

# **Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee**

## **Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2022**

### **Present:**

Councillor Hitchen - In the Chair

Councillors Azra Ali, Benham, Connolly, M Dar, Hilal, Hussain, Johnson, H Priest, Ogunbambo, Rawson, Wills and Wilson

### **Also present:**

Councillor Midgley, Deputy Leader

Councillor Rahman, Statutory Deputy Leader

Councillor Igbon, Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods

Councillor White, Executive Member for Housing and Development

Councillor Wheeler, Ward Councillor for Piccadilly

Chief Inspector Adam Wignall, Greater Manchester Police (GMP)

### **Apologies:**

Councillors Iqbal and Whiston

## **CESC/22/48                  Minutes**

### **Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2022 as a correct record.

## **CESC/22/49                  Our Manchester Voluntary and Community Sector (OMVCS) Fund**

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on the process that had been followed to refresh the OMVCS funding programme for 2023-26. The report described the steps that had been taken, as well as providing an overview of the applications received and the current position. The Committee was given an indication on next steps and timescales for decisions.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Background to the VCSE sector in Manchester;
- Summary of the OMVCS Fund and the refresh process;
- Progress update July – December 2022;
- Overview of applications received; and
- Next steps.

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

- What would happen after the decisions were taken, in particular support for organisations which had submitted an application but had not been successful;

- The geographical spread of applications and what work was taking place to ensure different communities across the city were being served;
- Concern that smaller organisations were at a disadvantage in their ability to submit bids and the importance of supporting smaller organisations with submitting grant applications; and
- Future funding opportunities for organisations which were not successful.

The Assistant Chief Executive highlighted the support, outlined in the report, provided to organisations in submitting applications for the fund. He advised that, due to the high number of applications, not all could be funded and that the infrastructure support provider would provide support to the organisations which were not successful. He reported that a wide range of organisations, covering the different areas of the city, had applied to the fund. He recognised that some areas of the city had historically had an under-representation of VCSE organisations. He highlighted paragraph 4.16 in the report, which outlined how the Panel would proportionately target areas of under-representation across neighbourhoods and communities of identity. In response to a question from the Chair, he highlighted that 69% of the proposals submitted aimed to tackle poverty. He reported that a lot of bids had been received from very small organisations, with 81 bids in the small grant category, and that significant work had been done to engage with these organisations. In response to a question about VCSE groups working to address climate change, he advised that it was a condition of receiving the funding that organisations had to have a plan for addressing climate change. He supported a Member's comment about the importance of collaboration between VCSE organisations, stating that collaborative working was a criteria within the funding process. He reported that small voluntary organisations were supported by the infrastructure provider and neighbourhood officers in their ward.

In response to a Member's question, the Policy and Programmes Manager (Communities and VCSE) clarified that, although organisations applying for the fund could be based outside the city boundaries, they needed to demonstrate a strong Manchester connection over at least 18 months. He reported that all the organisations which had applied to the fund, both those which were successful and those which were unsuccessful, would receive strengths-based feedback on their application, including information on how they could improve their application in future, and that the infrastructure provider would provide ongoing support. He advised that there were alternative sources of funding which unsuccessful applicants could be signposted to. He informed Members that the panel had receiving training on conscious and unconscious bias, with the aim of ensuring that applications were considered based on what the organisation was proposing to do, rather than on how well-written the application was, as the latter tended to lead to already successful organisations continuing to receive the funding. In response to a Member's question, he advised that a diverse panel had been recruited and that an Equality Impact Assessment had been developed throughout the process.

The Chair recognised the important role of volunteers and thanked all volunteers in the city for their work, asking officer to pass on thanks to the voluntary organisations.

## **Decision**

To request that information on which organisations are successful and alternative sources of funding for unsuccessful organisations be included in a future report.

[Councillor Hussain declared a disclosable pecuniary interest as a Director of Muslim Writers North which had submitted a bid for the fund and left the room for this item.]

[Councillor H Priest declared a personal interest as a volunteer at North Manchester FM which had submitted a bid for the fund.]

[Councillor Ogunbambo declared a personal interest as the Chair of Blackley Football Club of Manchester]

[Councillor M Dar declared a personal interest in relation to Youth on Solid Ground and Keep Youth Work Alive Beswick.]

## **CESC/22/50                      Public Open Spaces CCTV**

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhood Services) which detailed the policy and procedure developed following the review of Public Open Space CCTV. It detailed how the Council would ensure that the significant investment in CCTV was targeted effectively in the city whilst ensuring compliance with the Information Commissioners Office Code of Practice for surveillance cameras. The Committee was invited to comment on the report prior to its submission to the Executive on 14 December 2022.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Background information;
- Investment in CCTV;
- CCTV Board;
- Policy and procedure for CCTV legitimacy and effectiveness;
- Additional cameras; and
- Legal advice.

The Statutory Deputy Leader reported that the Council was committed to investing in upgrading its CCTV equipment and placing cameras in the right locations where they were most effective.

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

- Cameras that could be deployed across the city to address areas that were subjected to sustained fly-tipping;
- Had a data protection impact assessment been carried out and, if so, could Committee Members see it;
- The process relating to proposals to site cameras in new locations, including how Ward Councillors would be involved in this and whether residents could be involved too;
- The concentration of CCTV cameras in the city centre, asking that consideration be given to placing more cameras in other parts of the city and ensuring that their location was spread fairly across the city;

- To request a breakdown of how many CCTV cameras were located in the city centre and how many were in other areas and how many were used to address crime and disorder as opposed to fly-tipping;
- Was a full review being carried out of the location of all CCTV cameras across Manchester; and
- The capacity of the CCTV control room if additional cameras were installed in future.

The Director of Commercial and Operations clarified that mobile cameras, operated by the Compliance and Enforcement team, were used to tackle flytipping and that additional funding had been provided for these from the Growth and Waste funding in the budget.

The Community Safety Lead advised that the Council had a data protection impact assessment for CCTV cameras which was currently being updated and that she could share the existing one. She advised that proposals for the location of cameras would be discussed at a ward level, facilitated by the neighbourhood teams, with Ward Councillors being able to discuss where they had concerns and thought that cameras would be a good solution for a crime problem; however, she advised that the views of the local police and neighbourhood teams would also be taken into account so it could be decided that it was not appropriate to place a camera in a particular location or that there were other ways to resolve the problem. She advised that consideration would be given to how residents could feed into this. She reported that cameras would be located where there was the greatest need, including consideration of the crime statistics and other provision in the area. She stated that she could provide Members with the breakdown of the location of cameras between the city centre and neighbourhood areas. She confirmed that the fly-tipping cameras were not included with the scope of the report. She confirmed that a full review of the location of CCTV cameras would take place and that their location would be continuously reviewed to ensure compliance with the legislation.

The Director of Commercial and Operations advised that decisions on the distribution of cameras would be evidence-based, identifying where they were most needed, rather than an equal spread across the city, and that this was what was required legislatively. In response to a Member's question about changes in technology, he reported that the new cameras would primarily perform the key function of observing what was taking place and feeding it back to the control room and that there were no current plans relating to the use of artificial intelligence. He reported that there was physically space in the CCTV control room to monitor more cameras but it could require more operatives to monitor them, which would be an additional cost. He also advised that the location and capacity of the control room was due to be reviewed.

Chief Inspector Adam Wignall from Greater Manchester Police (GMP) reported that, where there were concerns about crime in a particular location but it did not meet the requirements for installing a CCTV camera, other measures would be put in place to tackle the problem and he outlined some of the work taking place to reduce crime and disorder, including the establishment of prevention hubs and work with the Community Safety Partnership and local communities to solve problems in local areas. In response to a question from the Chair about GMP's budget for CCTV cameras, noting that they had previously invested in cameras in Moss Side which

were now obsolete, he advised that he would need to look into this. He reported that GMP had recently installed cameras in Piccadilly Gardens, with assistance from the Community Safety Partnership.

The Community Safety Lead reported that Safer Streets funding had been used to fill some of the gaps in areas of Moss Side and Rusholme which required CCTV coverage. In response to a question from the Chair about the future replacement of cameras as they reached the end of their lifespan, she reported that replacing the 169 cameras that were over 7 years old would make a significant difference but confirmed that there would be a rolling maintenance programme.

## **Decisions**

1. To receive the further information that Members have asked for at an appropriate time, including in relation to control room capacity, plans to manage the replacement of other cameras as they reach the end of their lifespan and GMP funding for CCTV cameras.

2. To endorse the recommendation to the Executive that:

The Executive is recommended to:-

Approve the Policy and Procedure for legitimacy and effectiveness of CCTV in the city.

## **CESC/22/51                      Compliance and Enforcement Services - Performance in 2021/22**

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhood Services) which provided an update on demand for and performance of the Compliance and Enforcement service during 2021/22. The report also provided a forward look at challenges and future workload pressures as a result of changes to legislation, policy and areas of growth that would have an impact on the work carried out by Compliance and Enforcement teams.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Background information;
- Demand;
- Proactive activities;
- Programmed activities;
- Formal enforcement action;
- Ongoing challenges; and
- Future challenges/pressures.

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

- That enforcement activity and prosecutions in relation to fly-tipping should be publicised to assure residents that action was being taken and to warn fly-tippers of the consequences of their actions;

- Issues with poor bin management by students;
- What work was being done to tackle landlords who were letting properties which were not fit for habitation;
- To what extent could the future challenges and pressures outlined in the report be met and what were the risks associated with these;
- How could local businesses better liaise with the Compliance Team so that they did not fall foul of the regulations; and
- Concerns that jobs were sometimes being recorded as completed on the CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system when this was not the case.

The Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety advised that the Council used social media to publicise action taken in relation to fly-tipping and issued press releases when they had successful fly-tipping prosecutions; however, she advised that they were dependent on the media picking up on the press releases. She advised that they had previously worked with the Manchester Evening News on advertorials and could look into this again. She reported that she was also open to Members' suggestions for other ways this work could be publicised. She advised that the Council did a lot of work to engage with students, as well as engaging with landlords, and that enforcement action was taken where appropriate. She advised that there were no enforcement powers in relation to taking wheelie bins back onto properties promptly, although the pavement should not be obstructed and she would ask officers to look into this issue. In response to a Member's question about street signage, she advised that most legislation did not require this. She reported that Manchester was working to target rogue landlords, including the use of selective licensing and providing information to tenants and landlords on the actions they could take to address and report mould. In response to a Member's question, she offered to provide a copy of the relevant leaflets. The Executive Member for Housing and Development outlined work to address damp and mould in both private rented and social housing, including making it easier for tenants to report issues.

The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods outlined how the Neighbourhood Teams, other Council services and partners organisations, including the universities and Manchester Student Homes, were working together to address the issues raised in relation to areas with a large student population. She reported that this was a constant battle and that they were continually working to address this, as well as looking for new approaches which could be taken. She advised that a further response would be provided to the Member who had raised this in relation to the next steps to address this within his ward of Withington and that she would be happy to discuss this further with him. She agreed that it would be useful to further publicise the positive work which was taking place and that this could be done through the Ward Co-ordination Officers.

In response to the question about future challenges, the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety reported that the service would need to prioritise resources, stating that the service currently did a lot of work above and beyond the statutory role but that, where necessary, the statutory work would need to be prioritised, and the additional work reduced, focusing on the work which was most needed. She advised that, when the government brought in new legislation, there should be funding made available and that her service was always looking for sources of funding and bidding for it. In response to the question about work with

local businesses, she advised that the Compliance Service's initial approach was always to help businesses to comply with regulations, although enforcement was used where businesses were not willing to engage. In response to a Member's question about reporting fly-tipping, she advised that people could still report this by telephone as an alternative to using the website but that a lot of fly-tipping was identified through pro-active work. In response to a Member's question, she advised that she was not aware of an increase in noise complaints due to pavement licensing. She asked Members to feed back on any instances where jobs had been recorded as completed on the CRM system when this was not the case.

The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods informed Members that a new CRM system was being introduced. In response to a question from the Chair, the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) advised that, although this fell with the remit of the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee as an ICT issue, he would liaise with the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer about providing an update on this work for this Committee.

In response to a question about the Council's regulatory duties in relation to industrial processes, the Strategic Lead (Compliance and Enforcement) reported that visits were carried out twice a year and that the focus was on education to ensure that they were operating correctly.

The Chair thanked staff in this area for their work, recognising the wide range of work they undertook.

## **Decisions**

1. To request that the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety circulate the leaflets in relation to damp and mould to all Members of the Committee.
2. To request that the Committee receive an update on plans for the new CRM system.

## **CESC/22/52                      Community Safety Update**

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhood Services) which provided an update on the range of work delivered to address the priorities in the strategy and included updates on the City Centre and Wynnstay Grove Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs). It also included information on how partners worked to help people feel safe in the city centre, including the role of Licensing, taxi marshals, pubwatch and event security.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Tackling neighbourhood crime and antisocial behaviour;
- Keeping children and young people safe;
- Tackling serious harm and violence;
- Tackling drug and alcohol driven crime; and
- Protecting communities through changing offender behaviour.

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

- To recognise the positive, multi-agency work taking place in the Withington and Ladybarn area to tackle anti-social behaviour;
- Plans to expand training, for example on Martyn's Law, to licensed premises outside of the city centre; and
- To request more information on the Complex Safeguarding Hub, including what the thresholds were for referral to the Complex Safeguarding Hub, what percentage of referrals were not dealt with through the Hub because they did not meet this threshold and how Manchester's threshold compared to other Greater Manchester authorities.

The Chair informed Members that the Chair of the Licensing Committee was unable to attend this meeting but had asked for his thanks to be passed on to the Licensing Team, GMP, partner organisations and the Scrutiny Committee for their work to keep residents and visitors to Manchester safe.

The Community Safety Lead reported that, if a referral was not appropriate for the Complex Safeguarding Hub, this did not mean that they would not receive support and that a range of other support could be offered, with a focus on early intervention. She stated that she would ask colleagues in Children's Services to provide further information in relation to the Member's questions on the Complex Safeguarding Hub. She informed Members that the Complex Safeguarding Hubs across Greater Manchester were in contact with each other to understand how other Hubs across the region were working and to share good practice. In response to a Member's question about PSPOs, she reported that the PSPO in relation to street drinking was in place across the city, not just the city centre, although it was not a blanket ban on street drinking and was used to tackle anti-social behaviour. She advised that begging was not covered by any of the PSPOs currently in place in the city but that there was a well-established approach to begging, focused on getting people the right help and support, and that this approach was used across the city.

The Principal Licensing Officer advised that the training referred to would be expanded to the district centres next year. In response to a question from the Chair, he confirmed that the multi-agency partnership was city-wide and routinely considered issues outside of the city centre.

The Ward Councillor for Piccadilly Ward requested confirmation that none of the five Fixed Penalty Notices which had been issued in relation to the City Centre PSPO had been issued to people who were genuinely homeless. The Community Safety Lead confirmed that none of these had been issued to homeless people.

The Statutory Deputy Leader highlighted how partners were working together to make communities safer and the importance of this multi-agency, collaborative approach, particularly in the light of reduced resources.

The Chair thanked everyone for their work and recommended that the Statutory Deputy Leader write to the Secretary of State to highlight the importance of adequate funding to do this work. The Statutory Deputy Leader agreed that he would write to



the Secretary of State and circulate a copy of the letter to all Members of the Committee.

### **Decisions**

1. To note that the Statutory Deputy Leader will write to the Secretary of State to highlight the importance of adequate funding to do this work and will circulate a copy of the letter to all Members of the Committee.
2. To note that the Community Safety Lead will liaise with Children's Services to provide the Member with a response to her questions about the Complex Safeguarding Hub.
3. To request that Members be kept informed of the training taking place regarding Martyn's Law and ACT (Action Counter Terrorism) training.

### **CESC/22/53            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.

In response to a question about the Z-Arts grant, it was agreed that information on cultural grants should be incorporated into the Libraries, Galleries, Culture and Leisure Annual Report scheduled for the Committee's February meeting.

### **Decision**

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



# **Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee**

## **Minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2023**

### **Present:**

Councillor Hitchen - In the Chair

Councillors Benham, Chambers, Connolly, Evans, Hilal, Hussain, Johnson, Ogunbambo, H Priest, Rawson, Sheikh, Whiston, Wills and Wilson

### **Also present:**

Councillor Midgley, Deputy Leader

Councillor Igbon, Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods

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

Paula Lyons, Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service (GMFRS)

Superintendent Paul Walker, Greater Manchester Police (GMP)

### **Apologies:**

Councillors Azra Ali and M Dar

## **CESC/23/01            Minutes**

### **Decision**

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

## **CESC/23/02            An update report on the Homelessness Service**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Housing Operations which provided an update on the Homelessness Service and the improvement and transformation that was happening across the service in an increasingly challenging social and economic context.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Preventing homelessness;
- Work to end rough sleeping;
- Work to considerably reduce the use of temporary accommodation; and
- Delivering better outcomes and better lives for people and families at risk or who were homeless.

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

- Recognising the challenges that the city was facing and thanking officers for the work that was taking place to make improvements, including welcoming the focus on preventing homelessness;
- Noting that additional officers had been assigned to answer calls to the Housing Solutions Service, was it possible to increase this further, given that the target for the service was to be answering 85% of calls by the end of March 2023;

- What did Manchester need from the national government to address the homelessness problem;
- Emergency accommodation for rough sleepers with dogs;
- To request a further update report early in the next municipal year, including data on the use of temporary accommodation and its geographical spread, noting the benefits of people being able to remain near their community networks;
- Would the 200 units of self-contained dispersed accommodation be located within Manchester and noting that these were for families, not single homeless people;
- Did the Council have any property which it could convert into temporary accommodation; and
- The impact on children of living in temporary accommodation away from their community support network.

The Chair of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee questioned whether the rent amounts in appendix 3 reflected the current situation as, she advised, landlords were increasing rents after evicting tenants. She stated that the time taken to move new tenants into social rented housing after the previous tenants had left was too long. She expressed concern at the costs of bed-and-breakfast accommodation and stated that cheaper alternatives should be considered. She questioned why Camden's figures for households in temporary accommodation were so much lower than Manchester's. She questioned whether community connection could be taken into account when allocating social housing and whether more could be done to incentivise families to allow their adult children to live with them.

In response to a Member's question, the Assistant Director of Homelessness reported that the count of rough sleepers was city-wide and included the airport. He agreed with a Member's comment that answering 85% of calls was still not good enough but advised that improvements were being made incrementally, that significant progress had already been made in the number of calls being answered and that the service would continue to work to improve this further.

The Strategic Lead for Homelessness invited Members to contact her if they wanted to join one of the counts of rough sleepers. She reported that work was taking place to encourage people to access the Housing Solutions Service digitally to increase capacity and make the service more easily accessible, while recognising that many people preferred to contact the service by telephone. She reported that her service worked with the Dogs Trust and that there were hostels in the city which were very dog-friendly and others which would consider accepting pets on a case-by-case basis. In response to a question about right-sizing, she advised that her service could assist people who were in properties which were too large for them to find a suitable-sized property and provide other incentives, such as helping an older person with packing and moving or carpeting or decorating the new property.

In response to a question about case checks, the Assistant Director of Homelessness outlined how, over a ten-week period, service managers would come to have a firm understanding of all live homeless application cases.

In response to a Member's question, the Strategic Lead (Housing) provided an overview of the work to build more affordable homes in the city.

The Deputy Leader reported that more investment was needed from national government to build affordable housing, including social rented housing, at the scale that was needed, although the Council was working hard with its partners to maximise what could be delivered. She advised that the case needed to be made to the next national government about what big cities needed from them to address the housing crisis, and in the meantime, Members should continue to lobby on Section 21 evictions and the Local Housing Allowance.

In response to a Member's question, the Assistant Director of Homelessness advised that the future plans for the 'A Bed Every Night' (ABEN) scheme and the Etrop Service were still being discussed. He advised that the focus on families in relation to the 200 units was due to the legal position that bed-and-breakfast accommodation was never suitable for a family and could only be used in exceptional circumstances and then for no longer than six weeks, and also the negative impact that being in bed-and-breakfast accommodation had on children; however, he highlighted other work focused on single people which was detailed in the report. He advised that the 200 units would be almost exclusively within Manchester although consideration could be given to locations on the borders of the city. He advised that placing families in these 200 units would save the Council £7 million per year and provide them with decent accommodation. He explained how Camden's allocations policy encouraged people to contact the Council earlier which gave more time to find a solution for their housing issue and that this had informed the proposal for Manchester to change its allocations policy. In response to a Member's question, he advised that there was no timeframe for how long someone could be placed in temporary accommodation and that it was usually until a longer term accommodation offer could be found, which could be a number of years. In response to a question about people who could not provide a guarantor, which was requested by some private landlords, he advised that the service considered each case on an individual basis and would negotiate with landlords to reach an equitable solution.

The Director of Housing Operations informed the Committee that his service was looking at 44 Council assets which could be considered for re-purposing as accommodation. He outlined how homelessness prevention work would help keep people in their own communities with their support networks. He advised that the number of void social rented properties had significantly reduced and was now less than 1.5% of housing stock.

The Chair asked whether the Committee had received a response to the letter sent to Michael Gove in November 2022 and, as they had not, requested that a further letter be sent, inviting him to Manchester to see the impact of the government's policies in the city and to see the strengths of the people of Manchester and the great work that Council officers were doing. She also thanked officers for their work.

## **Decisions**

1. To write to Michael Gove to invite him to visit Manchester.

2. To receive a further report early in the next municipal year.

## **CESC/23/03                      Bonfire Night Events**

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which provided an overview of the approach to planning and delivery of a safe Bonfire/fireworks season. The report included details of anti-social behaviour during this period and an assessment of the impact of the Council's decision not to reinstate Bonfire Night events during 2022.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Background information;
- The Greater Manchester Bonfire Campaign 2022;
- Bonfire and fireworks incidents; and
- The future of Bonfire Night events.

Paula Lyons from GMFRS informed the Committee that her service's official report would not be available until early February but that it would be shared with partners when it was available. She reported that the service's data showed that there had been a slight increase in bonfire and firework-related incidents in 2022 but fewer attacks on firefighters, with two incidents involving the throwing of fireworks at firefighters and fire engines.

Superintendent Paul Walker from GMP reported that it was expected that there would be a level of anti-social behaviour up to and including Bonfire Night and that the levels in 2022 were as expected in a typical year.

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

- That official Bonfire Night displays held in Wythenshawe Park in previous years had created problems for local people, for example in relation to parking, and that, as a local Ward Councillor, a Member had received positive comments from residents about not having this issue around Bonfire Night 2022, rather than people complaining that an official event was not held;
- The environmental impact of Bonfire Night events, including people travelling to an official display;
- The community events and activities to replace Bonfire Night displays and whether these were held in or attracted people from the wards highlighted in the report as the worst affected by fireworks incidents; and
- Identifying shops which were selling fireworks to children.

The Head of Parks outlined the reasons for not reinstating the Bonfire Night displays in 2022, including the funding gap which would have required diverting funds from other areas, the environmental impact of the events and that, with the cost-of-living rise, many people were less able to afford to spend money on the income-generating elements of the events, such as food and drink stalls and funfairs. She informed Members about alternative events which were being provided throughout the winter period, which had included the provision of free or low-cost food. She reported that she could provide details of the events broken down by localities. She advised that

not having to plan and prepare for the Bonfire Night events had enabled Parks staff to focus on engaging with local residents and raising quality standards but that the decision would be reviewed for 2023. In response to a Member's question, she confirmed that the Council had previously applied for and received a grant of £10,000 from GMFRS towards safely putting on Bonfire Night events but that, if the Council had applied for the grant for 2022, they would only have been able to bid for £5,000.

In response to a Member's question, the Head of Compliance, Enforcement, and Community Safety reported that it was difficult to establish whether there was a causal link between anti-social behaviour and official Bonfire Night displays being held but that, when the full figures for 2022 were available, officers would be able to undertake a more detailed analysis. She reported that her service had undertaken visits to fireworks retailers but had received no complaints this year of under-age sales. She advised that test purchases would be undertaken at any retailers for which they received complaints about under-age sales. She reported that her service would use the analysis of the data from 2022 to identify areas where there were higher levels of firework incidents and look at fireworks retailers in those areas.

Paula Lyons reported that a range of factors, such as the weather, impacted on the level of incidents around Bonfire Night and that GMFRS had increased its community intervention with schools in the build-up to Bonfire Night 2022 which could have impacted on the number of incidents.

The Chair reported that residents in her ward had been disappointed not to have a Bonfire Night display in their local park but that, instead, a well-attended and well-received event had taken place in the run-up to Christmas. She thanked officers for putting on that event and requested that a similar event take place in 2023.

The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods reported that it had been a difficult decision not to go ahead with the official Bonfire Night displays in 2022 but that it had been the right decision, based on the information so far, although they were still waiting for all the data to be available to make a full evaluation. She outlined the considerable amount of work over months involving different Council services and partners to put on safe, funded Bonfire Night events. She informed Members that work was taking place to ensure that there were other activities in parks and ensure that parks were used all year round. She advised that young people did not always feel safe on Bonfire Night and that the Council was looking to put alternative events in place and she encouraged Members to contact her with any suggestions they had. She offered to provide a further update at an appropriate time.

The Chair recognised the hard work of officers and thanked GMP and GMFRS for all their work to keep Manchester residents safe.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Housing Operations which provided an overview of the advice services within the city. It detailed the range of provision across the city and outlined the outcomes achieved through the advice contracts that the Council commissioned. It articulated the pressures that were increasing for all advice providers in serving Manchester's population and explained the offer that other advice providers gave, including the Council's retained advice service and Registered Providers provision.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- An overview of the advice services in Manchester;
- Advice demand, trends, and pressures, including the impact of cost-of-living rises;
- The impact of the City Wide Advice Service contract, including social value and tackling inequalities;
- Manchester Advice Forum;
- The response to COVID-19; and
- Future demand and delivery.

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

- To praise the work of advice workers and their tenacity in contacting companies to seek a resolution;
- That the problems residents were contacting Ward Councillors about were increasingly complex and it would be helpful for Members to be provided with some guidance or training on where best to signpost residents depending on the situations they needed advice on;
- Access to advice services for people who were working during the day;
- To note that trade unions provided advice on employment issues to their members and to encourage workers to join a trade union; and
- How the locations for the Mobile Advice Van were communicated.

The Strategic Lead for Homelessness agreed to work with advice organisations to arrange training for Members. She reported that work had taken place to improve digital access to advice outside of office hours, including a digital chatbox. She advised that over the next year the Council would be reviewing what was needed in terms of advice services, in preparation for putting in place a new contract from 2024, and that this would include consideration about what was needed in terms of advice access on evenings and weekends.

In response to the Member's question about the Mobile Advice Van, the Service Manager (Homelessness) reported that Citizens Advice had targeted publicity in the areas where the Advice Van was visiting and that she would speak to Citizens Advice and the Council's Communications Team about improving communication in regards to this, if Members were not seeing this information. The Member stated that the Advice Van might not currently be visiting her ward but that it would be useful if it did. The Deputy Leader advised that Members could suggest to Citizens Advice any



locations that they felt that the Advice Van should visit via their website, or through her or the Service Manager.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Strategic Lead for Homelessness advised that retained advice services were within the Adult Social Care Directorate. She informed the Committee that representatives from a core group of services were meeting to look at how best to serve the demands arising from the cost-of-living crisis. The Deputy Leader reported that an additional £200,000 would be spent in 2023/24 to give additional capacity to advice services in response to the cost-of-living crisis.

The Chair welcomed the work taking place and asked that the Committee's thanks be passed on to all those providing advice services across the city.

### **Decisions**

1. To receive an update at an appropriate time.
2. To request that Ward Councillors be provided with training on signposting residents to advice services.

[Councillor Wilson declared a disclosable pecuniary interest as an employee of the Trussell Trust and left the room for this item.]

### **CESC/23/05            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.

The Chair proposed that the Committee receive the update report on Homelessness in either May or June 2023 and requested that Committee Members be provided with a briefing note on the analysis of the information on Bonfire Night 2022, when this was available.

### **Decision**

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



## **Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 6 December 2022**

#### **Present:**

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

#### **Also present:**

Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Finance and Resources  
Councillor White, Executive Member for Housing and Development  
Councillor Stanton, Deputy Executive Member for Finance and Resources  
Councillor H Priest, Member of the Housing Advisory Board  
Christine Leyland, Co-opted Member of the Housing Advisory Board  
Safeena Rather, Co-opted Member of the Housing Advisory Board

**Apologies:** Councillor Good and Kirkpatrick

#### **RGSC/22/53 Urgent Business**

Upon opening the meeting, the Chair informed members that meetings of the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee would be held on Thursday mornings from the start of the new municipal year in May 2023.

#### **RGSC/22/54 Minutes**

#### **Decision:**

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

#### **RGSC/22/55 Housing Advisory Board**

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director – Neighbourhoods, which provided an update on the new governance arrangements in respect of the Council's housing stock. The new Housing Advisory Board provided oversight of Manchester City Council Housing Services, which was formerly Northwards ALMO, and was a key contributor to empowering tenants and ensuring that North Manchester residents helped to shape and held the Council's Housing Service to account.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- In January 2021, Manchester City Council agreed to bring the ALMO Northwards Housing back in house and the transfer of the ALMO took place on 5 July 2021;
- The Housing Advisory Board began meeting in July 2022 and the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee was instrumental in its formation;

- The purpose of the Housing Advisory Board and the key responsibilities of Board Members;
- The Board meets bi-monthly and was made up of 5 local residents/tenants, 6 elected members (including the Chair, Exec Member for Housing and Development) and 3 co-opted housing professionals;
- The recruitment of the resident members to the board received a very high response, with over 300 residents expressing an interest. Officers remain in contact with all applicants to ensure a diverse network to engage with on future plans and current performance;
- Deep dive sessions on areas of particular focus and interest, such as the Housing Revenue Account, Zero Carbon and the Social Housing Bill, are undertaken as part of the Board's collective learning and development; and
- There are two audit recommendations to fully implement over the remainder of the financial year, which relate to learning and development and further equalities reporting.

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

- A previous recommendation made by the Committee for all Housing Advisory Board agendas to be circulated to all members, and why this had not happened;
- Whether the Board's remit required revision to include private finance initiative (PFI) properties;
- How the Board could encourage residents to remain engaged; and
- The number of voids - when a property is unoccupied for a period of time – and what was causing such a high level.

In introducing the item, the Executive Member for Housing and Development advised the committee that the Housing Advisory Board had met three times and that the governance of the Board was robust.

Members of the Housing Advisory Board, including a local elected member and independent co-opted members, attended the meeting and provided their insights into the work of the Housing Advisory Board. They explained their motivations for joining the Board and their role in holding the Board to account.

The Director of Housing Operations responded to members' queries and committed to sharing all past and future agendas for the Housing Advisory Board to members.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development acknowledged a local gap in the governance of PFI properties and welcomed members' feedback.

In response to a member query on further engagement with residents, the Director of Housing Operations confirmed that this would continue and highlighted the significant engagement with a strong network of residents. He also highlighted new tenant satisfaction measures, as part of the Social Housing Bill requiring statutory tenant engagement. There was much to collaborate with residents on and the Housing Advisory Board would oversee a systematic approach to this.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development also suggested the possibility of undertaking tenant scrutiny panels as the Board progressed.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development explained that the Council had inherited a high level of voids from Northwards when the council housing stock was brought in-house. This was largely due to the Covid pandemic which had caused a backlog of repairs and labour and issues in accessing properties, which was a challenge faced by the housing provider sector as a whole. The issue of voids had been considered at every meeting of the Housing Advisory Board with a deep dive undertaken at the last meeting.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development explained that the number of voids was reported at the last Board meeting as 178, which was a reduction but remained significant. He commented that the Council strongly sought to reduce the overall number of voids, particularly given housing need in Manchester. Work was being undertaken to assess the relet programme, handover of keys, use of contractors and void standard in order to reduce the number of unoccupied properties. He also advised members that there was a target of less than 100 voids by April 2023.

#### **Decision:**

That the report be noted.

#### **RGSC/22/56 Housing Revenue Account**

The committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, Strategic Director – Growth and Development and Strategic Director – Neighbourhoods which provided an update on the ongoing work being undertaken to finalise the 2023/24 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget. The final proposed budget would be brought back to Members in March as part of budget approvals.

The report also outlined the current assumptions for the 2023/24 HRA budget and the impact of the proposals on both the HRA and tenants, given the current economic climate and cost-of-living pressures.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The HRA is a ring-fenced account and must, in general, balance on a year-to-year basis, so that the costs of running the Housing Service, can be met from HRA income;
- The Government stipulates that registered providers may not increase rents by more than Consumer Price Inflation (at September of the previous year) plus one percentage point in any year, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in the November 2022 Autumn Statement that social housing rents would be capped at an increase of no more than 7% due to current high inflation rates.

- HRA reserves are forecast to be around c£90m at the end of the current financial year (2022/23) and are forecast to reduce to around £44m by 2026/27;
- As of October 2022, the HRA is forecasting that expenditure for the current year will be £17.7m higher than income and this would be funded through the use of reserves
- The HRA budget was being modelled on the basis of a 7% rent increase to all tenants with effect from April 2023 and if this increase is approved by members, it would produce an average weekly rent (based on 52 weeks) of:
  - General Needs £83.88 (£5.49 increase)
  - Supported Housing £76.45 (£5.00 increase)
  - PFI Managed £98.15 (£6.42 increase)
- Housing benefit levels had not been capped and any approved rent increase would be covered in full for those residents in receipt of 100% Housing Benefit entitlement or Universal Credit (housing element).

The key points and queries which arose from the committee's discussions included:

- Whether the government would fund the difference between the 7% rent cap and 11.1%, which would have been the proposed increase had the rent cap not been applied;
- Work undertaken to mitigate inflationary pressures and 'bad debt', including non-payment of rent;
- The extra work required to address voids and issues with damp and mould in properties;
- Whether any flexibility was built into the budget regarding heat charges, given that the energy price cap will end in March 2023;
- How the Council was ensuring deliverability on the contract with Equans, who were commissioned to bring voids back into use;
- Seeking clarification as to whether the Council had assumed an annual 3% rent increase from 2024/25 onwards;
- Types of hardship funds and cost-of-living support provided by other Registered Providers in Manchester;
- Residents' views on the level of voids in Manchester, and whether there were any particular "hotspots" for these;
- The viability of the Right to Buy scheme, and the impact this has on the Housing Revenue Account;
- Emphasising that the 7% rent cap is a limit and not a requirement, and that a 7% rent increase would have a significantly detrimental impact on many Manchester families.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member for Finance and Resources explained to the committee that a decision was still to be taken on the Council's rent increase for 2023/24. He explained that the government had undertaken a consultation on whether to impose a rent cap of either 3%, 5% or 7%, which contrasted with the national rent policy which allowed social housing rents to be increased by up to the consumer price index (CPI) plus 1% and would have meant next year's rents increasing by 11.1%.

He advised that a 7% cap had been imposed but acknowledged the inflationary pressures facing the Housing Revenue Account, which was required to balance for a 30-year period.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources also confirmed that the government would not fund the difference between the 7% rent cap and the 11.1% based on CPI.

The Head of Finance for Corporate Core and Strategic Development advised that a provision of 1% per annum based on rental income had been built into the business plan for bad debts and this would be kept under review. However, previous experiences indicated that concerns over the introduction of Universal Credit leading to an increase in non-payment of rent were unfounded and this was largely due to work undertaken by Northwards previously and the Council presently in building relations with tenants and promoting early intervention.

The Director of Housing Operations explained that removing damp and mould was part of the Council's repairs programme and that this had been prioritised lately given recent events surrounding the death of a child due to mould in social housing elsewhere in the country.

In response to a member query around heating charges, the Head of Finance for Corporate Core and Strategic Development explained that the previous year's budget included a 20% cap for heating charges and increases in the Ofgem price cap and heating charges had resulted in an in-year deficit within the HRA. Officers were working through the impact of this for 2023/24 and this would be brought back to the committee in February 2023 as part of the budget approval process.

Regarding the work of Equans, members were advised that the contract began in April 2021 with 6500 outstanding repairs jobs, of which 2000 remained. The number of voids had decreased from 260 at the commencement of the contract to 178, and a plan had been devised for March and April 2023 to get the number of voids back to the pre-pandemic figure.

Assurances were provided by both the Executive Member for Housing and Development and the Director of Housing Operations that the Council was doing all it could within the current contract to reduce the number of voids and outstanding repairs and to ensure value-for-money for residents and the HRA.

The Head of Finance for Corporate Core and Strategic Development clarified that calculations of the surplus and deficit of the HRA's 30-year business plan were based on implementing either a 3%, 5% or 7% increase in 2023/24 and reverting to usual practice of an increase based on CPI plus 1% in subsequent years.

The Head of Strategic Housing also committed to providing additional information on the types of hardship funds and cost-of-living support provided by other Registered Providers in Manchester following the meeting.

In response to members' queries around residents views on the number of voids, the Executive Member for Housing and Development explained that the Housing Advisory Board had undertaken a 'deep dive' into the issue of voids at its last meeting and residents expressed strong views on the issue. He emphasised the moral responsibility of the Council in helping those in temporary accommodation and on the housing register. The Director of Housing Operations also advised that engagement had been undertaken with residents during the summer with over 500 responses as to what residents wanted from the service. Many comments were centred around increased visibility in the community and repairs.

It was noted that hotspots for voids could be identified by tenure type, particularly around older stock. The Executive Member for Housing and Development endeavoured to look into geographical hotspots and provide an update to members.

The Head of Finance for Corporate Core and Strategic Development provided assurances around the impact of the Right to Buy scheme on the HRA and explained that assumptions on housing stock were built into the 30-year business plan. It was noted, however, that expenditure would need to be reduced to offset any reduction in rent income as a result of residents utilising the scheme. The Executive Member for Housing and Development also highlighted the Council's progress in building more social housing to offset any reductions and expressed his desire for the Right to Buy scheme to be either scrapped or fundamentally reformed to ensure financial sustainability.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources recognised the hardships which residents were facing and urged residents to take advantage of the Hardship Fund offered by the Council.

#### **Decision:**

That the report be noted.

#### **RGSC/22/57 Capital Programme - Impact of Recent Market Changes and Budget Process**

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer which provided an update on the impact of recent changes in the financial and construction markets on the capital programme and provided an update on the proposed capital budget process for 2023/24.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The current forecast for the approved capital programme over this year and the next 3 years is £1,037.8m;



- The Council has seen costs rise across the programme since the start of 2022 and some projects have sought budget increases given the severity of the cost increases;
- Whilst the forecast over the medium term is for inflation to subside, the price increases are not expected to reverse;
- The cost of debt available to the Council from the Public Works Loan Board has on average more than doubled since December 2021, resulting in increased ongoing revenue costs associated with additional borrowing;
- The current approved programme remains affordable and the Council has budgeted for capital financing costs across a number of years and built up a capital financing reserve from funding including underspends in the historic annual capital financing budget to smooth the effects of potential increases in interest rates;
- A set of principles were proposed to ensure that the limited capital resources are prioritised to achieve best value for money. Projects should demonstrate that they support corporate priorities, including both low carbon and social value, and will be supported to proceed if:
  - the project is fully funded by external grants and contributions;
  - the project generates additional capital receipts to the Council, so the impact on resources is minimal; or
  - the project will generate a robust net income stream or revenue savings that is sufficient to meet the associated capital financing costs and therefore be funded on an invest to save basis
- Additional borrowing will only be considered for funding a project as a last resort, if there are no other funding sources available and the project is of critical importance to the Council;
- Proposed changes to the approval process for capital expenditure, to ensure it remains fit for purpose, reflects best practice and provides a strategic top-down as well as bottom-up approach to the development of the future programme;
- Proposals would continue to be developed and would form part of the Capital Strategy to go to Executive in February 2023.

In introducing the item, the Chair informed the committee that he had recently undertaken a tour of the Town Hall, which was undergoing renovation, and encouraged other members to do the same.

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

- The proposed changes to when key decisions are taken on capital expenditure, and the impact this would have on the call-in process;
- Requesting an update on the progress of the Council's Levelling Up Funding (LUF) bid;
- If the Council was intending on taking a tougher line on Section 106 payments given the necessity of this revenue stream;
- Expressing concern over a suggestion that S106 monies could be used to fund projects which were not in the area of the awarding development, and how local members would be involved in the process;

- How the implementation of a due diligence template would facilitate a more robust decision-making process; and
- Seeking clarification as to the amount of additional borrowing required to fund the capital programme.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer explained that the capital programme existed in a more constrained environment given the increased cost of borrowing and inflation rate. The current capital programme had facilitated significant investment in Manchester and highlighted the parameters for future programmes.

In response to a query from the Chair regarding the proposal to amend the Constitution to allow key decisions for capital expenditure to be taken at the point that the budget increase is approved, the Deputy City Treasurer confirmed that this would allow the call-in process to begin at the time that the budget is set, as opposed to when a contract is awarded. This would improve transparency and the role of the Scrutiny Committee.

The Deputy City Treasurer advised members that the Council was successful in the first round of Levelling Up Funding and a bid had been submitted within the second round for the regeneration of Wythenshawe district centre. Any funding would be capped at £20 million and a decision was anticipated before Christmas. He also acknowledged the need for the Council to only apply for grants and funding which is relevant to the corporate priorities.

It was clarified that any S106 monies would continue to be linked to the schemes to which they are associated and that the proposed changes to the capital approval process were aimed to bring funding streams together to maximise resources and target priorities. The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer stated that the report highlighted the importance of maximising all income streams, including S106, and making sensible decisions around the capital programme.

With regards to the proposed due diligence template, the Deputy City Treasurer explained that this would form an initial 'sense test' for projects to ensure they fit with the Council's priorities, whether it could generate external funding, budget implications and deliverability.

The Deputy City Treasurer also explained that the capital programme would cost c£1 billion over 5 years with the Council borrowing around half of this. This amount had not yet been borrowed fully but Members were assured that the Council had the budget and means to repay this.

### **Decision:**

That the report be noted.

### **RGSC/22/58 Update on Autumn Statement**

The committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer which provided an updates on the main announcements from the Autumn Statement delivered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Jeremy Hunt MP, to the House of

Commons on 17 November 2022. The report also focused on the implications of the Statement for local government funding.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- A total of £55bn was announced in either public spending cuts or tax rises;
- Pensions and benefits were increased by the September 2022 inflation rate of 10.1% and would come into place in April 2023;
- Government department spend will increase more slowly than planned, below the current inflation rate, with exceptions in health and education, which have had increases in their budgets;
- The financial impact on the Council's position remained unknown until the finance settlement is received in late December;
- Positive announcements were around increased funding for adult social care, a continued freeze of the business rates multiplier and an extension and enhancement of the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) reliefs scheme into 2023/24, plus a Supporting Small Business Scheme (SSBS);
- The announcements within the Autumn Statement were expected to have a positive impact on the funds available to the council for the next couple of years but there remained significant unknowns around the New Homes Bonus, the Services Grant and the Fair Funding Review; and
- The Statement's focus on three core priorities for economic growth -energy, infrastructure and innovation.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources stated that there were some positives announced in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, although he asserted that many difficult decisions after 2025 would need to be taken by local authorities and not the government.

He explained that the Council would benefit from compensation from the business rates multiplier freeze and increased funding for adult social care. The Council's financial position would become clearer upon receipt of the Finance Settlement, which was expected in late December 2022.

He advised the committee that there was inadequate support within the Autumn Statement to mitigate against the financial implications currently facing local authorities and there was no guarantee that future funding would rise in line with inflation.

#### **Decision:**

That the report be noted.

#### **RGSC/22/59 Setting of the Council Tax Base and Business Rates Shares for Budget Setting Purposes**

The committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer which outlined the methodology of calculating the City Council's council tax base and business rates income for budget setting purposes for 2023/24. The report also

explained the timing of related payments and the decision on business rates pool membership.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The calculation of the council tax base is the number of dwellings within the Council's boundary presented as 'Band D equivalent'. Dwellings outside Band D are converted into a proportionate Band D value and individual band bills are calculated in the ratios proportionate to Band D;
- The number of properties is adjusted to take account of discounts and exemptions for disabled occupants, single occupiers, students, exempt dwellings and reductions in accordance with the council tax support scheme and non-collection of council tax;
- The fluctuating numbers of students and the transient population in Manchester make it difficult to predict how many properties will be exempt, empty or occupied by a single person;
- Manchester has been part of the Greater Manchester business rates retention pilot since 2017/18 which means that 99% of yield will be retained by the Council and 1% paid to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority;
- The starting point for the calculation of the business rates base is the estimate of gross business rates payable by business ratepayers in 2023/24 and is adjusted by the forecast cost of mandatory and discretionary reliefs;
- The Council is required to estimate any business rates surplus or deficit on their Collection Fund for the relevant year and any such estimated surplus or deficit is shared between the billing authority and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority;
- An application was submitted to Government for the ten Greater Manchester authorities to form a Business Rates Pool in 2023/24 and each authority will need approval, through its respective governance arrangements, with a final decision on whether to participate in the 2023/24 Pool required within 28 days of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, which is expected in late December; and
- Payment dates for the share of council tax payable to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority must be agreed and notified before 31 January 2023. The payment dates are proposed as the 20th of each month for 2023/24; and
- How the Council approaches Council Tax debt recovery.

In introducing the item, the Chair thanked officers for providing additional information regarding the Council's procedure for debt recovery, which was included as an addendum to the report.

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

- Commending the Council for a reduction in using enforcement agents to recover debts, and querying what more could be done to reduce this;
- The Council's procedure for dealing with complaints made against Enforcement Agents;
- Noting that the recovery process would stop if a resident contacted the Council and made and kept to an arrangement for payment;

- The need to recognise those facing mental health issues and how this impacts their ability to deal with financial difficulties and debts;
- Whether any information sharing was in place with partners to gain a clearer understanding of the personal circumstances of those who owed money;
- Noting that there was an increase of c.8000 Band D equivalent properties for 2022/23, and how many more were anticipated for 2023/24;
- How the Council's membership in a business rates pool with other Greater Manchester authorities would be advantageous; and
- Whether the Council would be required to pay central government if there was a decline in business rates growth in Manchester.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer explained that decisions around the estimated council tax surplus or deficit for 2022/23; the 2023/24 council tax base; the estimated business rates surplus or deficit for 2022/23; the 2023/24 business rates income; the Council's membership in the business rate pool with other Greater Manchester local authorities; and the dates of precept payments to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority would be taken as Key Decisions by the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Resources, and that the Chair of the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee would be requested to waive these decisions from the call-in procedure.

She also explained that the Council's business rates position was particularly complex for 2023/24 due to the pending re-evaluation and the Council tax position was increasingly volatile due to the need to ascertain correct estimates for student exemptions and new properties.

In response to a question around what more could be done to reduce the use of Enforcement Agents in collecting money owed, the Head of Corporate Revenues advised that over the last 10 years, the Council had utilised all information they had to contact and engage with residents who owed money to come to a mutually sustainable solution. The Council was also identifying companies who encourage residents through text messages and automated phone calls to engage with the Council. This had been trialled in other areas and had a good response rate.

He also informed members of a HMRC trial, which provided the Council with information on residents' employer and earnings and further encouraged them to contact the Council. Staff were currently making contact with those residents earning over £40,000 pa.

Officers had been instructed to take account of cost-of-living pressures when making sustainable arrangements, recognising the pressure on resident's finances.

The Head of Corporate Revenues advised that all Enforcement Agents wear body cameras with audio and visual recording functionality, and this could be utilised in response to a complaint. He explained that work was undertaken several years ago to examine the number of complaints against Enforcement Agents, and this was low, with around 5 complaints per company per year. He also provided an example where the Council had requested that a particular Enforcement Agent did not work in Manchester due to a complaint around conduct.

Members were also informed of criteria within the Enforcement Agents' Code of Practice, such as mental health issues and recent bereavement, which required Agents to desist from visiting a resident who may be suffering or dealing with personal issues. All enforcement companies had Vulnerability Teams, who would assume responsibility for collecting money owed in a sensitive manner. The Council would also take any mitigating information around mental health or personal circumstances into account before passing details over to Enforcement Agents and would make further efforts to engage with residents prior to this.

A GDPR issue was acknowledged in response to a question around information sharing with partners, but the Revenues team had provided training previously to the Adult Social Care officers on council tax, to enable staff in the community to understand the payment process and encourage residents to pay. The Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services explained that his service was looking at how best to link with the cost-of-living advice service which offered pathways to advice and support related to benefits, help with rent, debt and food poverty and worked in conjunction with Citizens Advice Manchester to provide holistic support to residents and acknowledge the wider issues as to why a resident may be in council tax arrears.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer explained, in response to a question from the Chair, that future forecasts of Band D equivalent properties were aligned with information from the Council's housing department on proposed new developments, but this is not an exact figure as properties are not formally recognised until assessed by the Valuation Office.

The Deputy Chief Treasurer advised that a 2% increase in the tax base was assumed for 2023/24 and would provide a figure as to how many properties this equated to following the meeting.

It was stated that the Greater Manchester business rates pool would be advantageous for Manchester City Council if the pool was not a part of the 100% business rates growth pilot as this would enable the Council to retain its entire business rates income. Membership of the 50% business rates growth pilot would mean that grant funding would be provided to 9 of 10 Greater Manchester authorities, including Manchester City Council, with Trafford Council having to pay a tariff to central government and would be disadvantageous to the Greater Manchester economy.

The Deputy City Treasurer advised that there was a baseline of 97% for business rates growth, under which the government would compensate a local authority. He assured the committee that the business rates growth in Manchester was above 97% as a result of cumulated growth.

In summarising the item, the Executive Member for Finance and Resources reiterated that the use of Enforcement Agents in collecting debts was a last resort, that residents had a minimum of 12 opportunities to engage with the Council regarding their payments and that those on the Council Tax Support Scheme would not be referred to Enforcement Agents. He also highlighted that low income was not

always the reason why a person may not pay council tax. However, he stated that council tax formed a substantial part of the revenue budget and was needed to provide essential and basic services.

**Decision:**

That the Committee

1. notes that the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Resources, has delegated powers to:
  - agree the estimated council tax surplus or deficit for 2022/23;
  - set the 2023/24 council tax base for tax setting purposes in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2013;
  - agree the estimated business rates surplus or deficit for 2022/23;
  - calculate the 2023/24 business rates income for budget setting purposes in accordance with the Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations;
  - determine whether the Council should be part of a business rate pooling arrangements with other Greater Manchester local authorities in 2023/24;
  - set the dates of precept payments to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.
2. notes that the Chair of the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee will be requested to exempt various key decisions from the call-in procedure; and
3. recommends that the Council's partner agencies be provided with training on Council Tax to provide a collaborative holistic approach to residents requiring support.

**RGSC/22/60 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.

In response to a query regarding the Major Contracts Oversight Board, which the committee had recommended be established, the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer confirmed that a meeting had taken place in November with a further one scheduled for January 2023. It was agreed that a report on the work of the Board would be added to the Committee's work programme for a suitable time.

**Decision:**

That the report be noted and the work programme agreed.





## **Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 10 January 2023**

#### **Present:**

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

#### **Also present:**

Councillor Craig, Leader of the Council  
Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Finance and Resources  
Councillor Rawlins, Executive Member for Environment and Transport  
Councillor Stanton, Deputy Executive Member for Finance and Resources

**Apologies:** Councillor Wheeler

#### **RGSC/23/1 Interests**

During the course of discussions, Councillor Rowles declared a personal interest in item 6 – Decarbonisation of the Operational Estate.

#### **RGSC/23/2 Minutes**

##### **Decision:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 6 December 2022 be approved as a correct record.

#### **RGSC/23/3 Election Act 2022**

The committee considered a report of the Chief Executive, which outlined the planning and governance arrangements for the implementation of the Elections Act in Manchester.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The Elections Act 2022 was introduced to make new provision for and amendments to existing electoral law and will come into effect over the next two years, impacting delivery of Local Elections in 2023, the Local and Mayoral Elections in 2024, and the next Parliamentary General Election;
- The main legislative changes, including:
  - Requiring voters to show an approved form of photo ID at polling stations before a ballot paper is issued
  - A requirement to provide reasonable equipment to assist voters with disabilities in polling stations

- Allowing all British citizens living overseas to vote in UK Parliamentary elections, regardless of when they left the UK, with applications required every 3 years
- Enabling electors to apply online for an absent vote, with both online and paper applications requiring the applicant's identity to be verified
- Requiring postal voters to reapply every three years
- Further limit to the number of people an elector may act as proxy for
- Political campaigners will no longer be permitted to handle postal votes, and the number of postal votes an individual can hand in at a polling station will be limited.
- A review of the eligibility to vote for some EU citizens
- The scheduled implementation of these changes and suitable ID for voters to show at polling stations;
- Work was underway within the Council to plan the 'front door' access, and what is required for the electors' journey and processing of their enquiry;
- Modelling work had been undertaken with the support of Performance, Research and Intelligence (PRI) to determine what transaction volumes could look like in polling stations, to model resourcing requirements;
- Staff numbers had been increased per station and an additional five stations have been added to polling places where historical information indicated a larger turnout;
- Detail of the 'customer journey' in a station or the processes to check ID had not been finalised and shared by central government;
- The Elections Strategic Lead for Greater Manchester was leading on a project to seek a consistent approach to reasonable equipment and processes at all Polling Stations across the ten Greater Manchester Districts and meetings are taking place with GM Disabled persons groups to take their views on what can be delivered and how to communicate these provisions to disabled voters;
- The Electoral Commission will run a high-profile national campaign to raise awareness of the requirement for Voter ID, targeting those who may not already have the required photographic ID and a GM-wide approach to amplify this was proposed; and
- Members will be briefed on the changes being implemented, with initial focus around changes affecting May 2023 polls. The Member Working Group will also be re-established to provide regular updates as more information becomes available.

Key points and themes which arose from the committee's discussions included:

- The need for any specific electoral communications to be easily distinguished from other Council campaigns;
- Commending the inclusion of videos in British Sign Language to communicate changes around Voter Authority Certificates (VAC);
- Why only four housing associations were listed within the 2023 local elections communications approach;
- Whether members would be briefed on progress with implementing the changes arising from the Elections Act;

- Accessibility within polling stations and what flexibility there was to respond to unforeseen circumstances such as rain;
- When further information on the customer journey in polling stations and written training information was expected from central government;
- Noting that VACs can be applied for up until 6 working days before Election Day, and querying whether the Council had capacity to support this short timescale;
- Whether any Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) had been devised to monitor a return on investment in the joint campaign across Greater Manchester;
- If the joint GM campaign would utilise advertising space on screens across the city;
- Whether any additional funding would be provided from central government to mitigate the costs associated with changes introduced by the Election Act; and
- Communications regarding voting by post, and whether postal voting would be encouraged as an alternative to the new voter ID arrangements.

The Chair began discussions on the item by quoting a British Politics and Policy paper from the London School of Economics (LSE) which stated “*Conservative MPs frame voter ID as necessary to strengthen confidence in the electoral system despite public confidence in the running of elections being at its highest*” and a piece by a Young Voices UK contributor published on the Conservative Home website, which declared “*The government has failed to offer a compelling justification for voter ID requirement beyond fearmongering about non-existent fraud. These new guidelines seem to be little more than a rushed attempt to grant themselves a slightly less embarrassing election result by excluding groups more likely to vote for a non-Tory candidate*”.

In introducing the item, the City Solicitor explained that elections were ran well in Manchester in part due to a strong core Elections Team and the use of the whole organisation during the election periods. She clarified that the Election Act would come into effect over time and that two key changes would be implemented from May 2023 – voter ID and further accessibility requirements. The Electoral Commission’s consultation on voter ID was ongoing and the Council would wait to begin a communications campaign until the VAC application portal was launched.

The Leader of the Council stated that around 2 million people across the UK would be impacted by the changes introduced within the Election Act as a result of not having the appropriate forms of ID required and that this would disproportionately impact those from disadvantaged and deprived communities and those at risk of social exclusion. She highlighted the serious and focused effort of the Council’s Elections team and reiterated that the Council would amplify communications from the Electoral Commission and Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) in addition to its own targeted campaign.

The Head of Strategic Communications responded to members enquiries and provided assurances that the Council’s communications on VACs would be distinguishable from other campaigns. These would be created in the same style and

using the same graphics as the Electoral Commission's campaign, which featured a range of different colours. The format of communications would also be in line with the GM-wide approach.

A need for the communications to be wide-reaching was acknowledged and it was confirmed that the list of housing associations identified as channels for communication with residents was not exhaustive. Members were asked to contact the Communications team with details of other housing or community organisations who could help to reach residents.

The Electoral Services Corporate Delivery Manager explained that annual reviews were undertaken to ensure the accessibility of polling stations and risk assessments would be carried out with Presiding Officers, given their knowledge and experience of their polling station. Work was also being undertaken with GMCA and disability groups to ensure a consistent approach.

With regards to the flexibility of polling stations in dealing with unforeseen challenges and demand, members were advised that command and control hubs were in operation on Election Day and Polling Station Inspectors (PSIs) attended polling stations throughout the day. It was noted that transaction times in polling stations may be longer as a result of the Election Act's provisions and busier polling stations and staffing levels were being reviewed in response to this to mitigate queues and waiting times.

Members were also advised that other cultural and social requirements could be met, for example all polling stations would have moveable privacy screens for those wearing facial coverings and the number of female polling station staff was currently being finalised. Further information on this would be provided to members once complete.

Assurances were also provided that the changes arising from the Election Act would be covered in the Candidate and Agent Briefing and a Member Briefing was anticipated to be held.

In response to members' questions around capacity to manage the supply of VACs up to 6 days before an election, the City Solicitor advised that processes and resources were being put in place to enable VACs to be issued as soon as the government's online portal was launched. The Customer Services team had also employed additional staff to deal with telephone enquiries and all customer-facing employees within Customer Services had been briefed on the changes and timescales. The Electoral Services Corporate Delivery Manager also assured that her team was familiar with working to deadlines and time constraints given the nature of their roles. It was noted that there may be external challenges or issues around delivery of VACs, given the recent industrial action by Royal Mail, and officers would continue to monitor the situation.

Assurances were provided that additional staffing requirements had been adequately budgeted for and that the Council would apply for all available grants and funding

sources to offset any financial implication on the authority, although it was acknowledged that any grants or funding would typically be received after expenditure.

The Head of Strategic Communications informed the committee that it was difficult to scope KPIs for the communication campaign, but the Council would be able to measure and identify trends in social media engagement and the number of calls to the contact centre around key dates for the campaign.

Members were also advised, in response to a query, that GMCA's campaign approach included advertising on digital screens across the city. The costs involved in the purchase of this advertising space would be part-funded by Manchester City Council and by the Electoral Commission.

In response to a query from the Chair regarding whether postal voting would be encouraged as an alternative to the new voter ID arrangements, it was stated that the Council would not actively promote one method of voting over another and the level of communications encouraging residents to register for a postal vote would remain the same as previous years. Residents would, however, be encouraged to register for a postal vote earlier if they wished to vote via this method.

The Chair wished the Elections team and all staff involved in the running of elections good luck.

#### **Decision:**

That the Committee notes

1. the progress being made by the Elections Team and the Election Steering Group in relation to changes that will be introduced by the Election Act 2022 for the Local Elections on 4 May 2023;
2. the communication plan for local residents with regard to the changes for the May 2023 polls; and
3. the changes that will be introduced for polls after the local elections 2023.

#### **RGSC/23/4 Decarbonisation of the Operational Estate**

The committee considered a report of the Head of Estates and Facilities which outlined the activities and progress to date of the Zero Carbon Estate Programme and the decarbonisation of Manchester City Council's operational estate. These included MCC and grant funded retrofit projects delivered under the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and major capital schemes that were delivering energy efficiency and carbon reduction measures.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019 which recognised the need for the Council, and the city as a whole, to do more to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and mitigate the negative impacts of climate change;
- 316 buildings were reported against in the Buildings & Energy section of the Climate Change Action Plan 2020-25, including offices, depots, leisure centres, libraries, markets, properties that provide social care services to adults and children, buildings in parks and buildings owned by the council but operated by third parties;
- CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the operational estate had reduced by 7,161 tonnes (29.7%) compared to the baseline set by the Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2020-25;
- The completed phases of the Zero Carbon Estate Programme which upgraded energy conservation measures and invested in heat decarbonisation, energy efficiency and generation projects in 11 leisure centres;
- £18.2m of funding was received from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) for phases 1 and 2 and a further £3.1m had been awarded for phase 3a. A third bid for £1.2m of PSDS funding to support energy efficiency projects at the Town Hall Extension and Woodhouse Park Active Lifestyle Centre is awaiting decision;
- The projects currently being delivered;
- 80 Energy Audits had been commissioned from Equans to inform the long-term strategy for investment, the total scale of opportunity and key challenges;
- Other projects that are being delivered in addition to the Zero Carbon Estate Programme, which support the decarbonisation of the estate, including the refurbishment of the Town Hall; and
- Potential challenges to decarbonisation.

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

- Welcoming progress to date;
- Whether the Council would be able to continue decarbonisation works at the same pace in order to meet ambitions, given the challenges identified in the report;
- How guaranteed future funding was and where this could from and if it would be sufficient to continue the Council's decarbonisation agenda;
- Whether there was any health and safety impact on Council staff following installation of LED lighting in the Town Hall Extension;
- How decarbonisation was being approached in buildings which the Council owned but did not manage or operate;
- Why the graph of Council buildings emissions within the report did not include future projections;
- Why local authority-maintained schools were not included in decarbonisation plans;
- How much decarbonisation had occurred in Council buildings as a result of programmes to decarbonise the National Grid;
- Welcoming the installation of renewable energy generation capacity, and querying what more could be achieved by installing more solar panels;

- Why the National Football Museum was withdrawn from the scope of the works;
- Why there were no plans to make the Town Hall a zero carbon building;
- How often carbon emissions were measured; and
- If a financial figure of savings as a result of decarbonisation works was available.

The Head of Estates and Facilities introduced the item and explained that the carbon emissions from the Council's operational buildings amounted for around three quarters of the Council's total emissions, which meant it was a focus area for the Climate Change Action Plan.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport informed the committee of the Zero Carbon Coordination Group, which brought all Council directorates together to ensure a coordinated approach and to share learning and explore challenges. The Council also had a dedicated Zero Carbon section on the website and quarterly Climate Change Action Plan updates were reported to the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Mandie Shilton Godwin, Chair of the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee, submitted representations through the Chair and expressed her disappointment in the withdrawal of the National Football Museum from the scope of the Zero Carbon Estate Programme and stated that this demonstrated the present unsatisfactory national government system of allocating funding for such projects. She stated that this approach was constraining the city's ambition and queried why this had been withdrawn and whether it could be included in a future phase of the programme. In response, the Head of Estates and Facilities advised that the National Football Museum was a complicated building in terms of fabric and construction. There was also a challenge around using PSDS funding for works to this building as it stipulated that heating sources had to be changed from gas to an electric solution, which would require a ground source heat pump, and there was a lack of space around the Museum to enable this. He explained that some works had been undertaken at the Museum such as upgrades to air handling units to improve efficiency and contribute to reducing carbon emissions. The Council would also be able to take forward elements of the programme, such as LED lighting upgrades, for the Museum in the future.

In response to a member's query around funding, the Head of Estates and Facilities explained that there was a mix of different funding streams available, and the Council pursued external grant funding where possible and practical. There had been two successful funding bids for PSDS, and a third bid was hoped to be approved soon. There was also a significant amount of the Council's own resource invested in the programme, including on an invest-to-save basis, and some major capital schemes included firm commitments to reducing carbon emissions through these projects. There were plans to continue the carbon reduction programme, although it was not yet known if the PSDS would continue in the same form as previously, and the Head of Estates and Facilities confirmed that he was confident in the ability to continue the programme.

It was acknowledged that the future of the carbon reduction programme would change given the challenges outlined in the report and that the next phase of the programme would focus on larger Council-operated buildings which emit less carbon than those worked on in previous phases. There had been significant learning from previous phases for the Capital Programme, Energy Management and Finance teams and there had been investment in capacity to enable delivery of decarbonisation projects.

The Head of Estates and Facilities acknowledged the importance of sufficient lighting with the Town Hall Extension and explained that lighting had been upgraded throughout office spaces within the building. An advantage of this was that LED lighting levels were more adjustable compared to traditional lighting and the Health and Safety team were involved in the installation of this to ensure that lighting levels were adequate.

A query was raised regarding works to buildings which the Council owned but did not manage or operate and the committee was informed that some buildings had proposals for decarbonisation works in development and some works had been undertaken at Bridgewater Hall, such as connection to the cyclical heat network and LED lighting upgrades, and the Art Gallery.

In response to a question regarding a lack of future projections within the council building emissions graph, it was stated that this was due to accessibility of data as the Council's energy usage was based on meter readings in buildings and future usage and carbon emissions could not be predicted. Members were advised that there are targets set for future emissions and that the Council was currently meeting these.

It was clarified that decarbonisation of local authority-maintained schools was under consideration by the Council, but this fell within the remit of a different service. The Director of Education had recently met with schools to devise a plan for decarbonisation and officers from the Energy Management and Capital Programmes teams were assisting in this by sharing their learning and experiences.

The Head of Estates and Facilities expressed his hope that Energy Audits, which were underway and due for completion in May 2023, would identify where additional capacity was available to install more solar panels.

It was also clarified that the Town Hall was not included in the project's scope to become a zero-carbon building because of its status as a Grade I Listed Building, which restricted the ability to add significant retrofit elements.

Information on the amount of emissions reduced as a result of decarbonisation works to the National Grid and financial savings would be provided following the meeting.

**Decision:**



That the Committee notes

1. the activities and progress to date on the decarbonisation of Manchester City Council's operational estate, and
2. the pipeline of future projects that are in development.

### **RGSC/23/5 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2023/24 and Budget Assumptions**

The committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer which provided an update on the main announcements from the provisional local government finance settlement 2023/24, which was announced on 19 December 2022. The report also focused on the impact on the Council's budget for 2023/24 to 2025/26 and the next steps in the 2023/24 budget setting process.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The Council faced significant inflationary and demand pressures in both the current financial year and next, which the settlement addressed in part;
- The Council's proposed strategy was to use any additional funding, after covering new priority investment requirements and demand pressures, to help close the budget gap in future years and reduce the need for significant cuts in 2025/26 and beyond;
- Confirmation that the savings reported to the committee in November 2022 were sufficient to deliver a balanced budget next year without any additional savings requirement;
- The referendum principles for 2023/24, including a limit of 4.99% for upper tier authorities;
- Changes to business rates retention and the introduction of additional grant funding for social care;
- The scale of these policy changes could not have been predicted in advance of the Provisional Finance Settlement and are a significant change from the messages coming from government prior to the autumn statement; and
- Implications for the Council, including the medium- and longer-term risks.

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

- What was meant by additional targeted support for most vulnerable residents, if the Council Tax precept was raised;
- Whether additional funds for adult social care and children's services potentially raised from a 1% adult social care precept and the Social Care grant could be directed into specific areas of need;
- Staff pay awards;
- Noting that central government assumed that the Council would increase council tax;
- What the proposed council tax increase of 4.99% would equate to for the top and bottom band; and
- How questions were phrased on the council tax consultation.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources introduced the item and explained that there had been a recent marked shift in the Autumn Statement, the Policy Statement and the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement which acknowledged a gap in public sector finances that would take four years to remedy, with public sector cuts deferred until after 2025.

He explained that central government anticipated the Council increasing council tax to 4.99% to enhance income. He stated that the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement provided breathing space for the authority but the additional funding outlined within the report would not mitigate the inflationary pressures faced by the Council.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer explained that there had been three significant policy changes arising from the Autumn Statement and the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. Business rates would be frozen and local authorities would be compensated by central government for the difference. 3 additional grants for social care would also be awarded to the Council and would be ringfenced for supporting hospital discharges, social care improvement and a broader grant for children's and adult's social care. The final policy shift was around the reliance on the council tax precept to provide additional funding and an increase in the referendum limit from 2.99% with a further 1% for the adult social care precept and a further 1% for the general fund precept. She reiterated that none of this funding was guaranteed after the Spending Review period and that significant unknowns and budget gaps were anticipated following the public sector cuts planned for after 2025.

Members were also advised that additional funding would also result in additional costs. Inflation was predicted to be 7% in the next financial year, which was higher than originally anticipated and officers were working to link funding and costs. In response to a member enquiry about potential additional support for vulnerable residents, the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer advised that officers were working through options for this and explained that £3.55m had been added to the Council's budget to address immediate pressures including support for food banks, VCSE organisations and expanding the Council's welfare provisions. Members were also informed of a government scheme in 2024 which would provide a rebate of up to £25 to those on the Council Tax Support Scheme to mitigate the impact of increased council tax and the Council would look to provide similar support, particularly for residents at risk of first-time debt and those who have previously had a repayment plan with the Council.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources reiterated that social care funding grants were ringfenced and would be used to reduce pressures and demand. Options for how grant funding would be spent were still being assessed and work was ongoing with the Director of Adult Social Care to identify investment proposals and priorities and assurances were provided that members would have the opportunity to discuss proposals before a decision is taken.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer responded to a member's query about staff pay awards and explained that the pay award for 2022/23 had only been confirmed in December and pay negotiations for 2023/24 had begun. She advised

that an uplift of 4% was originally budgeted for the pay award and this would be assessed during the budget process to ensure it is sufficient.

In response to a question around the proposed council tax increase and what this would equate to for the top and bottom band, the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer confirmed that an increase of 2.99% was proposed. The impact of this increase had been modelled for those properties in Band A, Band D and on the Council Tax Support Scheme which had informed initial ideas around support for residents. The increase would result in an additional c.£2m income for the Council.

It was also highlighted that Manchester had the smallest council tax base of all metropolitan authorities and although some grant funding compensated for this, it did not counteract the issue and raising council tax would provide some financial benefits.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources stated that raising council tax was not done lightly, especially in the current financial climate, and clarified that the public consultation on council tax increases provided indications of where residents wanted their council tax money to be spent. The consultation explained that an increase of 2.99% of the general precept and 2% on the adult social care precept was proposed and that this additional revenue would be directed to those issues identified as priorities for residents and to improve adult social care.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer wished to put her thanks on record to the Council's Finance team for their work on the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, particularly as it was received close to Christmas. The Chair concurred with this sentiment.

**Decision:**

That the report be noted.

**RGSC/23/6 Overview Report**

The committee considered a report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which provided responses to recommendations, details of key decisions within the committee's remit and its work programme.

In response to a member's request, the Chair agreed to receive a report on the progress of the Major Contracts Oversight Board at the Committee's meeting in March 2023.

An amendment was also required to the work programme to reflect that the Committee would meet on Thursday, 25 May 2023.

**Decision:**

That

1. the report be noted and

2. the Committee's work programme be agreed, subject to the amendments outlined above.

# **Health Scrutiny Committee**

## **Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2022**

### **Present:**

Councillor Green – in the Chair

Councillors Nasrin Ali, Bayunu, Curley, Karney, Newman, Riasat, Reeves and Richards

**Apologies:** Councillors Appleby and Russell

### **Also present:**

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

Councillor Collins, Deputy Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care

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

Daniel Hall, NHS Gambling Treatment Service

Matt Gaskell, NHS Gambling Treatment Service

Joanne Oakes, Lead Nurse

Ruth Speight, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

## **HSC/22/52 Minutes**

In approving the minutes of the previous meeting a Member made reference to the comment that he raised under item reference HSC/22/51, in which he had discussed the need to scrutinise the provision and delivery of acute health services across a range of activities. He stated that an extraordinary meeting of the Health Scrutiny Committee should be convened to undertake this function.

The Chair stated that to undertake this task effectively Members should email her in the first instance with the areas they would specifically wish to have included for consideration so that the correct information and representatives could be invited to the meeting. She stated upon receipt of these requests she would liaise with the Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care to progress this.

### **Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2022 as a correct record, noting the above comments.

## **HSC/22/53 Gambling Related Harms**

The Committee considered the report of the Interim Deputy Director of Public Health that provided an update on the national, regional, and local context of Gambling Related Harms.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing a summary of the key findings from the Public Health England Gambling-related harms evidence review;
- Information on the recently published Greater Manchester Strategic Needs Assessment on Gambling Related Harms;
- Discussion of the epidemiology of gambling and associated harms;
- Current prevalence of gambling, noting that the estimated prevalence of 'problem gambling' within the adult population was 0.5% in the United Kingdom, however this increased to 0.8% in Greater Manchester i.e.18,100 adults;
- Harms associated with gambling, noting that research suggested that people living in the most deprived communities were nearly twice as likely to participate in gambling and were seven times more likely to experience problem gambling, compared with those living in the least deprived communities;
- The impact of gambling harms on communities;
- The work to prevent and reduce harm in Greater Manchester, including gambling treatment and support, and delivery of gambling related harms work;
- Consideration of the estimated economic burden of gambling; and
- Providing an overview of some of the activities that had taken place to support the strategic development of the gambling related harms programme both locally and sub-regionally.

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

- Welcoming the report and describing it as very informative;
- Noting that it was important to articulate and highlight the harms associated with gambling;
- Calling for further regulation of the gambling industry, with the support of local MPs with a similar approach to that taken against the wealthy tobacco industry;
- Noting the prevalence of digital gambling where there was little or no regulation of this sector;
- Commenting that betting shops operated as mini casinos and they tended to target the poorest areas;
- Future reports should include deep dives of specific areas of the city to understand the full impact of gambling in local communities;
- Expressing concern at the data presented in regard to the prevalence of gambling amongst the student population;
- The Council should use all of its powers and influence, working across all Directorates to discourage gambling by exploring all opportunities to provide alternative entertainment and diversionary offers; increased enforcement of venues and premises where gambling was facilitated and appropriate consideration given to the proximity of gambling venues to other facilities;
- All front line service workers needed to be trained to identify people who maybe experiencing difficulties associated with gambling; and
- Local prominent football teams in the city should be encouraged to support anti-gambling campaigns.

The Interim Deputy Director of Public Health stated that it was recognised that more needed to be done to increase front line workers awareness and knowledge of the issue of gambling related harms so that people could be signposted to the correct sources of support.

The Programme Lead, Public Health Team advised that the licensing function did monitor gambling premises and would respond to any concerns, however she added that currently the licensing regime was such that the presumption was to grant licenses for gambling premises unless a specific threshold could be proven. She further noted the concerns expressed regarding the proliferation of online gambling, noting that this had become normalised in society.

Matt Gaskell, NHS Gambling Treatment Service noted the comments raised by the Member in relation to the football industry and noted that many premier clubs were sponsored by wealthy and influential gambling companies which made it very difficult to engage with them on this issue. He further commented that a significant issue was the introduction of Fixed Odds Betting Terminals in betting shops, he stated that as the number of these were restricted in shops this accounted for the increase in the number of gambling premises. He also supported the observations and concern expressed in relation to online gambling. He commented that big tech used data to target people to maximise the amount of money they could extract from people, adding that the promotion of gambling as a leisure pursuit was not helpful. He further commented that the Authority could consider measures to restrict local advertising that promoted gambling.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care informed the Committee that this subject area had been recently considered and the approach in response to gambling related harms described had been endorsed by all partners of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

## **Decision**

1. The Committee recommend that the Executive and Lead Officer across each Directorate use their powers and spheres of influence to limit access to gambling across the city.
2. The Committee recommend that any future update reports should include deep dives of specific areas of the city to understand the full impact of gambling in local communities.

## **HSC/22/54 Adult Learning Disability Services**

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Services that outlined key developments across Health and Social Care in Manchester relating to Adult Learning Disability services.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Developments surrounding the commissioning strategy for Adults with a Learning Disability;
- Developments surrounding the Planning for People with Learning Disability Board, noting that the board would focus on the whole Learning Disability agenda, including improving equalities in health, housing, preparation for adulthood,

criminal justice services, social care, commissioning, and work within the community;

- The NHS Transforming Care agenda;
- Healthcare, with an additional focus surrounding the local response to the recent national Care Quality Commission (CQC) report that looked at the experiences of people with a Learning Disability and Autistic people, when they needed physical health care and treatment in hospital;
- Transition to Adulthood, noting the approach for citizens who were transitioning into adulthood, as well as support for their carers/families throughout the process; and
- Information in relation to the Manchester City Council/Manchester Local Care Organisation In-House Provider Services review, including Supported Accommodation, Day Services and Short Breaks.

The report was accompanied by a presentation that highlighted the key areas of activity described within the report.

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

- Noting that the voice of the citizen and lived experience were missing from the report, noting that it was important to hear this voice to understand the challenges experienced;
- The need to recognise that the term Learning Disability covered a wide spectrum of conditions and needs;
- Further information was sought in relation to the work discussed to understand inequalities experienced by people with Learning Disabilities from minority communities;
- Concern was expressed in relation to the Transforming Care section of the report that described delays in admission notification from some Mental Health wards when they had new admissions; and
- Welcoming the update and the approach taken to transitions, however noting that consideration had to be given as to how people who may have been supported by families for many years suddenly found themselves in need of support due to a change in their support arrangements, such as a result of bereavement or parents going into care.

The Executive Director of Adult Social Services addressed the Committee and advised that it had been agreed that as this report was a wide ranging, scene setting document it would not be appropriate for them to be present at this meeting. Attendance at the meeting had been discussed with key partners in the city who support engagement and co-production with citizens. She invited Members to identify areas of work that the Committee would like further detailed reports on, and citizens would be invited to contribute to those future meetings. She further noted the discussion regarding the most appropriate way for Members to engage with teams and citizens and if agreed, visits for Members could be facilitated outside of the formal scrutiny meeting format. The Committee welcomed this proposal.

The Executive Director of Adult Social Services stated that the issue highlighted as a concern by the Member in relation to delays in admission notification from some



Mental Health wards when they have new admissions was being addressed through staff training.

The Executive Director of Adult Social Services commented that the range of needs for people with a Learning Disability was understood and there was significant data available to understand needs for the service due to established relationships with Learning Disabled citizens across the city. She stated this knowledge and understanding of the projected demand on the service also informed the work of the Better Outcomes Better Lives programme, with its emphasis on appropriate support and prevention. She stated that if Members came across any resident who was in need of support to refer them and they could be assessed, noting this was important to avoid any issues escalating to a crisis situation.

Joanne Oakes, Lead Nurse advised that two organisations, BHA and Breakthrough UK had been commissioned to understand inequalities experienced by people with Learning Disabilities from minority communities. She advised that they would utilise a number of opportunities, such as Primary Care Networks and establishing focus groups to engage with specific community groups. She advised that the outcomes of this work would be reported.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care paid tribute to all of the teams involved in the breadth of work described within the report.

The Chair concluded this item of business by thanking all the officers for contributing to a detailed report. She advised that the Committee would consider a further detailed report on the Manchester place based Joint Health and Social Care Commissioning Strategy (2023-2028) at an appropriate time. She further reiterated her support for visits to be arranged for Members of the Committee to meet with teams and service users.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

[Councillor Curley declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in this item as he is a Board Member of Breakthrough UK]

## **HSC/22/55 Climate Change – Impact of the recent heatwave**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Public Health that provided an overview of the impact that heatwaves would have on the city and detailed the activity underway to adapt to a changing climate and reduce the health impacts of future heatwaves in the city.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background, noting that in July 2019, Manchester City Council had declared a Climate Emergency which recognised the need for the Council, and the city as a whole, to do more to reduce carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions and mitigate the negative impacts of climate change;

- The UK had experienced a brief but unprecedented extreme heatwave from 16 to 19 July 2022, as hot air moved north from the near continent;
- The Met Office had issued its first red warning for extreme heat since the Extreme Heat National Weather Warning Service was introduced in June 2021;
- The impact of heat on health and those identified as being at risk;
- Discussion of the Manchester context, noting that climate projections suggested that Manchester would face warmer summers and more extreme heat events in the future;
- Activity in Manchester to reduce the impact of future heatwaves, including information on the Heat Pack, Heat Vulnerability Index and Local Climate Adaptation Tool; and
- Climate change was a key theme and action within the Making Manchester Fairer Action Plan.

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

- The Committee paid tribute to the Public Health Team for their timely and important response during the heatwave to support the residents of Manchester;
- The need to recognise the importance of Public Sector workers in supporting residents; and
- Noting the significant impact heat had on the health of older residents.

The Head of City Policy informed the Committee that the Manchester Climate Change Framework had recently been updated to include more focus on adaptation and resilience including the consideration of heat. He added that detailed work on this issue had commenced in conjunction with Manchester Metropolitan University, the Met Office and the University of Exeter and would help to inform the Council and partners decision making.

The Assistant Director of Public Health informed the Committee that a range of data would be released by the Office of National Statistics that would help understand the impact of the recent heatwave, including the numbers of excess deaths and pressures and demand on other services, such as primary care.

Councillor Shilton Godwin, Chair of the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee was welcomed by the Committee. She thanked the Committee for considering this important report and stated that heat would continue to impact upon the city as a direct result of the climate crisis. In response to a discussion regarding the impact of planning and climate change, she advised that the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee would be considering a specific report on this subject area at the meeting scheduled for 9 February 2023.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care paid tribute to all of the Public Health team for their effective and immediate response during the heatwave. He informed the Committee that at that time all health partners were in constant contact to monitor the emerging situation using real time data.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

## **HSC/22/56 Overview Report**

The report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which contained key decisions within the Committee's remit and responses to previous recommendations was submitted for comment. Members were also invited to agree the Committee's future work programme.

The Chair informed all those present that a whole meeting in the new municipal year would be dedicated to considering the Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust and the improvements instigated in response to the BBC Panorama documentary and the Edenfield Centre. Members requested that testimonies and Patient Groups be invited to attend that meeting.

### **Decision**

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



# **Health Scrutiny Committee**

## **Minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2023**

### **Present:**

Councillor Green – in the Chair

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

**Apologies:** Councillors Nasrin Ali, Riasat and Reeves

### **Also present:**

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

Councillor Collins, Deputy Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care

Michelle Humphreys, Director of Strategic Projects, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

Deborah Goodman, Associate Director of Operations, Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust

Gordon Reid, Deputy Head of Primary Care, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care

Stephen Gardner, Director, Single Hospital Service Programme, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

## **HSC/23/01 Urgent Business – Local Response to Current NHS Crisis**

The Chair introduced an item of urgent business by advising that she had requested the Interim Deputy Place Based Lead, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care and the Executive Director of Adult Social Services to address the Committee on the local response to the current national NHS crisis that had been widely reported in the media.

The Committee noted that an extraordinary meeting of the Health Scrutiny Committee had been called for 22 February 2023 to specifically discuss the issues currently experienced by Manchester residents accessing acute NHS services. The Chair stated that this would be a further opportunity to discuss the points raised by the Committee at today's meeting in further detail.

The Interim Deputy Place Based Lead, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care informed the Committee that the health service had experienced unprecedented demand since October 2022. He stated that these pressures were added to because of the increased incidents of Covid infection rates and an earlier start to the flu season, commenting that during the month of December, 500 patients had been admitted to hospital due to flu across Greater Manchester. He advised that this situation would continue to be monitored. He stated that these illnesses had also impacted on staff and front-line health workers that had also added to the pressures experienced across the service. He advised that the System Operation Response Task Force, which consisted of senior leaders and clinical practitioners across Greater Manchester had been meeting weekly, increasing to now daily to understand the levels of demand and manage resources appropriately system wide. He provided

an example of mutual aid as being when other local district hospitals had responded to relieve bed pressures experienced at the Children's Hospital, adding that this care had been managed by paediatric specialists.

In noting the industrial action being taken by Ambulance workers, the Interim Deputy Place Based Lead, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care advised that the impact of this was being closely monitored by the System Operation Response Task Force and urged anyone experiencing a life threatening emergency to contact 999 immediately. He also advised the NHS 111 service was still available, both online and via the telephone.

The Executive Director of Adult Social Services described the established multi-disciplinary teams that worked to manage patient flow. She described that Patient Target Lists were reviewed daily, six days a week to discuss and facilitate the safe discharge of patients into the most appropriate setting with the appropriate care pathways using the discharge to assess approach. She stated that data and activity was monitored at the Integrated Care Control Room, using real time data obtained via the Hive System. She also advised that Winter Discharge Monies had been used to support people living safely in their own homes, and this work had been supported by various Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise groups. She acknowledged that recruitment and retention of staff remained an issue nationally across the Adult Social Care sector, however work was ongoing locally with providers to address this. She commented that it was recognised that staff were the best and most important asset and a workforce development plan had been agreed that sought to support and develop existing staff, including the use of apprenticeships. She further noted the commitment to paying the Real Living Wage in Manchester.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care stated that the Government had repeatedly failed to adequately fund both the NHS and Adult Social Care, noting that across Greater Manchester there had been a funding shortfall of £430m. He stated that despite this Manchester had continued to respond to the challenge and sought innovative approaches to support the most vulnerable residents of the city. He stated that the legacy of genuine partnership working across all stakeholders that had been established across Greater Manchester following the Devolution arrangements had supported and enabled such a positive response, adding that avoiding the need to call a major critical incident in Manchester was testimony to this.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care further advised that he would continue to provide briefings to Members outside of the formal Committee process to ensure they remained up to date with emerging issues.

The Committee thanked officers and the Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care for their update. A member noted that at the time of the meeting the Times newspaper was running a headline that reported there were currently 1000 excess deaths per week due to the national crisis in the NHS. The Committee stated that sole responsibility for this current crisis was as a direct result of the Government.

Members also discussed the impact that this ongoing crisis would be having on other important NHS Services, such as screening and other preventative initiatives due to staff and resources being redirected.

The Committee paid tribute to all staff and frontline workers working within the NHS and expressed their support and solidarity with those striking staff, adding that these workers had been left with no other option than to take industrial action.

The Committee recommended that the Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care, in consultation with the Chair and all Manchester MPs writes to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to invite him to Manchester so he can meet with the Committee so that they can discuss the case for increased NHS funding in Manchester. A Member noted that if the invitation was refused a delegation should visit the Department of Health and Social Care to present the case for Manchester.

### **Decision**

The Committee recommended that the Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care, in consultation with the Chair and all Manchester MPs writes to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to invite him to Manchester so the Committee can present the case for increased NHS funding in Manchester.

### **HSC/23/02 Minutes**

#### **Decision**

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

### **HSC/23/03 Adult Social Care Assurance - Care Quality Commission**

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Services that provided information on the forthcoming Assurance Framework by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Noting that the Health and Care Act 2022 gave the CQC new regulatory powers to undertake independent assessment of local authorities' delivery of regulated care functions;
- A description of the four themes of the CQC assessment framework and their associated quality statements;
- Information on the Test and Learn pilot undertaken by CQC of Adult Social Care in July 2022 and the key outcomes; and
- Next steps.

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

- Welcoming the report and welcoming the findings of the CQC;

- The indicative rating was testament to the hard work and dedication of staff working across Adult Social Care on behalf of Manchester residents, led by the Executive Director of Adult Social Services; and
- Noting that this external evaluation of the service provided the Committee with further assurance of the good work and strong leadership of the service.

The Executive Director of Adult Social Services stated that she had welcomed the opportunity to partake in the pilot scheme, noting that it provided an opportunity for an external audit and review of the service and gave the residents of Manchester an assurance in the service provided. She stated that the CQC had met with a number of senior leaders, the Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care and staff across a range of services and the feedback from the inspectors had been very positive. She stated that the positive feedback from the Committee would be communicated to staff. In response to a Member's comment regarding a specific case relating to Adult Social Care she advised that if the Member forwarded her the specific details she would make enquiries and liaise with her directly.

The Principal Social Worker stated that the inspection had been an opportunity to showcase the excellent work that was delivered in Manchester. She stated as a result of this experience other Local Authorities had been in contact with a view to learning and adopting the good practice delivered in Manchester.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care paid tribute to the Executive Director of Adult Social Services and all her staff. He drew the Members' attention to the section of the report that described that there was a real commitment from leaders for the local authority to be a learning organisation and that Senior leaders, including councillors, had a good understanding of the issues affecting the people of the City of Manchester. He concluded by stating that Manchester was an exemplar Authority and was recognised nationally as a beacon of good practice.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

## **HSC/23/04 Planning for Liberty Protection Safeguards Implementation**

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Services that provided information updates to Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) planning work in progress in preparing for major statutory changes.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- The Mental Health (Amendment) Act 2019 for England and Wales introduces new statutory changes updating the current Code of Practice Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS) to become the new Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS);
- The draft code of practice was published in July 2022 and is yet to be finalised;
- It requires there to be new Responsible Bodies in Health as well as Adult Social Care and key new duties requiring organisational change and staff roles and practice;



- The main changes widen the scope to those aged 16 from 18 and applicable in all community housing and settings not just those in hospital and 24-hour care where people are assessed as lacking mental capacity to make specific decisions in relation to receiving necessary and proportionate treatment, care and support enabling them to be appropriately involved and independent throughout the process;
- New duties including evidence assessors put people at the heart of the LPS process and enable the voice of the person by respecting their experience, wishes, values and feelings supported by those who know them, or by independent advocacy throughout the LPS process and review;
- Information on the Learning Disability / Autism and Mental Health Act reform and the joint work with the Learning Disability and Autism Service and Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust; and
- Information on the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Team.

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

- Further clarification was sought in relation to that paragraph that described Learning Disability / Autism and Mental Health Act reform; and
- Further detail was sought in relation to the figures presented within the report.

The Assistant Director Adult Social Care stated that this was a very complex piece of legislation and work was ongoing across a range of teams to understand and plan for its implementation, adding that at the time of reporting the LPS final code of practice was yet to be released. He gave an assurance that this would not change the interventions and support for patients with mental health conditions and would rather strengthen the right of citizens with Autism / Learning Disability, ensuring that the citizen was at the heart of all decision making.

The Chair advised that the Committee would revisit this subject before April 2024 and requested that any future update report included cases studies and examples. The Committee also requested that consideration was given as to how data was presented in reports.

## **Decision**

To note the report and request that an update report is submitted for consideration at an appropriate time.

## **HSC/23/05 Health Infrastructure in Manchester**

The Committee considered the joint report of the Interim Deputy Place Based Lead (Manchester) NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care, the Director of Strategic Projects, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust and the Director of Finance, IM&T and Estates Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust that provided an overview of the key health infrastructure developments in Manchester.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- An update on the Wythenshawe Hospital master plan;

- The developments encompassed under the umbrella of the North Manchester Strategy, including the redevelopment of the North Manchester General Hospital site and the re-provision of the Park House mental health facility; and
- Key developments in primary care and community estates in the city.

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

- That a visit and briefing to North Manchester General Hospital be arranged for all North Manchester Councillors, with an invitation extended to all members of the Health Scrutiny Committee;
- Was there an opportunity to increase the number of jobs and apprenticeship opportunities created through the development and investment in North Manchester;
- Welcoming the Victoria North Development and asking if consideration had been given to health infrastructure to meet the demands on the local population;
- Welcoming the improvements identified for North Manchester General Hospital and noting that this had only been made possible as a direct result of the decision taken to disaggregate North Manchester General Hospital from Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust;
- Expressing disappointment of progress in delivering the Wythenshawe Hospital masterplan;
- Noting the uncertainty of Government adequately funding the Wythenshawe Hospital masterplan;
- Noting the challenges and limitations presented by current Treasury rules in securing alternative funding opportunities to deliver the Wythenshawe Hospital masterplan;
- Calling for the continued lobbying of Government to secure funding to deliver the Wythenshawe Hospital masterplan;
- Expressing concern that Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust would utilise New Hospital Programme fees for 2022/23 to fund resource to March 2023, noting that there was currently no funding beyond March 2023 in place, noting that this situation could have implications for both North Manchester and Wythenshawe sites;
- Had the issues relating to historic Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) and associated contractual arrangements been addressed at Wythenshawe Hospital;
- Recognising that the number of GP practices was as a result of practices consolidating;
- Was there any information relating to the provision of dentist practices; and
- Had the views of service users been taken into consideration during the design of the Park House inpatient mental health facility.

The Interim Deputy Place Based Lead, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care informed the Committee that a letter dated 10 January 2023 from Manchester partners, headed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive of MFT had been sent to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care emphasizing again the vital importance of the North Manchester General Hospital redevelopment proposals. He further commented that he was happy to facilitate a visit and briefing at North Manchester General Hospital for all North Manchester Councillors, with an invitation extended to all members of the Health Scrutiny Committee.

The Director of Strategic Projects, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust stated that she shared the frustrations expressed by the Members regarding progress at the Wythenshawe site. She described that they were working with Bruntwood and the Council as part of the wider redevelopment of Wythenshawe. She stated that she supported the call for continued lobbying of Government for adequate funding to deliver the Wythenshawe masterplan. She further commented that the PFI arrangements had been taken into account during the planning and financial modelling. In regard to North Manchester, she stated that economic growth and development was central to the vision of the development and work was underway with local schools and other partners to maximise the delivery of social value of this programme. She stated that the business case for the North Manchester development had been submitted two years ago however this had been reviewed in November 2022 to take into account increased budgetary and inflation costs and these revised figures had been submitted to the Secretary of State. In reply to questions regarding the implications of the 'New Hospital Programme' and 'Hospital 2.0' she advised that they were awaiting further information on these Government proposals.

The Deputy Head of Primary Care stated that discussions have been ongoing with developers throughout the design and planning of the Victoria North Development to ensure that appropriate consideration was given to health infrastructure to meet the demands of a growing population in the area. He further addressed the issue raised regarding dentistry by advising that since July 2022 arrangements for the commissioning of these services had transferred to the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board. He stated that work was currently ongoing to look at this area of activity.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care stated that the report clearly demonstrated the scale and vision that Manchester had in regard to improving and delivering health infrastructure across the city. He acknowledged that more needed to be done to articulate this ambition to residents. He stated that the conversations regarding delivering the ambition for the city were live and ongoing and the Committee would be kept informed of developments.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

## **HSC/23/06 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 the 24 May 2023 meeting would be dedicated exclusively to scrutinising improvements at the Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust.

## **Decision**

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

# **Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

## **Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2022**

### **Present:**

Councillor Reid – in the Chair

Councillors Alijah, Amin, Bano, Cooley, Gartside, Lovecy, Sadler and Sharif Mahamed

### **Co-opted Voting Members:**

Mr G Cleworth, Parent Governor Representative

### **Co-opted Non-Voting Members:**

Ms L Smith, Primary Sector Teacher Representative

### **Also present:**

Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Children Services

Kim Stevenson, Nursery in the Park

### **Apologies:**

Councillors Abdullatif, Hewitson, Johnson and Judge

Miss S Iltaf, Secondary Sector Teacher Representative

Canon S Mapledoram, Representative of the Diocese of Manchester

### **CYP/22/57**

### **Minutes**

### **Decision**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2022.

### **CYP/22/58**

### **Youth, Play & Participation Service (YPPS) Grants Framework 1st July 2023 to 31st March 2025**

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods which followed on from the update on the Youth and Play Commissioning Arrangements which was presented to Executive on 20 October 2021. The report to Executive set out an alternative delivery model to be designed and developed following the decision to transfer responsibility for commissioning from Young Manchester. The purpose of this report was to provide the Committee with the outcome from the design and development work and to set out the proposed Youth, Play and Participation Service's commissioning process and framework including timescales for the implementation of the proposed new arrangements. The Committee was invited to comment on the report before its submission to the Executive on 14 December 2022.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Strategic national and local context;

- Principles of investment;
- Governance and decision-making processes;
- Funding;
- Timeline;
- Service requirements;
- Quality assurance, impact and monitoring;
- Other considerations; and
- Next steps.

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

- Support for this approach;
- How would it be ensured that the young people's advisory panel was representative;
- Suggesting that schools and parents could be engaged with to reach young people whose voices were not currently being heard and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND);
- Ensuring that families and young people were aware of the activities which were available for them;
- Communication between the Ward Councillors selected to be part of the district Members' Advisory Panels and other Ward Councillors in the district; and
- Smaller community groups who did not have experience in or confidence to bid for grants but who were doing good work in their local community and how they could be supported to bid for funding and to adapt and grow to meet the needs of the area.

The Head of the Youth, Play and Participation Service reported that work was taking place to develop and expand young people's participation, including around decision-making and service provision, by his own team, working with Children and Education Services colleagues, and by upskilling the sector. He stated that, when decisions were being made about district-based youth provision, young people from that district should be involved in the decisions. He advised that the details of how this would work were still being fully developed and that more information would be provided in a future report. He reported that there had been a good uptake of the Youth Investment Fund from small grassroots organisations, including ones which were Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)-led, and that officers would be looking at how this could be expanded. He stated that they would also be looking at how smaller organisations could access the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme funding. He agreed that communicating the offer to children and young people was important and advised that funded projects would be expected to publicise their offer and that his team would be working with neighbourhood teams, and with other colleagues and partner organisations, to communicate what was available in the local area. In response to a Member's question about opportunities for new Councillors to learn more about what was going on in their ward and to engage with this work, he advised that he would be open to any invitations to meet with Ward Councillors in their ward. He asked Members to let him know of any local groups they were aware of which were doing good work with young people in their

area and to help to promote initiatives that they could be involved in such as HAF and workforce development opportunities. In response to a Member's question about the statistics from the census, he advised that they were looking at this and would provide an update at a later date.

The Executive Member for Children's Services referred to areas of the city, particularly in north Manchester, from where fewer applications for funding were received and work which was taking place to address this. He advised that Member involvement would be an important part of the new process as he felt that this had been an area of weakness previously. He asked Members to let him know if they were interested in being on one of the district Member panels and advised that he was also arranging meetings for all Ward Councillors to enable them to give their views.

The Chair advised that it was important to audit this work very quickly, including identifying any gaps, for example BAME-led groups. She expressed concern that applications would be predominantly for youth provision rather than play activities for younger children and advised that it was important to encourage groups which provided play activities for younger children to apply for funding and to ensure that any gaps identified were addressed. However, subject to these comments, she reported that she was happy with the direction that this work was taking.

## **Decision**

To support the direction of the work taking place, subject to Members' comments.

[Councillor Alijah declared a personal interest as the Chair of the Hideaway Youth Project]

[Councillor Reid and Councillor Lovecy declared a personal interest as members of the Members' Advisory Panel for their district]

## **CYP/22/59**

## **Post-16 EET Strategic Plan 2022-25**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Education which provided an update on work done by the Council to increase the number of young people accessing EET (education, employment or training) opportunities in the city, aligning with the city's economic priorities. It also outlined the plans for this work moving forwards, with the strategic plan developed to coincide with the Our Manchester Forward to 2025 Strategy and Manchester Inclusion Strategy 2022-25. The paper highlighted the challenges the city would have in ensuring sufficiency of places for young people wanting to continue in education due to the growth of the school population. It outlined the work that had been done to date including promoting opportunities for post 16 providers to access capital funding through bids to the Department for Education (DFE) and actively encouraging the submission of applications to open new provision through the free school process.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Post-16 provision;
- Young people not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET);

- The Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI);
- Post-16 EET Strategic Action Plan 2022-25; and
- Governance.

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

- Support for vulnerable young people;
- The resources needed for the expansion of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects;
- Post-16 education for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND);
- To request that Wythenshawe councillors be briefed on what was going on in their area; and
- Careers advice including for girls and young people who were less academic.

The Director of Education reported that STEM was one of the most in-demand areas where work was having to take place to try to increase capacity, whereas demand for subjects such as modern foreign languages and history was reducing. The Post-16 Lead informed Members that Manchester College had invested significantly in upgrading its facilities for STEM subjects in recent years and that other providers had put in bids for funding to improve their facilities. In response to a question about additional staffing that would be needed for the expansion of STEM subjects, the Director of Education stated that this was not something which had been raised by the post-16 settings.

The Director of Education advised Members that there was a strong post-16 sector for pupils with SEND, with most special schools having a sixth form, a strong offer from mainstream providers such as Manchester College and Loreto College and supported internships. She encouraged Members to visit one of the special schools' sixth forms. She informed Members about an event which had taken place recently with businesses about employing more young people with SEND.

In response to a question about vulnerable young people, the Post-16 Lead outlined work to identify, in conjunction with schools, young people who were at risk of becoming NEET and to work collaboratively across teams and with partners to address this. He informed Members about the post-16 steering group, which included a range of stakeholders, including the Virtual School, Youth Justice, Care Leavers and EHCP (Education Health and Care Plan) Teams, contributing to an action plan for targeted support, and the introduction of NEET prevention panels which provided an opportunity for schools to get advice and put early intervention strategies in place. He reported that approaches to careers advice varied across schools and post-16 settings, with some schools having their own in-house career services and some commissioning a service. He reported that the Council used Career Connect, which worked to prevent young people becoming NEET. He informed Members how his team was working with the Work and Skills Team on the quality assurance of school career services and about work to encourage targeted groups, such as girls, into areas in which they were under-represented. In response to a Member's question, he outlined some of the support available to young people who wanted to start their own business.



In response to a comment from the Chair about young people travelling across local authority boundaries for post-16 provision, the Director of Education reported that the Council had commissioned a sufficiency report which had looked at the number of young people coming into and going out of the city to access post-16 provision. In response to a question from the Chair, she informed Members about Manchester College's work to rationalise its buildings, improving the facilities and modernising their offer. She suggested that Members could visit their facilities, in the city centre or at Openshaw.

The Chair suggested that the government should provide funding for more secondary schools to expand to include their own sixth form and that Members should lobby the government about funding for post-16 places. She advised that the issue of pay in Further Education needed to be addressed. She expressed concern that the entry requirements for T Level qualifications would exclude some young people. She requested that a more detailed report be provided to a future meeting, including utilising social value, changes in the number of places available at Manchester College, whether Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES) could be utilised more and information from the sufficiency report which had looked across the Greater Manchester area.

## **Decision**

To request a more detailed report at a future meeting, including utilising social value, changes in the number of places available at Manchester College, whether Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES) can be utilised more and information from the sufficiency report looking across the Greater Manchester area.

## **CYP/22/60                      Attainment Headline outcomes 2022 (provisional)**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Education which provided a summary of the 2022 provisional outcomes of statutory assessment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2, Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. The report described how outcomes for children in the primary phase had declined nationally as a result of the pandemic and that the impact in Manchester was far more significant than elsewhere especially for younger children who had missed out on most of their early years and were now in year 1. The report concluded with a list of actions which were being progressed to address some of the gaps in learning including a proposal for additional support to year 1 cohorts in some of schools in the most deprived areas of the city.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Headline outcomes based on provisional performance data for 2022 for:
  - Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS);
  - Year 1 Phonics Test;
  - Key Stage 1;
  - Key Stage 2;
  - Key Stage 4; and
  - Key Stage 5; and

- Next steps.

The Executive Member for Children's Services drew Member's attention to a letter he had written to the Education Secretary, highlighting the impact of the pandemic on younger children in the city, and warned of the negative consequences if this was not addressed.

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

- To support the Executive Member's comments about the importance of taking action to address the impact of the pandemic on children;
- How to support children in the areas that they had fallen behind in during the pandemic without reducing time spent on play, which was also important to their development; and
- Recognising the hard work of Manchester teachers and other school staff, the ongoing challenges facing them and that the impact on children from not being in school demonstrated what an important difference schools made to children's development.

The Assistant Director of Education reported that the response from the national government to addressing the learning debt from the pandemic had focused on tuition; however, she advised that very young children had a deficit of social interaction, were not ready for sitting and learning and needed to do a lot of play and have a rich language environment. She reported that Manchester schools were responding to this by adapting the curriculum for the younger age groups, looking at where the gaps were for their pupils and responding to that. She advised that neither Ofsted nor the Council's Quality Assurance Team would support forcing children into learning activities which they were not yet ready for.

The Director of Education expressed concern that the impact of the pandemic on children would be forgotten as there was no quick solution to this and it would need sustained effort over a number of years, particularly for younger children. She reported that different age groups appeared to have responded differently, with children in Reception and Year 1 being very lively and not ready to sit and learn but with younger children who had been born in lockdown and were now going into nursery tending to be quiet and passive, so different approaches would be needed.

The Chair drew Members' attention to information she had circulated from the FFT Education Data Lab on attainment at Key Stage 1 following the pandemic. She advised that the pandemic had had the most impact on more deprived areas, in particular in the north-west. She suggested that research could be done through one of the universities. She reported that the validated attainment data would come back to the Committee. She highlighted the effects that the pandemic had had on babies and young children and how family circumstances had impacted the effect it had on children, for example, whether parents had the time and the academic ability to support their children's learning. She requested that the Committee receive a further, more detailed report at an appropriate time on how schools were progressing with this work.

## Decisions

1. To note that the Committee will receive the validated attainment data when this is available.
2. To request a further, more detailed report at an appropriate time on how schools are progressing with work to address the impact of the pandemic on children's learning.

### **CYP/22/61                      An update on the structural condition surveys for Council-owned Early Years buildings and future works**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Education, following on from a report which went to Executive in June 2021 which approved £3m capital to be spent on priority safety work for Council owned Early Years buildings, many of which were also used to provide daycare for children. This report provided an update on the structural condition surveys for these Council-owned Early Years (EYs) buildings and the development of a priority capital works programme which would lead to the inclusion of these buildings in the Asset Management Programme (AMP). In addition, there was an update on the progress made on reviewing lease arrangements for the private day care providers which occupied these buildings and the ongoing management of the early years estate.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Main issues;
- Priority capital spend on the Early Years estate 2022/23;
- Phase 2 Early Years estate capital priorities 2023/24; and
- Review of tendered daycare leases.

Kim Stevenson from Nursery in the Park stated that her site had been selected for improvement work and that she wanted more information on what was proposed for her building, stating that energy efficiency, in particular insulation, was important, along with building repairs. The Executive Member for Children's Services reported that the priorities for the works on Early Years buildings included making them safe and improving energy efficiency. He suggested that Ms Stevenson meet with the Lead for Statutory Area Early Years Access and Sufficiency to discuss proposals for her building, advising that he could also attend the meeting, if that would be helpful.

In response to a Member's question about the closure of Moss Side Children's Centre, the Director of Education advised that the costs of bringing the building to an acceptable standard would have used almost the whole capital allocation for this work, that there was sufficient daycare provision within that area and that other services which had previously been delivered from that location had been re-located to an alternative site. She reported that the Council had worked with the daycare provider which had been based in that building to facilitate them moving to an alternative building. In response to a question about the future use of the vacant building, she advised that this was now within Corporate Property's portfolio but that she could ask them to speak to the Member, who was also a Ward Councillor for Moss Side, about the future use of the site.

In response to questions from the Chair, the Executive Member for Children's Services advised that this work was an ongoing process, that there were further issues to be considered and that the Committee could expect to hear more about this in future.

### **Decision**

To note the report.

### **CYP/22/62                      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 of the Ofsted Subgroup invited additional Members to join the Subgroup.

### **Decision**

To note the report and agree the work programme.

# **Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

## **Minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2023**

### **Present:**

Councillor Reid – in the Chair

Councillors Abdullatif, Bano, Gartside, Hewitson, Johnson, Judge, Lovecy, Sadler and Sharif Mahamed

### **Co-opted Voting Members:**

Canon S Mapledoram, Representative of the Diocese of Manchester

Mr G Cleworth, Parent Governor Representative

### **Also present:**

Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Children Services

Councillor Bell, Ward Councillor for Moss Side

### **Apologies:**

Councillor Alijah

Miss S Iltaf, Secondary Sector Teacher Representative

Ms L Smith, Primary Sector Teacher Representative

## **CYP/23/01                      Minutes**

### **Decisions**

1. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2022.
2. To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Ofsted Subgroup held on 23 November 2022.

## **CYP/23/02                      Ofsted Improvement Plan**

The Committee considered the presentation of the Deputy Strategic Director of Children's Services which provided an update on progress in response to the Ofsted Inspection of Local Authorities Children's Services (ILACS) of Manchester's Children's Services.

Key points and themes in the presentation included:

- The findings from Ofsted's inspection which took place in March and April 2022;
- The Council's Ofsted Improvement Plan and how improvements were being made; and
- What had been achieved so far.

The Executive Member for Children's Services reported that, while welcoming that Manchester's Children's Services had been judged as "good" by Ofsted, the Council was not complacent and was committed to continuing to improve.

The Chair explained the history and context of this item for the benefit of new Members of the Committee and offered to meet with new Members if they wished to discuss this further. She recommended that the Committee carry out further visits to frontline Social Work teams to ensure that Members knew what was going on in practice, rather than relying too much on what they were told in Committee meetings. This suggestion was supported by other Members.

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

- To welcome the work taking place;
- Social Workers' caseloads;
- Workforce issues, including recruitment and retention of Social Workers, sickness levels, the use of agency workers and the diversity of the workforce;
- Training for Social Workers, in particular on domestic abuse, and how the success of training was assessed; and
- How to build trust with families.

The Deputy Strategic Director of Children's Services reported that there was a national debate about how pre-qualifying training prepared Social Workers for their role, including in relation to dealing with cases involving domestic abuse. He reported that the Council used the Safe and Together model, which was a well-evidence-based approach to working with people who had experienced domestic abuse, and brought in high-quality trainers from the Safe and Together Institute to deliver training to its Social Workers. He reported that the Council's policies and procedures, peer support and the quality of supervision they received also assisted Newly Qualified Social Workers in addressing their learning needs. He advised that the quality of training was assessed through the outcomes for children and families. He reported that the Council had a target of an average caseload of 18 for Social Workers and 16 for Newly Qualified Social Workers and that over the last 18 months caseloads had been lower than that and that these figures compared well nationally, and particularly to other Greater Manchester authorities.

The Deputy Strategic Director of Children's Services advised that lower caseloads, training and improving competence levels, including cultural competence, helped Social Workers to build trust with families. In response to a question about training on cultural competence, he informed Members about the development of a cultural competency toolkit, the Let's Talk About Race course, which he reported had received positive feedback, the role of reflective supervision and how the diversity of the workforce could help to improve Social Workers' insight into this area. He reported that recruitment and retention had improved, although recruitment was an area which they were constantly working to address. The Strategic Director (Children and Education Services) provided the Committee with workforce data, including stating that the vacancy rate for Social Workers was 12% and there was a turnover of around 18%, which represented an improvement.

In response to a Member's question, the Deputy Strategic Director of Children's Services outlined the early intervention service which had been commissioned to support families with disabled children and prevent an escalation of needs. In response to questions from the Chair, he described the audit process for examining the quality of practice in relation to individual disabled children and their families and outlined how the process for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) had improved. The Chair expressed concern at the financial pressures affecting the families of disabled children and the funding challenges facing the Council services and schools which supported them.

The Executive Member for Children's Services suggested that the Committee receive a specific report on the Children's Social Work workforce at a future meeting to provide the information which Members had requested, to which the Chair agreed.

In response to comments from the Chair, the Deputy Strategic Director of Children's Services outlined the improvements that the introduction of the Liquid Logic IT system had brought and how the service had invested in wifi and improving office accommodation. In response to a question from the Chair, he reported that Social Workers had weekly protected learning time, usually for two hours, and that staff could have additional protected learning time, depending on business needs.

## **Decisions**

1. To recommend that the Committee visit frontline Social Work services.
2. To receive a report on the Children's Social Work workforce at a future meeting.

## **CYP/23/03                      Our Year 2022**

The Committee considered the report and presentation of the Strategic Director (Children and Education Services) which provided an overview of Our Year and looked at the next steps to take this work forward.

Key points and themes in the presentation included:

- Our Year themes;
- Highlights of the year;
- Feedback from children and young people;
- Achievements from Our Year; and
- Work towards becoming a UNICEF UK Child Friendly City.

The Executive Member for Children's Services informed Members about the celebration event on 31 January and extended the invitation to this to the Co-opted Members.

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

- To welcome the work which had taken place as part of Our Year and thank all those involved;
- The priority that children and young people placed on protecting the environment;
- Noting that, as part of the work towards becoming a UNICEF UK Child Friendly City, Manchester had to focus on three mandatory “badges” (priority areas) and could choose three others that it would focus on, how would these other three be chosen;
- To request that Ward Councillors be informed of how they could support this work;
- Were there any areas of the city where fewer activities had happened in 2022 and which would be given more focus going forward; and
- How best to communicate with young people about activities they could participate in.

The Executive Member for Children’s Services confirmed that the environment had been a strong theme emerging from every engagement with children and young people. He stated that a young people-led Bee Green conference had been held which had informed the Education Climate Action Plan, which the Committee had received a report on and had asked for an update on at a future meeting. He reported that children and young people wanted action to be taken, not just to talk about climate change, and the Council had provided funding for posts to help to achieve this. He advised that the environment had also been considered in all the events that had taken place as part of Our Year, making events as carbon neutral as possible. He advised that there had been a lot of learning from 2022 on how best to communicate and publicise activities using a range of methods.

The Our Year Project Lead advised that the decision on which three additional badges to focus on would be made through analysis of the school engagement exercises, looking at baseline data, feedback from surveys and a discovery day in the spring where young people would sit down with key decision makers to determine which badges were most important.

The Strategic Director (Children and Education Services) reported that consideration was being given to children’s rights training, which might involve Committee Members or the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group, and that the Executive Member for Children’s Services was leading on a piece of work looking at how young people’s voices could be incorporated into Council decision-making. The Executive Member for Children’s Services provided further information on what was being considered in relation to this and advised that the Committee would be provided with an update on this at a future meeting.

In response to a question about schools becoming Rights Respecting Schools, the Strategic Director (Children and Education Services) suggested that Members who were governors raise this at their governors’ meetings and reported that this was a priority for the Children’s Board who would be looking at how they could support schools which wanted to become Rights Respecting Schools.

The Chair shared her experiences of carrying out engagement with children and young people as part of Our Year. She emphasised the importance of targeting



activities in deprived areas, promoting the Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) and providing activities in young people's own area, rather than expecting them to cross borders. She also emphasised the importance of play activities and early years. She praised the Baby Week which had taken place but advised that more of this type of activity was needed. She advised that safety was a key issue for children and young people and that the Committee should look at road safety around schools. She emphasised the importance of using social value for the benefit of young people.

The Executive Member for Children's Services reported that the Council had put extra funding in to the HAF schemes to cover half-terms. He reported that applications for youth and play activities tended to be lower in the north of the city so the Council was working to address this, encouraging more applications and building capacity to deliver activities in north Manchester. In response to the Chair's comments on younger children, he informed the Committee about the Kickstart programme as part of the work as a Marmot city region and advised that further information on this would be provided in a future report.

## **Decision**

To consider a report on road safety around schools at a future meeting.

## **CYP/23/04                      School Governance Update**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Education which outlined the support and future planned developments that the Council would provide to assist with fostering effective school governance across the city.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Governor recruitment;
- Governor support and resources; and
- School quality assurance.

The School Governance Lead expressed her thanks to all school governors across the city for their work.

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

- That the Council should periodically write to school governors to thank them for their work;
- Increasing the diversity of school governors, noting that most recruitment of school governors was via recommendations from people known to the current governors, which was likely to limit diversity, that some people would need more support to become a governor and that it was important to think more widely about who could become a governor;
- Improving recruitment methods, noting that it was important to communicate what a governor's role was, the benefits for the individual and that governors could choose the degree to which they were involved; and
- Mentoring and training for school governors.

The School Governance Lead reported that the Council did try to thank school governors in the city; however, she advised that it did not hold the contact details for all governors, which made this more challenging, and the message might not be passed on to all governors and she would take on board the Member's comments. She informed the Committee that a session had recently taken place on diversity in governance which had included consideration of different methods of recruitment. She informed Members about the methods the Council used to encourage people to consider becoming a governor or to find out more about what the role involved. She welcomed the comments that Members had made in relation to recruiting governors and said that these reflected issues that were currently being discussed. In response to a Member's question, she confirmed that people who were retiring were approached about becoming governors.

The School Governance Lead reported that the Council recommended that schools provide mentors to new governors and that she was currently asking Chairs of Governors across the city if they would be willing to mentor new Chairs. In relation to training, she stated that she encouraged governors to join the National Governors Association, which had a suite of e-learning modules, and that schools could also commission their own training. She advised that she visited schools which required additional support on governance, where this need had been identified through the Schools Quality Assurance process. In response to a Member's question, she advised that she could provide the Member with details of the process for becoming a school governor but that this varied depending on the type of governor and the type of school. The Director of Education informed Members that another route to recruiting governors was through large employers, including the Council and the University of Manchester.

Councillor Bell, Ward Councillor for Moss Side, suggested that officers recruit governors through the Civic Leadership programme and offered to speak with the School Governance Lead about this outside of the meeting. The Chair suggested that the School Governance Lead also speak to Canon Susie Mapledoram, the new Co-opted Member representing the Diocese of Manchester, who stated that they had recently invested a lot of time in training and supporting the governors of Church of England schools.

The Chair emphasised the important role of Parent Governors to hold school leaders to account. She commented that Teachers TV had provided a good source of information for governors but was no longer produced. She requested that Members be provided with data on governor vacancies by ward.

## **Decision**

To request that Members be provided with data on governor vacancies by ward.

## **CYP/23/05**

## **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.

### **Decisions**

1. To note the report and agree the work programme.
2. To appoint Councillor Hewitson to the Ofsted Subgroup.



# **Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee**

## **Minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2022**

### **Present:**

Councillor Shilton Godwin – in the Chair

Councillors Chohan, Hughes, Ilyas, Lyons, Nunney, Razaq and Wright

**Apologies:** Councillor Doswell and Holt

### **Also present:**

Councillor Foley, Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport

## **ECCSC/22/45          Minutes**

### **Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2022 as a correct record.

## **ECCSC/22/46          Local Area Energy Plan – Progress Update**

The Committee considered the report of Strategic Director, Growth and Development that described that Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) was the first city region in the country to compile and complete Local Area Energy Plans (LAEP) from street to network level. The GM LAEP was adopted by GMCA in September 2022. This report provides an overview of the city's LAEP and how this would be used to meet our target to be a zero carbon city region by 2038.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- Describing identified main issues; and
- Describing ongoing work and next steps.

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

- Noting the challenge of domestic boilers being ready to use hydrogen fuel;
- The challenges to retrofitting presented by heritage buildings and what could be done to support residents;
- What support was available more generally to support local residents in regard to delivering sustainable energy solutions;
- Noting the prevalence of pre-1914 homes across Manchester and these being reported as dwellings that were most consistently identified as needing fabric retrofit to support decarbonisation;
- Noting that there were a significant number of properties that were still single glazed.

In response to the Committees deliberations the Strategic Lead, Resources & Programmes advised that residents could access the GMCA Your Home, Better website as a source of information and support available. Your Home, Better is an independent service delivered by retrofit experts, providing advice, planning and delivery to help reduce the costs of your bills as well as carbon emissions associated with home energy and heating. He acknowledged the specific comment regarding the challenges and associated costs of retrofitting heritage buildings.

The Strategic Lead, Resources & Programmes further commented that currently there was a national issue in the supply of hydrogen domestic boilers, noting that currently there was no demand for these.

The Strategic Director Development stated that the Council was taking a civic leadership role on the issue of LAEP, and this was aligned to the Climate Change Action Plan. She stated that future reports to the Committee would include an agreed action plan.

The Interim Head of Infrastructure and Environment noted the comments regarding pre 1914 housing stock across the city. He stated that this understanding helped inform the modelling and articulating the scale of investment required to adequately deliver the scale of retrofitting. He further noted that replacing single glazing would significantly reduce heat loss and improve energy efficiency.

## **Decision**

1. The Committee note the report.
2. Recommend that an update report is submitted for consideration in the new municipal year.

## **ECCSC/22/47      Draft Manchester Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy**

The Committee considered the report of Strategic Director (Growth and Development) that provided an overview of the draft Manchester Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- Consideration of the main issues associated with the strategy; and
- Providing the draft Manchester Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for comment.

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

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

- Noting the challenge and increased costs experienced by leaseholders wishing to install Electrical Vehicle Chargers, and what support could the Council offer tenants in negotiations with their landlords and property owners;

- How would Electric Vehicle Charging Points be distributed across the city; and
- How did this strategy complement other strategies, noting that the ambition was to improve public transport, improve options for active travel and thus reduce the dependency on cars.

The Strategic Director (Growth & Development) advised that the strategy described the role of the Council. The strategy recognised that this area of work would be led primarily by the market, and would respond to demand.

The Interim Head of Infrastructure and Environment acknowledged that there was a need to introduce more electric vehicle charging facilities, hence the production of the strategy. He further advised that the installation of domestic charging points was primarily currently for those with the funds and ability (i.e having a driveway) to do so, adding that the Council had limited ability to intervene between a tenant and a landlord on this issue.

The Senior Policy Officer stated that this strategy would be reviewed in recognition of the speed of which technology developed. She said that these initial proposals were for the Council to consider the best use of their estates and facilities to deliver charging points, noting that grid capacity would also have to be taken into consideration. She said that the use of Council facilities would supplement wider provision by the market. She further commented that any new developments were now required through planning conditions to ensure electric vehicle charging points were installed.

The Interim Head of Infrastructure and Environment stated that the GM 2040 Transport Strategy had committed to 50% of all journeys being undertaken by public transport and active travel, and anticipated an increase in the use of electric vehicles. He said that as demand developed, the location of electric vehicle charging facilities across the city would remain under review.

The Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport reiterated the importance of delivering an integrated sustainable transport strategy, adding that reliable alternatives would reduce dependency on cars. She stated that this also needed to be considered in the context of climate and health justice, noting the significant issue of air quality and health implications, particularly for children across the city.

In considering this item the Chair reiterated the need to consider this topic in conjunction with the strategies to improve active travel and improve connected public transport across all areas of the city.

## **Decision**

1. The Committee recommend that an additional principle be included in the list of Principles listed at page 15 of the Manchester Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy. To read as 'Electric Vehicle charge points should be readily available and accessible to residents wherever they live in the city.'

2. The Committee recommend that the Manchester Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy be considered in conjunction with emerging policy and strategy on public transport and active travel.

3. The Committee recommend that the Executive approve and endorse the Manchester Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy, noting the above recommendation.

## **ECCSC/22/48          Single Use Plastics**

The Committee considered the report of Head of Integrated Commissioning and Procurement; Strategic Lead, Resources and Programmes and the Sustainability Project Manager, Zero Carbon that provided an update on work being undertaken across the Council on Single Use Plastics as part of the action under Workstream 3 of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction, noting that in 2019 Manchester City Council had pledged to eradicate avoidable Single Use Plastics (SUPs) by 2024;
- All ten Greater Manchester local authorities, plus the Greater Manchester Combined Authority had committed to actions related to reducing SUPs including aiming to eradicate avoidable single use plastic;
- Describing the Council's commitments as stated within the refreshed Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan 2020-25;
- Progress to date; and
- Next steps.

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

- What approach was taken to SUPs at markets, noting the success of the Christmas markets;
- Noting that for specific health conditions it was necessary to use a straw;
- How were avoidable and unavoidable plastics assessed; and
- What was the approach taken to the various supply chains via the Council's procurement process on the issue of SUPs.

The Sustainability Project Manager responded by advising that SUP food and drink serveware and bags had been banned on the Manchester Christmas markets since 2019, and this was routinely checked by officers. She further noted the comment regarding access to drinking straws for those with specific health conditions and advised that information on this would be provided to the Member following the meeting. She further advised that the Zero Carbon Team would continue to support the key messaging and enforcement surrounding SUPs, which will reflect the outcome of most recent Government consultation on a potential further ban on SUP items when known. She said they were committed to working with different teams and external partners on education and engagement on SUPs, including the Events Team to support them, adding that they produced written guidance in the form of a range of Sustainable Events Guides, including a specific guide on reusable cups and shared examples of good practice



In response to the question raised regarding the distinction between avoidable and unavoidable plastics she advised that the approach was to understand what was in use; categorise the item as avoidable or unavoidable by 2024 through consideration of alternatives, including production and waste stream consequences. She also clarified that the categorisation of SUPs would be completed as part of action planning process within the next six months, so that avoidable SUPs could be eradicated by end of 2024 and a plan in place for unavoidable SUPs beyond 2024.

The Head of Integrated Commissioning and Procurement advised that the Council had introduced a 10% evaluation weighting in procurements relating to climate change and the environment. He said that written guidance in relation to this was provided to contractors, noting that the questions asked of suppliers needed to be relevant to the specific nature of the contract. He advised he could provide written examples of questions asked regarding SUPs to the Chair to use in response to a resident's query.

The Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport called for the increased awareness amongst the population on the issue of SUPs. In response to a specific issue raised regarding the licensing regime, the Chair suggested that she should pursue this in her capacity as a Deputy Executive Member.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

## **ECCSC/22/49      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 the need to maximise revenue to the Council from commercial events that were delivered in Manchester parks that arose when discussing the Budget report at the November meeting would be considered by the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee.

A Member recommended that an oral report be received at the January 2023 meeting that provides an update on the waste collection service during the Christmas period. The Committee endorsed this recommendation.

## **Decision**

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



# **Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee**

## **Minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2023**

### **Present:**

Councillor Shilton Godwin – in the Chair  
Councillors Doswell, Holt, Ilyas, Nunney and Wright

**Apologies:** Councillors Hughes, Lyons and Razaq

### **Also present:**

Councillor Craig, Leader of the Council  
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 Ahmed Ali, Deputy Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods  
Neil Robinson, CSR and Future Airspace Director, Manchester Airports Group  
Andy Clarke, Head of Corporate Affairs, Manchester Airport  
Samantha Nicholson, Manchester Climate Change Agency

### **ECCSC/23/01          Urgent Business - Large Scale Renewable Energy Generation - Solar Farm Purchase**

The Chair invited the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer to address the Committee on the report that is listed on the agenda for the meeting of Executive, 18 January 2023 entitled 'Large Scale Renewable Energy Generation - Solar Farm Purchase'.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer stated that following the meeting of the Executive an update report would be submitted to the Committee for consideration at a time to be agreed in consultation with the Chair.

### **Decision**

To note the update.

### **ECCSC/23/02          Minutes**

### **Decision**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2022 as a correct record.

### **ECCSC/23/03          Waste Collection Over the Christmas Period**

The Committee received a verbal report on the waste collection service over the Christmas period.

The Strategic Lead, Waste Recycling and Street Cleaning stated:

- That compared to previous years there had been a reduction in the number of reported incidents and fly tipping;
- Planning for the increase in waste over the Christmas period was anticipated and taken into account when planning service delivery;
- Collection dates had been adjusted to take into account bank holidays over the Christmas period;
- Changes to these dates had been communicated to residents, the contact centre and key stakeholders such as housing providers;
- Availability of the Household Waste and Recycling Centres had been promoted;
- Delays and missed bins collections had occurred due to vehicle malfunctions and staff shortages due to illness;
- In the event of these incidents the agreed contingency plans were instigated, and missed bins were collected as soon possible, usually the next day with residents informed of these arrangements;
- This was the first year that electric vehicle had been used and analysis of their performance would be undertaken to understand any challenges experienced and this learning would inform future service delivery planning over the Christmas period;
- Street cleansing had continued to take place, noting that the water supplies for machinery had been affected by the bought of prolonged freezing weather;
- Cycle lanes would be inspected, and any areas of concern identified would be addressed by Biffa;
- The department worked closely with the Highways Department to ensure cycle lanes were designed to ensure they were accessible and could be cleaned easily by Biffa crews;
- Different departments worked together to coordinate activities to reduce the incidents of pooling of water on highways;
- If residents and/or Members wished to report missed bin collections, they should do this via the contact centre;
- Members had been provided with the Annual Leaf Removal Programme, noting the impact of the spell of cold weather on the timing of leaf fall;
- A lessons learnt exercise would be undertaken to inform future planning; and
- Recommending that all residents subscribe to the alerts system that provided bespoke information on bin collections and any issues with the service.

In response to a specific question raised regarding the potential for additional collections of paper and cardboard over the Christmas period the Committee were advised that the volumes of waste from the different streams would be analysed to inform the future planning of service delivery over this busy period.

## **Decision**

To note the verbal update.

## **ECCSC/23/04      Manchester Airport and Aviation Emissions**

The Committee considered the joint report of Manchester City Council, Manchester Climate Change Agency and Manchester Airports Group that provided an update on

progress since the 9 December 2021 report the Committee received which considered the relationship between aviation and the city's carbon emissions.

Key points and themes in the report and accompanying presentation included:

- Setting out the Council's role in relation to reducing aviation emissions and its relationship to Manchester Airports Group (MAG) who own and operate three United Kingdom airports, including Manchester Airport;
- An update from the Manchester Climate Change Agency which provided an extract from the 2022 Update to the Manchester Climate Change Framework setting out the citywide position in relation to aviation emissions; and
- An update from the MAG 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.

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

- Recognising and welcoming the leadership demonstrated to date by the Council, MAG and the Manchester Climate Change Agency on this important issue;
- Noting however that the projections provided remain incompatible with restraining carbon emissions to 1.5%
- Noting that the report and information provided was more open and transparent;
- Previous updates had included graphs to articulate the rate of emissions against projected targets and asked that these be included in any future updates;
- The need to reduce domestic business travel and calling for an improved, sustainable and reliable rails service to support this;
- What were that targets for increased passenger numbers and associated travel at the airport;
- More needed to be done by Government, including consideration of the introduction of a frequent flyer tax;
- Was the Jet Zero Strategy target of 10% of fuel must be sustainable alternative fuels (SAF) by 2030 challenging enough;
- What was the approach taken to private jets at the airport; and
- Asking for MAG to take their leadership to the next level within the sector so that the sector accelerates its activity to reduce emissions.

Neil Robinson, Manchester Airports Group responded to questions and comments by stating that MAG had welcomed the rigorous challenge and debate with partners on the issue of addressing aviation emissions and they were keen to lead on this issue with the wider industry. He stated that MAG had delivered on their commitment to decarbonisation, noting that all MAG's airports continue to be certified as carbon neutral. He advised that the majority of flights undertaken from Manchester airport were for leisure, adding that the number of private jets using Manchester airport was very small. He advised that most domestic flights were to destinations which either crossed over a body of water, or where the alternative mode of transport would take longer than 4 hours. The exception was Heathrow, a large airport that acted as a hub for other international destinations. He stated that it was important to manage emissions associated with whatever mode of transport was taken.

In terms of decarbonisation, Neil Robinson, Manchester Airports Group informed the Committee that the projected industry figures were very broadly a 10% reduction in aviation emissions over the next decade, facilitated due to efficiencies realised by aircraft entering the fleet; a further 20% increase in the following decade to be achieved as a result of the increased take up of SAF and a further 40% increase in the next decade due to an acceleration of technologies, adding that these projections reflected those of the Government's Jet Zero Strategy. He stated that the industry would still have associated residual emissions and it was important to be honest and transparent about this. He commented that as the scale of decarbonisation nationally accelerated, emissions associated with the aviation industry would appear to remain high, but it was important to understand these figures in relative terms. He advised that the Jet Zero Strategy demanded that any residual emissions would need to be compensated for, either via carbon removal or carbon offsetting. He stated that the increased costs associated with these requirements would drive and further stimulate industry efficiencies and technological improvements. Members asked that further information on the carbon offsetting proposals were circulated following the meeting.

Neil Robinson, Manchester Airports Group advised that with exception of the impact of COVID-19 the airport had witnessed sustained growth, as high as 10% year on year growth in passenger numbers and it was anticipated that future growth would be continued. He advised that it was important to acknowledge the significant economic and social value that the airport brought to the city and wider city region. He commented that the airport accounted for approximately 25,000 jobs on site with an additional 75,000 jobs in the associated supply chain. He stated that any growth needed to be delivered within safe and agreed environmental limits. He stated that the emissions limits imposed on the industry would stimulate improvements across the sector and incentivise technological progress within the industry. In terms of projected passenger demand he advised that this modelling would be provided following the meeting.

In regard to SAF, he stated that a lot of the initial safety concerns had been addressed, adding that a significant amount of work had been done in the industry to provide an assurance in this regard. He stated that the challenge now was to facilitate the production of this at scale. He advised that significantly large investment would be required and as such any potential investor needed an assurance that they would see a viable return. He advised that in other countries a price support mechanism had been introduced to support this investment and he called upon the Government to introduce the same in the UK. He stated that this presented a great opportunity to stimulate economic growth and job creation in the UK, and in particular in the North West. He also commented that discussions were ongoing as to how the manufacture of SAF could be an opportunity to use residual waste from Manchester and support a circular waste economy.

The Leader of the Council stated that MAG in partnership with the Council and the Manchester Climate Change Agency were taking national leadership on the issue of aviation emissions. She called for increased national leadership on the issue from the Government and an increased commitment to the delivery of reliable and sustainable rail travel. She stated that she supported the delivery of HS2, commenting that the

introduction of improved connectivity would reduce the need for internal domestic flights.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

### **ECCSC/23/05      Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan – Quarter 3 Update**

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 3 2022-23 (October – December 2022).

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- Key messages from the Quarter 3 progress report;
- Noting that since 2020, the Council had remained within its carbon budget each year and the Quarter 3 report showed continued progress being made with the Council on track to meet its 2025 target;
- Key achievements in this quarter; and
- Data on CO2 emissions.

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

- Welcoming the report and the good work described;
- Recognising that this good work was being promoted amongst partners and key stakeholders;
- Congratulating all staff involved in the programmes that had received awards and national recognition; and
- The need to promote active travel amongst staff.

The Zero Carbon Manager described how dedicated resources had been allocated to increase capacity within the team to look at staff active travel. She stated that this is an area identified as requiring additional attention which it is receiving and improvements were beginning to be realised and she was confident that improvements would be achieved. She said this included increased use of different channels of communication with staff and work with the Parks Teams. She advised that more information on this specific work would be provided at the next meeting.

The Committee noted that they would be considering the Manchester Green and Blue Strategy at their March meeting and Chair asked that this included information on nature-based solutions.

In response to a question from a Member who asked if there had been any analysis of any increase in the use of journeys undertaken by cars as a result of the disruption to the train service, the Strategic Lead, Resources & Programmes stated that he would take this enquiry away from the meeting and respond.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport stated that the learning from all the work described was cascaded and informed all the work of the Council. She stated that was everyone's business to take action and responsibility to address climate change.

### **Decision**

To note the report.

### **ECCSC/23/06      Draft Terms of Reference and Work Programme for the Climate Change Ward Action Plans Task and Finish Group**

The Committee considered the report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit that set out the proposed terms of reference and work programme for the Climate Change Ward Action Plans Task and Finish group.

The Committee were invited to agree the membership of the Task and Finish Group; agree the terms of reference for the Task and Finish Group and agree the work programme of the Task and Finish Group, which will be reviewed by the group at each of its meetings.

### **Decision**

1. To endorse the terms of reference for the Task and Finish Group and agree the work programme of the Task and Finish Group.
2. To appoint Councillors Doswell, Shilton Godwin and Wright (Chair), as members of the Task and Finish Group.

### **ECCSC/23/07      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.

A Member requested that information on what support the Council can offer to leasehold owner-occupiers and tenants who maybe experiencing resistance from the property owner regarding installing energy efficiency improvements to the property be provided in either the Housing Retrofit update report scheduled for March 2023 or the update report on the Local Area Energy Plan.

### **Decision**

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



## **Economy Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 8 December 2022**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Johns (Chair) – in the Chair

Councillors Noor, Raikes, I Robinson, Shilton Godwin and Taylor

#### **Also present:**

Councillor Craig, Leader of the Council

Councillor Midgley, Deputy Leader of the Council

Jen Atkins, Bruntwood

Nick Cooper, Adept Corporate Services

Ross Holden, GMB

Ian MacArthur, Director of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter

Professor Anthony Rafferty, University of Manchester

Conor Rand, USDAW

**Apologies:** Councillors Bell, Good and Moran

#### **ESC/22/47 Minutes**

#### **Decision:**

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Thursday, 10 November 2022, be approved as a correct record.

#### **ESC/22/48 Living Wage City: Evidence Hearing**

The Leader of the Council introduced the item and explained that the Council and Manchester had been on a significant journey to become a Real Living Wage Place, which would bring the Real Living Wage together across a range of sectors to ensure all residents and workers in Manchester receive the pay they deserve. There were over 200 Real Living Wage accredited organisations in Manchester, reaching around 65,000 residents, and it could be demonstrated that between 5000 and 6000 people had directly received a pay rise as a result of their employer becoming accredited.

The Leader acknowledged that almost a quarter of Manchester residents earned less than the Real Living Wage and that challenges around poverty in certain areas of the city remained. The Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy worked to alleviate and support those living in poverty and a well-paid job with good terms and conditions and working standards was highlighted as the easiest way out of poverty.

The committee welcomed and heard from a number of guests from a variety of industries and sectors within Manchester on the Living Wage and the good practice they undertake.

Ross Holden, Research and Policy Officer for GMB trade union, explained that GMB engaged with a range of bodies on minimum wages and the Real Living Wage and

that GMB were pursuing a policy for the national minimum wage to be raised to the same rate as the Real Living Wage and that a Foundation Living Wage of £10.90 p.h. be introduced for those sectors in which low pay was particularly prevalent.

He noted that the adoption of the Real Living Wage was influenced by certain factors, including government funding and the emerging economy, but he believed that there were levers in place for the Council to encourage more businesses and organisations to pay the Real Living Wage.

Ross raised points around private social care, where some staff were having to rely on food banks and there were issues around a lack of contractual sick pay and travel time between visits being unpaid. He called on the Council to encourage private social care providers to pay the Real Living Wage, to support GMB's campaigns and to meet with trade unions to identify how social care can be commissioned differently. He also suggested that the Council commit to involving trade unions in the commissioning process and highlighted GMB's Ethical Home Care Commissioning Charter, which other local authorities had signed up to.

In response to these suggestions, the Leader stated that the Council would be happy to work towards signing up to the Ethical Home Care Commissioning Charter and that similar work had been undertaken in 2018/19 with Unison to redesign how social care providers were commissioned, abolishing 15-minute visits, not paying people by the minute and ensuring that travel time between visits were paid.

GMB was also working to improve workers rights within platform organisations and asked that the Council, as a majority shareholder, worked with other shareholders at Manchester Airport Group (MAG) to ensure it becomes Real Living Wage accredited and that the Real Living Wage is paid to all workers, including contractors, in the airport zone.

Conor Rand, Senior Researcher for the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (USDAW) explained that the union represented around 360,000 workers in the UK and held agreements with a range of major retailers. He reflected on the importance of good work, given the cost-of-living crisis which had massively impacted USDAW members. USDAW had undertaken a cost-of-living survey in November 2022 and found that 80% of respondents in Manchester had been unable to take time off work when ill and 77% reported the financial worries were impacting their mental health.

Conor expressed that the cost-of-living crisis was largely a crisis of low pay, weak employment rights and a lack of good work. Whilst low pay was a significant issue, Conor advised that many USDAW members struggled most with the number of hours worked, whether this be above or below their contracted amount, and being denied extra hours by their employer.

He explained that USDAW had created a New Deal for Workers campaign, which called for a minimum wage of £12 p.h for all workers, a minimum 16-hour week

contract for those interested, a right to a normal-hours contract to reflect the actual hours worked, a ban on zero-hour contracts, improved sick pay and a holistic approach to good work. Members were advised that USDAW had successfully negotiated for minimum 16-hour week contracts for those interested and normal-hours contracts with Tesco and this was hoped to be replicated with other retailers.

The committee took the opportunity to ask questions of the trade union representatives and queried what work trade unions were undertaking to address discrepancies between hours of actual work and holiday entitlements.

Conor responded by explaining that USDAW's request for a minimum 16-hour week would benefit this and was seen to be the benchmark for access to statutory work rights and ensures a level of flexibility for employer buy-in.

Issues around universal credit and how changes in pay can result in a claimant receiving less than anticipated were highlighted. Conor reiterated the effect of changes in pay and additional bonuses on allowances and the contrast in pay dates of wages and universal credit.

A query was also raised as to what more the Council could do to improve the working lives of residents. It was suggested that there were major employers in Manchester who did not allow trade union oversight and the Council could apply significant pressure on such organisations and particularly national and international brands. The Council also had a role in leading by example socially and politically and it was suggested that social value could be maximised within the procurement procedure, although it was recognised that the Council had embedded social value into its procurement framework.

In response to a question from the Chair around how trade unions were organising those who worked in a non-traditional workplace, Ross explained that GMB were increasing public knowledge and undertaking partnership work.

Jen Atkins, People Director at Bruntwood commercial property company and member of the Real Living Wage Action Group, explained that the Real Living Wage had provided financial security for Bruntwood employees and helped them to feel valued for their work.

Jen highlighted how paying the Real Living Wage was also beneficial for businesses as this improved recruitment, retention and performance. She acknowledged the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, increased energy costs and challenges in recruitment and how this reiterated the need to be a good employer. She concurred with the previous speakers that paying the Real Living Wage should be a minimum.

In response to a question as to what more the Council could do to encourage businesses to pay the Real Living Wage, Jen acknowledged the leadership and influence that the Council had and that it could promote workers rights and entitlements to increase awareness.

Jen was also asked how businesses absorbed additional costs of paying the Real Living Wage and advised that, in Bruntwood's experience, there had been a £250k impact and that some of this had been passed onto customers through increased costs and that savings had been made through using smarter, digital technology and greater automation which reduced the amount required for repairs.

It was asked what advice Jen would give to small businesses wanting to pay the Real Living Wage, and Jen suggested that they think about the long-term benefits for the company and the advantages this would have on retention and productivity.

Members also referred to the issue of employees working more hours than contracted for, which was raised earlier. It was stated that Bruntwood offered both variable hours and 16-hour minimum contracts. Quarterly reviews were also undertaken to ensure that employees were not working over their contracted hours.

Professor Anthony Rafferty, Professor of Employment Studies and Managing Director of the Work and Equalities Institute at the University of Manchester also attended the meeting and explained that there had been good progress in the number of organisations in Manchester signing up to the Real Living Wage. He suggested that there was a need to make the Real Living Wage attractive to employers, particularly with business cases such as an evidence base of retention and recruitment figures for those organisations already paying the Real Living Wage.

Anthony expressed his belief that topics such as organisational development and business transformation would be pathways to opening up discussions on the Real Living Wage with organisations who may not be initially receptive. He also explained that the Productivity Institute had recently received funding to establish employer panels to guide through interventions to improve productivity and this may be useful to the work of the Council and the Living Wage Foundation.

Ian McArthur, Director of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter, provided an overview of his work and highlighted how the Real Living Wage was a binary condition of the Charter and that it was often a barrier to engaging with an employer.

A Good Employment Week would be held in 2023 to address messaging directly to employees to help understand what was meant by 'good work'. Ian acknowledged a need to reach out to those experiencing low pay and insecure work.

Ian was joined by Nick Cooper, Managing Director of Adept Corporate Services which was the only security manned guarding company to be Real Living Wage accredited in the UK. Nick explained that Adept was a supporter of the GM Good Employment Charter and did not meet the eligibility criteria to become a member as Adept did not provide sick pay from the first day of employment. This would be implemented in 2023 and Adept would become a member of the Charter.

Nick highlighted increases in retention rates and response rates to staff surveys as well as decreases in sickness levels and in the timescale between recruitment and fulfilment as a result of paying the Real Living Wage and being a Good Employer.

He also explained that the company has the Adept Living Wage, which meant that 92% of staff were paid at least an additional 50% of the Real Living Wage. All full-time employees received an annual £500 bonus, with part-time staff receiving £250.

Some challenges in clients not wanting to pay the Real Living Wage were acknowledged and Nick provided an example of where he had served notice on a client who refused to pay the Real Living Wage and staff would be redeployed to other clients who were willing to pay the Real Living Wage.

The Chair queried what drove the reticence around providing sick pay from the first day of employment, to which Nick explained that this was due to cost and that this would work out costing Adept £84k based on sickness levels from 2022.

Ian also advised that the requirement of sick pay from the first day of employment was added to the criteria for membership of the Charter due to the COVID-19 pandemic as many low-paid workers were required to work with the virus. Experiences indicated that some sectors faced difficulties in agreeing to pay sick pay from the first day of employment due to national agreements and where sickness absence could last longer due to the nature of workplace injuries.

In response to a query as to how Nick promoted conversations on being a Good Employer and paying the Real Living Wage with his Board members, some difficulties were acknowledged and Nick emphasised the need for businesses to look at the bigger picture and future forecasts to highlight the investment in staff and the return that this could provide.

Ian also explained that the GM Good Employment Charter worked with organisations which were employee-owned and have transformed the values and culture of their business through this. Many of these also acted as advocates for the Charter and supported other employers on specific or sectoral issues.

The Chair questioned how the GM Good Employment Charter worked with the labour market to encourage conversations around good employment and awareness of working rights. Ian explained that the Good Employment Week in 2023 would address this and would provide a QR code around the city, which would direct people to a website and ask a series of questions to tell them if they had a good job. The website would also advertise what the Real Living Wage is and link to resources on the GM Good Employment Charter website. This would also be sharable on social media to reach as wide an audience as possible.

In response to a question around how awareness around good employment can be increased among young people, Ian advised that the Charter was working to provide an educational kit for schools and colleges about what good work looked like to

provide a base knowledge for young people entering the workforce. It was hoped that this would be available in time for the Good Employment Week.

Work was also ongoing with the Trade Union Congress (TUC) and colleagues on the Charter's Board to encourage involvement in the Good Employment Week.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked guests for their attendance and contributions.

### **ESC/22/49 Living Wage City: Report Discussion**

The committee considered a report of the Director of Inclusive Economy which detailed the Manchester Living Wage Action Group's work to become a Living Wage City, why this is important, and how it intended to continue promoting the real living wage in Manchester.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Manchester announced its intention to become a Living Wage City in September 2021 and was recognised in October 2022;
- The real living wage is set by the Living Wage Foundation and based on independent advice and was currently set at £10.90 per hour;
- Becoming a living wage city was important for Manchester as most of the city's significant problems were linked closely to poverty, and while worklessness and benefit dependency remained the main drivers of poverty in Manchester, there had been an increase in in-work poverty in recent years;
- The criteria required to become Living Wage accredited;
- The benefits for both an employer and employee;
- Manchester was required by the Living Wage Foundation to convene a Living Wage action group to collectively develop a three-year action plan to increase the number of living wage employers in the city and to be made up of a range of accredited organisations, including anchor institutions, SME employers and the third sector;
- The role of the action group and the action plan;
- The targets and actions for the Action Group; and
- Next steps of Manchester's Living Wage journey, including handing responsibility to the Work and Skills team for delivery.

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

- If the Council had experienced any difficulties in engaging with employers due to current financial difficulties, and whether this was difficult for specific sectors;
- Noting that voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE) was not typically a high-paid industry;
- Noting a recruitment and retention crisis within employment;

- If the Council was doing all it could within its licensing and planning policies to promote the Real Living Wage; and
- How the Council could promote the Real Living Wage through the commissioning procedure.

The Director of Inclusive Economy acknowledged that the impact of current financial uncertainties on employer engagement with the Real Living Wage. She explained that big anchor institutions were key and the Council had asked them to encourage other employers within their sectors and spheres of influence to engage with the Living Wage Foundation.

Some challenges were noted, such as the Living Wage Foundation only recognising the headquarters of a business which caused some issues if the Manchester office of an organisation wanted to become accredited.

The Director of Inclusive Economy also explained that the Council would continue to present a video on the Real Living Wage, which members had watched earlier in the meeting, and use the levers it had to further encourage other employers to become accredited.

The Director of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter also advised the Committee that his organisation had surveyed members of Charter after the announcement of the increase in the Real Living Wage, and members remained committed to paying this.

The Deputy Leader informed members that the Council stipulated in funding applications for VCSE that organisations must be able to demonstrate that they either pay the Real Living Wage or had a commitment to implementing this within the next two years and MACC were supporting VSCE organisations to devise an action plan for this.

The Director of Inclusive Economy added that MACC strongly urged VCSE organisations to pay the Real Living Wage but acknowledged the need for Living Wage funders, who could build enough into commissions and grants so that VCSE organisations could pay the Real Living Wage and then monitor it through contract and grant conditions. Some progress had been made on this, although it was noted that more work needed to be undertaken.

It was confirmed that there were no conditions around the Real Living Wage within the Council's planning and licensing policies as there were no legal powers to enforce this.

The Strategy and Economic Policy Manager also explained that social value was already well embedded within the Council's procurement and commissioning processes, although he acknowledged the need to ensure consistency across the organisation.

He concurred with members' points about retention issues within the workforce and reiterated that those engaged with the Living Wage Action Group remained committed.

The next phase of work for the action group would identify levers which the Council could utilise to achieve its outcomes for the city and would help to open up conversations with different employers.

**Decision:**

That the Committee

1. notes Manchester City Council's approach to increasing the number of residents being paid a real living wage;
2. expresses their support for the Council in using all its levers, including procurement, land ownership, civic influence and place-based lead for health to increase the number of employers paying a real living wage; and
3. supports the Council's ambition to increase the number of residents being paid a real living wage by promoting this work through members' own contacts and networks.

**ESC/22/50 The Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter**

The committee considered a report of the Director of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter which provided an update on the work undertaken to create the Charter Implementation Unit and delivery mechanisms, how the Charter had been delivered and its impacts, and reflected upon the challenges of the changing nature of work and the growth of the good employment moving in the current socio-economic climate, moving from the COVID-19 pandemic through to the current cost of living crisis.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter's role as a key partner for Manchester's Real Living Wage Campaign, Our Manchester Business Forum and the Work and Skills Team in improving good employment practice across the city;
- How the Charter would continue to create a good employment 'movement' in Greater Manchester;
- How the Charter would continue to work with its partners to deepen the pool of supporting resource and provide a platform for the Good Employment community to spread and support good practice;
- How the Charter would work with partners to develop innovative approaches to good employment practice and to continually evolve and develop new solutions;
- The characteristics of good employment;
- Since its inception in early 2020, the Charter had grown to reach around 1,300 employers, including over 450 supporters and 76 full members, covering in excess of 400,000 employees; and



- Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) evaluated the first year of the Charter, examining both the motivations and experience of Charter 'leads' – those who took their organisation through the process of becoming either a supporter or member – and employees in Charter organisations on their experience of good employment. The findings from the evaluation were broadly positive, with some suggested next steps and recommendations on how to improve reach and impact.

Much of the previous discussions included reference to the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter and the Committee expressed its thanks to the Director of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter for his attendance and contributions.

**Decision:**

That the report be noted.

**ESC/22/51 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 and its work programme.

**Decision:**

That the Committee note the report.



## **Economy Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 12 January 2023**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Johns (Chair) – in the Chair

Councillors Good, Noor, Raikes, I Robinson, Shilton Godwin and Taylor

#### **Also present:**

Councillor Hacking, Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure

Councillor Rawlins, Executive Member for Environment and Transport

Rhianna Austin, Laing O'Rourke

Amanda Boyd, LendLease

Lauren Murphy, Laing O'Rourke

Abdul Tahir, Mace

#### **ESC/23/1     Minutes**

#### **Decision:**

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

#### **ESC/23/2     Employment and Training Opportunities from Major Capital Programmes**

The committee considered a report of the Director of Inclusive Economy which provided an update on the employment and skills opportunities created from Manchester City Council's major capital investment programmes, with a key focus on the Our Town Hall and The Factory projects.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The importance of social value and the need to embed it within the Council's capital investment programmes;
- The integration of social value into the Our Town Hall Project through contractual mechanisms with construction and design team employers from the outset of the project;
- The monitoring of social value against 20 specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), based around employment, skills, training, and local community benefit with a monetary value attached to each KPI that measures social return on investment (SROI);
- The social and economic value achievements of the Our Town Hall project and progress against KPIs, including individual case studies;
- The social and economic value achievements of The Factory project and progress against KPIs, including individual case studies;

- Noting that the Factory's Social Value KPIs were realigned in June 2021 to create new jobs, new apprenticeships and Kickstart placements for Manchester residents first;
- The procurement framework used by several Greater Manchester local authorities and the North West Construction Hub (NWCH) focused on Manchester projects;
- Tenders for a large Manchester City Council capital funded project must answer a social value question with weighting of 30%. This includes a link to Manchester City Council's Social Value Toolkit and tenders are asked to demonstrate how their social value proposal would be both Manchester specific and project specific and targeted at hard-to-reach groups within local wards.

In introducing the item, the Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure highlighted the importance of social value and explained that the Council had a strong reputation for delivering social value. He stated that social value was an important lever in the delivery of jobs, training and work experience and the Council was committed to providing these opportunities for residents.

The Director of Inclusive Economy explained that size, scale, building type and procurement impacted the delivery of social value between different projects. She highlighted how the Our Town Hall project was a once-in-a-multigenerational opportunity and social value was embedded as a core objective of this development from the outset. The scheme included ambitious social value objectives with built-in financial incentives for contractors to meet social value KPIs, and financial penalties for under-performance. She explained that a different approach was taken with The Factory scheme to work collaboratively with Laing O'Rourke and Manchester International Festival to deliver social value outcomes across the construction and creative and digital elements of the project

Two apprentices – Abdul Tahir from Mace and Rhianna Austin from Laing O'Rourke – also attended the meeting to share their experiences of apprenticeships.

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

- Whether the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) relating to new apprentices were targeted to Manchester residents;
- Why the number of new apprentices up to level 3 was under target;
- What attracted the guests in attendance to their apprenticeships; and
- How the Council communicated the importance of social value to other major employers in the city.

In response to a member's query regarding whether the target number of apprentices were to be Manchester residents, the Work and Skills Specialist explained that the overall target for number of apprentices working on the Our Town Hall project was 150, with 100 of these at level 2 and 50 at level 4 and above. For The Factory project, the target was 25 new apprentices for the construction element. He confirmed that the apprenticeship scheme for the Our Town Hall project was solely for those living or studying in Manchester whilst The Factory scheme had a

'Manchester first' approach due to the way it was procured through the North West Construction Hub.

The Director of Inclusive Economy highlighted how the KPI for the number of new apprentices at level 4 and above was overachieving. She also stated that the Our Town Hall project remained underway, and this meant that delivery on the number of apprentices below level 4 would continue. It was recognised that there had been a national and local decline in apprenticeships, partly due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and work needed to be done to improve take-up. The Work and Skills Specialist also explained that the final phases of both the Our Town Hall and The Factory projects were difficult to derive social value from due to rising costs and them being less appealing to those searching for an apprenticeship. Assurances were provided that the Council's Social Value Manager working on the Our Town Hall project had sight of contracts for individual packages with LendLease and this provided the Council with influence and the ability to support social value within projects.

In response to a question from the Chair regarding what attracted the apprentices to their roles, Abdul advised that a college teacher suggested the idea of an apprenticeship and he researched the idea through the Council's website, attended National Apprenticeship Week hosted by GMCA and visited the project. He reiterated previous sentiments that the Our Town Hall project was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Rhianna explained that she wanted a career switch to the built environment sector, and she received an email advert from the Kickstart scheme. She had previously undertaken work experience with Manchester International Festival, which provided a link with The Factory project.

The Director of Inclusive Economy informed the committee that the Council continued to encourage other major employers in Manchester to embed social value into their work. An example of this was the Social Value Framework and Charter which had been devised and implemented for partners in North Manchester. This included a shared set of social value objectives to deliver across all North Manchester projects in the next 15 years. This was the first time a place-based approach had been taken and opportunities to do this in other areas of the city was anticipated. Other examples of how social value is encouraged among other major employers included work on the Real Living Wage and a well-established programme between universities and The Growth Company to provide opportunities for residents in the construction sector. An annual conference was also held to showcase social value achievements across the city.

The committee thanked the apprentices for their attendance and sharing their experiences and wished them luck in their careers.

#### **Decision:**

That the report be noted.

**ESC/23/3      Update on Public Engagement for Manchester Active Travel Strategy and Investment Plan**

The committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) which provided an update on the public engagement activity carried out to inform the production of the Manchester Active Travel Strategy and Investment Plan (MATSSIP).

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The MATSSIP aims to create a city-wide, Manchester-specific strategy and network plan for active travel investment and a prioritised pipeline of measures to deliver across the city;
- Public and stakeholder engagement was carried out between July and December 2022, including online consultation, public engagement workshops and email responses;
- Key themes arising from the public consultation, including safety; maintenance of existing infrastructure; new infrastructure; and non-infrastructure measures;
- A draft network map; and
- Next steps for the development of the MATSSIP.

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

- Welcoming progress on the Strategy and noting its importance;
- Whether the Strategy could be more specific about what inequalities it aimed to reduce, and how this would be achieved;
- The need for an active travel network to be well-linked with schools and other infrastructure;
- The impact of speeding and pavement parking as barriers to active travel;
- The need for an active travel network to be integrated with public transport;
- Bus regulation was needed to encourage walking and reduce car usage;
- The impact of building works on reducing capacity for active travel by obstructing pavements;
- How the Council worked with developers to incorporate active travel provisions into major schemes;
- The need to repair gullies to improve road safety and encourage walking;
- Whether previous consultations on active travel were incorporated into the development of the MATSSIP;
- A need for places to permanently store bicycles, particularly for residents in apartments; and
- Noting a distinct focus on cycling in the MATSSIP and expressing hopes for there to be a balance between different active travel modes in the final Strategy.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport introduced the item and explained that the Council had taken a different approach to consulting on the draft MATSSIP by holding face-to-face engagement sessions as opposed to relying on online forms of consultation. She expressed her thanks to the members, residents and community groups who responded to the consultation and stated that this helped to inform a coherent and robust Strategy that would help to take advantage of all funding opportunities.

The Principal Policy Officer explained that the consultation was undertaken in partnership with Sweco over a 6-week period in autumn 2022. He stated that the consultation responses had provided useful key themes to highlight in the final Strategy, which would be considered in February by the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee and, if endorsed, the Executive.

In response to a member's question around inequalities, the Executive Member for Environment and Transport highlighted that the Strategy aimed to make all active travel modes accessible to everyone, which would help to alleviate financial and health inequalities. The Principal Policy Officer advised that the Strategy would be based around five objectives, including reducing citywide inequalities, and further detail on this would be included in the final report considered by the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee in February. He also highlighted the prioritisation tool for the Strategy which would utilise qualitative and quantitative data on multiple deprivation, health data, population and employment densities to assess where investment would be best targeted to reduce these inequalities.

A need for the active travel network to be well-linked with schools was acknowledged and members were advised that Manchester was taking part in the Greater Manchester School Streets Pilot, which placed restrictions on motor traffic at drop off and pick up times at 7 schools in the city. This would encourage people to make the school run and other everyday journeys by bike or on foot and would enable children to breathe cleaner air on the school run. The Strategy would also reference the Council's aspirations to expand the School Streets programme and it was hoped that national legislation may be enacted to enable the Council to enforce further restrictions on motor traffic around schools. The Principal Policy Officer suggested other ways of addressing parking issues around schools, such as traffic restraint measures and filtered neighbourhoods.

In response to issues raised by the committee regarding pavement parking and accessibility and speeding, the Executive Member for Environment and Transport advised that the Council's Highways Access Group which works with officers at the design stage on any new development to ensure that these issues are considered earlier in the development process.

The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) noted a need to look at active travel in an integrated way and explained that the Strategy sat alongside a number of other strategies related to mobility but was being developed with consideration given to the city's growth ambitions and key growth locations.

It was noted that movement strategies, public transport amenities and active travel provisions were key in the planning of major developments, such as the Co-op Live Arena. The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) confirmed that this would be undertaken through the planning process but negotiations and discussions with developers would also be held.

It was also confirmed that the Council worked with developers to minimise disruption from building works through sequencing and aligning programmes where possible.

In response to the Chair's query as to whether previous consultations on active travel were incorporated into the development of the MATSIP, the Principal Policy Officer advised that the technical work undertaken by Sweco included responses from previous consultations and that this would be clarified in the final report.

In summarising the item, the Chair proposed recommending that the Committee's comments be included in the full MATSIP report going to Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee and the Executive in February, which was supported by the Committee. He also informed members that the Committee was invited to attend the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee meeting when the final report would be considered.

### **Decision:**

That the committee

1. notes the report;
2. notes that the full MATSIP document and a summary report will be brought to the February 2023 Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee and, if agreed, Executive for adoption; and
3. recommends that the full MATSIP document reflects the Committee's comments and includes definitions as to what is meant by "inequalities of access" as stated at section 3.4(d) of the report.

### **ESC/23/4     Revised Policy for Residents Parking Schemes**

The committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which outlined a revised policy around the implementation and operation of Residents Parking Zones (RPZ) within the city.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Resident parking schemes are implemented to tackle the impact of commuter and other non-residential parking on residential areas;
- The revised policy reflects the feedback and issues that have been gathered during the process of extending the Christie Resident Parking Scheme and in the design of other planned schemes;
- Existing policy challenges identified by the review of the current scheme;
- Proposed changes to the scheme, including provisions for digital visitor permits, introduction of transferable paper permits for those without digital access and physical temporary parking permits to all residents;
- There are currently no plans to change the design of existing schemes that are already in operation;
- The removal of the visitor permit charge and provision of scratch cards to each household within the current schemes is estimated to cost £75k per annum;
- Positive feedback had been received on the proposed changes through drop-in sessions with residents within the extended Christie RPS.



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

- The success of resident parking schemes in reducing parking problems;
- How the proposed changes to permits would help digitally excluded residents;
- How secure the online system was, and whether any Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) issued during technical faults with the system would be rescinded;
- Provisions for parking permits for carers;
- Whether the estimated £75k cost of the proposed changes was funded from revenue;
- How often enforcement and levels of non-compliance would be reviewed and what the process would be if additional enforcement resources were required;
- The Council's legal right to enforce parking policy on unadopted roads;
- How many scratchcard permits each household would be permitted;
- The Executive's approach to the issues which make Resident Parking Zones necessary, and what can be done to reduce the need for these; and
- What more could be done to deal with dangerous parking, such as near junctions.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport and the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) introduced the item and explained that the revised policy reflected feedback from the extended Christie resident parking scheme and other emerging schemes to ensure that the policy was fit for purpose.

The Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) explained that the revised policy was to be agreed by the Executive, after which work would begin to identify how the scheme would operate in practice. Some detailed thinking around this had already been undertaken but the main design work would begin once the policy was agreed, with implementation scheduled for the next financial year.

Ensuring that digitally excluded residents could access parking permits would be addressed during the practical design phase of the policy.

The Parking Services Manager provided assurances that in the event of a resident or visitor with a permit within a resident parking scheme area receiving a PCN, this would be rescinded. She emphasised that resident parking schemes were in place for the benefit of residents and that the Council did not seek to penalise residents. This would remain the approach in the event of a system failure or technical issues.

She also assured members that the new online permits portal was fit for purpose, quick to use and user-friendly.

Confirmation was given that parking permits for carers would be provided in addition to the proposed two permits per household.

In response to queries regarding scratchcard permits, members were advised that these would allow for 10 visits per scratchcard. Discussions were ongoing as to how many free scratchcards would be provided to each household, although it was suggested that this may be one per year. It was stated, however, that this may differ between schemes depending on their location in the city.

The Parking Services Manager also explained with regards to parking enforcement that the Council had recently entered into a new contract beginning in April 2023 which included a 20% increase in the number of Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO) for out-of-town areas. This would help to alleviate issues in some areas where resources had previously been stretched. Members were also informed that there would be a further uplift in the number of CEOs following the introduction of the resident parking scheme in Eastlands.

Members were advised that the Council had a right to enforce parking regulations and restrictions on any highway which the public had access to, regardless of whether this was adopted by the local authority or not.

In response to a member query around how to reduce the need for and reliance on resident parking schemes, the Executive Member for Environment and Transport highlighted the importance of connectivity within the city's travel network and the need for reliable alternatives to car use. She acknowledged that a behaviour change was required with a focus on education around the Highway Code. There was also a need to ensure communication between departments such as Highways and Neighbourhoods so that parking schemes worked to the benefit of residents.

The Head of Design Commissioning and PMO informed the committee that rule 243 of the Highway Code, which stipulated where drivers cannot park, was incorporated into every resident parking scheme to mitigate dangerous parking particularly around junctions. Measures such as creating double yellow lines by junctions were sometimes included in the introduction of a parking scheme to address these issues.

The Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) explained that the estimated £75k cost for the removal of the visitor permit charge and provision of scratchcards related to the collective impact of introducing the proposed changes compared to revenue which may have been received from a ringfenced reserve for reinvestment into parking-related services. It was felt that this cost was necessary to ensure a series of schemes and zones across the city which could operate effectively and respond to the needs of residents.

He expressed that there was no intention to generate income from the proposed changes and that any income from PCNs was held for reinvestment.

### **Decision:**

That the Economy Scrutiny Committee endorses the Revised Resident Parking Scheme Policy for approval by the Executive.

### **ESC/23/5     Highways State of the City Annual Report 2021/22**

The committee considered a report of the Head of Network Management, which provided an update on the substantial works completed and progress achieved by the Highways service and provided an overview of methods of communication to ensure ongoing engagement with residents and members, as well as the performance of the service during the financial year 2021/22.

The key points and themes within the report included:

- Manchester's highway network includes over 1,350 km of road length, 2,600 km of footway length and over 350 bridges and structures and the total highway asset has an indicative gross replacement value of over £3 billion, making it the Council's most valuable asset;
- Achievements for 2021/22, including the successful delivery of the 5-year capital investment programme, receiving £37.2m in funding from the Mayor's Challenge Fund to improve walking and cycling facilities, embedding social value and sustainability within procurement and establishing the Highways Access Group;
- Delivery of planned maintenance, inspections and repairs, street works, winter services, major projects and road safety;
- The Council's highway infrastructure assets are currently being maintained in a steady state, with improvements in several areas following the 5-year investment programme. Service delivery performance has generally been maintained with improvements in some areas and decreases in other areas.

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

- How many service requests had been opened in the past 12 months and whether there was a backlog of outstanding requests;
- The ability for Highways Inspectors and Operatives to resolve any unreported issues in the same visit to reduce repeated call-outs;
- Noting that speed is a major factor in road collisions;
- Expressing disappointment in the lack of a road safety budget due to government cuts;
- Noting that the Council is below the National Highways and Transport (NHT) average satisfaction score for road safety, and expressing hope that this could be improved in the future;
- What other measures were being taken to promote social value within the Highways service;
- Noting that there were no capital funds earmarked for Highways in 2023/24;
- The prioritisation scheme for gully repairs and the timescales around this; and
- Whether there would be provision for gullies to be repaired or replaced outside of the cyclical programme in 2023/24.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport opened discussions on the item and advised committee members that they could raise any ward-specific issues with her directly.

The Head of Network Management highlighted that the report related to 2021/22 and that reports were provided annually. He also welcomed any feedback around specific issues and areas to be included in future reports.

In response to a question from the Chair around the amount of service requests, the Head of Network Management explained that the number of requests were available by ward area. He stated that ward dashboards would be reimplemented so that members had sight of all outstanding and completed service requests. A new asset management system had also been procured which would link to the Council's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to provide real-time information as to the progress of service requests.

The Head of Network Management explained that Highways Inspectors could log service requests whilst carrying out their roles across the city. He stated that repairs contractors were provided with up-to-date information before jobs to ensure all outstanding repairs can be undertaken at the same time, where possible. He also informed members that the Council was taking a "find and fix" approach to new contracts so that repairs can be undertaken as quickly as possible.

Members were informed that the Highways service undertook a lot of work on road safety despite having no formal budget. Road safety was included within all highways improvement schemes and £2 million of funding had been received for road safety schemes in 2021/22. It was also stated that the Council was developing a pilot scheme to reduce all 40 and 50 miles-per-hour speed limits in Manchester to 30 miles-per-hour speed limits and the Council would be the first in the country to have no speed limits above 30mph if the scheme was successful. The Head of Network Management also highlighted how the Council worked to ensure a 20 mph speed limit on any new roads developed and that the Mayor of Greater Manchester had recently declared reduced speed limits as a priority and it was hoped that this may lead to funding being available in the future.

In response to a query around social and environmental value, the Head of Network Management stated that the service was always looking for different ways to do things which could be beneficial to carbon reduction and recycling. The Head of Design Commissioning and PMO expanded on this and explained that two specialists had been recruited with one officer responsible for social value and the Highways Access Group and the other responsible for environmental sustainability. There was an extensive list of social value achievements, including inclusive recruitment; donations in kind; tree-planting by developers; and promotional material for Road Safety Week in 2022 which had been funded by developers. The Head of Design Commissioning and PMO also explained that the Highways Access Group was formed in late 2021 and won the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Initiative of the Year Award at the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) industry awards in November 2022. The Group met monthly and included representatives from 10 external organisations.

In response to a query from the Chair regarding gullies, the Head of Network Management explained that there were two programmes of work – cyclical gully cleansing and the Highways Gully Improvement Programme. Records of broken and slow gullies were maintained, and the cyclical programme informed how these were running and whether additional works were needed. The current priority for gully

repairs were those on the key route and community networks but members were assured that this would not prevent other urgent repairs to gullies not on these networks.

In summarising the discussion, the Chair suggested that a report on road safety be considered at a meeting in the new municipal year which the committee supported.

**Decision:**

That

1. the report be noted; and
2. the Committee requests that a report on road safety in Manchester be provided to a meeting in the new municipal year.

**ESC/23/6      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 and its work programme.

**Decision:**

That the report be noted.