

Climate Change Ward Action Plans Task and Finish Group

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2023

Present:

Councillor Wright – In the Chair
Councillor Shilton Godwin

Apologies: Councillor Doswell

Also present:

Councillor Igbon, Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods

ECCSC/CCWAP/23/01 Climate Change Action Ward Plans - Introduction

The Task and Finish Group considered the report of the Head of Neighbourhoods and the Strategic Lead Neighbourhoods South that provided an introduction to Climate Change Action Ward Plans (CCAOWPs).

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Describing the current rationale and purpose of Climate Change Action Ward Plans (CCAOWPs);
- The framework on which these plans were produced;
- The role of Climate Change Officers within Neighbourhood Teams; and
- Providing examples of ward level CCAOWPs from each neighbourhood team.

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all those present and reiterating the Terms of Reference of the Group, noting that these had been agreed by the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee.

Some of the key points that arose from the Task and Finish Group's discussions were: -

- Discussing the template used to produce the CCAOWPs and questioning if this was too prescriptive to capture the ambitions of residents;
- Noting that some of the actions described in the examples provided did not initially appear to relate to climate change and asking if these could be reviewed;
- Recognising that the staff working in Neighbourhood Teams had a challenging and busy workload with multiple responsibilities;
- Recognising the difference between wards especially in regard to the prevalence of green space and the types of businesses within ward boundaries;
- Each ward had different opportunities and challenges to address climate change;
- Noting that a consistent approach should be applied across all ward plans, and these should draw upon examples of good practice identified;
- Discussing the need to have meaningful KPIs and measurable targets, noting that this was to be discussed in detail at the next meeting;

- Stating that KPIs needed to be consistent across all ward plans and stating that some outcomes could take years to realise and it was important to recognise and articulate this;
- Discussing the often perceived tension between CCAWPs and the Our Manchester approach to resident engagement, adding that many residents were already engaged in the subject of climate change, however recognising the need to ensure the plans were practical and deliverable yet still capture and articulating the voice of residents;
- To ensure CCWAPs were realistic, consideration needed to be given to being explicit in the plans to identify what activities were measurable and reportable and what were ambitions;
- CCWAPs should differentiate between what we committed to, what we sought to influence and what we would like to see. This approach recognised the powers and resources available so as not to devise a plan that was ultimately undeliverable;
- Welcoming the inclusion in one of the examples that clearly identified and differentiated those partner projects;
- Noting that granular data was available in regard to recycling rates, however recognising that capturing and measuring repair and reuse data was challenging;
- Questioning if the number of events held was a useful metric, adding that an imaginative approach was required and providing an example of a school fashion show to highlight upcycling;
- Data on active travel needed to be collected at a ward level, including that relating to school children;
- Data from different Council departments, such as Highways should be used to inform the reporting of metrics;
- Discussing the need to influence behaviour change and the need to improve the structures and opportunities in the first instance (such as active travel infrastructure etc) to enable this;
- Carbon literacy training needed to be available in all wards;
- Increased tree planting needed to be included in all CCWAPs, noting that targets and outcomes could then be easily obtained and reported;
- Noting that certain programmes and projects were not ward specific and suggesting that consideration should be given to including an additional section on the plans that detailed broader Place Based initiatives that supported initiatives to address climate change; and
- Considering if CCAWPs should be published and available to the public.

The Head of Neighbourhoods informed the Committee that the Manchester Climate Change Agency had been invited to attend the meeting but unfortunately could not attend. She advised that they would be present at the next meeting where the Group would have the substantive item on metrics and reporting. In response to the Members' discussions, she stated that the template was never intended to be restrictive. She said that whilst all wards had used the template the contents of the plans were very different and reflected the ambitions and priorities of the individual wards. She reiterated and endorsed the comments articulated by the Members that the plans needed to be deliverable and explicit regarding the ambitions that were not within our gift to deliver.

The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods stated that it was everyone's responsibility, including the different departments of the Council, to take action to address climate change. She described that a significant amount of activity had been undertaken on the issue of behaviour change and reusing and recycling. She stated that in the context of the cost-of-living crisis this was more relevant than ever for many residents. She said this activity and awareness campaigns had been delivered in partnership with a range of organisations, such as Keep Britain Tidy. She further commented that consideration needed to be given to capturing and reporting a range of data from different sources, referring to the wealth of information that schools collected about pupil active travel.

In concluding this item of business, the Chair stated that the discussion and deliberations from this meeting would inform the final recommendations of the Group.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCSC/CCWAP/23/02 Work Programme of the Task and Finish Group

The Task and Finish Group considered the terms of reference and future work programme and were invited to make any amendments.

Decision

To note and approve the work programme.