

Manchester City Council Report for Information

Report to: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 21 June 2023

Subject: Update: Education Climate Change Action Plan 2022-24

Report of: Strategic Director of Children and Education Services

Summary

During 2022, Manchester's Education Services planned and coordinated and delivered a successful 'Bee Green' Conference for education settings. Subsequently, working in partnership with Manchester's settings, a strategic approach centred on 4Cs (Campus, Culture, Community and Curriculum) has been adopted to shape a coherent delivery plan. This will enable children to learn and contribute to a 'greener' environment, making a positive contribution to Manchester's Climate Change Action Plan. This will be important in continuing the progress made during Our Year 2022 and as Manchester looks to become a UNICEF child-friendly city.

This report provides an update on work done by the Council to support the Education sector with decarbonisation since the publication of the Education Climate Change Action Plan in October 2022. It also outlines the plans for this work moving forwards, with the action plan refreshed bi-annually following on from several review points within the two years.

Please note the word 'setting' is used to include all education providers including Early Years, schools, colleges, alternative and training providers and supplementary schools.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

1. Note and comment on the report; and
 2. Support the work of settings where appropriate to engage with this work by developing and implementing action plans to reduce their carbon emissions.
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Wards Affected: All

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

Focus of the report.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

This action plan is applicable to all children and young people of early years, school and college age and their settings' community and does not distinguish specific actions for protected or disadvantaged groups. Where relevant, reasonable adjustments are made to include all young people.

This is due to the initial two-year period being focused on understanding the status of education settings more broadly and engaging them with this agenda; providing overarching and more definitive support for identified settings of concern before moving into more nuanced KPIs, partly informed by the Manchester Climate Change Action Plan, as the Education specific plan is refreshed bi-yearly as 2038 approaches.

The refreshed audit will also enable support to be targeted at schools who are struggling most based on their self-assessment.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Equip children and young people with the skills and behaviours to prepare them for the green economy.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Raise awareness, build capacity and skills across the workforce to implement change.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Improve pathways of leadership and activism for young people and access to decision makers.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Increase the impact of the offer from MCC to education settings.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Increased carbon literacy amongst young people will contribute to a greener city in future.

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

£20,000 from Zero Carbon reserves

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Background Documents (available for public inspection):

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

Climate Emergency and Education Sector Report to CYP Scrutiny October 2022
DfE Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy 2022
GAP- Transform Our World School Climate Action Planning Tool
Salix Public Sector Decarbonisation Funding Scheme 3b Guidance
Loreto College Sustainability Strategy

1.0 Background/Context

A report was brought to this Committee in October 2022 regarding a new Education Climate Change Action Plan 2022-24. The report referenced the advertisement of a Project Manager to deliver this plan. This post was recruited to in December 2022. This report will provide the committee with an update on progress to date, as well as future opportunities and intentions for this scheme of work.

2.0 Introduction

Education services have developed a strategic climate change action plan which will support the sector in reducing carbon emissions and in developing sustainable environments, contributing to MCC's overall climate change action plan and to reaching the city's zero carbon target of 2038. The initial action plan focuses on a two-year period and will be refreshed bi-yearly as 2038 approaches. The action plan focuses on four workstreams - the four Cs – **campus, culture, community** and **curriculum**. Each has an overarching objective which will provide a focus of activity that will be implemented to achieve tangible and impactful outcomes:

- **Campus-** Having a positive impact on the school's grounds and operations.
- **Culture-** Changing attitudes and encouraging more sustainable choices.
- **Community-** involving individuals within and beyond the school community.
- **Curriculum-** Teaching students and the school community about climate change and sustainability.

All 4 Cs are linked to the 5 workstreams in the city's overall climate change action plan, so cross-departmental collaboration has been and will continue to be key.

3.0 Progress to date

This section of the report describes the progress that has been made towards the completion of actions under each of the four Cs.

3.1 Campus

- 3.1.1 One key 'Campus' target was for all education settings to have started a climate action plan by July 2024. The two main projects to support this have been the implementation of a climate action planning pilot (3.2.3) and the establishment of locality green school networks in North, Central and South Manchester (3.1.4). Both were set up on the back of an audit, which gave an idea of where settings were up to. This was completed by 80 schools out of a possible 189. A new audit will be sent out in September 2023 to gauge the number of settings with a climate action plan and ensure support can be targeted, particularly targeting those yet to engage. Working groups for Post-16 and Early Years settings respectively are being developed due to their

greater diversity of provision. Many of Manchester's Post-16 settings are making good progress in this field, as evidenced by Loreto College's Sustainability Strategy. As such, the focus of this group will be on converting strategy into action, whereas the Early Years group will focus more on the initial steps.

- 3.1.2 Another 'Campus' target is for all wards to make two commitments to improving active travel to education settings. Ward plans are currently being refreshed, providing an opportunity to better link ward and setting plans as well as achieving this target (3.3.2). The Green Bee Relay (3.3.5) has also been key to supporting this. Long-term, the establishment of the Governance Review Board (3.2.4) will mean a more comprehensive strategy on travel to school can be developed with the support of education settings.
- 3.1.3 The third 'Campus' target is for the settings with the lowest scores in each area of the audit to have risen from red to amber by July 2023. This has been partially supported by the action planning pilot and green schools networks. It has also been bolstered by sending out targeted support to all settings where this was the case, in the form of a tailored one-page directory of resources, information and advice. The impact of these actions will become clearer when the new audit is sent out in September 2023.
- 3.1.4 The final 'Campus target' was for at least two locality leaders to support with the establishment of green school networks in North, Central and South Manchester. All three networks have now been established, with half-termly meetings taking place to focus on one of the key climate change topics, sharing best practice, challenges, ideas, and opportunities. The format of the session is decided with the leading schools, with minutes and resources uploaded to the schools hub (3.4.3) to support those unable to attend the session. The North network is being led by Prospect House Specialist Primary, Our Lady's High, and North Ridge High School, with the first meeting taking place in June 2023. The Central network is being led by Connell Co-op College, Loreto College, St Peter's High, and the Manchester Environmental Education Network (MEEN). There have been three meetings to date, with 24 out of a possible 55 settings engaging. The South network is being led by Acacias Primary, St Margaret's Primary (Whalley Range), Whalley Range High, and Chorlton High. There have been two meetings to date, with 31 out of a possible 75 settings engaging. Working with the Zero Carbon Coordination Group, it has been agreed £15,000 will be put towards supporting these networks, with £5000 for each. It will be at the discretion of the leading schools how to best spend the funds, though this will be ringfenced for climate purposes. This may be for an in-person event as network meetings take place virtually. These networks will be key to reaching the target in 3.1.1, but they are largely conversational in nature. As such, the opportunity for larger projects with a focus on emissions reductions will be discussed at the Governance Review Board (3.2.4). Some of these projects will be related to school buildings, and specific plans for this are outlined in 4.0.

3.2 Culture

- 3.2.1 The first 'Culture' target was for 40% of all education settings to engage in Carbon Literacy Training by July 2023. The Department for Education (DfE) has dropped their requirement, outlined in the 2022 Climate Change strategy, for every setting to have at least one trained person in each by 2025. To increase take up and provide something more accessible, a short session about climate change, tailored for Manchester's education settings, has been created using Greater Manchester Combined Authority's e-learning content. The first two-hour session is due to take place in person in July 2023 and is open to any member of staff from an education setting. Depending on feedback, there will be repeat sessions and the content will be made available for settings to complete in continued professional development time. This will support with reaching the target of 50% of settings engaging in some carbon related learning by July 2024.
- 3.2.2 The second 'Culture' target was for everyone in MCC's Children's Directorate to complete the e-learning Carbon Literacy Training by July 2024. It should be noted this e-learning is not currently accredited by the Carbon Literacy Project. However, as a two-hour module, which has now been made available on MCC's e-learning platform, it provides a good refresher of climate change and possible actions. More work will be done to encourage staff who completed their carbon literacy training more than two years ago to access this training, such as the directorate broadcast. Work with the Zero Carbon Workforce Lead will also continue to increase uptake of the accredited Carbon Literacy Training.
- 3.2.3 Another 'Culture' target was the implementation and evaluation of a climate action planning pilot. Based on the overall ratings from the September 2022 audit, five settings from each locality were selected for this pilot, totalling 15 schools. Although all initially expressed an interest, four have since dropped out due to competing priorities. The remaining eleven have created climate action plans using the Transform Our World School Climate Action Planner and will be supported by the Project Manager to complete the actions in these plans. Evaluation of the impact is being monitored by looking at each school's energy usage per pupil, with each taking at least one action to reduce their consumption. However, energy usage only accounts for approximately 37% of a school's emissions. Work has been ongoing to identify a suitable carbon footprint calculator for schools to provide the full picture. A further £5000 was drawn from the Zero Carbon Reserves to support this agenda, and it was decided that the schools in the action planning pilot, where suitable, will be enrolled in the Zero Carbon Schools programme. The programme supports to embed climate change into the whole school curriculum, but this will not be suitable for all schools, as some of them have already taken steps towards this through frameworks like eco-schools. The programme also provides the necessary tools to calculate the school's carbon footprint. The methodology for this can be adapted and used in all settings, not just those in the pilot, enabling better measurement of the impact of the action plan.

3.2.4 The final 'Culture' target was the establishment of a Governance Review Board, chaired by the Deputy Executive Member for Children and Young People. The Terms of Reference have been agreed and the first meeting will take place in July 2023, meeting termly from then on. Board members will be the leading settings from each of the locality networks, as well as the climate change neighbourhood officers. As well as presenting updates about the progress of the networks and scrutinising the Education Climate Change Action Plan, the board provides a platform for the leading education settings to discuss the feasibility of projects with the largest potential to reduce emissions. Engagement with settings ensures that any policy resulting from board discussions is co-produced. This will complement the work of the networks, which are more focused on getting schools to start thinking about climate action.

3.3 Community

3.3.1 The first 'Community' target was about utilising schools as a key community hub, involving the wider community in climate initiatives. There is still some work to be done in this area. However, the Climate Change Neighbourhood Officers have been attending the green schools networks to promote community climate initiatives. One of the future meetings will be dedicated to linking in with the wider community, providing practical examples of how this can work. These networks have also been used to promote pots of funding, which schools can apply for, to enact climate related projects provided they have a wider community benefit. Some of the schools involved in the action planning pilot, such as Cringle Brook Primary, have established parent working groups to support with their action plans. This has led to projects like regular community litter picks, as well as organised walking buses to promote active travel to school. In addition, work will take place over the summer to create a map of green and blue spaces and the relevant contact information for each, ensuring schools have better opportunities to participate in the activities taking place in these spaces across the city.

3.3.2 The next 'Community' target is linked and was to ensure all settings are incorporated into ward plans by July 2024. As well as the work outlined in 3.3.1, all the schools in the action planning pilot have been made aware of these ward plans and their current review. Work is ongoing to link schools with their neighbourhood officers to ensure that wider community climate initiatives involve schools and young people. This is vital to build on the range of climate change activities which took place during Our Year 2022, such as the Green Bee Assembly. Young people identified clearly that tackling climate change was a priority, and work is ongoing to ensure this is at the heart of Manchester's application to become a UNICEF child friendly city.

3.3.3 The next 'Community' target was working in partnership with the Youth, Play and Participation Service on the creation of Skills for Life Climate Ambassadors. The name has changed to Champions, but the aim of amplifying young people's voices on the climate remains. The first session took place at Powerhouse Community Centre in March 2023, with an overview of climate change and the opportunity for the 35 pupils from ten different

settings to have their say on their school's climate action plan. They were also provided the chance to see the Envision Formula E race car as part of the Team's launch of a new car made entirely out of e-waste. The pupils were taught about the circular economy as well as being given the chance to design a mini replica of the new car. The same opportunity was afforded to three other schools on the day, and the plan is to repeat this before the car is launched on 'Blue Peter' in July 2023. The second climate change champions session is scheduled for the end of June 2023 and will be for the same cohort of pupils. The pupils will have a chance to feed back about progress made, as well as reflection on the skills they have developed as part of the Kloodle app, which was introduced at the first session. As the event is due to take place just after Clean Air Day, other activities will be centred on that theme, including a play street supported by MCR Active. It will also be an opportunity to introduce the pupils to Manchester's bid to become a UNICEF child-friendly city and what that means in terms of young people's views and ideas of climate change. There are two more sessions scheduled for 2023. Once those have finished and pupils have had an awards ceremony, the programme will roll over and begin with a new cohort. MCC are also supporting with a Youth Sustainability Conference at Connell College in July 2023. This will bring 150 pupils together to showcase their sustainability work, participate in workshops, and providing them the opportunity to engage with 'green' employers.

3.3.4 A further 'Community' target was the development of a good practice school streets toolkit, working with colleagues from neighbourhoods. This work is ongoing as the TfGM School Streets Pilot, which began with seven schools in September 2022, is still underway and learnings can be applied once this is completed.

3.3.5 The final 'Community' target was the running of the Green Bee Relay, with the deadline for completion of 3500 miles being Clean Air Day 2023. Although 17 settings signed up originally, at the time of writing six look like they will complete/come close to completing the relay. There will be a prize draw for the winners, with one setting getting £3500 for a climate related project. After seeking feedback from all 17 who originally signed up, the relay will repeat next year. Clean Air Day and accompanying resources have been promoted with all these as well as the green schools networks, which should increase the number actively participating in the day.

3.4 Curriculum

3.4.1 The first 'Curriculum' target was for half of settings to embed green jobs into careers programmes. Groundwork's 'Every Job a Green Job' toolkit is now available to careers advisors and was presented to the Central Green Schools Network in May 2023 as part of a session on green careers and skills. Other opportunities such as the Green Skills Academy and green work placements were also showcased. This structure will be replicated for the equivalent sessions in the North and South networks. The establishment of a post-16 working group affords greater opportunity to explore green careers and skills. Education will continue to work closely with Work and Skills to ensure priorities align in this area and work is not duplicated.

- 3.4.2 The second 'Curriculum' target is for 25% of secondary school and post-16 CEIAG leads to complete carbon literacy training by July 2023. Most of the progress on this can be seen in 3.2.1. It is worth noting that the shorter training can be adapted specifically for careers leads, which would increase uptake.
- 3.4.3 The final 'Curriculum' target was the promotion of resources via the schools hub. The decarbonisation and sustainability page contains information, resources and advice on the various climate change topics, as well as all the resources from the network meetings and case studies of best practice.

4.0 Future Opportunities/Intentions

- 4.1 One of the representatives on the post-16 Working group is from the University of Manchester (UoM). A partnership has formed with a contact, and MCC hopes to benefit from the University's 'Living Lab' project. This allows organisations (including schools) to post projects or enquiries they have not got round to and provides UoM students with the chance to undertake these projects as part of their degree. The contact there is the Academic Lead for Sustainability Teaching and Learning, so projects will be climate change focused. From September, the National Education Nature Park will be rolled out across schools in the North West, teaching pupils about the importance of biodiversity and its existence within school grounds. MCC has been working with the chosen partner organisation for the project, the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), to pilot the project. A handful of schools in Manchester were selected for this and MCC will continue working with RHS to ensure all schools can benefit from the project regardless of their school grounds type. Part of the Nature Based Solutions work is also working with MCC's Green Infrastructure team to increase the number of settings across the city with tree coverage. Using their interactive mapping tool and capacity for planting report, MCC will look to promote planting opportunities at suitable locations in partnership with City of Trees. Working with the Green and Blue Infrastructure team, Education will be creating a map of green and blue spaces across the city to distribute to settings, increasing the engagement of young people in these spaces.
- 4.2 Finally, decarbonisation of the school estate will be key to reducing the emissions of the sector. Working with the estates team, a bid has been submitted for 80 buildings across MCC's estate, including five schools, to be brought up to RIBA3 standard. If successful, the five schools will be included in the next bid for public sector decarbonisation funding in Autumn 2023. MCC have also been involved in a Greater Manchester task force looking at the possibilities of solar panels in schools. Condition surveys will indicate which local authority-maintained schools may be suitable for solar. For these settings, a cross departmental panel will be formed to consider potential routes to installation.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Despite a delay in some of the work starting at the end of 2022, significant progress has been made towards the targets in the Education Climate Change Action Plan. There have been good levels of engagement with the green schools networks, though work must continue to involve those who are yet to engage. The development of the short carbon learning will be key to this. The establishment of the Governance Review Board will ensure that this work is not just about creating plans, but looking at significant projects which will bring the emissions of the sector down and this will be co-produced. The inclusion of schools in a public sector decarbonisation bid is one such example, as the decarbonisation of the school estate is key to this agenda. The ability to measure the impact of this work, particularly the action planning pilot, has been greatly enhanced by the plans for a carbon footprint calculator for schools. This will also be supported by a refreshed audit in the new academic year, which will also bring in a new cohort of schools for the action planning pilot. A programme which provides the opportunity for young people to express their views on climate change has been established, but it is vital that this translates into their school's climate action plan moving forwards, as merely consulting young people does not put their rights at the centre of policy.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 The Committee is asked to:

1. Note and comment on the report; and
2. Support the work of settings where appropriate to engage with this work by developing and implementing action plans to reduce their carbon emissions.