a robust financial management plan was in place to cover Council fees, operational costs and the necessary external resources.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport advised the committee, in response to a query around Electrical Vehicle charging points, that a report on the Council's Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy was due to be considered by the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee and the Executive in December 2022.

Assurances were provided that a minimum of 20% of the 1500 homes planned to be built in Wythenshawe would be affordable, as per the Council's policy, and the Executive Member for Housing and Development expressed hope that this figure would increase. Discussions with partners around affordable housing were underway and members were advised that there was 16,000 council and social rent homes in Wythenshawe already and that housing providers can access various funding schemes such as Homes England funding and brownfield land funding to develop affordable rent, social rent and shared ownership homes.

Private market sale and private rent homes would also be available to ensure mixed tenure within the town centre.

The Director of Development provided assurances that the Council was conscious of cost inflation when creating the LUF bid and that this included provisions for inflation, optimism bias and contingencies with officers confident that the budget would allow delivery of the bid's aspirations.

Assurances were also provided that, because the Council would be the landlord of retail spaces, it would have the power and oversight to prohibit unsavoury businesses operating within the shopping centre.

b) **Moston Lane**

In introducing the item, the Chair informed the committee that Councillor Julie Connolly, ward councillor for Moston, had provide a written representation and was supportive of the proposals.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development commented that Moston Lane was a vibrant shopping centre in North Manchester but acknowledged some challenges and opportunities to diversify land and housing assets.

Funding had been received from the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), which would help to improve green space and neighbourhoods.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development informed members that long-term aspirations included further housing development and increasing job opportunities within Moston.

In response to a query regarding the status of the SPF funding, the Strategic Director of Growth and Development explained that SPF was split into three themes – Communities and Place, Supporting Businesses, and Skills and Employment. The Communities and Place theme was devolved to local authorities from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and consisted of £5 million for Manchester City Council. Proposals are submitted to GMCA with the final sign-off from government.

The Council was currently awaiting formal approval of the funding for Moston Lane but there had been no indication that the proposals did not meet the criteria for SPF funding.

c) **Gorton**

In introducing the item, the Chair informed the committee that Councillor Julie Reid, John Hughes and Afia Kamal, ward councillors for Gorton and Abbey Hey, had provided a written representation which highlighted recent and ongoing positive developments, including a GP surgery, library and job centre, within Gorton.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development welcomed the opening of the Gorton Hub and informed members of the popularity of Gorton Market which had an opportunity to develop a frontage to the high street.

d) **Withington**

In introducing the item, the Chair informed the committee that Councillor Angela Gartside, ward councillor for Withington, had provided a written question regarding when the safer streets scheme would be delivered.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development responded that significant active travel investment had occurred in Withington and cited the Didsbury-Manchester segregated cycleway as an example. It was confirmed that safer streets scheme was out for consultation and had not been fully delivered but there was a strong commitment to this.

It was also explained that Withington was well served by the bus and tram network and it was anticipated that the Beryl Bikes scheme would be extended to Withington in the future.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development acknowledged that district centres needed to be well served by public transport and that there are safe walking and cycle routes.

A recent LUF bid for Withington had been unsuccessful but the Executive Member for Housing and Development commented that lessons had been learnt.

In response to a query regarding what this learning included and how this could be applied to future bids and works to district centres, the Strategic Director for Growth and Development informed members that the Council received positive feedback on the LUF bid for Withington. It was recognised that the proposed investment into public realm and what this would deliver did not meet the expectations of the Department for Transport (DfT).

It was stated that some of the works proposed within the LUF bid, such as Withington Baths, had progressed with Shared Prosperity Funding.

e) **Chorlton**

The key points and queries that arose from the committee's discussion on Chorlton district centre included:

- Acknowledging Chorlton as an active community with a strong identity;

- Referencing the 'night-time economy' in Chorlton and how this was sometimes at the detriment of the 'daytime economy';
- Interest from local residents and community groups to attract investment; and
- The need to implement sustainable active travel routes.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development recognised ongoing work in Chorlton and the need to evaluate the wider impact of this across the area. Meetings between Chorlton Vision and local councillors were taking place to assess several sites which would help to deliver hundreds of new homes and reinvigorate the district centre.

Positive housing developments, including at Chorlton Baths, were recognised and welcomed.

f) **Cheetham Hill and Strangeways**

The key points and queries that arose from the committee's discussion on Cheetham Hill and Strangeways district centres included:

- Where the opportunity in Strangeways was emerging from and what were the driving forces behind this; and
- Illegitimate and fraudulent businesses in Strangeways and what could be done to prevent these being established.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development explained that a new college facility and housing had been developed in Strangeways but challenges around crime and antisocial behaviour in the area were well-documented.

A masterplan for the area and engagement with local members was anticipated to expand the improvements in the city centre into Cheetham and Strangeways.

The Strategic Director for Growth and Development noted that works to district centres was not a 'one size fits all' approach and acknowledged the particular issues affecting the Strangeways area. Members were advised that works in Strangeways and Cheetham were in their early stages.

The Council would look at its landholdings and assets within the area to identify opportunities and demand for housing and business. The Strategic Director for Growth and Development recognised that a multi-agency approach was needed in Strangeways and Cheetham but the Council had levers over freehold land in the area. The Council's Neighbourhoods team can identify breaches in the licences for these sites and escalate this to the Enforcement team.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development added that the Council had recently shut down some businesses engaging in fraudulent or illegal activity in partnership with other agencies.

The Executive Member reiterated the need for positive aspects within the community and cited the school, college and affordable housing within Strangeways and Cheetham as examples.

g) **Harpurhey**

In introducing the item, the Chair informed members that Councillor Pat Karney, ward member for Harpurhey, was in support of the works outlined in the report.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development advised the Committee that there are 10 footfall monitors in district centres across the city to identify trends. Recent data indicated that district centres had recovered from the pandemic quicker than the city centre in terms of footfall and Harpurhey was recognised as a popular, resilient district centre.

h) **Newton Heath**

In introducing the item, the Chair informed members that Councillor June Hitchen, ward member for Miles Platting and Newton Heath, had submitted a question regarding future plans for improving Old Church Street in Newton Heath.

In response to this, the Executive Member for Housing and Development advised that much of the Newton Heath's district centre was privately-owned and this made improving shop fronts challenging. The Council would work to ensure that businesses in Newton Heath and across the city were viable and that owners had the ability to invest in their business. It was explained that whilst there are some grants for these works, these are not always available and can be competitive.

It was hoped that improvements to district centres would increase viability and encourage business owners to reinvest profits into the district centre.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development explained that significant investment was going into Newton Heath with the Silk Street development, which consisted of 69 social-rent, low-carbon homes adjacent to Newton Heath district centre and the canal.

It was suggested that the Silk Street development highlighted the opportunity to increase housing within district centres and subsequently improve viability and footfall.

ESC/22/40 Overview Report

The Chair informed members that the Work Programme for November 2022 would be amended to add the word 'Update' to the Poverty Strategy report.

It was also clarified with regards to the response to a previous recommendation that a subgroup be established on housing retrofit that a formal task and finish group would not have been the right approach and that the quarterly policy panel, which was already established, was best placed to assess and develop the retrofit programme.

It was also agreed that a report providing an overview and update on the work of Shared Prosperity Funding would be added to the Committee's Work Programme.

Economy Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 10 November 2022

Present:

Councillor Johns (Chair) – in the Chair

Councillors Bell, Good, Moran, Noor, Raikes and Shilton Godwin

Also present:

Councillor Craig, Leader of the Council

Councillor Midgley, Deputy Leader of the Council

Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Finance and Resources

Councillor Hacking, Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure

Councillor White, Executive Member for Housing and Development

Apologies: Councillor I Robinson and Taylor

ESC/22/41 Minutes

Decision:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Thursday, 13 October 2022, be approved as a correct record.

ESC/22/42 Economic Strategy Update

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director of Growth and Development, which provided an update on the development of a new Economic Strategy which sets out how the next phase of Manchester's growth can ensure that the city's economy is both high performing and drives a reduction in inequalities.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The vision and key purposes of the Strategy;
- One option for the structure of the Strategy is to have five themes which sit around the core outcome of ensuring that Manchester's economy is one of the most high-performing, whilst reducing inequality. The other themes would include:
 - A strategic approach to development and investment
 - Thriving, productive and innovative sectors
 - World class infrastructure, places and talent
 - Zero carbon growth
 - Including more people in economic opportunity
- Engagement to be undertaken through roundtables and policy panels with leading economists; business engagement through the Business Sounding Board, Our Manchester Business Forum and Anchors Group; and partner engagement through the Our Manchester Forum and other relevant boards;

- A proposal to approach an external organisation to provide challenge and thinking about the future of economic growth in the city and how this can have the greatest impact on reducing inequality; and
- The Strategy will be scoped during autumn 2022 and will be formally developed in the first part of 2023 with formal approval in early summer 2023.

Key points and queries that arose from the Committee's discussion included:

- Commending the focus on economic growth;
- Whether there was an intention to focus on living costs, income and middle-tier jobs;
- The role of Manchester City Council both in the Greater Manchester region and wider North of England and the benefit of working in partnership to develop the economy;
- A need for a broader focus around socioeconomic barriers such as unemployment and disability to reduce economic inequality;
- How the objectives of the Strategy can be married with zero-carbon targets;
- The importance of considering the types of industries to attract to Manchester;
- Energy retrofitting, and how this was being undertaken for the Northwards housing stock;
- If any difficulties had been experienced with retrofitting listed buildings;
- How the Strategy would address negative externalities and impacts of growth; and
- What a 'resilient economy' looks like.

The Strategic Director of Growth and Development emphasised that the Council had a long-term approach to growth and that the Economic Strategy did not signify a fundamental change in the Council's focus. She highlighted that Manchester's economy was much stronger than 20 years ago and some of the issues it currently faced were very different, such as unprecedented demand for housing, which needed to be addressed, but the Council would continue to work in partnership with the markets, utilise its assets and take a strategic approach to development and attracting external funding. The Strategy would be owned collectively by stakeholders and developed inclusively to recognise the need for collaboration in addressing a potentially-challenging economic period.

The Strategic Director of Growth and Development acknowledged a need to examine living costs and income and commented that key enablers for work would be studied as part of work on the Strategy. It was also stated that Manchester has an increasingly-recognised national role and the Strategy needed to reflect the Council's position both within Greater Manchester and the wider region.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development commented that removing barriers to economic growth and investment which exacerbate inequality is a key objective for the Strategy.

Members were advised that significant work had been undertaken to retrofit Northwards housing stock, which had been brought back under Council ownership. The Executive Member and Deputy Executive Member for Housing and Development had recently visited properties in Harpurhey and Charlestown which would be

retrofitted to zero-carbon standards. Other works included spending £83 million in recent years on energy improvements to Council-owned properties in North Manchester; providing energy advice to 2100 residents which saved an estimated total of £370k a year; insulating 1600 solid-wall properties; external rendering insulation to 14 high-rise blocks of flats; high and low-rise heat pumps to 580 homes; solar voltaic panels on 2350 roofs and homes; solar thermal panels on 8 retirement blocks; low-energy lighting to 300 blocks of flats; 11,000 homes with high-efficiency condensing boilers; 12,000 homes with double glazing; 5000 homes with cavity wall insulation; 7000 homes with loft insulation; and securing external funding for these works.

In reference to listed buildings, it was highlighted that work is undertaken closely with the Planning and Listed Building Officers to ensure retrofits are sympathetic and appropriate to conservation areas where applicable. Some external works are inappropriate but works such as double glazing, door sealant and heat source pumps could be installed to improve energy efficiencies of listed buildings.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development recognised that more needed to be done and that the Council wanted all properties to be of a standard which meant it would be cheaper, safer and warmer for residents.

The Strategic Director for Growth and Development acknowledged the enormous cost of retrofitting the Council's housing stock and work was being undertaken to identify new and innovative ways to invest in sustainable retrofit and development. The Council was working on this with 3Ci, a partnership between Connected Places Catapult, Core Cities UK, London Councils and other local authorities across the UK, and other Core Cities.

Assurances were provided that the Council would seek to employ all possible levers to address challenges between growth and sustainability. The quality of development, businesses and sectors would be an important consideration and the definition of a 'resilient economy' would be established partly through the development of the Strategy and external challenge. The Strategic Director for Growth and Development explained that diversity between industries would be at the heart of the Strategy and help the resilience of the economy.

In response to a query as to how the Strategy would address negative externalities and impacts of growth, the Strategic Director of Growth and Development explained that Council-owned land and assets would be used to mitigate risk and meet the priorities and objectives of the Strategy.

Decision:

That the report be noted.

ESC/22/43 Poverty Strategy Update

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Inclusive Economy which provided an overview of the work undertaken to date to develop a

refreshed Poverty Strategy, referred to as the Anti-Poverty Strategy in the report, for the city.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Poverty remains a significant and complex problem for Manchester residents, is driven by many external factors and has persisted despite the best local efforts to reduce it.
- A significant amount of partnership work had been undertaken to deliver the 2017 Family Poverty Strategy over the past five years against a backdrop of health and economic challenges which highlighted and exacerbated poverty in Manchester;
- The new Anti-Poverty Strategy provided an opportunity to identify the impact of these challenges and extend the Strategy to cover all households with and without children;
- Conversations with key stakeholders and partners helped to shape the development of the new Strategy as well as understanding the lessons from the Family Poverty Strategy;
- An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken in June 2022 to identify how poverty impacted on different communities of identity. This indicated that all communities of identity were more likely to live in or experience poverty with the biggest impact felt by disabled residents, people from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority backgrounds, the over 50's and people with one or more protected characteristics;
- The EIA has informed the engagement process of the Strategy, particularly with residents;
- There were 4 suggested priorities and actions to be included in the final strategy, which were subject to further refinement with our stakeholders as well as formal consultation:
 - Preventing Poverty
 - Mitigating Poverty
 - Pathways Out of Poverty
 - Good Governance and Effective Delivery
- The Manchester Anti-Poverty Strategy will sit under the Making Manchester Fairer Plan and will support the delivery of these priority actions, along with other key actions identified through the development of the Strategy;
- A formal online consultation on the draft strategy will be carried out in mid-December, with the final Strategy being taken to Executive in January 2023.

The key points and queries that arose from the Committee's discussion included:

- Welcoming the proposed priorities;
- How much focus was placed on prevention of poverty and relief that could be provided, given the context of the cost-of-living crisis;
- How targeted the evidence base was;
- How the outcomes and delivery of the Strategy would be measured;
- Commending the pathways out of poverty referenced in the Strategy;

- How long “breathing space” periods to pause enforcement against residents for non-payment of fines or other charges when they are accessing professional support or help would last;
- Whether the Council had considered reviewing the use of bailiffs for debt collection;
- How frequently members will receive progress updates on the work within the Anti-Poverty Strategy;
- Consultation with ethnic minority communities and the voluntary sector;
- Vagueness within Appendix 1 with regards to gender reassignment and what data the anecdotal evidence referred to in the appendix is based on;
- The stigma around the term ‘poverty’, and welcoming training provisions for frontline workers to recognise the signs of poverty;
- What actions were being taken to remove or address barriers to people using work as route out of poverty, such as childcare or transport; and
- Highlighting the importance of good quality work as a pathway out of poverty.

In introducing the item, the Deputy Leader of the Council explained that work had been undertaken to refresh the Poverty Strategy, which had been renamed the Manchester Anti-Poverty Strategy to demonstrate the Council’s commitment to reducing and eradicating poverty within the city. The Strategy would form part of the Council’s work on ‘Making Manchester Fairer’ and was an important piece of work given the challenges of the cost-of-living crisis. She highlighted that Manchester was ranked the 6th most deprived local authority in 2019 and 42% of children in the city live in poverty.

The Director of Inclusive Economy commented that the Council had access to both local and non-local levers to address poverty and a Family Poverty Strategy was already in place. She explained that the Anti-Poverty Strategy was devised by drawing on the Council’s substantial evidence base, a literature review, and extensive targeted consultation.

The Director of Inclusive Economy concurred with members’ comments on the importance of prevention and highlighted how the Council had amplified its response to the cost-of-living crisis. The Anti-Poverty Strategy would be positioned between this response and the Making Manchester Fairer Action Plan, which addressed the relationship between poverty and health inequity.

The Strategy and Economic Policy Manager explained that the evidence base for the Strategy was drawn from publications by organisations such as the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Resolution Foundation. Whilst the Council had a lot of data, it was acknowledged that it did not have a reliable overall measure of poverty at a Manchester-level. The data available provided a probability of characteristics and demographics of those who may experience poverty and work had been undertaken closely with the team working on Making Manchester Fairer.

In response to a query around measuring outcomes and delivery, the Strategy and Economic Policy Manager acknowledged difficulties in identifying trends and patterns between indicators of poverty and the actions taken as part of the Strategy. External circumstances would also affect the measurement of delivery and the focus would need to be on evaluating individual projects and their effectiveness.

The Deputy Leader of the Council explained that there had been significant engagement with Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority (BAME) groups through Covid-19 work and the Council was keen to build on this engagement as work progressed on the Anti-Poverty Strategy. The Strategy and Economic Policy Manager advised that there had been discussions with many organisations working with BAME residents and there would be a formal online consultation for all residents and group sessions with key organisations across a range of communities.

The Director of Inclusive Economy highlighted the Council's robust system for using bailiffs, particularly in cases where a resident is receiving council tax relief. She explained that the Strategy sought to address how good practice could be shared between the Council and partner organisations and create an aligned approach.

Clarification on how frequent progress would be updated to Economy Scrutiny Committee would be provided once the Strategy was live and there was a process for measuring progress. The work of the Strategy would also impact the information within the Economy Dashboard, which committee members received in their agendas.

The Deputy Leader of the Council concurred with members' comments around the stigma of poverty and its impact on mental health. She emphasised that the Council wanted to highlight the support and resources available for residents who may be struggling and this would be embedded into the final version of the Strategy.

In response to a member's query about what was being done to address issues such as childcare and travel, which could be a barrier to employment and getting out of poverty, it was explained that affordable and accessible childcare was a key component of the current Family Poverty Strategy to enable parents to access work. This would be continued in the new policy. The re-regulation of transport had already yielded benefits in terms of capped fares - £1 single for children & young people and £2 for adults. In addition, the Our Pass for young people had been important in enabling young people to travel across the conurbation for post-16 education and training of their choice.

In discussing the importance of good quality work, members were reminded that the next meeting of Economy Scrutiny would consider the Living Wage and Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter.

Decision:

That the report and proposed priorities for the Manchester Anti-Poverty Strategy be noted.

ESC/22/44 Revenue Budget Update

In introducing the item, the Chair proposed that item 8 – Growth and Development 2023/24 Budget Proposals – be discussed in conjunction with this item.

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer which outlined the financial challenge facing the Council, the latest forecast position, and the next steps.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The Council is forecasting an estimated budget shortfall of £44 million in 2023/24, £85 million in 2024/25, and £112 million by 2025/26;
- After the use of circa £16 million smoothing reserves in each of the three years, the estimated budget shortfall reduces to £28 million in 2023/24, £69 million in 2024/25 and £96 million by 2025/26;
- There remained a budget gap of £7 million to close to get to a balanced budget in 2023/24 despite proposals outlined in the report;
- The Council's funding from central government would be confirmed in the Provisional Finance Settlement, which was expected in late December 2022;
- The indicative medium-term position, planned use of reserves and the level of savings proposals to date;
- An assumed council tax increase of 1.99% per annum and Adult Social Care precept of 1% per annum;
- Indicative workforce reduction linked to savings proposals was anticipated to be managed through natural turnover and vacancies;
- Public consultation on the proposed council tax levels and savings and cuts measures would take place from early November 2022 until January 2023 and a full analysis would be reported to Budget Scrutiny in late February; and
- The next steps for the budget process.

The key points and queries that arose from the Committee's discussions included:

- Expressing disappointment at the budget cuts imposed by central government;
- Commending officers for maintaining a strong financial standing for the Council and continuing to support residents; and
- If and how a reduction of 70 FTE as outlined in the report would impact the workload of teams and services;

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources introduced the item by highlighting Manchester City Council as a well-managed and financially-responsible authority and stated that the budget shortfall was the direct result of ideological decisions taken by the government over the previous decade. He explained that the Council's budget had been unfairly cut by £428 million since 2010/11 and that if Manchester had received the average cuts to funding the city council budget would be £77 million per year better off.

Members were informed that the problem was not solely experienced by Labour Councils and a recent survey conducted by Grant Thornton found that 1 in 6 councils would run out of money in 2023/24.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources provided assurances that the loss of 70 FTE would be through natural turnover and there would be no need for voluntary retirement or severance, meaning there would be little impact on the

workload of officers and teams. The dedication and commitment of staff to the city enabled the Council to continue providing services for residents.

The Directorate Head of Finance highlighted that this was the first-stage of the process but more savings were needed to ensure a balanced budget. A report would be provided to Scrutiny Committees in January 2023 and a firmer position was anticipated then as the Autumn Statement and Finance Settlement would be released.

Decision:

That the report be noted.

ESC/22/45 Growth and Development 2023/24 Budget Proposals

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director of Growth and Development which outlined the priorities for the services within the remit of the Economy Scrutiny Committee and highlighted the initial revenue budget changes proposed by officers.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The Growth and Development directorate was made up of City Centre Growth and Infrastructure, Strategic Development, Strategic Housing, Planning, Building Control and Licensing, Investment Estate, Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES), Work and Skills, Digital Strategy and Highways;
- The Growth and Development directorate has a gross budget of £35.5 million and generates £44.8 million in income;
- The Highways service has a gross budget of £25.1 million;
- Proposed savings for these services had been identified and amounted to £3.54 million over three years;
- Proposed savings and income generation included:
 - Additional income from Manchester Airport Group to the Investment Estate department, although this was dependent on meeting forecasted performance;
 - A saving of £170k once the former Gala Bingo building in Wythenshawe is disposed of and outstanding borrowing is settled;
 - Deletion of a vacant grade 4 post in the Strategic Housing department;
 - Generating increased income through Highways;
 - Deletion of two vacant posts within the Highways service and one Neighbourhood Liaison post;
 - Temporarily reducing gully cleansing for three years;
- There were no budget growth proposals or emerging pressures within the directorate;
- An overall reduction of 4 Full Time Employees (FTE) was anticipated as part of the savings proposals but this would be managed through natural turnover and deleting vacancies; and
- The directorate continued to be affected by Covid-19, particularly in the Investment Estate service, and work was ongoing to assess requests for rent holidays on a case-by-case basis.

The key points and queries that arose from the Committee's discussions included:

- The importance of the Work and Skills service and Manchester Adult Education Services (MAES) and how these were funded;
- Whether the Strategic Assets Management Plan would be scrutinised by Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee;
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority's (GMCA) budget proposals and how these would affect Manchester City Council;
- Expressing concern over the proposal to temporarily stop gully cleansing;
- How temporarily reducing gully cleansing would save money;
- How the Council would continue to engage with neighbourhoods if it deleted the Neighbourhood Liaison Officer post as proposed;
- Suggesting that Highways Inspectors be concentrated in areas of regeneration;
- The impact of deleting the vacant post in the Highways Maintenance Team; and
- Whether the increased fee income from design and project management work, outlined in Appendix 1, was an external income generator or an internal cost.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development explained that the Growth and Development directorate was income-generated through assets, investment estate and new homes which helped to generate net income for the Council to support other services and wider work.

The Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure highlighted the interconnectedness of budget cuts and that these would have knock-on impacts on different services and enabling the Council to achieve its priorities.

The Director of Inclusive Economy explained that the Adult Education budget was largely a central government budget and had been cut over the previous 10 years. MAES was funded by a portion of this budget which is devolved through GMCA but there had been no increase in this, which had resulted in MAES using reserves, particularly during the Covid pandemic. The number of teaching and non-teaching staff was reduced in 2021 as a result of this and this had been highlighted to GMCA and central government.

The Work and Skills service was part of the Core Cities budget, which had been reduced slightly in 2020 and no changes had been or were anticipated to be made to this budget.

In reference to GMCA's budget proposals, the Directorate Head of Finance advised members that there had been an indication on some of the financial support and charges from GMCA. This was not finalised and he endeavoured to address this outside of the meeting.

In response to a query regarding the Strategic Assets Management Plan, the Strategic Director of Growth and Development explained that this would bring together information, policies and procedures on the Council's assets and would provide a framework for decision-making as to how these assets would be used. The

Plan would fall within the remit of the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee but a briefing note could be provided to members of Economy Scrutiny Committee, which the Chair welcomed.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the questions and challenge from the Committee. She commended the work and proposals of officers, who sought to prioritise the most vulnerable services and residents. She stated that the situation the Council faced was a result of an ideological attack faced by cities like Manchester and political choices and that this had informed the proposed budget cuts.

The Head of Network Management advised that the Highways service had undertaken significant work to identify what he referred to as the “least-disruptive” savings. He reiterated that the proposal was for the gully cleansing service to be halted for two years and to move to a risk-based approach. There had been significant investment into gully cleaning and highways repairs in recent years and this enabled useful data collection to inform the frequency of gully cleaning. The proposed approach would look at the resilient and key route networks, city and district centres and areas prone to flooding and identify the best way forward for the next two years. Reactive gully cleaning machines would still be in operation to quickly respond to key areas.

Assurances were provided that cycle lanes would continue to be cleaned as part of regular and scheduled inspections.

In response to a question around the Neighbourhood Liaison Officer post, it was acknowledged that the approach to communication and engagement with neighbourhoods required improvement and there was a proposal to work closely with Neighbourhoods teams to facilitate this.

The Head of Network Management commended the work of Highways Inspectors and assured members that utilities companies are held to account for any damage they cause to highways. They are required to rectify any damage and are fined if they do not comply. Highways worked closely with Planning Officers and developers to ensure the use of suitable materials in and improvements to and maintenance of surrounding areas of new developments. The Committee was reminded that a report on Highways would be considered at the meeting in January and would provide further information on this.

The Head of Network Management explained that increased fee income from design and project management work related to fees which are charged to internal projects for the design of improvement schemes. A benchmarking exercise had been undertaken and officers proposed a small uplift in fees in line with what other local authorities and private sector organisations charged. The Committee was informed that another benchmarking exercise had been undertaken around fees charged to developers and an increase was proposed for when developers want the Council to adopt roads or undertake highways improvements to junctions.

In response to the Chair’s question around the impact of the proposal to delete a vacant post in the Highways Maintenance Team, the Head of Network Management stated that this would have only a small impact around the timing of works. Officers

were confident that the service would remain able to respond to issues in line with the code of practice and that safety would not diminish.

Decision:

That the report be noted.

ESC/22/46 Overview Report

The Committee considered a report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which provided details of key decisions within the Committee's remit, the work programme, responses to previous decisions and the Economy Dashboard.

Decision:

That the Committee note the report.