

## Manchester City Council Report for Information

**Report to:** Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee – 12 January 2023

**Subject:** Manchester Airport and Aviation Emissions

**Report of:** Manchester City Council, Manchester Climate Change Agency and Manchester Airports Group

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### Summary

This report provides a further update on progress since the 9 December 2021 report the Committee received which considered the relationship between aviation and the city's carbon emissions. It sets out the Council's role in relation to reducing aviation emissions and its relationship to Manchester Airports Group (MAG) who own and operate three UK airports including Manchester Airport.

Two separate updates are appended to the report. The first is from the Manchester Climate Change Agency which provides in an extract from the 2022 Update to the Manchester Climate Change Framework setting out the citywide position in relation to aviation emissions. The second is from MAG and provides an update on the international position in relation to aviation emissions, the approach taken by the UK Government and MAG's own work to reduce emissions from flights to and from Manchester Airport and from ground operations.

### Recommendations

To note and comment on the content of the report and appendices.

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**Wards Affected:** All

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

This report considers the relationship between aviation and carbon emissions. Aviation contributes 2-3% to global carbon emissions and the emissions that arise from flying need to be considered as part of global and national carbon budgets as part of global efforts to keep global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees C of pre-industrial levels. The report sets out how it is proposed that aviation related emissions are accounted for and also reports on the work that the Manchester Airports Group are doing to both reduce ground-based emissions and to contribute to the wider aim of reducing aviation-based emissions.

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how the report aligns to the OMS</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Manchester Airport is a significant economic asset and pre-pandemic employed 25,000 people on site. Aviation is, however, also a significant contributor to global carbon emissions and this report includes an update on work with the UK Government and international partners to reduce emissions in a way that is COP21 compliant.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The aviation industry is a large employer in the city. Innovation such as the introduction of new technologies and sustainable aviation fuels will create new opportunities for Manchester residents which will require new skills pathways.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and zero carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Manchester Airport is a vital part of the city's tourism infrastructure with visitors from around the globe travelling to Manchester to access its leisure, cultural and sporting offer.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Manchester Airport is the global gateway to the North of England which supports international trade, people to people connections and leisure. Improving the Airport and its wider transport infrastructure such as high speed rail is a strategic priority for Manchester.

### **Financial Consequences – Revenue**

N/A

### **Financial Consequences – Capital**

N/A

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

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

Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25  
[www.manchesterclimate.com/framework-2020-25](http://www.manchesterclimate.com/framework-2020-25)

2022 Update to the Manchester Climate Change Framework  
[www.manchesterclimate.com/content/2022-update](http://www.manchesterclimate.com/content/2022-update)

Manchester Climate Change Annual Report 2022  
[www.manchesterclimate.com/progress](http://www.manchesterclimate.com/progress)

Aviation and Carbon Emissions report to Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee 9 December 2021

## **1.0 Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 Manchester Airport is a core part of the Manchester and Greater Manchester economy. Prior to the pandemic it employed 25,000 people directly on site and 76,000 indirectly, generating £4.5 billion for the local economy. The pandemic had a huge temporary impact on the airport in terms of both the reduction in the number of passengers flying and the drop in carbon emissions from flights (a 91% drop in 2020 compared with 2019). However, numbers of staff working at the airport and passengers flying are recovering strongly, with October 2022 passenger numbers at 93% of pre-pandemic traffic<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.2 Whilst the direct economic benefits of having a major international airport in the city are considerable, the Airport and the aviation sector in general make a significant contribution to carbon emissions and, consistent with the city's ambition to be zero carbon by 2038 at the latest, it is important that these emissions are considered within the city's overall strategy to limit carbon emissions.
- 1.3 The Council has a number of ways in which it can influence the approach to aviation emissions and emissions from Manchester Airport which are explored in the following section.

## **2.0 Main Issues**

### **Manchester City Council's role as a MAG shareholder**

- 2.1 The Council has a 35.5% stake in MAG with 29% owned collectively by the other 9 Greater Manchester Councils and 35.5% owned by IFM Global Infrastructure Fund. The Council is represented on the Board of Directors and played a key role in shaping MAG's Corporate, Social, Responsibility (CSR) Strategy which has 'Zero Carbon Airports' as one of its three strategic priorities alongside 'Opportunities For All' and 'Local Voices'. The Council was instrumental in MAG joining the Manchester Climate Change Partnership which has enabled them to share the work they are doing with partners and to input into the development of the Framework.
- 2.2 As noted in the 9 December 2021 report to the Scrutiny Committee, MAG are a global leader on sustainability and are actively engaged in developing projects and processes to reduce both carbon emissions associated with flights to and from the Airport, and also emissions from ground operations. A full update of this work, including the recent signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with HyNet to develop the first direct hydrogen fuel pipeline for a UK airport is included in Appendix 2 below.

### **The Council's role on the Manchester Climate Change Partnership (MCCP)**

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<sup>1</sup> MAG Traffic Statistics, October 2022 <https://www.magairports.com/about-us/traffic-statistics/>

- 2.3 The Council is a member of the MCCP which is the city's cross-sector partnership focussed on the common goal of helping Manchester to limit its greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to a changing climate. The Partnership tasks the Manchester Climate Change Agency with producing the citywide Climate Change Framework and associated targets which are then presented to the Council to consider adopting as part of its formal policy framework.
- 2.4 The Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25 includes a section on aviation emissions but notes that analysis undertaken by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at University of Manchester allocates aviation emissions to a UK-wide aviation carbon budget, rather than allocating emissions to specific local authority areas.
- 2.5 The Framework was updated in September 2022 and published in October 2022. The update includes the development of a joint MCCP agreement on aviation emissions which is provided in full in Appendix 1.

### **Aviation emissions from Council staff**

- 2.6 The Council updated its Staff Travel Policy in December 2021 to reflect the Climate Emergency and changes to ways of working during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Policy encourages all Council employees to use the most environmentally friendly mode of transport that is practical and accessible for their journey.
- 2.7 The Policy includes the following statement in relation to air travel:  
*“Air travel is restricted to business-critical cases. Given the carbon impact of air travel, this option should only be pursued for international travel, unless in exceptional circumstances. All air travel requires prior approval from the City Treasurer or Chief Executive.”*
- 2.8 The CO2 emissions associated with any flights taken by Council staff and elected members are reported quarterly as part of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan process, including to the Committee.

### **3.0 Recommendations**

- 3.1 The Committee are invited to note and comment on the content of the report and appendices.