

Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Monday, 16 October 2023

Present:

Councillor Johns – in the Chair
Councillors Benham, Hussain, Iqbal, Northwood, Richards, I Robinson, Shilton
Godwin and Taylor

Also present:

Councillor White, Executive Member for Housing and Development
Councillor Hughes, Ward Councillor for Gorton and Abbey Hey
Councillor Reid, Ward Councillor for Gorton and Abbey Hey

Apologies:

Councillor Abdullatif

ERSC/23/39 Minute's Silence

The Committee held a minute's silence to mark the tragic events in Israel and Palestine.

ERSC/23/40 Minutes

Decision

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2023 be approved as a correct record.

ERSC/23/41 Update on the activities and initiatives to support and develop District Centres

The Committee received a report of the Director of Development and Director of Communities which provided information on the activities and initiatives to support and develop District Centres. The report described the progress to date following the findings and recommendations of the District Centres Subgroup, and included an update on the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Background information;
- The District Centre programme;
- Other activity relating to District Centres; and
- The Shared Prosperity Fund.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development welcomed that the meeting was being held in Gorton to enable Members to see one of the city's district centres and the investment that was taking place. He highlighted some of the challenges

that district centres had faced and their importance to the city and Manchester residents.

Councillor Hughes, Ward Councillor for Gorton and Abbey Hey, spoke positively about Gorton Hub, which he reported was very well-used and provided a one-stop shop for everything that people needed, commenting that every ward should have one.

Councillor Reid, Ward Councillor for Gorton and Abbey Hey, reported that she was a member of the Hub's Strategic Board. She outlined some of the challenges that had been faced in establishing the Hub, the benefits of having multiple agencies based in the same building and working together and some of work that was still in progress, including the GP surgery moving in, establishing a café in the Hub, getting the top floor of the building fully occupied and sufficiency of car parking. In response to a question from the Chair about what she would like to see next for Gorton district centre, she stated that she would like to see more partners moving into the Hub and for it to be fully utilised and have a buzz about it every day. She highlighted how well used the library within the Hub was and reported that it would be used as a Warm Hub again this winter. Noting the levels of unemployment and lower levels of qualifications in the area, she highlighted that Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES) were based in the building but advised that more courses should be available from this site. The Chair commented that this issue could be discussed further when the Committee considered an item on Work and Skills later in the municipal year.

A Member commented on the challenges of bringing partner agencies together to create something like Gorton Hub, including the challenges relating to NHS Capital Funding, but emphasised that it was important to do this work in order to create something which met the needs of local residents.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development reported that the Council had learnt a lot from this and other projects about working together with partner agencies, emphasising the importance of getting everyone involved from the start of the process. He informed Members that the establishment of Gorton Hub had increased footfall in the district centre. He stated that the Council's role was as an enabler of these kind of projects and that it would try to access funding from a range of sources but that these projects could not be achieved without the involvement of other partners. He reported that more housing was needed in Gorton and other district centres.

The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) highlighted the importance of health provision, education provision and other social infrastructure, noting that the city's population had grown considerably, putting demand on existing services. She advised that an assessment of the broader infrastructure requirements was underway and that, with major projects like Victoria North, the Council was doing what it could to plan this infrastructure from the outset; however, the situation was more complex where there was incremental growth in an area.

The District Centres Programme Manager delivered a presentation which provided an overview of the work on district centres, including specific details of the work in relation to Moston Lane, Wythenshawe, Strangeways and Gorton.

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

- To welcome the progress made on this work, including the depth, breadth and geographical spread of the activity, and that it involved a deep dive understanding of a place;
- The importance of the co-location of public sector partners, the private sector and housing and what levers the Council had to achieve this;
- That footfall data was very useful and could it be shared more widely;
- The importance of getting the basics right, such as street cleaning, repairing uneven pavements and broken signage and people feeling safe;
- The importance of improved public transport, noting the opportunity that bus franchising offered;
- Were predicted demographics taken into account when determining what housing would be built and what facilities an area would need;
- The amount of work being placed on Neighbourhood Teams and the range of different duties they were expected to cover and whether some of the engagement work with and support for traders should be carried out by a different team; and
- Funding risks and challenges.

The Director of Strategic Housing and Development outlined how the establishment of Gorton Hub had helped to break down barriers with public sector partners and reported that a pipeline of locations for investment was now being mapped out, particularly in areas of population growth. He reported that the Council was also able to use surplus buildings and available land as levers to get other organisations on board. The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) highlighted the role of Strategic Regeneration Frameworks, as having a clear vision enabled the Council to align partners behind it and have early-stage discussions. She stated that the private sector would invest where there was certainty about what was being brought forward. She acknowledged the Member's point about sharing the footfall data more widely and stated that officers would look into how this could be done.

The Director of Communities reported that additional investment had been made, including on cleansing in district centres and the city centre, and that Ward Councillors would have influence of how additional spending for their ward was allocated.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development acknowledged a Member's comments about Levelling Up Funding, commenting that Manchester had not had much success in the first two rounds of funding. He reported that the Council had invested in District Centres Programme Managers and that Work and Skills Teams were engaging with businesses across the city, providing support and access to grants and funding. He informed the Committee about the range of data used to inform the Council's plans, including consultation with residents and Ward Councillors. In response to a Member's question about gathering additional data on footfall, such as where people were travelling from and the purpose of their visit, he

advised that more work would be needed to understand this better, while commenting that some data could be gathered from other assets such as Libraries, which undertook surveys and gathered information on people accessing their services. He acknowledged a Member's comments about the importance of having opportunities for smaller independent traders to grow and develop, for example, starting on a market stall, and about campaigns to encourage people to support small local businesses.

The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) reported that at the start of a piece of work on a Neighbourhood Development Framework or Strategic Regeneration Framework, the Council would undertake an analysis of the current socio-demographics of the area and adjacent areas. She recognised Members' comments on transport, highlighting the introduction of the Active Travel Strategy the previous year and reporting that a City Centre Movement Plan was being developed. She stated that transport across and beyond the city would also need to be looked at, commenting that the plan over time was to see a reduction in car usage and the need for car parking but that public transport had to be reliable, efficient and affordable, with bus franchising providing a good opportunity to address this. She acknowledged a Member's comments on the importance of good communication, including during periods when there might not be much visible progress, for example, while the Council was working to identify a development partner, and advised that discussions were taking place with the Communications Team about this. In response to a Member's question, she provided an update on the Shared Prosperity Fund and reported that the Council had been informed that there would be a third round of Levelling Up funding and that the Council would want clarity on the criteria but would do whatever it could to access available funding streams. In response to a question from the Chair, she reported that a Retail and Leisure Study would be undertaken as part of the Local Plan and that this would include a review of how District Centres were defined. In response to further questions, she advised that, while an analysis of need and demand for development-led interventions was undertaken, consideration also had to be given to where the Council had land assets and was in position to deliver the plan.

A Member requested that a future update include a deep dive comparison between a district centre which had a Development Framework and one which was being proactively supported by the Neighbourhood Team.

Decisions:

1. To note the report.
2. To receive an update report in the next municipal year, including a deep dive comparison between a district centre which has a Development Framework and one which is being proactively supported by the Neighbourhood Team.

ERSC/23/42 Strategic Regeneration Frameworks

The Committee received a report of the Director of City Centre Growth and Infrastructure and the Director of Strategic Housing and Development which provided an overview of the role, purpose and process of producing Strategic

Regeneration Frameworks (SRFs) and Neighbourhood Development Frameworks (NDFs) for different areas of the city. It also provided some case studies of SRFs and a list of existing and upcoming SRFs and NDFs.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Background information;
- SRF/NDF overview;
- Case studies; and
- Summary list of all existing and developing SRF/NDF.

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

- Developer-led and Council-led frameworks, including how particular areas were chosen for Council-led frameworks and whether there were any opportunities to influence these decisions;
- Consultations, including ensuring that these were meaningful in relation to developer-led frameworks, changing residents' perceptions, where they believed that these were just tickbox exercises, and ensuring that all communities were reached, noting the number of people in the city who spoke languages other than English;
- Monitoring progress; and
- Ensuring that development helped to address inequality and child poverty in the city.

In response to a Member's question, the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) reported that SRFs were usually of a larger-scale geographically and delivered over a number of phases, such as Victoria North. She informed Members that Council-led frameworks were usually determined through need and opportunity; however, where frameworks were developer-led, the Council still played an active role in determining what was acceptable in a particular area. She advised that consultations were meaningful but that there were parameters for some sites, for example, if a site was a key strategic employment location, it would not be changed to a different use, for example, a public park, but consultation responses would be taken into account, for example, in terms of public spaces within the area. In response to a further question, she outlined the mechanisms used to consult with residents. She confirmed that progress was monitored, although in some cases frameworks could be refreshed due to changing circumstances, outlining changes in relation to Central Retail Park, which a Member had referenced. She reported that the opportunity to purchase land assets was a key factor in deciding to initiate a Council-led framework in a particular area. She recognised the Member's point about the pressure that multiple developments happening at the same time could put on communities and outlined work that was done to minimise disruption, including the phasing of developments and clear communication to residents. She reported that SRFs and NDFs were useful for attracting funding and that having projects in the pipeline meant that, when funding was announced, the city had projects ready to go. In response to a question from the Chair, she reported that, when a refreshed framework was brought to scrutiny or the Executive, the reasons for the refresh were set out; however, she acknowledged that residents might not see this information and that it was important to maintain good lines of communication with communities

about what was happening in their area and the reasons for any changes. The Chair asked whether people who had previously responded to a consultation could be kept updated. The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) reported that she would look into this.

In response to a Member's comments on consultations and co-design, the Director of Strategic Housing and Development provided an example of how residents' views had informed the plans for Moston Lane.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development advised that, particularly on brownfield sites and where there were a number of planning applications in the pipeline over a number of years, it was useful to have a framework in place so that planning decisions were not made in isolation. He recognised a Member's point about the impact of developments on neighbouring wards and the importance of good communication and consultation with Ward Councillors in those wards, noting that meetings were due to take place in relation to the specific area the Member was referring to. He acknowledged the importance of engaging with all communities across the city through a range of methods, such as providing information in community languages, and engaging with people through community groups. He also supported a Member's comments about addressing inequality and poverty, stating that the Council wanted to use the tools it had to address this, including providing social and affordable housing and local jobs. The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) advised that it was important to have clear social value expectations from the outset, including jobs, supply chains, apprenticeships, work with schools and community facilities and to monitor this closely.

The Chair commented that short, easy-to-read summaries were important when consulting with residents.

In response to a question from the Chair about Section 106 funding, the Executive Member for Housing and Development drew Members' attention to a report on this which had been considered at a meeting of the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee the previous week and reported that this was part of the planning process rather than directly part of the SRF but that the Council was committed to getting the most value possible out of this funding.

The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) reported that there was a weekly email to Ward Councillors listing planning applications, that Members could also register to be informed about developments in their ward and that developers were actively encouraged to engage with Ward Councillors prior to submitting their application. She outlined the planning process, including Section 106 funding, highlighting that this funding was to mitigate the impact of the development so there were restrictions on what it could be used for. The Director of Strategic Housing and Development clarified that Section 106 monies compensating for affordable housing were ringfenced to be spent only on affordable housing.

Decisions:

1. To note the report.

2. To request a further report on the evaluation and monitoring of SRFs.

ERSC/23/43 Victoria North - Strategic Business Plan Refresh

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) which provided a high-level summary of the refreshed Victoria North Strategic Business Plan. The report included updates on progress made since the Strategic Business Plan was approved by Executive, and scrutinised by this Committee, in February 2020. This included an update on progress made in delivering the 988 homes covered by the Initial Development Area Business Plan, in addition to a look ahead to the next Development Area Business Plan, together with a summary of the high-level opportunities, challenges and risks associated with the overall programme.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Governance, decision-making and scrutiny;
- Strategic Business Plan – Joint Venture progress to date;
- Key themes of the refreshed Strategic Business Plan;
- Affordable housing;
- Strategic Investment Plan;
- Infrastructure interventions and Delivery Strategy;
- Delivering social value;
- Social and Community Infrastructure Strategy; and
- Contributing to a Zero Carbon City.

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

- Solutions to address flooding risks;
- Concerns of existing residents, including about the risk of losing their communities;
- How this work would be monitored to ensure that the project was meeting its original goals, noting that this project would take around 15 years to be fully implemented;
- Was dentistry being considered as one of the amenities that would be needed; and
- Social value including whether information could be provided on whether this enabled residents to access jobs across the income distribution.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Executive Member for Housing and Development clarified that the intention was to deliver 5% affordable housing through planning and a further 15% through grant funding from Homes England. He confirmed that the levels of affordable housing were being monitored throughout the project and that this would be reported back to this Committee and through other channels. He acknowledged the point about considering access to dentistry for future Victoria North residents.

The Assistant Director (Major Regeneration) reported that, following geological issues with the original plan to remove a weir in the River Irk, the plan was now to

deliver on-plot flood solutions. He outlined how the Council was working with the Environment Agency on this, finding practical solutions to dissipate the issue without displacing the problem elsewhere, while trying to take as many properties as possible out of a flood zone altogether and take all properties out of flood zone 3.

The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) reported that the Victoria North Board met quarterly and monitored progress and that every phase of the project was subject to a business plan which was refreshed annually and closely monitored. She reported that there was a guarantee that anyone who was going to lose their home due to the regeneration of the area would be found a replacement home which met their needs. She acknowledged the Member's comment about residents' existing communities and outlined how residents in Collyhurst were actively involved in the plans for the area, emphasising the importance of two-way communication. The Executive Member for Housing and Development reported that the Local Lettings Policy would give priority to people with a local connection and that, while plans for Collyhurst could see the number of homes in the area increase from approximately 600 to 3000, he emphasised that the existing communities were at the heart of the scheme and helping to shape plans for their area.

In response to comments from the Chair about new primary schools opening in phases, rather than offering places in all school years from the outset, and the challenges this presented for families moving into the area if they had children of different ages, the Executive Member for Housing and Development stated that he would discuss this with Education colleagues, who they were working closely with in relation to school provision for Victoria North.

The Victoria North Strategy and Coordination Lead reported that the four existing schools in this part of the city, two of which were Roman Catholic, one of which was Church of England and one which was a community school, currently had spare capacity, although they were all one-form entry schools. He reported that work would take place with Education colleagues and existing schools to identify a strategy to provide sufficient school places as the area's population started to grow. In response to the question about social value, he informed Members about the North Manchester Social Benefits Framework, advising that the intention was to have a more outcome-focussed and person-centred approach, although he acknowledged that it would be challenging to find a way to monitor the ongoing progress of a Manchester resident after they had started work. The Chair stated that this could be discussed further when the Committee considered the item on Social Value and the Economy at its December meeting.

Decisions:

1. To note the summarised content of the refreshed Victoria North Strategic Business Plan.
2. To endorse the refreshed Victoria North Strategic Business Plan.
3. To note the general programme update.

[Councillor Richards declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item due to her involvement in the Joint Venture Board and some of the decision-making on Victoria North during her time as an Executive Member and left the room for this item.]

ERSC/23/44 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 drew Members' attention to the revised work programme for the rest of the municipal year. He advised that, following a request for a report on the Shared Prosperity Fund, it had been decided that information on this would be incorporated into relevant reports on the Committee's work programme, rather than the Committee receiving a discrete report on this.

Referring to the minutes of the Committee's September meeting, he asked that a Member's request for a figure of the cost of bringing homes in the city up to the required standard be added to the recommendations monitor. He also asked that a report on Fairer Access to Finance be added as an item to be scheduled on the work programme. He thanked officers for facilitating the meeting taking place at Gorton Hub.

Decision:

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

Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday, 7 November 2023

Present:

Councillor Johns – in the Chair

Councillors Abdullatif, Benham, Hussain, Iqbal, Northwood, Richards, I Robinson, Shilton Godwin and Taylor

Also present:

Councillor Craig, Leader

Councillor Hacking, Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure

Councillor Rawlins, Executive Member for Environment and Transport

Councillor White, Executive Member for Housing and Development

Steven Cochrane, Partnership Director, Oxford Road Corridor

Michael Bullock, arc4

ERSC/23/45 Minutes

Decision

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2023 be approved as a correct record.

ERSC/23/46 Oxford Road Corridor

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) which provided information on how the Oxford Road Corridor facilitated and promoted innovation, commercialisation and employment growth in Manchester.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Policy context;
- Planning and delivery;
- Investment, impact and key schemes; and
- Future development and opportunities.

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

- To welcome the contribution of the Oxford Road Corridor to the city's economy and plans for the future, while emphasising the importance of inclusive growth and making the city fairer;
- The impact of the cancellation of the HS2 line to Manchester on this work;
- Engaging with local residents, mitigating negative impacts for residents and ensuring that they could benefit;

- The pathways for local residents to the higher-paying jobs that were being created and ensuring that under-represented communities were not only able to access lower-paid jobs;
- Requesting that future reports included information on engagement with and inclusion of local communities;
- What were the constraints on economic growth and how would they be mitigated; and
- Making the partnership more inclusive including opportunities to collaborate with ethnic minority-led organisations and stakeholders, for example, Curry Mile traders.

The Leader explained that the Oxford Road Corridor was a partnership of organisations and that the individual organisations also had their own programmes of work, which the Committee might be interested in considering at a future meeting. She reported that the decision about HS2 would affect the ability of the UK to have a more balanced economy but that the level of ambition for the Oxford Road Corridor was longstanding and would remain the same, despite the challenges presented in relation to connections and rail capacity, and she highlighted some of the opportunities of the Oxford Road Corridor, in relation to research, innovation and the growth of the science sector. She commented that the points relating to local residents accessing better paid jobs were addressed within the Economic Strategy, which was the next item on the agenda.

Steven Cochrane, Partnership Director, Oxford Road Corridor reported that the Corridor was a great example of setting a strategic vision for an area and remaining committed to it over an extended period of time, during a turbulent period for the UK, which had included the economic crash, Brexit and the pandemic. He highlighted that the types of jobs that had been created included ones which previously people would have had to leave Manchester to pursue. He outlined how partners, including the universities, NHS and private sector had worked together to deliver strategic schemes and attract investment and highlighted the use of evidence-based policy development. He advised Members that the research taking place on the Corridor was bringing economic benefit but also societal benefit, for example, research in life sciences. He recognised comments about the impact of growth on local communities while stating that the universities had tried to use the public realm to make the area more welcoming with recent developments. He stated that the universities and NHS recognised the importance of engaging effectively with local communities. He reported that earlier in the year the partnership had mapped out all the widening participation activity which partners were undertaking, providing a number of examples of this activity and offering to share the report with Members. He recognised a Member's comments about social mobility and moving people from entry level jobs to higher paid roles, stating that this was a challenge but that partners were committed to improving this.

In response to a Member's comments, the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) clarified that the reference to Upper Brook Street within the report related to the wider ambitions for the area as set out in the Strategic Regeneration Framework and that the specific details of any development would be subject to the planning process.

The Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure reported that significant opportunities were being created and that enabling residents to access these opportunities was a key priority for the Council. He highlighted the work taking place in relation to the Work and Skills Strategy and suggested that the Committee receive a more detailed report on the skills and employment programmes which were operating in the city. Steven Cochrane reported that he would be happy to contribute to a future report on this. In response to a Member's comments about working with diverse stakeholders, including traders on the Curry Mile, he offered to speak to the Member outside of the meeting about how to better engage with these groups.

The Director of Inclusive Growth reported that, while there was still more that could be done, there was a lot more engagement between the universities and local residents than there had been when the Corridor started, including university staff on school governing bodies, Manchester Metropolitan University's first generation programme aimed at families which did not have a history of family members attending university and degree apprenticeships, as well as employment-led programmes in each of the big institutions on the Corridor. She also informed Members about the role of the Civic University Partnership across the five Greater Manchester universities.

The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) acknowledged the challenges raised by a Member, including in relation to the electricity grid and the lack of investment in Oxford Road Station. She informed Members that the Corridor enabled the Council to work with partners to bring together a more cohesive plan for the area and reported that there was a longstanding, constructive relationship with Electricity North West to plan for electricity requirements across the city. She also reported that they were working closely with Network Rail to look at investment in Oxford Road Station.

Decisions:

1. To request that the Widening Participation report be circulated to Committee Members.
2. To request that more information on the Work and Skills interventions be submitted to the Committee's March meeting, when it will be considering a report on the Work and Skills Strategy.

[Councillor Johns declared a personal interest as his partner was employed by the Royal Northern College of Music.]

ERSC/23/47 Investing in Success: An Economic Strategy for Manchester

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) which presented the final economic strategy which would be taken to Executive on 15 November and described the development process followed in creating the strategy.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The development process;
- Resident and worker engagement;
- Business engagement;
- Phase 2 online survey;
- The Council's response to the challenges; and
- Delivery and measuring success.

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

- The impact of the cancellation of the HS2 line to Manchester;
- Electricity North West's capacity to increase supply at the speed and scale required;
- How the Council was engaging with residents, ensuring that the people responding to consultations were representative of the population of the city, including on ethnicity, level of qualifications and employment status;
- Data capture and monitoring measures, including the impact of the pandemic on ways of working, ensuring that equity and inclusive growth were included in the measures and that consideration should be given to including a measure on the proportion of people's income spent on rent;
- The focus on the city centre and the importance of ensuring that deprived neighbourhoods benefited from economic growth; and
- Whether there was an over-reliance on high value growth sectors.

The Leader expressed her frustration and concern about the decision in relation to HS2. She reported that improving connections between the east and west and north and south would enable the city to unleash its full potential and that the city was facing a challenge in addressing this without any meaningful discussion with national Government as yet on alternative transport projects; however, she advised that the Council would continue to pursue this and engage in discussions with the Government. She stated that businesses needed certainty and a coherent plan and that the Council was working to reassure stakeholders. She stated that the Council would be working with Greater Manchester colleagues on what infrastructure investment was needed over the next ten years, including transport, the electricity grid and the decarbonisation of energy. In response to a Member's question about capitalising politically on the launch of the Strategy to lobby the Government and the Opposition frontbench on behalf of the city, she stated that she had been putting forward the case that a future Government could place responsibility for economic development on local authorities, with a duty to collaborate across the combined authority area. She stated that political lobbying would take place regarding the tools that the city needed to achieve the ambitions set out in the Strategy. She reported that the measures set out in appendix 2 were still a work in progress and highlighted the Key Performance Indicators for Making Manchester Fairer which, she advised, when brought together with these measures, would provide a richer picture.

The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) reported that the Council had a strong relationship with Electricity North West and met regularly with them to review requirements, ensuring that forecasted growth in the city and Electricity North West's 5-year investment plans were aligned, adding that there was also scope for flexibility

within their plans, informed by the ongoing discussions. In response to questions relating to data gathering and monitoring, she offered to bring regular updates to the Committee on the Performance Management Framework.

The Chair commented that it would be useful for the Committee to receive updates on the Performance Management Framework and consideration would be given to the timing and frequency of these.

The Strategy and Economic Policy Manager informed Members about the engagement that had taken place in relation to the Strategy, including work to reach different groups, such as face-to-face engagement in different communities and settings. He highlighted the further opportunity to engage with residents on the refresh of the Our Manchester Strategy. He reported on the measures that would be used to monitor progress in relation to the areas that the Strategy was intended to influence, acknowledging that work was still needed on the data gathering process and use of data in relation to a couple of aspects of this work. He informed Members that the information on rent was available and could be included and that the intention was to include measures relating to inclusive growth and equity, with work still taking place on how best to do this. He advised that using measures which could be compared against trends was helpful when there was an event which had a significant economic impact, such as the pandemic, as the Council could see how Manchester was performing against other cities. The Head of City Policy reported that the measures had been split into resident prosperity and economic performance.

The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) reported that the city centre would be the primary driver of growth but that the Council was also looking at the role of other areas and neighbourhoods across the city such as Wythenshawe, Holt Town, Gorton, Moston and Withington and could look again at whether this was reflected strongly enough in the Strategy. She stated that the Strategy reflected the importance of both the high value and the everyday economy and that the Council recognised the importance of employment across and the need to support all sectors but that high value sectors would drive the biggest increases in productivity. She reported that one of the successes of Manchester had been in diversifying its economy.

In response to a Member's question on the Community Health Equity Manchester (CHEM) sounding boards, the Director of Inclusive Economy reported that these had been developed during the pandemic as a way of communicating with different communities and that her service had engaged with them on work relating to the cost-of-living. She advised that she would respond to the Member's question on the structure and make-up of the sounding boards after the meeting. She reported that these sounding boards were one part of a wider system relating to the Communities and Power theme of Making Manchester Fairer.

The Chair noted that the issue of ensuring that consultation responses and engagement reflected the diversity across the city had been raised at a number of the Committee's meetings and advised Members that he would speak to the Chair of the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee about how this was being scrutinised by her Committee.

A Member commented that it was important for the Council to clearly communicate to residents the purpose of consultations and how the responses would be used to improve the lives of Manchester residents.

In response to a Member's request that a measure on the proportion of people's income spent on rent be included in the measures for the Strategy, the Leader confirmed that this would be included in the final version.

Decision:

To commend the Strategy to the Executive for adoption.

ERSC/23/48 Revenue Budget Update 2024/25

The Committee considered the report of Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer which informed Members that the Council was forecasting an estimated budget shortfall of £46m in 2024/25, £86m in 2025/26, and £105m by 2026/27. After the application of approved and planned savings, and the use of c£17m smoothing reserves in each of the three years, this gap reduced to £1.6m in 2024/25, £30m in 2025/26 and £49m by 2026/27. This position assumed that the savings approved as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy in February 2023 of £36.2m over three years were delivered.

The report provided a high-level overview of the updated budget position. The Committee was invited to consider the current proposed changes which were within its remit and to make recommendations to the Executive before it agreed to the final budget proposals in February 2024.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Updates on the refreshed position including progress in reaching a balanced budget, reflecting preliminary savings and investment options;
- The government was expected to announce the Autumn Statement on 22 November 2023, but no major changes were expected;
- Government funding for 2024/25 would be confirmed in the provisional finance settlement, expected late in December 2023;
- The accompanying report set out the priorities and officer proposals for the services within the remit of this committee. This included a reminder of the savings proposals identified as part of last year's budget setting process (£36.2m across three years) and additional savings for consideration (£2.5m from 2024/25). As far as possible these were aimed at protecting the delivery of council priorities and represented the least detrimental options; and
- There remained a forecast shortfall of £1.6m next year. Any further reduction to the underspend this year would reduce the need to top back up General Fund reserve in 2024/25 and help bridge this shortfall. In addition, the Collection Fund position would be finalised in January and the final levy amounts from GMCA confirmed.

The Leader informed the Committee that she had written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to highlight the precarious financial position that Manchester and other local authorities were in, with sustained funding cuts over a number of years, increasing budget pressures and rising demand for services.

Members expressed concern about the financial position that Manchester had been placed in over a number of years. Members commended officers and the Executive for delivering a balanced budget over these years in the face of so many challenges, commenting that Manchester had been disproportionately affected by funding cuts.

In response to a Member's question about confidence in financial forecasting, the Head of Finance (Corporate Core) reported that there were elements of risk, for example, relating to inflation and increased demand, and the budget would be refreshed every year. He advised Members that the Committee would receive a further budget report in February, following the financial settlement from Government in December. In response to a further question, he drew Members' attention to a more detailed report on the budget, including the risks and assumptions made, which had been submitted to the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee.

Decision:

To note the report.

ERSC/23/49 Growth and Development Budget 2024/25

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) which set out the priorities for the services in the remit of the Committee and detailed the initial revenue budget changes proposed by officers. The Committee was invited to consider the current proposed changes which were within its remit and to make recommendations to the Executive before it agreed to the final budget proposals in February 2024.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Service overview and priorities;
- Service budget and proposed changes;
- Commissioning and procurement priorities;
- Workforce implications;
- Equality and anti-poverty impact; and
- Future opportunities, risks and policy considerations.

A Member reported that Manchester Adult Education Services (MAES) was an excellent service which had suffered considerable cuts since 2010 and she emphasised the importance of protecting the service and, if possible, developing it. The Chair commented that at a time of high inflation, maintaining current funding levels represented a cut in real terms.

A Member noted the proposed efficiency savings within the Growth and Development Directorate, questioning whether it was possible to make any more

efficiency savings and whether these savings would impact on the ability to deliver the 10-year Housing Strategy.

The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) acknowledged the comments relating to MAES and the importance of this provision and reported that she was working with colleagues from MAES and Finance to look at options in relation to this. She also acknowledged the Member's point about whether efficiency savings was the right term for the proposals in relation to the Growth and Development Directorate and clarified that the Directorate was not looking to make any cuts. She reported that this was a relatively small Directorate which generated income for the Council and was undertaking new programmes of work. She informed Members that the Directorate would receive an uplift but would need to be creative, including looking at the use of reserves, grant funding and the management of its commercial estate.

In response to a Member's request for clarification on the proposals relating to parking, the Head of Finance (Corporate Core) reported that, following the pandemic, income from off-street parking had reduced and was now approximately £2.1 million lower than had been forecast and that this gap was currently being funded from car parking reserves while the strategy for parking was reviewed to ensure a balanced budget from 2025/26 onwards.

Decision:

To note the report.

ERSC/23/50 Housing Needs Assessment

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) which provided an update of the Housing Needs Assessment commissioned to inform the development of housing policies in the emerging Local Plan.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Background information, including national planning policy and guidance and the Housing Needs Assessment methodology;
- Affordable housing;
- Mix of size and type of housing need;
- Housing for older and disabled persons including the need for accessibility standards/housing for people with additional needs;
- Private Rented Sector;
- Self-build and custom housebuilding; and
- Next steps.

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

- To welcome the consideration of the needs of older people, recognising the importance of having the right accommodation for older people in the right areas, while also freeing up family homes;

- Noting the LGBT+ Extra Care Scheme in Whalley Range, were other innovative schemes being considered for how people might want to live as they got older;
- Whether the study on gypsy and traveller communities referenced in the report was being considered by the relevant scrutiny committee;
- People using spare bedrooms as offices, due to the increase in people working from home, and the importance of gathering data on this;
- The importance of affordable housing; and
- Concern about the standard of some private sector housing, including energy efficiency, and tenants' rights in the private sector.

The Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing informed Members that the work relating to gypsy and traveller communities had already been commissioned, as well as a separate report on travelling show people; however, it was not quite yet at a stage to bring to Scrutiny. In response to a question from the Chair, she reported that the expectation from the Government was that not all of the 10,000 affordable homes target would be delivered through planning policy, with most of it delivered through other means, such as Homes England funding; however, there was a need for more affordable housing in the city so consideration would be given to whether additional affordable housing could be achieved through planning policy.

The Planning and Infrastructure Manager acknowledged that there was a need to better understand the extent to which changes in working from home during the pandemic had led to longer-term changes and how this might need to be taken into account in relation to housing. In relation to a question about owner-occupiers, he advised that these were included in the report in relation to the mix of accommodation in different parts of the city. He advised that this was something which could be discussed further in future reports which would be brought before the Committee. He drew Members' attention to a report which was due to be considered at the next meeting of the Environment, Climate Change and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee on energy usage within new residential and commercial developments. In response to a question from the Chair about the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, he advised that there was still further legislation and regulation to follow and that the Council was currently continuing to follow current legislation and regulations for the delivery of the Local Plan. In response to a further question, he clarified that the Housing Needs Assessment was an evidence-based study which provided recommendations for the Council to consider, alongside other pieces of evidence, to inform the Council's development of the draft Local Plan, which would be brought to the Committee and the Executive.

Michael Bullock from arc4 reported that a detailed Housing Need report would be available in due course. He emphasised the importance of level access accommodation, due to demographic change, and more social rented accommodation and expressed concern about the Private Rented Sector in Manchester, reporting that the Local Housing Allowance was significantly below rent levels. In response to a Member's question, he advised that first homes should be recognised as a potential component of affordable housing, as this included both affordable rented and affordable home ownership, but that as much of this as possible should be social rented housing.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development reported that more homes were needed of all types and tenures across the city and that this report would inform the Council's plans to ensure that the right homes were built in the right places. He reported that the Leader had raised the issue of the growing gap between Local Housing Allowance and rents in her letter to the Chancellor. He stated that he welcomed some elements of the First Homes initiative from the Government but advised that a more coherent, sustainable strategy on new housing was needed. He acknowledged Members' comments about people paying high rents for low quality housing in the Private Rented Sector and stated that the Council would welcome more regulation and was using Selective Licensing and other tools to bring more accountability in this area. He highlighted the Renters Reform Bill, which was going through Parliament, which would provide greater protection to renters. He confirmed the Council's commitment to ensuring that Manchester was a great place to grow older. He reported that 30% of social housing was under-occupied, in particular older people in homes with empty bedrooms which did not meet their needs, including in terms of mobility issues, and that the Council was working innovatively on schemes which met older people's needs and enabled them to continue to live in their local area.

Decision:

To note the report.

ERSC/23/51 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, and the Economy Dashboard for information.

A Member asked that the item on Manchester Airport scheduled for the December meeting include consideration of the impact of the Airport on parking in surrounding residential areas, to which the Chair agreed.

The Chair reminded Committee Members that they had been invited to attend the next meeting of the Environment, Climate Change and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee, which would be considering items on Vision Zero and Active Travel.

Decision:

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

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 10 October 2023

Present:

Councillor Hitchen (Chair) – in the Chair
Councillors Appleby, Good, Sheikh and Whiston

Also present:

Councillor Midgley, Deputy Leader
Councillor Karney, Lead Member for City Centre
Aderonke Apata, African Rainbow Family
Adeniyi Balogun, African Rainbow Family
Susie Cuthill, The Proud Trust
Mark Fletcher, Manchester Pride
Lisa Harvey-Nebil, The Proud Trust
Farhana Hemani, Manchester Pride
Darren Knight, George House Trust
Paul Martin, LGBT Foundation
Professor Stephen Whittle, Manchester Law School and Indigo NHS Greater Manchester Gender Service

Apologies: Councillors Azra Ali, Doswell, Ogunbambo, Rawson and Wills

CESC/23/39 Minutes

Decision: That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 5 September 2023, be approved as a correct record.

CESC/23/40 LGBTQ+ Communities Deep Dive

The committee considered a report of the Joint Director of Equality and Engagement - NHS GM Integrated Care (Manchester locality) and Manchester City Council which explored the inequalities faced by LGBTQ+ communities and the support provided by Council services to improve access, experience, and outcomes.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The Council's equality commitments through the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED);
- The key strategies and plans that aim to make Manchester a more equitable place to live and work;
- An overview of Manchester's LGBTQ+ population, provided through the 2021 Census;
- The quality of life and feelings of acceptance, comfort, and satisfaction of LGBTQ+ residents;
- The intersectional approach to LGBTQ+ inclusion;
- Education, employment, housing and healthcare;

- Case studies to demonstrate the delivery of the Council's Equality Objectives; and
- Areas for further work to support the Council's workforce to lead high-quality, culturally competent community engagement work.

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

- Thanking guests for their attendance and their work;
- Noting that the Council had passed a motion to 'Make HIV History' but that there remained difficulties for residents in accessing HIV testing kits, and querying why this was;
- How many GPs were yet to register with Pride in Practice;
- If any investigation into a possible causal link between overrepresentation of LGBTQ+ people in the youth homeless population and higher incidences of mental health issues and suicidal ideation in young LGBTQ+ people had been undertaken;
- Whether any up-to-date data was available on the number of Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority (BAME) LGBTQ+ people experiencing racial discrimination from within the LGBTQ+ community, noting that recent figures were from 2018;
- The overall rate of workplace conflicts for LGBTQ+ people, and whether this was improving;
- How the Council was tackling instances of 'gatekeeping' in the Gay Village;
- Requesting more extensive data on the number of LGBTQ+ people experiencing homelessness;
- The lack of information on sexual health services within the report and lack of data around patient satisfaction;
- Noting that anti-trans sentiment is higher amongst cisgender men than amongst cisgender women, despite the transphobic narrative being that trans people pose a threat to cisgender women's safety;
- Noting that the rapid decrease in public support for trans people was the result of a hostile media that platforms transphobic voices;
- How many schools in Manchester had signed up to the Rainbow Flag Award;
- Noting that Neighbourhood Investment Funding had been allocated to support the first-ever Withington Pride, which took place in September 2023 and was attended by a large number of people from across the local community;
- Whether trans inclusion training would be offered to everyone in the Council; and
- What the LGBT organisations would like to see brought forward.

The Deputy Leader stated that this was an important report to identify the inequalities faced by the LGBTQ+ community and expressed that the Council wanted to ensure suitable support was available and that communities felt comfortable, supported and that they could thrive in Manchester.

The Joint Director of Equality and Engagement explained that the report provided an overview of the Council's work to enhance LGBTQI+ inclusion. She stated that

Manchester was a sanctuary for LGBTQI+ people, with the largest community outside of London, but acknowledged the challenges faced by those in the transgender community. The committee was advised that focus groups had been held during the development of the report and that this dialogue would be continued.

The Lead Member for the City Centre provided an overview of the Council's LGBTQ+ journey and progress. He highlighted the challenges faced and welcomed the achievements made since the 1980s.

Representatives from African Rainbow Family, The Proud Trust, Manchester Pride, the LGBT Foundation, George House Trust, Manchester Law School and Indigo NHS Greater Manchester Gender Service attended the meeting and shared the work of their organisations and the experiences of their service users in Manchester.

In response to a member's query regarding what was causing gaps in access to HIV testing kits, Darren Knight of George House Trust stated that whilst Manchester was doing well in take-up of HIV testing, more work needed to be done and there needed to be more investment in sexual healthcare to increase access. He stated that there was a myriad of ways for people to access sexual health treatment and that targeted promotion was valuable. He explained that 'opt-out' HIV testing was a gamechanger, but prevention was key and more people needed to be encouraged to use PrEP medicine, which could be taken before sexual intercourse to help reduce the risk of catching HIV. It was noted that there had been a good take-up rate of PrEP amongst gay and bisexual men and there had been a good response to mpox vaccination in 2022.

Paul Martin of the LGBT Foundation concurred with Darren's comment that access to sexual health services was key. He stated that there was a 1 in 10 chance of calls to a sexual health clinic being answered, which was due to lack of investment and staff shortages. He also explained that organisations in Manchester had reestablished the mpox vaccination programme, following a national decision to only offer this in London, but were unable to publicise this service due to concerns that it may overwhelm capacity. He stated that national investment was needed to enable local services to develop further.

The committee was also advised that 75 out of 84 GP surgeries across the city were currently registered with Pride in Practice. Paul Martin of the LGBT Foundation explained that some surgeries felt they did not need to take part in the Pride in Practice scheme and that some would not engage, particularly since involvement was not mandatory. The Joint Director of Equality and Engagement explained that the Primary Care team worked with GP practices to encourage the take-up of this and linked it with standards. She highlighted that Manchester had a higher take-up of Pride in Practice than other Greater Manchester boroughs.

The Joint Director of Equality and Engagement explained that there were a number of reasons as to why there was a higher percentage of young LGBTQ+ people presenting as homeless but stated that there had not been any specific work

undertaken by the Council or Health Service to link homelessness with mental health, but this was something that could be undertaken. The Deputy Leader highlighted that this topic was included in the next report on the meeting's agenda and that the Council wanted to ensure that services were inclusive and supportive through the new Homelessness Strategy. This was also an area that could be assessed by the Homelessness and Health Taskforce.

The Deputy Leader also recognised the need to address the unique issues facing LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers and the ways that this could be done. She noted the potential impacts of the recent government policy change which would give migrants, refugees and survivors of trafficking a minimum of seven days to find alternative accommodation upon receipt of an eviction notice from Home Office accommodation, and the need to identify ways to support those affected. She also highlighted that the Council was now a Local Authority of Sanctuary.

In response to a member's query regarding queer and trans people experiencing racism, the Joint Director of Equality and Engagement suggested that the statistics on this from 2018 were unlikely to have changed and recognised the issue. She stated that the Census 2021 data had enabled better collection of information and the Council had revised and published its monitoring standards, which would improve the collection of data once embedded.

With regards to the overall rate of workplace conflicts for LGBTQ+ people, the committee was informed that this study was undertaken by the CIPD and it was suggested that these figures were unlikely to have changed, given the current climate.

The Joint Director of Equality and Engagement committed to liaising with the Licensing team to understand what levers the Council had in place to address 'gatekeeping' within the Gay Village. Paul Martin of the LGBT Foundation explained that the Council had commissioned LGBT Foundation to deliver anti-racism training to venues and door staff in the Village and that the study into the future of the Village that was commenced prior to the Covid lockdown would be recommissioned, which he felt would be an opportunity to understand what people wanted in the Village.

Aderonke Apata of the African Rainbow Family highlighted a unique issue facing asylum seekers, which prevented them from entering venues in the Village as they did not hold valid identification.

In response to a member's comment regarding sexual health services and difficulties in accessing tests, the Chair advised that this would be an issue for Health Scrutiny Committee to consider but suggested making a recommendation to request further detail on provisions. The committee was advised that the Health Scrutiny Committee would consider the Public Health Annual Report, with a focus on sexual health and HIV, at its meeting on 6 March 2024.

The Joint Director of Equality and Engagement confirmed that trans inclusion training had been rolled out to senior management and would be provided to specific directorates such as Communications and the Housing and Homelessness Service. The Deputy Leader stated that this would be rolled out more widely in future and this would include members.

In closing the item, the Chair asked the representatives from each organisation what they would like to see brought forward to improve the experiences of LGBTQ+ people in Manchester. Lisa Harvey Nebil of The Proud Trust stated that she would like increased LGBTQ+ training and education for schoolteachers, social workers, and youth workers. Farhana Hemani of Manchester Pride suggested it would be useful to adopt the Pioneer Creative Health Strategy and to consider how creativity can help to tackle inequalities as a key part of queer culture. Darren Knight of George House Trust emphasised the need to shift from co-design to co-ownership to ensure that everyone feels involved in plans and changes in the city. Aderonke Apata of the African Rainbow Family championed appropriate accommodation and better access to justice for LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers. Paul Knight of the LGBT Foundation stated the need to continue working collaboratively and to recognise the economic benefits that this would bring. Professor Stephen Whittle of Manchester Law School and Chair of Indigo NHS Greater Manchester Gender Service encouraged the wider rollout of the trans inclusion training to all Council staff.

The Deputy Leader thanked guests for their attendance and committed to continuing to work collaboratively.

Decision:

That the committee

1. thanks the representatives of African Rainbow Family; The Proud Trust; Manchester Pride; George House Trust; LGBT Foundation; and Manchester Law School and Indigo NHS Greater Manchester Gender Service for attending the meeting and commends the work they do for the LGBTQ+ community in Manchester;
2. notes the progress made to date on delivering the Equality Objectives;
3. expresses their support of the approaches to working with communities and areas for further development outlined in the report;
4. recommends that the Council works closely with African Rainbow Family to identify how issues affecting LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers, particularly in accessing housing, can be addressed;
5. requests that officers liaise with the Licensing team to identify what levers the Council had in place to address 'gatekeeping' within the Gay Village; and
6. recommends that the trans inclusion training be rolled out across the whole Council at the earliest opportunity.

The committee considered a report of the Director of Housing Services which detailed the Homeless Review and Strategy, provided an update on last year's cold weather provision, and plans for this winter, and included data on equalities which had been previously requested by the committee.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The development and aims of the Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-27;
- When severe weather was activated in 2022/23;
- The winter accommodation offer in 2022/23;
- The proposed model for winter 2023/24, including communications;
- Data around households presenting as homeless due to domestic abuse, broken down by ethnicity;
- Factors influencing why more people with a minority ethnic background than those who are white British are in homeless accommodation;
- Homelessness amongst young people; older people; those with a physical disability; those with mental health concerns, acquired brain injury, learning disabilities and autism; and the LGBTQIA+ community;
- Staffing equalities within the Homelessness Service;
- Information on the Housing Register and demand for social housing; and
- Information on wait times for properties.

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

- How the Council had achieved the elimination of bed and breakfast accommodation use for families;
- Whether the Housing Solutions telephone helpline was available 5 days a week;
- How many call handlers were employed in the service, and whether this would increase;
- When the service could expect to be fully staffed;
- Whether there was any particular reason for the rise in the number of Black people presenting as homeless;
- Noting the issues caused by wait times for those using Pay-As-You-Go mobile phones;
- Suggesting that the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy included ways to support those at risk of becoming homeless;
- What prevention methods would be included in the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, particularly for those with mental health issues and complex needs;

- Noting that the Housing Solutions Service was trialling case panels with Manchester Communication Academy to discuss a number of households who have indicated to the school that they have a housing issue and that this would be rolled out to schools in Moss Side and Wythenshawe, and expressing hope that this would be successful and could be rolled out in primary schools;
- What work was being done with landlords to encourage participation in the Sanctuary Scheme; and
- Noting that Local Housing Allowance rates had not increased and calling on the government to provide fair funding for housing.

The Deputy Leader explained that the report included information on a number of areas which the committee had requested during the previous Homelessness Update report, and she noted that it was also World Homelessness Day. She acknowledged that the Council continued to face challenges with homelessness despite the brilliant work undertaken by staff.

The Assistant Director for Homelessness explained that the Council had a legal duty to develop a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and the current Strategy would expire at the end of 2023. He stated that the Strategy would be framed around three principles – that homelessness would be rare; brief; and ended as quickly as possible – and would be based around the Place Called Home programme which aimed to increase prevention, reduce rough sleeping, secure more affordable and suitable accommodation and better outcomes, better lives. Work with key partners across the city would be required in the development and delivery of the new Strategy, and it was hoped that this would be approved by the end of the year.

The Strategic Lead for Homelessness acknowledged that the population of Manchester was continuing to change and become more diverse. She highlighted that the number of those identifying as homeless from an ethnic minority background was increasing and explained that this was due to several reasons, such as those who have their asylum claim approved or refugees who do not have a support network in the UK. She advised the committee that a review into the data around domestic abuse had been undertaken and this demonstrated a significant increase in the number of Black people presenting as homeless as a result of domestic abuse. This was of significant concern and work was being undertaken across the Council to understand if this was reflective in the wider population.

The Strategic Lead for Homelessness also highlighted a significant number of young people identifying as homeless, which was a direct result of the changes in welfare benefits and the Shared Room Rate. She explained that mitigation measures were in place, such as mediation with families and providing specific, suitable accommodation for young people. There were also increasing numbers of people with physical disabilities becoming homeless and often remained in homeless accommodation for longer due to difficulties in encouraging private sector landlords to make adaptations on properties and the small number of social housing properties available. Members were advised that work was ongoing with Registered Providers

to improve this and that this was being reviewed through the Local Plan but there were mitigation measures in place currently, such as the hospital discharge site.

It was clarified that those with physical disabilities were housed in temporary accommodation which was suitable for their needs.

The committee was advised that work was ongoing to support LGBTQ+ homeless people, through Greater Manchester Combined Authority's 'A Bed Every Night' scheme and the Council's commissioning of the LGBT Foundation and the Albert Kennedy Trust. It was hoped that the new Homelessness Strategy would present an inclusive and open approach to LGBTQ+ people experiencing homelessness to encourage more people to use the service.

In response to members' queries, the Assistant Director for Homelessness explained that some children remained in hotel accommodation in Manchester, for example asylum seekers who were under the responsibility of the Home Office. He stated that from February 2023, the number of families in bed and breakfast accommodation in Manchester who were owed a homeless duty decreased from 227 to 0. He noted that this was a precarious situation with significant demand for accommodation and stated that the number of families in bed and breakfast accommodation was increasing in almost every other local authority area nationwide. He explained that this decrease was achieved through changes to the Allocations Policy, which allowed those on the Housing Register to maintain their place if they took a private rented tenancy; by leasing more self-contained properties; managers undertaking case checks to ensure effective progress; and holding move-on panels.

The committee was informed that between 125 and 130 homelessness applications were received every week, which was more than any other local authority in the country.

The Assistant Director for Homelessness explained that there were currently 10 call handlers within the service. There was also 55 FTE Housing Support Officers, although some were undergoing the induction process and these officers performed a range of homeless assessment functions such as face-to-face interviews and in-depth telephone assessments.

The Assistant Director for Homelessness also offered to share current data on call handler capacity and call waiting times, which the committee welcomed.

The Strategic Lead for Homelessness explained that there was a triage process for telephone enquiries prior to a housing assessment taking place and that the service was looking to progress case panels to gather information earlier in the assessment process. Further information on these changes could be reported back to a future meeting.

In response to concerns regarding wait times for those using Pay-As-You-Go mobile phones, the Strategic Lead for Homelessness explained that the Council had a

callback option which enabled the caller to maintain their place in the queue without needing to stay on the phone, and she encouraged people to use this.

It was also confirmed that the Homelessness Service operates 24/7 with an out-of-hours telephone number.

The Strategic Lead for Homelessness recognised the increase in the number of BAME people presenting as homeless due to domestic violence and stated that the service was looking to delve into this more deeply with partners from domestic abuse charities and organisations. It was not known whether this increase was as a result of more domestic violence cases being reported or because of a concerning increase in cases overall.

The Assistant Director of Homelessness acknowledged that there was a greater focus on helping those experiencing domestic abuse and at risk of homelessness in other cities to stay in their own homes. He stated that there was a need to provide realistic expectations on the time taken to get a social housing tenancy and that further investment in sanctuary measures was needed, noting that this was cheaper than providing temporary accommodation. He explained that the Sanctuary Scheme currently focused on lock changes and other basic security measures and that further investment would enable more families to remain in their homes, areas and schools. He stated that this was a major focus for the service.

In response to the Chair's query regarding rolling out case panels to primary schools, the Strategic Lead for Homelessness advised that the work being undertaken with Manchester Communications Academy would help to devise the package and ensure its success. She stated that once this package was well-developed, it would be rolled out across the city and would include primary and secondary schools.

The Strategic Lead for Homelessness also confirmed that significant work was being undertaken with the Homelessness and Health Task Group to identify how the Council could work better with mental health services. She also informed the committee that additional funding had been provided to the Homeless Mental Health team who undertook assessments of those with mental health issues presenting as homeless. There was also significant work being undertaken to ensure that those with mental health issues were also placed in appropriate accommodation.

In closing the item, the Chair thanked officers for their work.

Decision:

That the committee

1. notes the report;
2. welcomes the Assistant Director of Homelessness' offer to provide data on call handler and Housing Support Officer capacity and call waiting times within the Homelessness Service;

3. requests a further report on the Sanctuary Scheme and the work undertaken to address the increase in the number of BAME people presenting as homeless due to domestic violence.

CESC/23/42

Building Stronger Communities Together Strategy 2023-2026

The committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which introduced the Building Stronger Communities Together Strategy 2023-26 and highlighted the key priorities for the next three years.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background to the Council's social cohesion work;
- The consultation carried out as part of the development of the Strategy and the findings of this;
- The strategic priorities of the Strategy
 - Relationships;
 - Participation; and
 - Belonging
- How progress would be measured; and
- Pilot activities to be tested and delivered in the north, central and south of the city in the next 12 months.

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

- Noting the need for a Community Cohesion Strategy, and welcoming this work;
- Noting that the Strategy would be a great starting point to deliver and measure progress;
- The need to identify what works well in communities and what could be improved on; and
- The importance of monitoring the progress delivered through the Strategy.

The Director of Communities explained that the reset of the Our Manchester Strategy provided an opportunity to review the approach to social and community cohesion and how this was embedded in terms of delivery. She stated that the changing nature of Manchester provided a strong background to develop the Council's first Community Cohesion Strategy and explained that a 12-week online and face-to-face consultation had been undertaken, with around 700 responses received.

The three priority areas of the Strategy were highlighted and focused on relationships and building trust within communities; participation; and belonging. The Director of Communities explained that place-based action plans would be developed with the Belong Network and would contribute to the key themes of the Strategy, with this due to formally launch in December 2023.

The Deputy Leader highlighted the fantastic communities within Manchester and the importance of residents having a sense of belonging. She noted that the action plans would be key in the delivery of progress and against the themes and priorities of the Strategy.

The Director of Communities explained in response to members' points that the Strategy would be a live document that would evolve over time.

The committee also wished to place on record their thanks to the Prevent and Community Cohesion Coordinator, who could not attend the meeting, and the wider Community Cohesion team for their work on this.

Decision:

That the committee

1. endorses the Building Stronger Communities Together Strategy 2023-26 for approval by the Executive;
2. requests further information of the wards where the pilot activities will be tested and delivered;
3. requests a further report on the development and key priorities of action plans for the Building Stronger Communities Together Strategy 2023-26 in 6 months' time; and
4. requests a further report on the progress of the Building Stronger Communities Together Strategy 2023-26 in 12 months' time.

CESC/23/43 Overview Report

The committee considered a report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which 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 query regarding a previous recommendation requesting further information on the Council's new CRM system, the Governance and Scrutiny Team Leader endeavoured to get a response to this for the next meeting.

A further query was raised regarding the recommendations made under the Domestic Abuse and Safety of Women and Girls report at the meeting on 5 September 2023. The Governance and Scrutiny Team Leader confirmed that officers were making enquiries on these recommendations and that the information would be shared with members once available.

Decision: That the report be noted, and the work programme agreed.

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 7 November 2023

Present:

Councillor Hitchen (Chair) – in the Chair

Councillors Azra Ali, Good, Ogunbambo, Rawson, Sheikh and Wills

Also present:

Councillor Rahman, Statutory Deputy Leader

Councillor Midgley, Deputy Leader

Councillor Rawlins, Executive Member for Environment and Transport

Councillor Shilton Godwin, Lead Member for Active Travel

Superintendent Chris Downey, Greater Manchester Police

Sarah Paul, Homelessness Prevention Lead and Strategic Lead for Community

Accommodation Service Tier 3 (CAS 3), GM Probation Service

Stuart Tasker, Assistant Chief Officer, GM Probation Service

Apologies: Councillors Appleby, Doswell and Whiston

CESC/23/44 Interests

Councillor Azra Ali declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in item 6 – Community Safety Partnership Overview.

CESC/23/45 Minutes

Decision: That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 10 October 2023, be approved as a correct record.

CESC/23/46 ACES European Capital of Cycling 2024

The committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which provided an overview and sought the committee's endorsement to the Executive of Manchester's bid to become ACES European Capital of Cycling for 2024.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- The content of Manchester's bid, which was joint between Manchester City Council, MCRactive, TfGM, British Cycling, Marketing Manchester and GLL;
- The commitments made by partners for 2024, should Manchester's bid be successful;
- The communications plan, including a bespoke campaign brand; and
- The outcomes and legacy should Manchester's bid be successful.

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

- Noting the great facilities for cycling within Manchester, including the National Cycling Centre and indoor BMX track;
- Whether any activities would be undertaken to widen access to cycling to certain communities such as LGBTQ+ and ethnic minorities;
- The stigma around young people on bicycles and antisocial behaviour;
- The impact of illegal parking and flooding on cycling infrastructure, and how this would be addressed;
- Whether the proposed commitments would still be achieved if Manchester's bid was unsuccessful;
- The activities and events that would be held in 2024 should Manchester be successful in its bid;
- Whether new walking and cycling routes were part of scheduled works already or if these were dependent on a successful bid;
- Current issues with the Bee Bike cycle hire scheme; and
- Expressing hope that Manchester's bid to become European Capital of Cycling 2024 was successful.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport explained that the Council had been approached by ACES Europe to submit a bid to become European Capital of Cycling for 2024 as a result of the Council's investment in cycling with partners. She explained that Manchester was home to the British Cycling and the Great Britain Cycling team at the recently refurbished National Cycling Centre. She stated that the Council had received investment of £70 million in recent years to deliver high-quality cycling infrastructure on highways and there was a strong network of volunteers, partners and local groups which worked to expand cycling participation through Bikeability courses, cycling coaching in schools and inclusive cycling programmes and events. She highlighted that Manchester's bid aligned closely with the Manchester Active Travel Strategy and investment plan, Making Manchester Fairer and the Manchester Sport and Physical Activity Strategy. She explained that, if successful in its bid, the Council aimed to achieve a long-lasting legacy for cycling in Manchester and to transform and enhance the city's cycling offer.

The Director of Neighbourhood Delivery explained that all members had received a copy of the bid document which was submitted to ACES Europe in August 2023 and that a follow-up delegation had visited Manchester in September to look at different examples of cycling within the city. He stated that the bid consortium included representatives from the Council, British Cycling, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), MCR Active, Marketing Manchester, GLL and Cycling UK and community and voluntary organisations had also been involved in the bid process. He explained the benefits that being accredited would bring, such as cycling development, raising the profile of Manchester, community engagement and wellbeing, business opportunities and potential access to new funding, opportunity to share best practice with other European cities and extensive media and PR opportunities. He stated that the Council hoped to learn the outcome of the bid in December and that, if successful, a detailed programme of actions would be developed with partners.

The Chair invited the Lead Member for Active Travel to make representations on this item. She emphasised the health benefits of cycling and stated that this bid would be a great opportunity for residents to recognise the growing network of cycling infrastructure in the city and to be inspired to take up cycling.

In response to members' queries, the Director of Neighbourhood Delivery recognised that there were some barriers to cycling within certain communities and that there was a stigma around young people on bicycles engaging in antisocial behaviour. He highlighted the significant investment into cycling infrastructure and explained that the Council would work with partners to expand community-focused initiatives in 2024, including making cycling an integral part of the Holiday Activities and Food Programme. Members were advised that there were links with LGBTQ+ and ethnic minority communities already and that this could be explored further in the delivery plan.

The Active Travel Lead (Infrastructure and Environment) acknowledged issues with the Bee Bikes GM cycle hire scheme and advised the committee that a recovery plan had been developed with TfGM and was having a positive effect with an increase in the number of bikes available. He stated that there would also be changes to the cycle docking stations and locking mechanisms to reduce the risk of theft and damage.

The Director of Neighbourhood Delivery also noted that issues regarding traffic enforcement in cycle lanes had been raised by members. He stated that the Council would continue to monitor hotspot areas and that this would form part of a long-term plan to change behaviour. The Council would continue to undertake enforcement against lane contraventions and keep lanes clean.

The Interim Lead for Leisure, Events and Specialist Markets stated that the key areas of focus for activity in 2024 were highlighted in the bid document and explained that the Council had a strong collaborative engagement with cycling stakeholders on both a community and a professional basis which would continue should the bid be unsuccessful. She stated that targeted work would be undertaken with key priority areas and recognised that the bid would be utilised as a catalyst to undertake further work. The Council continued to invest in cycling infrastructure, including a dedicated sweeper for cycle lanes.

Emphasis would also be placed on lifestyle changes during 2024 with a range of schemes and campaigns, including New Years resolutions, bike maintenance and building confidence on bicycles. The committee was also assured that there would be a citywide campaign and that all wards would have a programme of activities.

In response to a query regarding whether new walking and cycling routes were part of scheduled works already or if these were dependent on a successful bid, the Active Travel Lead (Infrastructure and Environment) stated that the major highways scheme in Ancoats and New Cross were part of the Victoria North Eastern Gateway development. It was further clarified that no additional capital funding would be

received with the accolade of European Capital of Cycling but that it would enhance the Council's ability to promote highways schemes and the opportunities they could provide.

In closing the item, the Chair thanked officers for their work wished them luck with the bid.

Decision:

That the committee endorses the recommendation to the Executive for Manchester's bid to become ACES European Capital of Cycling for 2024.

CESC/23/47 Community Safety Partnership Overview

The committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) and Chair of the Community Safety Partnership which provided an update on the implementation of the Community Safety Strategy 2022-25.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background to Community Safety Partnerships and the Community Safety Strategy 2022-25;
- Tackling neighbourhood crime and antisocial behaviour, particularly in student neighbourhoods;
- Safety of women and girls;
- Keeping children and young people safe;
- Early intervention and prevention, including trauma responsive interventions;
- Tackling serious harm and violence, including modern slavery and the RADEQUAL community campaign;
- The initiatives funded for 2023/24;
- Tackling drug and alcohol driven crime;
- Work to change offender behaviour; and
- The work and aims of the Community Safety Partnership's Achieving Race Equality Task and Finish Group.

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

- What work was being undertaken to strengthen cohesion in communities where tensions may be rising as a result of conflict in the Middle East;
- Noting the work of RADEQUAL and the influence that disinformation (false information deliberately spread to deceive people) could have on young people;
- Expressing disappointment in the way that changes to Greater Manchester Police's (GMP) Student Safe operation were communicated to members;
- Expressing concern over staff turnover within GMP's Neighbourhood Policing teams;

- The membership of the Safety of Women and Girls Steering Group and how members were appointed;
- What work was being done, beside nighttime patrols in the city centre, to ensure the safety of women in the nighttime economy and to implement Unite the Union's 'Get Me Home Safely' campaign;
- What work the Council's Youth, Play and Participation service were undertaking in south Manchester to dissuade young people from engaging in violence;
- Noting that 90% of people managed by Probation in Manchester were in settled accommodation following release from prison between January and March 2023, and querying what happened to the remaining 10%;
- How Greater Manchester's performance in placing prison-leavers in settled accommodation after their release compared to other areas in England;
- Requesting further clarification on the unmet need within CAS3;
- Noting the seriousness of modern slavery and exploitation through international sponsorship schemes;
- The capacity to house all prison-leavers in Manchester;
- Whether accommodation for prison-leavers was in one locality or spread across the city;
- What was being done to address reoffending amongst young people; and
- Whether earlier intervention was required to address youth crime.

The Strategic Lead (Community Safety) explained the key priorities of the Community Safety Partnership, including keeping children and young people safe, early intervention and prevention, addressing drug- and alcohol-related harms and cross-cutting themes such as addressing disproportionality in services.

The Assistant Chief Officer of GM Probation Service provided an overview of the service and reiterated the benefits of working closely with Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), as part of unification between the National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies in 2021, in establishing a local service and enabling local commissioning. He acknowledged that three probationary units within Greater Manchester had been assessed as 'requiring improvement' by HM Inspectorate but advised members that the service's level of integration had been highlighted as an example of good practice.

The Strategic Lead for CAS3, GM Probation Service, explained that this accommodation was funded by the Ministry of Justice and was available to prison leavers. This was undertaken through commissioning with GMCA and there were 159 beds across Greater Manchester, with 54 beds in Manchester. She explained that the service worked closely with the Council, who had identified a provider for accommodation and support services. Members were informed that there was a process involved to approve addresses and locations of this accommodation and that the individuals placed in accommodation also required approval by the Probation Service, GMCA and GMP.

She further stated that 513 prison leavers had been accommodated in Manchester since June 2021. The accommodation was transitional and available for 84 nights, during which the Probation Service worked to identify move-on accommodation in collaboration with the Council and support providers, On the Out.

In response to members' queries, the Strategic Lead (Community Safety) acknowledged that the conflict in the Middle East was concerning for some communities and explained that Operation Wildflower was underway through the Community Safety Partnership to work with GMP to understand tensions and identify areas for response. She stated that there was also a significant amount of work underway to raise awareness of and address hate crime.

The committee was also advised that work was ongoing in schools to safeguard children and young people who may be troubled by conflict in the Middle East.

The Strategic Lead (Community Safety) recognised that changes to GMP's Student Safe operation were not communicated in the best way, and this had been fed back to GMP. She advised that the Council's Neighbourhood teams were working closely with GMP to understand the changes and the rationale behind them, to continue the partnership work of this operation within Neighbourhood teams and to ensure that any future changes to safety operations were communicated more appropriately.

The Superintendent, GMP, confirmed that he would relay this feedback to colleagues and stated that Student Safe was an expensive operation. He advised that GMP was enhancing its Neighbourhood Policing teams across North, Central and South Manchester to continue delivering these services at a lower cost.

In response to a member's concern over staff turnover in Neighbourhood Policing teams, the Statutory Deputy Leader advised that this would be best directed to senior officers within GMP.

The Strategic Lead (Community Safety) explained that the Safety of Women and Girls Steering Group included a range of partners and was chaired by the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Joanna Midgley.

With regards to the work being done to ensure the safety of women in the nighttime economy, members were informed of the Good Night Out Guide, premises being accredited in the safety of women and girls and a range of other options were being discussed by the Safety of Women and Girls Steering Group.

The Parks Lead explained that Leeds City Council had recently undertaken research into the safety of women and girls in parks with their partners and highlighted three key areas for green and open space providers to focus on to improve senses of safety and security within these spaces. This included the availability and visibility of staff and clear entrance points and inclusion of women and girls in decision-making. She stated that a brief audit had been undertaken as a result of this research which found that many of these findings were already in place in Manchester's parks.

She also highlighted the work taking place on intersectionality around women and girls, including supporting partners to host the Black Girls Hike nature festival in Platt Fields and the Adventure Festivals, which gave women and girls the opportunity to participate in events that they were typically underrepresented in.

In response to a question regarding work in South Manchester to discourage young people from engaging in serious violence, the Strategic Lead (Community Safety) explained that support was targeted to challenging areas where crime and antisocial behaviour was high. She stated that work to develop an early intervention and prevention offer across North, South and Central Manchester was underway and expertise from STEER had recently been implemented in the south of the city. Funding for the wider youth offer was also available.

The Strategic Lead for CAS3, GM Probation Service, explained that the national target for people managed by Probation to be in settled accommodation following release from prison was 90% and that a trigger plan would be implemented where this figure reduced to 80%. She explained that Greater Manchester was high performing in national figures, although there was evidence of a decline which she attributed to the current climate. She stated that the Probation Service met with 'negatives' – those not placed in settled accommodation upon release – on a monthly basis and further explained that those deemed 'neutral' could be being housed in other establishments such as Home Office accommodation.

In response to queries from the Chair, the Strategic Lead for CAS3, GM Probation Service, clarified that there were currently 54 bedspaces in Manchester which were spread across the city. She reiterated that this accommodation was only available for 84 nights and that work to identify move-on accommodation would be undertaken during this time. This could include trying to reintegrate a prison-leaver with family or identifying priority need for housing through the Council. She further stated that funding was available to the Council through the government's accommodation for ex-offenders' scheme which linked to the development of CAS3 and provided rent, a deposit and incentive to landlords to agree a tenancy with a someone who had left prison in the previous 12 months.

The Strategic Lead (Community Safety) explained that there were many youth providers in Manchester which provided a range of support and safeguarding measures for children. It was acknowledged that by engaging with youth services and participating in the activities they organise, children and young people would be less likely to take part in antisocial behaviour and crime as they would not be on the streets. She also acknowledged that support and trust took time to develop between young people and providers including the Council and where necessary, information was shared between partners to ensure appropriate support was provided.

In response to a query regarding whether earlier intervention was required to address children becoming involved in crime at a younger age, the Strategic Lead (Community Safety) endorsed this and explained that pre-natal support was already

in place in some circumstances to ensure that families had the support in place for children to grow up happily and healthily.

In closing the item, the Chair thanked officers and guests for their attendance and commended the many organisations working together in Manchester to tackle the most challenging issues and to achieve better outcomes for residents.

Decision:

That the committee

1. notes the report;
2. expresses concern over staff turnover within GMP's Neighbourhood Policing teams and asks that this is addressed in the Crime and Policing item at January's meeting;
3. requests further information on where accommodation for prison-leavers is located in Manchester;
4. requests that the next update on the Community Safety Partnership include detail on outcomes, deliverability of priorities and objectives and how this could be monitored going forward.

CESC/23/48 Serious Violence Update

The committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which provided an overview of progress made in developing Manchester's approach to tackling serious violence.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background to the Serious Violence Strategy 2022-2023;
- The Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) Strategic Needs Assessment 2023;
- An overview of serious violence in Manchester;
- Hotspot areas;
- Links between serious violence and deprivation;
- Serious violence amongst and against young people;
- Interventions and early indications of impact and outcomes; and
- An overview of the Joint Targeted Area Inspection on serious youth violence, which was undertaken between September and October.

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

- Requesting clarification on which protected characteristics as listed under the Equality Act 2010 were likely to be disproportionately affected by serious violence, with figures and statistics;

- Requesting further information on the work of the Peace Together Alliance and SAFE taskforce;
- Noting the importance of early intervention and querying what work was being undertaken with those already involved in serious violence;
- Whether data on homicides within the city was based on a month-by-month comparison;
- Highlighting the important early intervention and prevention work being undertaken by voluntary groups in local communities;
- Responses to crime and serious violence in communities and in the media;
- Whether a communications plan was in place to reduce fear and to highlight work to reduce instances of serious violence;
- How GMP positively communicated updates on serious violence incidents;
- What early intervention and prevention work was being undertaken specifically with young people; and
- The importance of the role of housing providers in early intervention and prevention.

The Statutory Deputy Leader acknowledged some serious incidents of violence in Manchester in recent months, particularly involving young people as both victims and perpetrators, and he emphasised that one instance of serious violence was one too many. He stated that it was important to intervene early and to provide hope, aspiration, and positive activities for young people. He also noted that the vast majority of young people in Manchester did not engage in violence and that the Serious Violence Strategy and the Community Safety Partnership would work to reduce violence in the city.

The Strategic Lead (Community Safety) explained that the report provided an update on progress with the delivery of the Serious Violence Strategy, including current performance and key statistics on serious violence in Manchester and detailed the significant investment which had been given to the work of the Community Safety Partnership and the Violence Reduction Unit from a range of funding sources. She also informed the committee that the Partnership's response to serious youth violence was recently subject to a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) and the outcome of this would be published on 30 November 2023 with a report to this committee in January 2024.

In response to members' queries, the Strategic Lead (Community Safety) confirmed that she would share the additional information requested. Regarding ongoing work to support those already involved in serious violence, she explained that support and protection was a key element in the Serious Violence Strategy and that a range of interventions were available. Early intervention and prevention were a key focus as a result of feedback from communities, but it was important to work with those already in the criminal justice system or engaging in criminal activity. The Strategic Lead (Community Safety) stated that the Council worked closely with Youth Justice to enable support and collaborative working and there had been investment for the Another Chance and Shift schemes to continue offering avenues for support to young people involved in or influenced by crime.

In response to a query regarding data on homicides, the committee was informed that the data within the report referred to homicides, attempted murder, and section 18 offences (wounding or causing grievous bodily harm with intent), which were the offences that the term 'serious violence' covered. It was confirmed that there had been an annual reduction of 12%, which was welcomed.

The Statutory Deputy Leader acknowledged that the media did not always relay positive news stories of the work being undertaken to address serious violence. He stated that the Council communicated success with local community and voluntary groups and partners and helped to reassure residents.

In response to a query from the Chair, Supt Chris Downey of GMP acknowledged that fear of crime was often a driver of crime. He explained that the police used certain phrases, such as 'isolated incident' or 'targeted attack', in their communication to provide reassurance and clarity. He also informed the committee that meetings were convened between the police, other emergency services and partners including the Council which aimed to identify where communication should be directed and what actions needed to be taken following an incident. GMP would also email the Council's Community Safety team to provide an overview of any incidents, which could then be shared with members and staff.

The Strategic Lead (Community Safety) reiterated feedback from residents which placed great importance on early intervention and prevention to reduce serious violence. The Serious Violence Manager advised the committee that there were designated officers within the GMP locality teams – North, South, and Central – who were responsible for identifying children and young people named as suspects in criminal acts which may not go through the full criminal justice process. These children and young people would then be screened with safeguarding, early help and children's social care teams to understand if any additional support was required. It was also confirmed that housing providers were involved in this.

In closing the item, the Chair welcomed the work of the Council and local and voluntary organisations to make communities in Manchester safer.

Decision:

That the committee

1. notes the report;
2. requests clarification on which protected characteristics as listed under the Equality Act 2010 were likely to be disproportionately affected by serious violence, with figures and statistics;
3. requests further information on the work of the Peace Together Alliance and SAFE taskforce; and
4. requests further detail on 'hotspot areas' of serious violence in the city.

In opening the item, the Chair advised the committee that items 8 and 8a would be considered together and the committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer which provided an overview of the Council's updated budget position for 2024/25 and a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which outlined the priorities for the services in the remit of this committee and detailed the initial revenue budget changes proposed by officers.

Key points and themes within the reports included:

- An estimated budget shortfall of £46m was expected in 2024/25, £86m in 2025/26, and £105m by 2026/27;
- This gap would reduce to £1.6m in 2024/25, £30m in 2025/26 and £49m by 2026/27 after the application of approved and planned savings and the use of c£17m smoothing reserves in each of the three years;
- The indicative medium-term financial position;
- A review of emerging pressures and budget assumption had been completed and provision made to address these where unavoidable, including inflation and pay awards;
- The planned public consultation on proposed council tax levels and savings and cuts measures;
- Next steps in the budget process;
- Providing an overview and information on the priorities of the Neighbourhoods directorate;
- The services under the remit of this committee;
- The base budgets for each service area for 2023/24;
- Current financial pressures and ongoing high inflation rates meant it was necessary to revisit the initial assumptions and identify further savings options for consideration whilst protecting service delivery;
- Noting that a temporary reduction in the annual £40k contribution to the security measures for the Christmas Markets whilst Albert Square is unavailable would be re-introduced once the markets return to Albert Square;
- A proposal to reduce libraries' book fund budget by £30k to £0.65m per annum;
- Government grants and the income they provide;
- Workforce implications, including reviews of vacant posts;
- Future opportunities;
- The indicative medium-term budgets by service area; and
- The indicative medium-term budgets by type of spend/income.

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

- Acknowledging the 13-year period of austerity and the Local Government Association's warning that local authorities were facing a £4bn funding shortfall;
- Noting ongoing inflationary pressures and the advantage that a Fair Funding Settlement would provide;
- Expressing concern with the proposed £30k cut to the book fund budget;
- The impact of inflation on the Council's income stream;
- Highlighting the additional burden placed on the Homelessness service as a result of the government's plan to provide 7 days' eviction notice to asylum seekers in temporary accommodation;
- The impact of the cost-of-living crisis increasing demand for Council services and support whilst the Council's budget was being cut at the same time;
- The financial implications of cuts to homelessness grants, such as the Afghan Resettlement Funding; and
- Requesting further breakdown of the budget allocated to tackle crime and disorder.

The Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) provided an overview of the key points within the reports and explained that the Neighbourhoods directorate had a net budget of £66m with 1364 full-time equivalent (FTE) posts. The Head of Finance reiterated the process for approving the budget and advised the committee that a report on the government's Autumn Statement would be considered at Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee in December 2023 and final proposals following public consultation would be provided to each Scrutiny Committee in February 2024 for final approval by Full Council in early March.

The Statutory Deputy Leader emphasised that the report included officer proposals for the 2024/25 budget and that Executive Members would lead on these proposals once considered by the relevant Scrutiny Committees.

The Deputy Leader reiterated the comments of the Statutory Deputy Leader and stated that local authorities across the country had lost 27% of their spending power as a direct result of cuts to local government funding imposed by central government. She explained that Manchester had been disproportionately affected due to levels of need and deprivation and what she stated as the unfairness of cuts and the ideological choices of government. The committee was informed that, had the Council received the average cut in funding, there would be an additional £70m to spend on residents and services. She highlighted that some local authorities in England were facing bankruptcy and stated that Manchester was not in such a position due to the careful financial management of officers, who she commended, but acknowledged the precarious financial situation that the Council found itself in as result of inflationary pressures and the cost-of-living crisis.

In response to concerns raised regarding the proposal to reduce the book fund budget, the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) recognised the impact of this and that the book fund had been reduced in previous budgets. He explained that making budget cuts was not an easy decision and that reducing the book fund budget

seemed to be the least impactful in comparison to closing libraries or reducing staff numbers. The Director of Neighbourhood Delivery explained that the book fund budget was used to purchase both physical copies, e-books and online subscriptions. He advised that if the proposed cut was approved, officers would look to cut less-used subscriptions in the first instance.

The Head of Finance stated that there had been implications on a range of services as a result of rising inflation rates, which were not anticipated. Examples of this included commissioning costs in social care and in housing. He explained that the report included forecasts on inflation rates and this would be reviewed throughout the year.

In closing the item, the Chair acknowledged that the Council had lost 27% of its budget since 2010 and stated her belief that the government systematically ensured that cities like Manchester were disproportionately targeted for their political allegiance. She also placed on record her thanks to Council officers for their work in making and implementing difficult financial decisions.

Decision:

That the committee

1. notes the report;
2. expresses concern with the proposed £30k cut to the book fund budget and requests detail on how the impact of this cut might be mitigated for service users and what the year-on-year cuts to this budget have been;
3. requests that the Neighbourhoods directorate 2024/25 budget report in February 2024 includes information on any plans to mitigate the financial implications of cuts to homelessness grants, such as the Afghan Resettlement Funding; and
4. requests that the Neighbourhoods directorate 2024/25 budget report in February 2024 provides further breakdown of the budget allocated to tackle crime and disorder.

CESC/23/50 Overview Report

The committee considered a report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which 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.

Members noted that there was only one substantive item listed on the committee's work programme for December. The Governance and Scrutiny Team Leader endeavoured to identify any additional reports which could be brought forward to that meeting.

The Overview Report also included a briefing note for information on the RBDxP programme, in response to a recommendation made previously by the committee for further information on this. Several comments were made on this, which would be passed onto the relevant officers.

Decision: That the report be noted, and the work programme agreed.

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2023

Present:

Councillor Reid – in the Chair

Councillors Alijah, Bell, Fletcher, Hewitson, Lovecy, Marsh, Muse, Nunney, Sadler and Sharif Mahamed

Co-opted Voting Members:

Mr G Cleworth, Parent Governor Representative

Canon S Mapledoram, Representative of the Diocese of Manchester

Co-opted Non-Voting Members:

Miss S Iltaf, Secondary Sector Teacher Representative

Also present:

Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People

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

Nicky Boothroyd, MCRactive

Jeff Seneviratne, Chair of Manchester Outdoor Education Trust (MOET)

Apologies:

Councillors N Ali, Amin, Bano, Gartside, Judge, Ludford and McHale

Ms L Smith, Primary Sector Teacher Representative

CYP/23/40

Minutes

The Chair welcomed the new Committee Member, Councillor Marsh.

The Representative of the Diocese of Manchester informed the Committee of the issues that her Diocese was responding to in relation to Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) within school buildings that it was responsible for.

Decision

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2023.

CYP/23/41

Urgent Business – Joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to serious youth violence

At the request of the Chair, the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services provided the Committee with an overview of the JTAI taking place in Manchester. The inspection started on 25 September 2023 and was due to conclude with five days fieldwork activity and feedback to senior leaders on 13 October 2023. The inspection was led by Ofsted and involved a total of 12 inspectors from the CQC (Care Quality Commission), Ofsted (schools and social care), HMPI (HM Inspectorate of Probation) and HMICFRS (HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire

& Rescue Services). In addition, the Violence Reduction Unit would be within scope as a key partner. Each inspectorate was engaged directly with their usual regulatory area, for example, the CQC reviewed NHS activity, data and records.

The scope of the inspection considered three broad areas.

- Strategic Partnership responses to serious youth violence (how well did we work together, understand and respond to issues in Manchester)
- Intervention with individual and groups of children affected by serious youth violence and criminal exploitation (how did we provide timely, purposeful and impact positively into children and their family's lives)
- Intervention in places and spaces (contextual safeguarding and how we used intelligence to inform activity and disrupt)

Ofsted was due to publish the letter on 30th November 2023 in respect of their findings, to which an action plan would be required in due course.

The Chair advised that the findings would be submitted to either the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee or the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee.

Decision

That the findings of the JTAI will be considered by the relevant scrutiny committee.

CYP/23/42 Sufficiency

The Committee considered a report and two presentations of the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services which provided an update on the Our Children Sufficiency Strategy 2022 – 27 and outlined Children's Services' response to the Supported Accommodation Regulations (March 2023) and the requirement to register all supported accommodation with Ofsted.

Key points and themes in the Sufficiency presentation included:

- Commissioning provision;
- Implementation timeline, including the launch of Mockingbird; and
- Internal service provision.

Key points and themes in the Supported Accommodation report and presentation included:

- Background information;
- Categories of registration;
- Demographics;
- Framework for inspection;
- Our provision; and
- Challenge/risk and service response.

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

- To welcome the positive work the Council was doing with its partners;
- To welcome work to ensure that Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children were in touch with local support networks;
- To welcome that young people had been involved in the decision-making in relation to this work;
- Identifying and supporting young people with Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) or a neuro-behavioural problem;
- Young people waiting for a place in supported accommodation; and
- Support for unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people with no immigration status when they reached 18.

The Strategic Director of Children and Education Services reported that FASD and other conditions could be identified through the Annual Health Assessment and he informed Members about work to increase the number of review health assessments and plans to develop a Health Profile, which could include the number of children with FASD. He also informed Members about the transition process, which included an assessment of young people's needs, and highlighted the use of dual registration accommodation, which was registered with both Ofsted and the CQC, and the focus on providing a stable home. In response to a Member's question, he advised that the aim was for children to grow up within their local community and that the Council had a performance measure for placing children within 20 miles of their home address, which the vast majority were.

In response to a Member's question about the outstanding activities on the project plan, the Assistant Director (Children in Care and Care Leavers) reported that a lot of work had been completed since the report had been published, while highlighting some of the activity which remained outstanding and the reasons for this, including some work which could not be completed until the Inspection Framework was published. She reported that young people who were waiting for a place in supported accommodation would remain in their current placement until a place became available for them. In response to a Member's question, she outlined how the Council worked with other local authorities through the Greater Manchester Care Leaver Board with the aim of ensuring that young people across Greater Manchester had the same experience, regardless of their home local authority, and that reciprocal arrangements were used to best support young people. In relation to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, she reported that the number of young people over the age of 18 without an immigration status had significantly reduced but there were concerns about the impact of the Illegal Migration Bill on this group and work was taking place to prepare for this.

The Chair welcomed the progress made since 2014 when Manchester's Children's Services was judged to be inadequate. She expressed concern that the Council and providers were having to prepare for the new regulations on supported accommodation when the full details had not yet published, advising that this was unfair and should be raised with Ofsted. She also expressed concern that the new regulations would place additional pressure on staff and could deter some people

from providing supported accommodation, particularly people providing supported accommodation in their own home.

The Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People recognised the Chair's points about the risks and difficulties involved, including having to prepare for a new inspection regime without the full information, while advising that the Council was in a much stronger position to respond to these challenges than it had been previously. In response to a question from the Chair in relation to a specific case, he suggested that they discuss this further outside of the meeting. He highlighted that the Council had increased the allowance to young people by £20 to help them with the cost-of-living crisis.

The Strategic Director of Children and Education Services reported that the National Association of Directors of Children's Services had raised some of the concerns discussed at the meeting in relation to the impact of the new regulations. He reported that guidance had been issued and that this was unlikely to change significantly so the Council was planning ahead on this basis. He advised that the capacity issues would fall mainly on the providers but that the inspections were likely to focus on the provider, rather than the provision, so would not necessarily involve visiting individual homes. In response to a question from the Chair, he informed Members about work to build capacity for Regulation 44 visitors, recognising the much more detailed reports which were now required.

Decision

To note the report.

CYP/23/43 Ghyll Head Outdoor Education and Activity Centre Update

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which provided an update on the capital works undertaken on site, set out the progress made since Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) stepped in with the operational management of Ghyll Head and provided context for the current operating environment.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Background information;
- Capital business case and implementation;
- Trading position and challenges; and
- Next steps.

The Committee was shown a video about the provision at Ghyll Head and the benefits for Manchester young people.

The Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People highlighted the investment which had been made into Ghyll Head to make it sustainable for the future.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care, addressed the Committee as the Council's Elected Member Representative on the Strategic Advisory Group. He spoke positively about his own experiences at Ghyll Head. He informed Members about the work that had taken place over recent years, including the development of the Outdoor Education Strategy, and he thanked those involved. He highlighted the improvements in the infrastructure and the use of the space. He reported that workforce recruitment was still a challenge but that GLL, MCRactive and Council officers were working to find innovative solutions and that this was continuing to be closely monitored. He highlighted the financial challenges that schools were facing and the importance of working to source funding to help children from deprived wards to access Ghyll Head. He praised the work of the Heads of the Centre, MCRactive, Council officers and Manchester Outdoor Education Trust (MOET) and the positive partnership with GLL.

Jeff Seneviratne, Chair of MOET, reported that, when he had last attended the Committee four years ago, the future of Ghyll Head had looked uncertain but that, while there remained challenges, the decisions made to invest in the centre had secured its future. He welcomed the decision to involve MOET in the future of Ghyll Head and he highlighted the importance of ensuring that, rather than young people having a one-off trip to Ghyll Head, this should be part of a wider outdoor education. He outlined some of the work taking place to achieve this including developing resources in and near the city, including accessible facilities, and workforce development for teachers and youth workers to help them to build on what young people learnt at Ghyll Head.

Nicky Boothroyd from MCRactive informed the Committee that a research team at Sheffield Hallam University had been engaged to help develop a strategy focusing on participation and that work was also taking place to identify facilities within the city.

Members welcomed that Ghyll Head was a fantastic asset for the city and shared positive experiences of Ghyll Head and the benefits for children and young people.

In response to a Member's comments about leisure centres and digital exclusion, the Interim Lead for Leisure, Events and Specialist Markets offered to discuss this with the Member outside of the meeting.

In response to a Member's comments, the Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People reported that the partnership with GLL on Ghyll Head had worked well, with priority being given to Manchester children, while attracting other users to make it sustainable, and with the Strategic Board having oversight.

A Member who was a Teacher Representative commented on the financial pressures on schools, the challenge of finding funding to take pupils to Ghyll Head and whether some of the funding provided to schools could be specifically designated for this purpose. The Chair advised that individual schools had discretion over how they spent their own money and suggested the Member speak to senior leaders at the school. The Interim Lead for Leisure, Events and Specialist Markets reported that she wanted to work with schools to get more groups to Ghyll Head. She reported that funds such as Our Year Legacy Fund and the Our Year Social Fund had been used to help some groups to visit the centre and that discussions were taking place

about other funding which could be used in future to help subsidise visits to Ghyll Head, as well as looking at ways to reduce other associated costs, such as transport to the Lake District.

The Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People reported that a Strategic Education Plan was being developed for the city and that the Council wanted to include a pledge in this that all Manchester children would have the opportunity to attend a residential.

A Member welcomed that energy consumption at Ghyll Head had reduced by 14%, while use of the site had increased. In response to a question about other measures to reduce energy consumption, the Interim Lead for Leisure, Events and Specialist Markets reported that further improvements to energy efficiency would be part of the next phase of the development of Ghyll Head. Nicky Boothroyd from MCRactive reported that solar panels had been considered as part of the refurbishment but, because Ghyll Head was within a national park, there were planning restrictions in place which would have made this difficult. She reported that the refurbishment had included additional insulation, LED lights and light sensors, that the centre now used gas and electricity rather than oil and that GLL used an energy monitoring system. She reported that, despite not being in Manchester, Ghyll Head was included in the Council's zero carbon target.

In response to a Member's questions about children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), Nicky Boothroyd from MCRactive reported that they worked closely with the Local Offer Board and highlighted some of the groups which used Ghyll Head. She advised that the club at Debdale was accessible, that a group of SEND children from the Youth Zone in Harpurhey also accessed the provision every month and that a new accessible boat had just been delivered.

The Chair highlighted how Ghyll Head was now very accessible. She reported that the centre was now used by families for edge of care provision, as well as by schools and was also available for commercial use. She spoke of the benefits of visiting Ghyll Head for children who had never been outside their area of Manchester.

Jeff Seneviratne, Chair of MOET encouraged all Councillors to join MOET. The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care agreed to circulate information on this.

Decision

To note the report.

CYP/23/44 Youth, Play & Participation Service (YPPS) Commissioning Grants, Holiday Activities & Food (HAF) Programme and Youth Investment Fund (YIF)

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which provided an update on the outcome of the youth and play commissioning process. It also provided an update on the highlights from the HAF Programme, an

overview of the Department of Culture, Media & Sport's (DCMS) YIF Programme and an update on Manchester's YIF capital programme.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Policy context;
- Decision-making processes for youth and play commissioning;
- Applications, funding awards and development;
- Quality assurance;
- Holiday Activities Fund (HAF); and
- Youth Investment Fund (Capital) Programme.

The Head of Libraries, Galleries, Culture and Youth, Play and Participation Services thanked officers for all their hard work in relation to these areas of work.

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

- The challenges in deciding who would be awarded funding because of the volume of applications and the limited funding available;
- Support for organisations which had not been successful in obtaining funding or had not been awarded the full amount of funding that they had asked for; and
- Issues with territory and young people not wanting to travel to different areas.

The Commissioning and Engagement Manager reported that positive meetings had taken place with organisations who had not been successful in obtaining funding and that these organisations had been offered support, including training opportunities, feedback on their application and, in some cases, smaller amounts of funding. He reported that the Council had offered help with finding alternative sources of funding and help with writing their applications, if needed. He acknowledged that there had been difficult decisions on awarding funding and that the vast majority of organisations had not received what they had asked for; however, he reported that there was a robust process in place for making the decisions, with decisions made based on the merit of the application and assessed against the agreed criteria, considering whether they were meeting the needs of local communities and in line with national and local strategies. In response to a further question, he advised Members that the additional £500,000 referred to in the report was to support groups and build their capacity, including training and development for their staff, such as youth work qualifications.

In response to a question from the Chair about coverage across different wards, the Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People reported that the Council always wanted to improve in terms of having more provision and a more equitable coverage across the city; however, having brought the commissioning programme back in-house, the Council now had better knowledge of current provision, was monitoring it and would ensure that organisations were delivering to the areas they had said they would. In response to a Member's question about grassroots organisations, he reported that the Council could provide help and support

to these groups and suggested that they could apply to the HAF Fund. He thanked those in the youth and play sector for their work.

The Commissioning and Engagement Manager reported that, while territory was still an issue, more young people were now willing to travel, and providers were being asked to work with young people to address this issue. He informed Members that the successful applicants had indicated that they would be working with young people across different wards and that monitoring would take place to ensure that this was happening. He informed the Committee about the quality assurance and monitoring processes, including the use of Young Ambassadors and Peer Reviewers. In response to a question from the Chair, he reported that most of the organisations which had been funded were providing both youth and play activities. In response to a question about outreach work, he confirmed that some organisations had been funded to provide outreach work, including work to address territorial issues and issues within specific areas.

The Chair emphasised the importance of monitoring that work was taking place, including at a ward level. She highlighted that some wards in north Manchester had a high number of homeless families placed in them and the need to address any gaps in provision.

Decision

To note the report.

[Councillor Lovecy declared a personal interest as a trustee of Trinity House Community Resource Centre.]

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

CYP/23/45 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.

Decision

To note the report and agree the work programme.

Health Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2023

Present:

Councillor Green – in the Chair

Councillors Curley, Hilal, Karney, Muse, Riasat and Wilson

Apologies: Councillors Bayunu and Reeves

Also present:

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

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

Councillor Midgley, Deputy Leader and Making Manchester Fairer Programme Board Co-Chair

Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People

Professor Sir Michael Marmot (Virtually)

Adil Mohammed Javed, Making Manchester Fairer Programme Board member

Abi Brown, Making Manchester Fairer Programme Board member

Sinead O'Connor, Making Manchester Fairer Programme Board member

Sue Spiteri, Executive Headteacher, Haveley Hey Community School

Claire Buxton, Deputy Head, Haveley Hey Community School

HSC/23/42 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2023.

HSC/23/43 Making Manchester Fairer: Tackling Health Inequalities in Manchester 2022-2027

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Director of Public Health that provided an overview of progress made from October 2022 to October 2023 on the Making Manchester Fairer Action Plan.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background, noting that Making Manchester Fairer (MMF) is Manchester City Council's five-year action plan to address health inequalities in the city focussing on the social determinants of health;
- Information on the MMF Programme Workstreams;
- Information on the structure and purpose of the MMF Governance and Programme Board;
- The approach to general communications and engagement;
- An update on workforce development;
- Consideration of resident and community engagement and involvement;
- Information on Kickstarters and the Investment Fund;

- The approach to engaging with anchor institutions, recognising that Manchester institutions and businesses had a key role in addressing health inequalities and it was recognised what impact their collective actions could have on health outcomes by changing their operations, investments and services;
- Describing the approach to monitoring and evaluation with a summary of progress across all the MMF workstreams;
- A deep dive on the theme of Homes and Housing, noting that there were six themes within this workstream of the Making Manchester Fairer programme which would be delivered through the Council's Housing Strategy 2022-2032; and
- Next Steps for MMF Action Plan.

The Committee heard from members of the Making Manchester Fairer Programme Board. Abi Brown stated that she wished to bring her lived and professional experience as a young black female working in Public Health to the conversation and to advocate for positive change. Adil Mohammed Javed described that he had a background in the arts and culture sector and had joined the Board to provide insight and to articulate the voice of local communities with the ambition to empower and educate to tackle health inequalities. Sinead O'Connor described her lived experience of accessing services and reiterated the importance of hearing and acknowledging the unique voice of lived experience, as this would inform the solutions to address inequalities.

The Deputy Leader and Making Manchester Fairer Programme Board Co-Chair paid tribute to the three Board Members for attending the meeting and articulating their experience. She stated that the breadth of knowledge and experience that the members brought to the discussion stimulated positive and important conversations to drive the work of the Board and provide the appropriate governance.

The Committee heard from Professor Sir Michael Marmot who spoke of the need for both national and local actions to address health inequalities. He stated that Manchester had demonstrated positive progress in this area of activity and that other authorities across Greater Manchester could learn a lot from the Manchester model and experience. He further paid tribute to Manchester for taking the initiative in developing and adopting an Anti-Poverty Strategy. He said that all Marmot recommendations were important to address health inequalities, however it was important that local people and decision makers determined which ones they prioritised to reflect local need, and this should be informed by people with lived experience, recognising that Manchester had done this. He discussed national government policy and mindful of a potential election he commented that health equity should be at the heart of all national government policy decision making, adding that the positive outcomes of this approach was evidenced based. He stated that the experience in Manchester was a positive example of what could be achieved, and he called for the country to become a Marmot country. He further made reference to the Health Equity Network and commented that there was a tangible buzz and excitement generated through this network and it offered a forum for support and learning across all partners to progress this work. In response to the Member's discussion regarding health prevention initiatives he reiterated that whilst these were important it was the social determinants that had the biggest impact on health outcomes. He commented upon the importance of addressing poverty to achieve the establishment of a fairer society.

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

- Noting the detrimental impact austerity had had on public services across Manchester and supporting the call for a Marmot country;
- Recognising the significant amount and range of work that had been undertaken in the previous year to deliver the MMF programme;
- Discussion of how the impact of this work would be evaluated, commenting that residents in wards were largely unaware of this work;
- Calling for additional resources to support the work force development that was described;
- Was there a correlation between the reduction of Sure Start Centres and the increased number of SEND children (Special educational needs and disabilities);
- What provision was available for young people who were not in education or training;
- Recognising that residents often had complex health and social needs;
- Calling for further regulation of the tobacco and alcohol industry, noting the proliferation of online 24/7 access to home delivery services;
- Welcoming the approach to addressing mould and damp in properties, noting that Social Landlords were more responsive to residents on this issue, however challenges for tenants within the Private Rented Sector remained;
- Calling for all existing powers to be used to improve housing conditions within the Private Rented Sector;
- Welcoming the reduction in the number of families housed in temporary accommodation, adding that families with children needed to be accommodated close to the school they were attending wherever possible;
- All Council departments should work together to coordinate activities and policies to promote and deliver MMF; and
- Recognising the good practice described at Haveley Hey Community School and stating that good practice needed to be shared across all schools.

The Deputy Director of Public Health discussed the methodology of evaluation of MMF and stated that this would be undertaken and reported at the appropriate time. She stated that MMF was a five-year plan and the success would be demonstrated by improving health outcomes and narrowing the gaps across the city. She commented that the evaluation of the Kickstarter programmes would be undertaken next year. She informed the Committee that a bid for additional grant funding to support this evaluation work had been submitted. She stated that areas of greatest need would require greater attention and this approach was recognised and understood. In response to the discussion regarding alcohol and tobacco she stated that whilst the Making Manchester Fairer correctly focused on the social determinants of health, Public Health also commissioned alcohol and tobacco services. The Director of Public Health supported the call from the Committee for increased regulation of the tobacco and alcohol industry.

A Member recommended that a briefing note be circulated following the meeting that described the methodology used to identify those areas with the highest need. Further, that officers provide a briefing note that details the location of temporary accommodation across the city and how that related to the MMF methodology to identify those areas with the highest need.

The Strategic Lead for Making Manchester Fairer addressed the issue raised by the Member in relation to complex needs and made reference to the work of the Changing Future Programme. The Changing Futures programme was led by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and was working in partnership with the ten GM authorities, and other organisations across the VCSE and statutory sector, to improve the way that local systems and services worked for adults experiencing multiple disadvantages, including homelessness, drug and alcohol problems, mental ill health, domestic abuse and contact with the criminal justice system.

The Director of Housing Services informed the Committee that Manchester's existing homelessness strategy covered the period 2018-2023 and expired at the end of December 2023. He described that there was a consultation exercise currently underway, and this had been reported to the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee at their meeting of 10 October 2023. He commented that the discussions regarding families and children were fully acknowledged and would be reflected in the refreshed strategy.

The Head of Strategic Housing stated that social landlords were very responsive to the issue of damp and mould following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak, adding that there was a great deal of national scrutiny on social landlords surrounding this issue. In terms of the Private Rented Sector, he advised that they worked with landlords to improve conditions using all available levers, however if required enforcement action could be taken. He commented that there were commissioned advice services that private tenants could access for a range of tenancy advice, including in relation to disrepair.

The Deputy Leader paid tribute to all of the staff working within the Homeless Service, recognising that they worked in a very challenging environment.

The Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People stated that the importance of MMF was recognised and understood within Children's Services. He stated that Covid had significantly contributed to the increased number of SEND children, more so than the reduction of Sure Start Centres. He commented that the national response to children and the pandemic had been very lacking, however Manchester had taken the initiative to implement strategies to improve the outcomes for young people.

The Committee then heard from Sue Spiteri, Executive Headteacher, Haveley Hey Community School and Claire Buxton, Deputy Head, Haveley Hey Community School. The Executive Headteacher described the context and levels of social deprivation in which the school operated. She further commented that she had worked closely with local Members and ward coordination to support the Kickstart programme at the school. She suggested that all Ward Plans should be framed and structured using the key themes of MMF.

The Deputy Head described the initiatives that had been implemented at the school to support pupils. She described that the school had been an early adopter of the Kickstart programme and an Intensive Support Teaching Assistant had been employed, supported by an Education Psychologist and Speech and Language

Therapist. This had resulted in a programme of bespoke activities and initiatives that had been developed and delivered. She described that the benefits of this approach would be formally assessed and reported however positive outcomes were already being realised, in terms of reading, writing, maths and pupil attendance.

In response to specific questions the Assistant Director for Education, Schools QA and SEND stated that Manchester had a comprehensive offer in relation to education and training, and the number of young people not in education and training was relatively low when compared to other core cities. She reiterated the previous comments regarding the impact that Covid had on young people, particularly in regard to social and language skills and that work was underway to address this. In addition, she made reference to the Family Hubs that had been established. She described that the three hubs in Longsight, Cheetham and Wythenshawe would provide a range of advice and services, all targeted at parents, children, and young adults. The Hubs supported MMF as they would provide access to a wide range of services to help families, from health issues such as infant feeding, mental health support, stopping smoking, to building better relationships, accessing school and education support, as well as providing advice on jobs, skills training, and next steps post-18.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care reiterated the commitment to ensure that addressing health inequalities was central to all Council decision making. He commented that it was the intention to mainstream the Kickstarter programmes. He stated that he was very proud of the work that had been delivered over the previous year, noting that there had been a significant cultural change in the approach and discussions that were now undertaken around the issue of health in Manchester as a result of the adoption of the Making Manchester Fairer approach and principles. He informed the Committee that he would provide all Members with a regular update on the progress of MMF.

The Chair commented that there were a number of strategies and policies across the Council and reflected on the earlier discussion on resident awareness of MMF. She recommended that all strategies and policies be framed and prominently articulated with the Marmot Themes and MMF.

Decisions

The Committee recommend;

1. All Council strategies and policies are to be framed and prominently articulated with the Marmot Themes and Making Manchester Fairer.
2. All Ward Plans should be framed and structured using the key themes of Making Manchester Fairer.
3. That officers provide a briefing note that described the methodology used to identify those areas with the highest need.

4. That officers provide a briefing note that details the location of temporary accommodation across the city and how that relates to the MMF methodology set out in (3) above.

HSC/23/44 Overview Report

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

Decision

The Committee notes the report and agrees the work programme.

Health Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2023

Present:

Councillor Green – in the Chair
Councillors Curley, Hilal, Karney, Muse and Riasat

Apologies: Councillors Bayunu, Cooley, Reeves and Wilson

Also present:

Councillor T. Robinson, Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care
Councillor Chambers, Deputy Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care
Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Finance and Resources
Councillor White, Executive Member for Housing and Development
Charlie Norman, Chief Executive of Mosscafe St. Vincents
Steve Campbell, Extra Care Scheme Manager
Mary Moylan, resident of Elmswood Extra Care Scheme
Dr Scott Mather, Consultant Geriatrician, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust
Dr Sarah Follon, Ancoats Urban Village Medical Practice
Andy Needle, Manchester People First
Richard Hughes, Manchester People First
Joanne Oakes, Greater Manchester Lead Nurse
Laura Foster, Director of Finance, Manchester Local Care Organisation
Sally Ferris, Dementia Together Support
Hazel Savage, The Alzheimer's Society
Jeff Seneviratne, Dementia United Expert Carer Reference Group
Ann Booth, Dementia United Expert Carer Reference Group

HSC/23/45 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2023.

HSC/23/46 Revenue Budget Update 2024/25

The Committee considered the report of Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that described that the Council was forecasting an estimated budget shortfall of £46m in 2024/25, £86m in 2025/26, and £105m by 2026/27. After the application of approved and planned savings, and the use of c£17m smoothing reserves in each of the three years, this gap reduced to £1.6m in 2024/25, £30m in 2025/26 and £49m by 2026/27. This position assumed that the savings approved as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy in February 2023 of £36.2m over three years were delivered.

This report provided a high-level overview of the updated budget position. Each scrutiny committee was invited to consider the current proposed changes which were

within its remit and to make recommendations to the Executive before it agreed to the final budget proposals in February 2024.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Updates on the refreshed position including progress in reaching a balanced budget, reflecting preliminary savings and investment options;
- The government was expected to announce the Autumn Statement on 22 November 2023, but no major changes were expected;
- Government funding for 2024/25 would be confirmed in the provisional finance settlement, expected late in December 2023;
- The accompanying report set out the priorities and officer proposals for the services within the remit of this committee. This included a reminder of the savings proposals identified as part of last year's budget setting process (£36.2m across three years) and additional savings for consideration (£2.5m from 2024/25). As far as possible these were aimed at protecting the delivery of council priorities and represented the least detrimental options; and
- There remained a forecast shortfall of £1.6m next year. Any further reduction to the underspend this year would reduce the need to top back up General Fund reserve in 2024/25 and help bridge this shortfall. In addition, the Collection Fund position would be finalised in January and the final levy amounts from GMCA confirmed.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources stated that Manchester had been subject to unfair budget cuts over the previous fourteen years. He stated that the decision to reduce budgets to cities like Manchester had been an ideological decision taken by the government. He described that the financial situation of local authorities across the UK was very precarious, stating that it had been estimated by the Local Government Association that there would be a £4billion shortfall in total next year. He stated that he endorsed the ask of the Leader in her recent letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer ahead of the Autumn Statement. He called for an end to last minute provisional settlements, but rather long term, fair and stable funding arrangements for all local authorities.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care stated that the government had shown nothing but contempt for Manchester, however despite this Manchester had continued to ensure that the residents of the city were at the heart of all decisions taken. He said that despite the challenges presented by government, Manchester continued to be innovative in how it worked for all residents.

The Deputy Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care referred to the recent visit undertaken by members of the Committee to the Control Room. The Control Room was the integrated hub for supporting flow out of hospital into the community. The Control Room was responsible for ensuring the safe and timely discharge of citizens across hospitals and to support the system to work together to achieve the best outcomes for people. She stated that this was one positive example of the many innovations developed in Manchester to support residents despite the cuts imposed on the city. The Committee expressed their appreciation to the staff at the Control Room for facilitating the visit from Members.

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

- Paying tribute to all workers across the Council and the NHS for the work they undertook on behalf of the citizens of the city;
- Thanking the Executive Members and the Directors for their continued dedication in supporting residents, recognising the difficult financial landscape they had to navigate;
- Condemning the government's policy of austerity and the impact this had on all Mancunians;
- Welcoming that residents were central to all decisions taken; and
- The Committee expressed the opinion that they retained their confidence in the Executive Member, the Director of Public Health and the Executive Director of Adult Social Services.

Decision

To note the report.

HSC/23/47 Public Health Budget 2024-27

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Public Health that set out the proposals for the Public Health budget for 2024/25 to 2026/27.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- An overview of Public Health services and key priorities;
- A detailed overview of the budget;
- An update on Making Manchester Fairer;
- The gross 2023/24 budget was £50.471m and the net budget of £43.211m;
- Income of £7.260m included use of reserves £3.753m, Better Care Fund £0.960m, contributions from NHS partners £0.805m and from other local authorities £0.853m and government grant £0.889m;
- The latest 2023/24 global monitoring report to the Executive outlined a £0.8m underspend. Savings of £0.730m had been achieved in full. There were underspends across the staffing budgets due to vacant posts and the maximisation of external funding, and underspends on other indirect staffing costs;
- There were no additional savings for 2024/25; and
- Planned non recurrent use of reserves in 2023/24 of £0.330m was replaced in 2024/25 with the planned use of headroom in the budget set aside for contract uplifts as detailed in the report to Health Scrutiny February 2023. The approved savings schedule for 2024-26 were detailed in appendix 1.

A Member discussed the proliferation of 24/7 alcohol delivery services and the detrimental impact alcohol had on the health outcomes of residents. The Director of Public Health stated that a report on the Drugs and Alcohol Services was scheduled to be submitted to the January 2024 meeting and consideration of this would be included in that report.

Decision

To note the report.

HSC/23/48 Adults Social Care Budget 2024-27

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Services that set out the proposals for the Adults Social Care budget for 2024/25 to 2026/27.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- An overview of Adult Social Care services and key priorities and positioning within the Manchester Local Care Organisation; and
- A detailed overview of the budget, including:
 - The significant financial challenges on the 2023/24 budget and requirement to resolve them ahead of incorporating the 2024/25 budget proposals;
 - The update to budget growth assumptions for the service as set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan;
 - Confirmation of an unchanged savings plan 2024-26 at this stage pending further work underway;
 - Future risks and opportunities including significant budget considerations in 2025/26;
 - The gross 2023/24 budget was £280.764m and the net budget of £215.260m;
 - Income of £65.504m included client fees £30.416m, Better Care Fund £17.787m, contributions from NHS partners of £10.428m and other income of £6.873m which includes grants and use of reserves. This included the integration reserve, which was drawn down in accordance with the plan agreed for the year with NHS Greater Manchester – Manchester locality;
 - The base budget for 2023/24 was £211.947 and the key change to the budget in the year was the addition of the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF) workforce grant of £4.055m. This was also reduced by a pensions budget adjustment of £-0.602m and Directorate transfers of £-0.140m;
 - The latest global monitoring report to the Executive outlined a £3m ASC 2023/24 overspend and that the underlying recurrent pressure in the long term care budget were significantly more challenging at c£9m. This was being offset non-recurrently in 2023/24 through the approved use of reserves, employee underspends and applying Better Care Fund (BCF), Adult Discharge Fund (ADF) and Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF) against eligible costs. In summary, new demand were running at a higher run rate than demographics and preventative programmes. This was compounded by significant price pressure in the care market, and the complexity of need for clients discharged through hospital;
 - A recovery plan had been initiated to fully mitigate the budget pressure without further need for a new savings programme and from the additional resources proposed as part of this budget process; and
 - Savings of £4.4m were approved for 2024-26 and were detailed in Appendix 1. Implementation plans were being developed and at this stage, there were no proposed amendments to this programme.

Decision

To note the report.

HSC/23/49 Update on Dementia Developments

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Public Health and Executive Director of Adult Social Services that described the progress made in the last six months around key developments of the Dementia Action Plan, with specific focus on the early commission of the Manchester Dementia Alliance, led by Alzheimer's Society, with Manchester Carers Forum and Together Dementia Support. Noting that at the Health Scrutiny Committee meeting of 8 March 2023, the first progress report on the developments across the Dementia pathway had been presented. (See minute ref. HSC/23/19 Dementia Developments in Manchester).

Key points and themes in the report included:

- The development of the Manchester Dementia Alliance and early work and achievements to date;
- An update on Delirium work in Manchester, noting that as part of the Greater Manchester Dementia United work, delirium had been a particular focus and Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) had been at the forefront of this work, led by Dr Scott Mather, Consultant Geriatrician;
- An update on the forward plan on the next 6 months priorities, aligned to the Dementia Action Plan; and
- Reference to a new Extra Care Scheme in the development pipeline specifically focused on Dementia Care with our partners, Irwell Valley Homes.

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

- Were the number of patient admissions in Manchester with delirium comparable with other regions;
- Was delirium only experienced by older citizens;
- Were some groups of residents more susceptible to experiencing delirium; and
- Supporting the next step to have this comprehensive approach to delirium in all settings and supporting the discussions with Manchester Local Care Organisation and clinical leads at the GM Integrated Care Board about rolling it out to care homes.

Dr Scott Mather, Consultant Geriatrician, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust stated that the improved coding of patients had helped correctly diagnose incidents of delirium, adding that rates in Manchester were comparable with other regions. He advised that delirium could affect all ages, however, it was more prevalent in older citizens as they became more vulnerable to this condition. He stated that this was also exacerbated by infections, constipation and/or dehydration. He also commented that a change in settings could also contribute to incidents of delirium. He also stated that some patient cohorts, including those for whom English was not their first language or had an existing condition such as Korsakoff syndrome were also more susceptible to experiencing delirium, adding that this demonstrated the importance of correct early diagnosis and care.

Hazel Savage, The Alzheimer's Society, informed the Committee that the Dementia Changemakers had held another meeting since the report had been published. She advised that they planned to meet again in January 2024 and the focus of that meeting would be Home Care. She stated that the Professionals Workshop had met in October. The aim of that workshop was to collate feedback of current Dementia services within Manchester, from the professionals' point of view; to map out current service offers; and to see if the service offers aligned with the views/needs of service users. She commented that this had been a very positive and empowering experience. She stated that the feedback from this event would be collected and evaluated. Jeff Seneviratne, Dementia United, commented that this had been important as it represented the first steps to developing a holistic model of dementia care that reflected upon the recommendations of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Dementia.

The Director of Public Health stated that Manchester benefited from an established clinical network who were committed to the issue of dementia, and this foundation would strengthen and inform the local strategy. He further paid tribute to the Manchester Dementia Steering Group, adding that it was an example of genuine partnership working. He further commented that diagnosis rates of dementia were higher than the national average. The Assistant Director Commissioning MLCO added that a person-centred, strength-based approach was taken to assess an individual's needs and this would be reviewed by social workers to ensure that they were receiving the correct care in the correct setting.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care stated that he had welcomed the frank and open discussions he regularly had with Dementia Together Support. He commented that he had reservations about national policy in relation to dementia and he would continue to lobby on this issue. He reassured the Committee that discussions were ongoing locally with the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership with the view to replicating the good practice witnessed in Manchester across Greater Manchester.

The Chair commented that the Committee would be considering a report on End of Life Care at the February 2024 meeting and themes that had been discussed in the report and at the meeting today would be included in that report.

The Chair further requested that when the Manchester Dementia Alliance Newsletter was available this should be circulated to all Councillors.

The Committee expressed their gratitude to all guests for attending the meeting and contributing to the meeting.

Decision

To note the report.

HSC/23/50 Update on Extra Care Housing Developments

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Adult Social Services that described the latest developments around Extra Care Housing.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Information on the completion of the housing needs analysis providing an indicative increase in the number of additional units/schemes required by 2043;
- An update on the recent survey by Healthwatch with people currently in Extra Care Housing;
- Information on the Enabling Independence Accommodation Strategy (EIAS) and how this would impact on the further growth of Extra Care Housing in the city; and
- The recently published Housing Learning and Improvement Network (HLIN) case study on Neighbourhood Apartments.

The Committee heard from Charlie Norman, Chief Executive of Mosscafe St. Vincents who discussed the importance of the Extra Care Housing Strategy and how they worked collaboratively with both Strategic Housing and Adult Social Care. She spoke of the many benefits of the Elmswood Extra Care Scheme that had opened in 2020, including reducing social isolation and supporting independent living in a safe, inclusive and vibrant environment. She stated that she was proud to be working on behalf of the residents of the city, at a neighbourhood level that reflected the Our Manchester strategy. She commented that scheme offered 72 high quality one and two bedroom, low carbon apartments that were all offered at 100% social rent.

Steve Campbell, Extra Care Scheme Manager reiterated the many benefits of Extra Care Housing that had been articulated by the Chief Executive of Mosscafe St. Vincents. He added that this model of housing also reduced the need for residents to go into costly residential care. He added that care could be stepped up or stepped down as appropriate in a safe setting.

The Committee heard from Mary Moylan resident of Elmswood Extra Care Scheme who spoke of their experience of living in Extra Care Housing. She described her home as lovely, and said she felt safe and secure. She added that the environment was very supportive and there were many opportunities to socialise and take part in activities. The Committee expressed their gratitude to Mary for attending the meeting and contributing to the meeting.

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

- Welcoming the delivery of 100% social rent accommodation at the Elmswood Extra Care Scheme; and
- Welcoming Extra Care Schemes and recognising the benefits these had for residents.

The Assistant Director – Commissioning commented that the Housing Needs Analysis that was described in the report used a variety of data sets to inform future planning. She commented that the findings indicated that an additional 15 Extra Care Home Schemes would be required, a doubling of the existing offer. She added that 11 of the 12 current schemes were all offered at 100% social rent, with the remaining one being mixed tenure. The Commissioning Manager, Strategic Housing added that

providing Extra Care Schemes supported people to safely right-size and this released larger family homes into the market.

The Assistant Director – Commissioning responded to a comment from a Member regarding the possibility of delivering Extra Care Housing for a mixture of citizens, such as Learning Disabled citizens and an intergenerational offer by stating that consideration could be given to this and building upon the positive model that Extra Care offered.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care commented that Health partners were working collaboratively with colleagues in Strategic Housing and the ambition was to increase the number of Extra Care Schemes across the city.

The Committee expressed their gratitude to all guests for attending the meeting and contributing to the meeting.

Decision

To note the report.

HSC/23/51 Adult Learning Disability Services

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

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Policy and Strategy, namely developments surrounding the recently approved Manchester Local Care Organisation (MLCO) Commissioning Strategy for Adult's with a Learning Disability (2023 – 2028), and Housing Needs Analysis for Adults with a Learning Disability and Autism (2023 – 2033);
- Recommissioning and Transformational activity including the developments surrounding the 'My Way, My Life' programme;
- Health Care, including local developments surrounding the NHS Greater Manchester and Manchester University Hospitals Foundation Trust Transforming Care agenda and NHS Learning Disabilities oversight group; and
- Preparation for Adulthood, also known as Transition.

The report was accompanied by a video presentation that highlighted key developments over the last 12-18 months across a range of areas including housing, social care, and health. This video was recently presented at the recent Greater Manchester Learning Disability conference and captured a range of views from citizens with lived experience.

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

- Recognising and welcoming the work undertaken by Manchester People First;

- Noting the theme of the importance of staff being caring and kind had been identified during engagement events with Learning Disabled citizens as part of the process of drawing up a new Learning Disability strategy; and
- What was being done to ensure that vulnerable citizens with a learning disability and/or autism did not remain in hospital under the care of the Mental Health Act for any longer than they need to be.

The Head of Strategic Commissioning (Adult Learning Disability & Autism) stated that the Housing Needs Assessment had been used to plan for future Learning Disability housing need. He advised that findings of this Assessment were described at section 3.2.5 of the report. In summary, approximately 430 additional places of supported accommodation, general needs accommodation and shared lives services would be needed in the city over the next 10 years. There would need to be a structured programme of work to deliver the housing requirements of adults with a Learning Disability, working with strategic partners including Strategic Housing, Registered Landlords and the Adult Social Care Market Providers.

The Head of Strategic Commissioning (Learning Disability and Autism) advised 90 of those places would be needed to provide new accommodation for citizens within the current Manchester City Council in-house provision, to ensure existing citizens had access to better quality and efficient accommodation types. He also advised there was a significant programme of work underway over the next 3 years or so to review the range of in-house services, and to ensure that the in-house service accommodated citizens with more complex needs, which may mean that some citizens with lower level needs may need a more independent offer.

The Head of Strategic Commissioning (Adult Learning Disability and Autism) also commented that he was proud to inform the committee of the launch of the new Manchester Local Care Organisation Adult Learning Disability and Autism Commissioning Strategy (Plan), which had been produced with people who had lived experience. This set out the Council's commissioning strategy (plan) for Adults with a Learning Disability over the next five years.

The Adult Social Care Assistant Director, Complex Needs informed the Committee that an oversight group had been established to regularly review citizens with a learning disability who were admitted to hospital to ensure they were in the correct care setting and to plan for their appropriate transfer of care. She stated that the integration of Health and Social Care supported this partnership approach to ensure the best outcomes for the citizen. She stated that the individual would be supported once discharged from a hospital setting to prevent them from being readmitted.

The Adult Social Care Assistant Director, Complex Needs described that a value-based approach to staff recruitment had been developed, adding that this involved asking questions that explored the values of candidates and explored their lived experiences. She stated that people with lived experience contributed to interview panels, and this had been a very positive development.

The Committee heard from Andy Needle and Richard Hughes from Manchester People First, a self-advocacy group for adults with a learning disability. Mr Needle commented that the inclusion of people with lived experience being involved with the

recruitment of staff to ensure the correct values were demonstrated was a very important and welcome development. He further acknowledged the importance of the publication of the easy read version of the Action Plan.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care paid tribute to all the staff working within the Learning Disability Team.

The Committee expressed their gratitude to all guests for attending the meeting and contributing to the meeting.

Decision

To note the report.

HSC/23/52 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.

Decision

The Committee notes the report and agrees the work programme.

Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 12 October 2023

Present:

Councillor Simcock (Chair) – in the Chair

Councillors Andrews, Connolly, Davies, Evans, Kilpatrick, Kirkpatrick, Lanchbury and Stogia

Also present:

Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Finance and Resources

Apologies: Councillors Brickell and Wheeler

RGSC/23/55

Minutes

In moving the minutes, the Chair informed the committee that he had recently attended a meeting with officers and ACORN representatives to discuss the wording used in the Council's communications regarding council tax. He explained that these communications would be revised and that, if successful in improving collection rates, every 1% increase in the collection rate could produce an additional £1.5m-£2m in revenue.

The Chair also advised that the committee's recommendation for officers to undertake a feasibility study, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Resources, into ending the use of Enforcement Agents had been accepted and was being undertaken.

Decision:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2023 be approved as a correct record.

RGSC/23/56

Workforce Equalities Update

The committee considered a report of the Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation which provided an update on progress to date to deliver the Workforce Equality Strategy and the Council's journey to becoming a diverse and inclusive employer.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- An introduction to the Workforce Equality Strategy;
- Progress in delivering on the Strategy's 47 actions, with 38 completed; 6 in progress; and 3 outstanding;

- Data around the number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) employees and those with a disability or long-term health condition;
- How progress has been made with the Council's leadership and management;
- The work of staff network groups;
- Communication and engagement;
- Policies, processes and systems to strengthen diversity and inclusion;
- How the Talent & Diversity team works with local communities to attract local diverse talent;
- The Council workforce's diversity profile;
- Updates from each directorate on how they have supported the Council to build a diverse and inclusive workplace; and
- An upcoming refresh of the Strategy in late 2023.

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

- Welcoming the Workforce Profile, and seeking clarification as to whether the average age included students and children under the age of 16;
- Seeking clarification on the percentage of people in Manchester who identify as transgender;
- Seeking clarification on the percentage of BAME residents in Manchester;
- Noting that BAME employees were more likely to have a complaint made against them but that the outcome of a disciplinary process was typically the same as a White employee;
- What work was being undertaken to increase take-up of the 'Let's Talk About Race' training;
- The age breakdown of staff undergoing 'Let's Talk About Race' training;
- Whether flexible working options would be considered in the Age Friendly Action Plan to support the Council to become an Age Friendly Employer;
- Querying why non-completion rates of SAP Equality Data was highest in Children's Services; and
- Why there was no recognition of deafness or hearing impairment as a disability under the Diversity Data Subcategories in the Workforce Profile.

The Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation explained that the report highlighted the significant work undertaken over the previous two years and how the Council had achieved against its ambitions to build a diverse and inclusive workforce and he acknowledged that there was more to be done.

The Head of Workforce Strategy reiterated that great progress had been made in delivering against the Workforce Equality Strategy since its launch in 2021, with most actions delivered. He stated that there continued to be a positive impact and explained that there had been an increase in Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority (BAME) representation at all levels in the Council and particularly at a senior level. There had also been an increase in representation of disabled employees at all

levels. He also stated that feedback from the staff survey indicated that the workforce recognised improvements to equality, diversity and inclusion and that there was a strong sense of belonging.

The Head of Workforce Strategy stated that this work was a long-term priority for the Council and that a refresh of the Strategy would accelerate the journey to become a diverse workforce.

Directorate Equalities Leads were also present at the meeting.

The Chair relayed a written representation from Councillor Zahid Hussain, Lead Member for Race, who was unable to attend the meeting. He welcomed the HRODT department's works and highlighted areas for increased focus. The Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation welcomed the Lead Member for Race's comments.

In response to the Chair's queries regarding the Manchester population average data referenced in the Workforce Profile, the Head of Workforce Strategy confirmed that this included the whole population within Manchester as it was based on data from the 2021 Census. He endeavoured to clarify statistics around the transgender population and would provide clarification on this outside of the meeting.

The Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation stated that an increase in Employee Dispute Resolution cases could be interpreted positively as it suggested that the workforce felt confident to raise issues with HR and that these issues would be responded to. The Head of Workforce Strategy informed the committee that the number of BAME employees who experienced disciplinary proceedings had decreased.

The Head of Workforce Strategy recognised the low take-up rate of 'Let's Talk About Race' training and explained that each directorate had an action plan to deliver this over the next 6-12 months and confirmed that the age breakdown of employees accessing this training could be shared. The Strategic Head of Organisation Development stated that there was a breakdown of age and race for training such as 'Let's Talk About Race', Inclusive Leadership and other key corporate training such as zero carbon and this data is helpful to identify areas to focus on. She recognised that training was easier to access for certain services and employees in the Council.

In response to a query regarding whether flexible working options would be considered in the Age Friendly Manchester action plan, the Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation stated that the Council already had a number of flexible working options available, but that staff may not be fully aware of these. He noted that there would not be a one-size-fits-all approach and that this subject had been discussed by the Strategic Equalities Group. The Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation was

also due to meet with the Chair of the Older Peoples Staff Network to explore this area further and how flexible working options could be promoted.

With regards to training non-completion rates, particularly in Children's Services, the Head of Workforce Strategy explained that this was a frontline service which engaged less with corporate communications and systems. The Directorate Equalities Lead for Children and Education Services explained that they had been advised to only ask employees for their equalities data once per year so as not to discourage them, noting that it was a personal choice to disclose such information. She explained that there was an increased confidence in and number of conversations to discuss race and trans inclusion and it was hoped that the equalities plan and communications resulted in an increased response. The Directorate Equalities Lead for Neighbourhoods echoed these comments and emphasised the importance of increasing confidence to share equalities data.

The committee was also advised that the equality data categories were being reviewed to ensure that staff can identify any disability or impairment they may have, and that staff networks were engaged with this work.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources stated that wanting to build a diverse and talented workforce was important for all public and private sector organisations but that there was not a template for success and every organisation was unique. He emphasised the need to build sound foundations and thanked the HRODT team for their work. He also stated that a diverse, inclusive and talented workforce would be good for the city.

Decision:

That the committee

1. notes the progress made by the Council to deliver the Workforce Equality Strategy;
2. notes the progress made by each directorate to deliver workforce equality, diversity, and inclusion;
3. notes the plan to refresh the Workforce Equality Strategy;
4. requests further clarification on the percentage of people in Manchester who identify as transgender;
5. requests that the age breakdown of staff undergoing 'Let's Talk About Race' training be shared with members; and
6. requests that the Workforce Profile be updated in line with members' comments regarding deafness and hearing impairment.

RGSC/23/57

Workforce Strategy

The committee considered a report of the Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation which provided an overview of the Council's Workforce Strategy and the priorities being delivered against to ensure that

the Council is in the best position to deliver the Corporate Plan, Our Manchester Strategy and to continue to deliver excellent services to residents.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The priorities and strategies of the Workforce Strategy;
- How these priorities were delivered; and
- How success was measured;

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

- Noting the emphasis on mental health in the priorities of the Strategy, and querying the challenges relating to this;
- If apprenticeships were linked to career pathways;
- How talent pools would be developed and how these would work; and
- Whether there were any peer networking groups for apprentices with other local authorities.

The Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation explained that the Workforce Strategy enabled the Council to define its ambition and how this would be achieved.

In response to the Chair's query regarding challenges around mental health, the Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation acknowledged that this was becoming one of the biggest challenges for organisations across the country. He noted that the ways to respond to this were complicated and there would not be a one-size-fits-all solution to this. He stated that there was a specific focus on health and wellbeing within the Strategy with a range of interventions to help address some issues. It was also stated that statistics showed keeping those facing mental health issues in work led to the best outcomes, although this was acknowledged as not always being possible.

The Head of Workforce Strategy recognised that mental health was the biggest cause of staff absence. He stated that engagement had been undertaken with staff as part of the Workforce Strategy refresh to understand experiences and more work was needed on this. He explained that the Strategy focused on prevention and early intervention and targeted support would be provided to areas with higher levels of absence, such as frontline services. Managers would also be trained with knowledge and skills needed to provide effective support to those experiencing mental health challenges. The Employee Assistance Programme and occupational health service would also be publicised more widely. The committee was advised that these challenges were not unique to the Council and were indicative of challenges across local government.

In response to comments around apprenticeships, the Head of Workforce Strategy stated that apprenticeships were an important part of internal development and

would be aligned to career pathways. Apprenticeships were also key in attracting young people and people from across Manchester to work for the Council. The Head of Workforce Strategy stated that each directorate would have a set target for the number of apprentices recruited each year.

The committee was informed that talent pools were in the process of being developed and would provide access to coaching, mentoring and leadership development programmes to enable progression. Further detail on this could be shared once available.

The Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation stated that young people were more likely to want to move across a Council and into different services, as opposed to staying in one role, and talent pools could help with this.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer advised that the workforce budget had been assessed to enable greater flexibility around apprenticeships and vacant posts. She also highlighted that the priorities in the Strategy were interlinked.

In response to a query regarding peer networking groups with other local authorities, the Head of Workforce Strategy explained that this had not been considered but he welcomed the idea. He stated that the Council had a strong offer of apprenticeships, professional programmes through universities and externally commissioned training. The Directorate Equalities Lead for Children and Education Services advised that there were several groups and networks for Education Services staff across Greater Manchester and the wider North West.

Decision:

That the committee notes the report.

RGSC/23/58 Future Shape – Our Internal Digital Transformation Programme

The committee considered a report of the Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation which provided an update on progress to date with the Future Shape of the Council programme to evolve the Council's ways of working in order to meet current challenges.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background to the Future Shape programme;
- The achievements and progress made since 2020;
- The current programme;
- The different workstreams of the programme;
- The impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on Future Shape;

- Communication and engagement; and
- Future Shape is internally focused, but improved council services will lead to better outcomes for the residents and businesses of Manchester.

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

- Noting the varying degrees of digital exclusion;
- How difficult it was to detect use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in job applications, and whether the Council would need technology to identify this;
- How products created as part of digital transformation could be cross-sold to other local authorities;
- How it would be ensured that those with visual or hearing impairments were not excluded by the work of Future Shape; and
- The need for an Ethical Framework for the use of AI.

The Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation stated that there had been a shift towards Future Shape being the vehicle to implement digital transformation within the Council. He stated that it was important to ensure that suitable conditions were created for systems to be used effectively and that the workforce was equipped with the skills required.

The Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation explained that the Council undertook significant engagement with staff and residents when implementing any changes to systems. The Strategic Head of Organisation Development recognised the needs for systems and processes to be insight-driven and based on the experiences of users.

In response to queries regarding the use of AI in job applications, the Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation acknowledged that this did occur, but the Council did not have any tools currently in place to identify this. He noted, however, that applying for a role was the first stage of the recruitment process and that AI could not be utilised in all stages. The Strategic Head of Organisation Development stated that there had been improvements in the development offer for recruiting managers and panel members and this would include how to identify AI within applications.

The Director of Human Resources, Organisation Development and Transformation recognised the opportunities afforded by AI but stated that there was a need to identify how it could be used and where there were opportunities to do things differently.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer provided assurances that new major ICT systems would not be bespoke, given the risk involved in this. She stated, however, that front-facing forms and layout of systems could be edited to improve user experience.

With regards to digital accessibility, the Strategic Head of Organisation Development explained that there was a workstream, which focused on 5 key areas for digital skills. This sought to ensure that all users could access systems and had a positive experience. She noted that there was lots of different aspects to consider in order to inform how systems and processes work. The Head of Workforce Strategy also advised that a Disability Action Plan had been co-produced with the Disabled Staff Network and employees across the organisation. This sought to ensure that all communication and engagement methods and workspaces were accessible.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources stated that Future Shape was an enormous piece of work which would provide better ways of working to deliver better outcomes for residents and businesses.

Decision:

That the report be noted.

RGSC/23/59 Annual S106 Monitoring Report

The committee considered a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) which provided an update on the Council's Section 106 (s106) activity for 2022/23 and to date.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background to s106 and s278 agreements,
- Activity in 2022/23 and 2023/24 to date, noting that there had been an increase in planning applications so far in 2023;
- A comprehensive list of agreements completed during 2022/23 and 2023/24 to date;
- Contributions received and spend;
- Affordable housing and projects through the Council's Housing Affordability Fund (HAF);
- Benchmarking information received from Sheffield City Council and Liverpool City Council;
- The work of the officer working group;
- Tree planting and landscaping;
- Proposed planning reforms; and
- An update on the Local Plan.

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

- The definition of 'trigger not met' and 'viability appraisal' on the Obligations Schedule, with particular reference to Miles Platting and Newton Heath;
- How the clawback process worked in reality, how many times this had been used and the outcome of this;
- Transparency around viability assessments;

- If the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy would replace Section 106 agreements in relation to affordable housing, and whether this would increase the number of affordable homes;
- How members could be involved in deciding where s106 monies were allocated and spent;
- Suggesting that the Weekly List email be amended to highlight the wards which have received applications so that members do not have to open the document to see what wards are included;
- Whether the Obligations Schedule was an evolving list of agreements;
- The usefulness of benchmarking Section 106 policies with other cities;
- Whether the current financial climate and inflation rate had impacted on the amount of s106 contributions;
- How members could be advised of applications in their ward in advance; and
- Recommending that delegated authority be given to the Chair, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Development and the Strategic Director (Growth and Development), to request a report should progress be made on the proposed planning reforms.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development stated that Section 106 agreements were a vital part of the planning process to ensure that any harm or loss of amenity can be mitigated in communities where developments happen through the provision of affordable housing, investment in green spaces, new schools and surgeries.

In response to the Chair's query regarding what was meant by 'trigger not met' and 'viability appraisal', the Section Planning Manager explained that 'trigger not met' referred to when the payment was due to the Council as a result of development reaching a certain point i.e., a certain number of houses being built or commencement of development. He clarified that a viability appraisal was provided to demonstrate that a developer could afford to include affordable housing in the scheme. Where this was financially viable, a legal agreement would be drafted to ensure either receipt of a specific sum of money or the delivery of a number of affordable homes on site.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development stated that s106 agreements were just one mechanism to achieve affordable housing and that Homes England grant funding could not be used as s106 money but could still be used to develop affordable homes. He further stated that viability assessments were public and accessible through the Planning Portal and there was a lot of independent scrutiny of these. He explained that the Council was bound by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which viability assessments had to comply with. He stated that he would like the NPPF to be changed to award the Council more levers to deliver affordable housing through the viability process.

The Director of Planning, Licensing and Building Control emphasised that all viability assessments were publicly accessible and that all assessments were reviewed robustly and independently. In-house advisors would then verify the findings of the independent assessors.

The Director of Planning, Licensing and Building Control advised that triggers would be met at varying points in the development process and that the Council had its first two applications which met the trigger, one of which had been assessed further and no additional contribution could be provided.

In response to a query regarding the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy, the Director of Planning, Licensing and Building Control explained that further guidance was still awaited from central government. She stated that the Council had been waiting for further information on planning reforms for 18 months and it was understood that the levy was likely to replace s106, although it was suggested that there could be exceptional circumstances where an s106 agreement could still be used to deliver affordable homes.

The committee was advised that the officer working group met once a decision on a planning application had been made. It was stated that a chart was available which demonstrated where members could be involved in the decision-making process for s106 monies. The Director of Planning, Licensing and Building Control advised that the department encouraged developers to engage with members at pre-application stage and explained that the Weekly List informed members of applications received for each ward. She also encouraged members to contact Planning Officers if they had any queries on an application or development.

It was noted, however, that the Council could not mandate developers to undertake pre-application engagement or how long for.

The suggestion that the Weekly List email be amended to highlight the wards which have received applications so that members did not have to open the document to see what wards are included was noted. The committee was also advised that members and residents could sign up to email alerts for individual wards of interest to them.

The Section Planning Manager clarified that agreements signed within the last 12 months were included in the main body of the report, but these would be included in the Obligations Schedule for future reports.

With regards to benchmarking exercises, the Director of Planning, Licensing and Building Control explained that this had been challenging as authorities had different policies which made it difficult to compare. The Assistant Director of Planning and Building Control concurred with this and suggested that asking what s106 monies were collected for could be a more suitable measure to benchmark against.

The Director of Planning, Licensing and Building Control stated that the state of the market had an impact on financial viability with supply chain and material costs being incorporated into the process. She advised, however, that the Council had been able to withstand these pressures but there had been some delays in development. She confirmed that the development industry remained engaged with the Council and aware of its priorities regarding affordable housing and zero carbon.

In response to the Chair's query as to how members could be advised of applications in their ward in advance, the Director of Planning, Licensing and

Building Control endeavoured to consider this further but noted that there were issues around when this engagement would take place and what information could be shared given the confidential nature of some applications.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development stated that the Council used the planning process to deliver its ambitious targets as set out in the Housing Strategy. He explained that developers were increasingly working with Registered Providers to create mixed-use developments across the city. He noted challenges with inflation but explained that there continued to be high demand for housing and employment space in Manchester.

Decision:

That

1. the report be noted;
2. the Committee asks officers to undertake a benchmarking exercise with other core cities to understand what they collect Section 106 monies for; and
3. delegated authority be given to the Chair, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Development and the Strategic Director (Growth and Development), to request a report should progress be made on the proposed planning reforms.

RGSC/23/54 Overview Report

The committee received a report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which provided details of key decisions that fell within the Committee's remit and items for information previously requested by the Committee. The report also included the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to amend as appropriate and agree.

The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer advised that the Autumn Statement would be announced on 23 November 2023 and that this item would need to be deferred to December's meeting as a result.

Decision:

That the report be noted and the work programme agreed, with the amendment to the Autumn Statement report as noted above.

Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 9 November 2023

Present:

Councillor Simcock (Chair) – in the Chair

Councillors Andrews, Brickell, Connolly, Evans, Kilpatrick, Kirkpatrick, Lanchbury and Stogia

Also present:

Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Finance and Resources

Councillor Moran, Deputy Executive Member for Finance and Resources

Apologies: Councillors Davies and Wheeler

RGSC/23/61 Minutes

Decision:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2023 be approved as a correct record.

RGSC/23/62 Update on New Procurement Regulations

The committee considered a report of the Head of Integrated Commissioning and Procurement which provided an update on new procurement regulations and advised the committee of the implications for the Council's future procurement activity.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background to the Procurement Bill 2022;
- Details of changes to procurement processes; supplier exclusion; resolving disputes over tenders; and social value;
- The likely impact of these changes;
- Opportunities for contracting authorities under the new regulations;
- New regulations on transparency and publication of data relating to procurement, including the implementation of a Transparency Platform;
- The establishment of the Procurement Review Unit and its purposes;
- Regulations for the Provider Selection Regime, which would come into effect on 1 January 2024; and
- Training on the new regulations.

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

- Whether the new regulations would make the procurement process more difficult;
- If the Procurement team were working with IT to ensure the correct systems were in place;
- Whether there would be any delay to the Council implementing the new regulations as a result of the establishment of central government's new Procurement Review Unit;
- If the new regulations would help to enable the Council to use local suppliers;
- The solution for the Council, given the national delay in implementing the National Procurement Policy Statement due to technical legal issues;
- The impact on resources arising from the new requirement to publish notices throughout the procurement lifecycle;
- Whether suppliers could be excluded at shortlisting stage;
- How value-for-money would be considered in the procurement process as a result of the new regulations;
- What kind of contracts would be subject to the 'light-touch approach' and why the government did not want to retain this;
- The grounds on which a supplier could legitimately challenge a contract award; and
- What information had been provided by the Cabinet Office on sharing best practice.

In introducing the item, the Head of Integrated Commissioning and Procurement emphasised the opportunities for the Council that arose from the new procurement regulations, such as taking a more commercial approach and increased transparency. He informed the committee that the new regulations would come into effect in 11 months and that communication and training would be undertaken during this period. He also advised that the Procurement service was fully staffed following recent recruitment.

The committee was advised that the Council had previously engaged with local suppliers to the greatest possible extent and that the new regulations did not reference dividing contracts into lots. The new regulations would allow the Council to take local priorities into greater account when awarding contracts, although the detail on this remained unclear. The Head of Integrated Commissioning and Procurement also advised that the Local Government Act 1988 which stipulated that local authorities could not take non-commercial matters into consideration when awarding contracts, would be reworded to allow greater freedom.

In response to a query from the Chair, the Head of Integrated Commissioning and Procurement stated that the previous regulations were considered difficult and cumbersome and that the new regulations were less prescriptive and allowed authorities greater freedom. He noted that the Council could continue to take similar approaches to contracts as done previously. It was also stated that one aspect of the regulations remained unclear because the details of the regulations would be

released over time but there was mention of the Council being able to take local priorities into greater consideration when awarding contracts.

The committee was advised that the Council had previously engaged with local suppliers to the greatest possible extent and that the new regulations did not reference dividing contracts into lots. The new regulations would allow the Council to take local priorities into greater account when awarding contracts, although the detail on this remained unclear. The Head of Integrated Commissioning and Procurement also advised that the Local Government Act 1988 which stipulated that local authorities could not take non-commercial matters into consideration when awarding contracts, would be reworded to allow greater freedom.

Regarding central government's new Procurement Review Unit, members were informed that this was an enhancement of the current Public Procurement Review Service and would have significantly greater powers. The effect on this for the Council was expected to be miniscule, although the Head of Integrated Commissioning and Procurement noted that the Unit may be busy from the outset given that publicity of the new regulations was resulting in many SMEs and companies anticipating more contracts from local authorities at a time when local authorities will have tighter budgets.

In response to a query regarding the technical legal issues relating to the National Procurement Policy Statement, the Head of Integrated Commissioning and Procurement explained that it was proposed to amend wording within the new regulations to allow contract awards to be restricted in certain circumstances to companies within a county or London borough boundary. It was noted that some contracts, such as those with the NHS, could overlap county boundaries and the technicalities of this were still being agreed.

The Head of Integrated Commissioning and Procurement confirmed that there would be an implication on resourcing as a result of the new requirement to publish notices throughout the procurement lifecycle but reiterated that there had been significant investment into improving contract management and a tool which would flag expiry dates of contracts. The Commissioning Lead explained that the Council was already required to publish summary details of contracts over a value of £30k on a government website, to which the Council's procurement portal linked directly, and monthly spend over £500. The new regulations would require publication of performance monitoring for contracts worth over £5m.

The committee was advised that the Council worked closely with the Cabinet Office through the Local Government Association (LGA) and that the Head of Integrated Commissioning and Procurement chaired the LGA's national advisory group for procurement, which had discussed how sharing best practice would work in reality. Details of approaches to procuring various categories of spend had been provided by the government's commercial function and the Procurement Review Unit would

work with the Crown Commercial Services, which provides frameworks for local authorities.

In response to a query regarding value-for-money, it was stated that previous practice had favoured the most economically advantageous tender, but the new regulations had revised this to the most advantageous tender, which would encompass price, quality, contribution to local economy and contribution to climate change targets. The Deputy City Treasurer stated that value-for-money remained paramount in the Council's activity.

It was noted that the current regulations lend to a drawn-out process for suppliers who may be unhappy with the outcome of a contract award, but the new regulations would enable a more straightforward process to resolve disputes and a body would be established, linked to the Procurement Review Unit, to adjudicate such disputes.

The Commissioning Lead explained that the 'light-touch regime' principally applied to social care services and previously applied to healthcare services, although these were now subject to a different regime. He stated that the new competitive procedure applied a light-touch approach to most contracts and provided greater flexibility, which was retained under the new regulations. He further explained that the new competitive procedure was designed to emulate the 'light-touch regime' but a number of authorities, including the Council, advocated for an explicit regime for social care services. Members were informed that the Procurement Bill went further than the new regulations to ensure that there were strong grounds to not require competing tenders, such as in individual contracts where the service user's choice was taken into account and allowed the Council to make individual judgements on care packages.

The Deputy City Treasurer welcomed the Procurement Act and reiterated that the Council's procurement team was nearly fully staffed and had received requisite funding for a new contract management system, which would help with the implementation of the new regulations.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources also welcomed the new regulations and recognised that this would simplify the procurement process, improve transparency, and could provide a pathway for new businesses and local companies to secure public contracts. He stated that the development of the new regulations demonstrated the improvements for residents that could occur when the government listened to local authorities.

Decision: That the report be noted.

RGSC/23/63

Social Value

The committee considered a report of the Head of Integrated Commissioning and Procurement which provided an update on the social value delivery of the Council and its wider partnerships.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- The work of the Social Value Governance Board;
- The introduction of a Social Value Co-ordinator role on a 2-year fixed-term contract;
- Updates on social value within contracts, including major contracts;
- Measurement of social value;
- Training and guidance;
- A refresh of procurement documentation, including Invitation to Tender documents;
- The Social Value Fund and projects which have benefited from this;
- Case studies from suppliers; and
- The work of the National Social Value Task Force.

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

- Welcoming the comprehensive appendices;
- How local members could work with their Neighbourhood teams to suggest projects that may benefit from social value;
- What the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and monitoring process would be for the social value road map at appendix 4;
- If there was a link between the new procurement regulations and social value;
- Who was responsible for monitoring social value;
- How the success of social value delivery was communicated with residents, with particular reference to the Our Town Hall project;
- How members could get more social value embedded within their wards;

The Deputy Executive Member for Finance and Resources introduced the item and thanked the committee for their continued interest in the Council's social value work. She stated that the Council was continuing to lead on and deliver a wide range of social value and Manchester had the highest social value and zero carbon weightings in procurement than any other local authority in the country.

The Chair relayed a written representation from Councillor Reid to the committee, which commended the social value work undertaken by Morgan Sindall which was contracted for the development of Gorton Hub and Hammerstone Road. Councillor Reid stated that Morgan Sindall recruited local people to apprentices and placed great emphasis on mental health support for their employees. Local community groups had also been assisted in their projects by volunteers from Morgan Sindall.

In response to queries, the Commissioning Lead noted that further work was needed to identify local members' roles in identifying areas for social value work and this

could be undertaken by the Social Value Governance Board. He explained that the brokerage workstream of the Social Value Governance Board Task and Finish Group tried to identify how the Council could connect opportunities with local need. This would be progressed with the Social Value Governance Board and the Head of Integrated Commissioning and Procurement advised that there had been discussion on how to link this with Neighbourhood Investment Funds.

The Commissioning Lead acknowledged that measurement of social value was a challenge for many authorities and partners and the Council was currently part of a Co-operative Councils' network which looked at social value measurement. This was a challenge because there were several measurement frameworks available, such as Themes, Outcomes, Measures (TOMS) although it was noted that this framework was difficult to use when measuring social value delivered by voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) groups. He stated that there had been significant work undertaken in the last year to identify a more consistent measurement of social value and KPIs had been developed.

In response to a query regarding a link between the new procurement regulations and social value, the Head of Integrated Commissioning and Procurement stated that there was no reference to social value in the new regulations but that the Procurement Act supported social value delivery through the amendment to award contracts to the most advantageous tender.

The committee was advised that there was an internal resource or a social value portal which were responsible for monitoring the social value delivery of major projects through the collection and verification of data and this was something that officers wanted to embed into the management of all contracts. The Commissioning Lead also advised that a Social Value Co-ordinator had been recruited and would begin work in January 2024. This role was established following the success of a dedicated resource on other projects and would be responsible for liaising with teams across the Council to promote opportunities for social value and collate information on delivery.

The Commissioning Lead explained that Social Value Governance Board Task and Finish Group was seeking to improve communication on social value work and the Council's Communications team and wider corporate services, such as HROD, were involved in promoting this. The Head of Integrated Commissioning stated that the Council previously held annual social value event, but it was felt that this only reached those involved in social value work already and officers wanted to identify better methods of communication.

It was also noted that different industries were in different places with their social value work, for example the highways and construction sectors who had been delivering social value for a number of years.

The Deputy Executive Member for Finance and Resources thanked officers for their work and recognised the role of members in being best placed to identify areas in their communities that could benefit from social value. She reiterated that the Council was a leader on social value work and acknowledged that it was sometimes easier to communicate social value work on the Our Town Hall project than it was for highways projects but this was an area of consideration going forwards with a communications plan in development.

Decision:

That the committee

1. notes the report, and
2. requests that the next Social Value Update report includes further information on how social value work is communicated.

**RGSC/23/64 Revenue Budget Update and Corporate Core Budget
Proposals 2024/25**

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

Key points and themes within the report included:

- An estimated budget shortfall of £46m was expected in 2024/25, £86m in 2025/26, and £105m by 2026/27;
- This gap would reduce to £1.6m in 2024/25, £30m in 2025/26 and £49m by 2026/27 after the application of approved and planned savings and the use of c£17m smoothing reserves in each of the three years;
- Changes to the Medium-Term Financial Plan;
- The resources available to the Council and those required;
- Additional directorate pressures;
- The planned public consultation on proposed council tax levels and savings and cuts measures;
- Next steps for the budget process;
- An overview of the service area and priorities of the Corporate Core directorate, including the base budgets for each service area for 2023/24;
- The savings plan for 2024-27 and further options for saving;
- Workforce implications, including a review of vacant posts, particularly those vacant for longer than 12 months, to determine which should be deleted with the least impact on service delivery;
- Additional funding of £1m had been allocated to offset the lower rental income that can be realised due to the Christmas Markets using a smaller footprint as a result of the temporary closure of Albert Square. This funding will then be

used to meet some of the increased operating costs of running the civic estate once the Town Hall is reopened;

- Government grants and the income they provide;
- Future opportunities and risks;
- The indicative medium-term budgets by service area; and
- The indicative medium-term budgets by type of spend/income.

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

- Recommending residents read the Leader's letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer prior to completing the Council's budget consultation;
- Noting that high inflation was costing the Council £21m per year, which was not recognised by the government;
- Expressing frustration at the lateness with which the Local Government Finance Settlement was provided;
- How many grants the Council was currently in receipt of, and how this compared to previous years;
- Why the costs for IT to move to a hybrid cloud solution were revenue and not capital spend;
- Why the year-on-year spend for cloud-based services increased and if there were any potential savings as a result of moving to a hybrid cloud solution;
- What work was underway to reduce the need for agency staff within the IT service;
- How eligible families were identified for the Household Support Fund 4 (HSF4) and how the Council could continue to provide such support if the government cut this funding in the future;
- How the Finance Settlement might affect the Greater Manchester Business Rates Retention pilot scheme;
- The staff pay award;
- Whether the government may offer inflationary assistance in order for the Council to maintain service delivery;
- Suggesting that the public consultation on the budget should reference where the Council had successfully made savings previously;
- Noting that most savings would be the result of deleting vacant posts, and querying at what point long-term vacant posts were identified for deletion; and
- Commending the work of officers and expressing concern over the growing funding gap in future years.

In introducing the item, the Executive Member for Finance and Resources stated that there had been warnings of budgetary pressures amongst local authorities since 2012 and the LGA had recently found that English councils were facing a shortfall of £4bn in the next financial year. He stated that Manchester was a well-managed council, despite having lost £443m of its overall budget since 2012, and that difficult financial decisions had been made at the appropriate time and smoothing reserves had been used prudently. He argued that the government did not value or recognise the work and services of local authorities and that budget cuts were driven by

ideology which meant that councils like Manchester with higher levels of deprivation were more significantly impacted.

The Executive Member for Finance and Resources also advised the committee that the government's Autumn Statement would be provided on 22 November and the Leader of the Council had written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to call on him to provide adequate funding for councils like Manchester and to end the practice of issuing Local Government Finance Settlements at the last minute, which did not provide any certainty or ability to plan for the future.

The Deputy City Treasurer explained that the challenges highlighted by the Executive Member had been compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic and rising inflation rates. He reminded members that a balanced budget for 2024/25 had been set as part of the 2023/24 budget process and this was based on the Council delivering £36m of savings and using £53m of reserves to ease pressure on frontline services. He advised that there was now a gap of £1.6m in this balanced budget and that a £49m gap was emerging by the 2026/27 financial year. He also advised that the proposals in the report aimed to protect investments made previously into street cleaning, neighbourhoods and cost-of-living support.

The Deputy City Treasurer advised that the Council was in receipt of around 200 grants and most of these were only guaranteed for the following year, which he stated made spending decisions and planning difficult. He also advised that there were overheads involved with receiving some of these grants, such as time and resource required to prepare and submit bids.

In response to queries regarding the budget for a hybrid cloud solution, the committee was informed that the Capital Programme was fairly mature and underpinned by significant borrowing, for which the Council had the budget to fund. He noted, however, that the capacity for borrowing was restricted due to high inflation rates. He explained that there was a drive to decrease the amount of on-premise IT hardware and to buy software services instead.

The Director of ICT explained that agency staff had been recruited where there was additional demand and there was work underway to review the target operating model for IT. This would seek to identify continued demand and how this could be met by recruiting more permanent staff. He noted that contract resources were occasionally needed to provide specific skills for which the Council did not require on a long-term basis.

In response to a question regarding HSF4, the Deputy City Treasurer explained that this amounted to around £13m of funding per year and an allocation policy for this had been designed as part of the 2023/24 budget process. Around half of this funding was spent on administering Free School Meals and the Holiday Activities programme. There were also a number of targeted schemes such as food support. He stated that the Council had a package of cost-of-living support measures which

would be retained, although some of this budget would be used to fund the increase in the Council Tax Support Scheme discount and he recognised that it would be challenging if the HSF4 scheme was to end. The Head of Finance explained that there was a criterion of residents who would be supported through HSF4, including disabled households and the elderly, and that work was ongoing to review the Council's support packages with a report to this committee in January 2024 which would set out the future model of support.

The Deputy City Treasurer explained that the GM Business Rates Retention Pilot scheme would continue for 10 years as part of the Devolution Trailblazer and that this had been factored into the Medium-Term Financial Plan. He advised that the Council tended to be compensated for any business rates relief schemes and that there was an ongoing government consultation on proposed changes to the indexation rate.

It was also confirmed that this year's staff pay award had been agreed and would be a flat fee increase of £1,925 again. There were indications that future pay awards may revert to previous practice of a 2.2% increase, but the Council had prudently budgeted for a 4% increase.

In response to a member's question, the Deputy City Treasurer stated that he did not anticipate the government providing financial help for rising inflation costs. He also stated that officers were proposing to begin work on the 2025/26 budget soon after this year's budget had been approved.

Regarding the proposed deletion of vacant posts, the Deputy City Treasurer explained that a lot of work was underway on this. He acknowledged difficulties in recruiting to certain posts and stated that part of this work included challenging service areas on the need to keep posts that had been vacant for more than 12 months. He noted the need to approach this sensitively and confirmed that more detail on this would be provided in February 2024. A member also suggested that this information should be broken down into service areas for greater clarity.

In closing the item, the Executive Member for Finance and Resources commended officers for their dedicated work and reinforced the importance of a sustainable budget for residents.

Decision:

That

1. the report be noted, and
2. the committee requests that information on vacant posts which could be deleted be broken down into service area in the next Budget report.

The committee received a report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which provided details of key decisions that fell within the Committee's remit and items for information previously requested by the Committee. The report also included the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to amend as appropriate and agree.

A member noted the responses to recommendations made at the previous meeting and wished to place on record her thanks to officers in HROD for this.

Decision:

That the report be noted and the work programme agreed.

Environment, Climate Change and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2023

Present:

Councillor Shilton Godwin – in the Chair
Councillors Collins, Holt, McCaul, Razaq, Wiest and Wright

Apologies: None received

Also present:

Councillor Rawlins, Executive Member for Environment and Transport
Councillor Igbon, Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods
Councillor Ahmed Ali, Deputy Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods
Samantha Nicholson, Director of Manchester Climate Change Agency

ECCNSC/23/50 Minutes

In moving the minutes, the Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling & Street Cleansing Team stated that a response to the written questions that were submitted after the previous meeting that related to ref. 'ECCNSC/23/46 Street Cleansing Programme and Campaigns Update' would be provided to the Member.

Decision

To approve the minutes of the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 7 September 2023 as a correct record.

ECCNSC/23/51 Manchester Climate Change Partnership and Agency – Impact Report 2022-23

The Committee considered the report of Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency that presented the Impact Report that provided a concise overview of the activities delivered by the Partnership and Agency in support of the city's climate targets and objectives, as set out in the Manchester Climate Change Framework (2020-25) and its 2022 Update.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- Describing the purpose and structure of the Manchester Climate Change Partnership (MCCP) and Manchester Climate Change Agency (MCCA) Impact Report;
- Providing an overview of the Manchester Climate Change Partnership;
- An overview of key activities of the Partnership;
- Providing an overview of the Manchester Climate Change Agency; and
- An overview of key activities of the Agency.

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

- Welcoming the report and the clarification provided regarding the structure and role of the Agency and the Partnership;
- Recognising the progress made to date and welcoming the case studies provided;
- Welcoming that Manchester as a city had secured an A list rating from CDP, noting that to earn an A score from CDP, organisations must have shown environmental leadership, disclosing action on climate change, deforestation or water security;
- Noting recent national government announcements in relation to actions to address climate change and the negative impact this could have on the ambitions to reduce emissions;
- Would the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Trailblazer arrangements provide any additional powers or levers of influence to address climate change;
- Membership of the Partnership should not provide an opportunity for organisations to 'greenwash', and how were members of the Partnership monitored (Greenwashing was when an organisation spends more time and money on marketing itself as environmentally friendly than on actually minimising its environmental impact.);
- Was carbon offsetting accepted as an action by Partners (Carbon offset was a way to compensate for your emissions by funding an equivalent carbon dioxide saving elsewhere.);
- Consideration needed to be given to formally collating feedback from Partners, suggesting a stakeholder survey;
- The Partnership should engage with local Muslim communities and organisations, noting that Quranic teachings called for the protection of the planet;
- Noting that the scale of retrofitting of domestic and commercial properties required was a significant challenge for the city and was there a City Challenge on this specific activity;
- Noting the importance of green skills and training to facilitate and deliver retrofitting at scale;
- Welcoming the Manchester Climate Change Youth Board and supporting the launch of their manifesto and endorsing their priorities; and
- Consideration needed to be given as to how the Manchester Climate Change Youth Board could be brought together with local decision makers.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency welcomed the comments and feedback from the Committee in relation to the clarity that was provided, and she paid tribute to her team for their work. She said that the report would provide a useful document to promote and articulate the work of the Partnership and to encourage new members. She encouraged all Councillors to promote this through their networks.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency stated that she shared the Committee's concerns regarding recent national announcements in relation to activities to tackle climate change, adding that despite this the work of the Partnership would continue and actions would be taken locally, making reference to the development of the Local Plan and the In Our Nature programme as examples. She advised that support was offered to organisation across the Partnership, making reference to the City Challenges groups, peer to peer learning, advisory groups and

networking. She added that work was underway to consider opportunities to unlock additional investment from the private sector as it was recognised that this was key to delivering activities at the scale required.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency said that Manchester City Council was a key partner of the Partnership and continued to demonstrate and provide clear leadership on the issue of climate change and this was demonstrable through the progress made against the Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency stated that the zero carbon by 2038 ambition was shared across the Greater Manchester Combined Authority. She added that the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Trailblazer would provide an opportunity to unlock additional investment to drive this programme of activity. She described that the details of this would be worked through, and the related plans would emerge over the next two years.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency welcomed the positive comments regarding the inclusion of case studies and stated that this were a small fraction of the wide range of activities undertaken across the Partnership. She addressed the issue of 'greenwashing' by commenting that the Partnership was alive to this issue and there were conditions to organisations joining and they had to commit to actions and to work collaboratively. In terms of monitoring and meaningful reporting, she stated that this was challenging and accepted this would be difficult due to different data sets used by different organisations and acknowledging that some organisations were local, whilst others were international, and it would be difficult to disaggregate the Manchester 'slice' from their activities.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency welcomed the comment from the Member regarding engaging with Muslim groups and organisations and that she would follow this up with the Member directly outside of the meeting. She made reference to the Our Faith Our Planet Network, an inter-faith network based in Manchester that focused on climate change action through engagement and education. The group were committed to creating a green, healthy and inclusive city that contributed to the Manchester Climate Change Strategy. Further she referenced the In Our Nature Project that had engaged with a range of different community groups across the city.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency addressed the issue raised relating to carbon offsetting by acknowledging this was a challenge. She said that the Partnership aimed to be inclusive and recognised that some organisations may choose to use this as a supplementary action to reduce their emissions. She added that it was understood that the Manchester could not achieve its targets and stated ambition by solely using carbon offsetting.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency acknowledged the scale of domestic retrofitting required was a challenge. She described that funding was available to Registered Providers to deliver this work and referred to the Your Home Better scheme, an independent service delivered by retrofit experts, providing advice, planning and delivery to help reduce the costs of bills as well as carbon emissions associated with home energy and heating. In addition, she said that the Bee Net Zero

partnership offered advice and support to businesses to go green. The Bee Net Zero partnership united a range of organisations and support programmes from across Greater Manchester who were committed to making the transition as straightforward and cost-efficient as possible for businesses.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency commented that the Manchester Climate Change Youth Board consisted of people aged between 16 to 28 years of age and the ambition was to strengthen the links between the Board and local decision makers. She stated that the Partnership would continue to support the Board, including by developing and strengthening governance arrangements and support with grant funding applications to deliver projects.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport stated that she would engage with the Manchester Climate Change Youth Board to discuss how they would wish to connect with decision makers in the Council and she would facilitate the progress of this as an action. She further stated that it was everyone's responsibility to take action to tackle the climate emergency. She reiterated the request for all Councillors to promote the work of the Partnership across their networks and she concluded by thanking the Committee for their continued support and challenge.

The Chair informed the Committee that Manchester's 2023 Emissions Report from the Manchester Climate Change Partnership and Agency would be submitted for consideration at the November meeting and the Work Programme would be updated to reflect this additional item.

Decision

1. The Committee welcome the continued commitment for the city to reduce its carbon emissions in line with the agreed carbon budget and for Manchester city and the wider Greater Manchester city region to become zero-carbon by 2038.
2. Endorsing the statement from the Executive Member for Environment and Transport who agreed to engage with the Manchester Climate Change Youth Board to discuss how they would wish to connect with decision makers in the Council.

ECCNSC/23/52 Manchester City Council Climate Change Action Plan – Quarter 2 Update report

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that provided an update and overview of progress made in delivering the Council's refreshed CCAP during Quarter 2 2023-24 (July – September 2023).

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background, noting that all activity described related to the period in which the report was issued, in this instance July to September 2023;
- An update on CO₂ emissions, noting that emissions data related to the previous quarter due to billing and data monitoring being quarterly in arrears (i.e., April to June 2023);

- Key messages and achievements from Quarter 2, including the completion of the first tranche of new low carbon social housing in Newton Heath, the promotion of Plastic Free July and the Council co-hosting a Youth Sustainability Conference; and
- Informing that the Quarter 2 progress report would be published in an accessible format on the Council's website.

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

- The Committee criticised the lack of leadership from the government on the issue of climate change and called for the continued lobbying of government on this important issue;
- Noting the issues reported regarding the decarbonisation of the national grid, the Committee noted that a report on 'Power Purchase Agreement to Decarbonise the Energy Supply' was scheduled to be considered at the December meeting;
- Discussion of behaviour change and measurable KPIs, the Committee noted that a report on 'Neighbourhood Teams Engagement with Residents' was listed for consideration at the December meeting; and
- Noting that emissions from Streetlights had risen by 5% during Q1 2023-24 due to a change in National Government's emission conversion factors.

The Strategic Lead, Resources and Programmes said that lobbying of Government, the Shadow Secretary of State and the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero on the important issue of support to tackle climate change was undertaken by officers via the Core Cities Network.

The Zero Carbon Manager acknowledged the risk and challenge to the Council's ambitions presented by the national grid, noting the increased use of natural gas in the production of electricity had increased the carbon intensity of the national electricity system by 7%. She commented that despite national challenges the Council continued to be innovative and remained committed to taking actions to reducing its own emissions across a range of activities and initiatives.

In response to a question from a Member, the Zero Carbon Manager stated that the section that read '*Outlined in the new Manchester Housing Strategy is a commitment for the Housing Providers to retrofit a third of their total housing stock by 2023*' should be 2032 and this would be corrected.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCNSC/23/53 Waste and Recycling Update

The Committee considered the report of Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) that provided an update on progress in delivering waste, recycling, and fly-tip removal.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background, noting that waste disposal and recycling arrangements for Manchester and other Greater Manchester Authorities (except. Wigan) are managed by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the operating contract for the disposal and recycling facilities, together with Household Waste Recycling Centre's (HWRCs) was delivered by Suez;
- Noting the Councils service provider Biffa were responsible for providing scheduled domestic waste and recycling bin collections; and reactive / pro-active (passageways and known hotspots) fly-tip removal services for defined land types;
- Describing how the activity contributed to the climate change agenda;
- Information on relevant national strategies;
- Performance data across a range of activity types;
- Information on the waste collection contract;
- Information on passageway collections and cleansing;
- Flytipping and the work to address this, including target hardening projects;
- Updates on commercial waste; flats above shops and Christmas collection arrangements; and
- Providing case studies across a range of activities described.

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

- Recycling opportunities needed to be promoted and encouraged in apartment blocks, especially the ability to recycle food waste;
- Was there any update since the report had been written regarding national policy, noting that The Waste Strategy (2018) had been subject to several delays;
- More information was sought on Keep Britain Tidy (KBT) and Keep Manchester Tidy (KMT) campaigns;
- Discussing the incidents of flytipping in Manchester and the comparative data provided against other local authorities;
- Noting that flytipping on non-council owned or no public-land was not removed in a timely manner;
- The experience of reporting flytipping and frustrations experienced.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling & Street Cleansing Team stated that there had been no further updates since the report had been produced in relation to national policy and they continued to lobby the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) for updates, and that she shared the Committee's frustrations. She said that despite this Manchester and Greater Manchester were actively working to eliminate avoidable waste before the 2050 target presented in the Defra Waste Prevention Programme. She further commented that the work of KBT and KMT had been reported to the previous meeting, with officers in attendance. She stated that they were seeking to progress the request to establish a regular update to all members on their activities.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling & Street Cleansing Team address the discussion on the flytipping statistics that were presented in the report. She said that there had been a spike in incidents post covid, however incidents of flytipping were still unacceptably high. In response to the comparative data provided she said that it

was difficult to draw conclusions from this data as there was inconsistency across the authorities in how they collated their data. She advised that work was ongoing across Greater Manchester to consider this.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling & Street Cleansing Team said that teams would continue to work with landowners to ensure that flytipping was removed as they had a responsibility to remove waste, however ultimately cases could be referred for enforcement action to have it appropriately removed and disposed of. In response to a specific question, she said that when flytipping was removed but it had not been formally reported as a request for service this would not be included in the data.

The Strategic Lead, Waste, Recycling & Street Cleansing Team commented the questions asked by a Member relating to the recycling of litter picked waste would be addressed in a written response to be provided following his written submissions after the previous meeting.

The Project Officer, Waste, Recycling & Street Cleansing Team said that they would continue to work with building managers when requested to facilitate and support recycling in their buildings on behalf of the residents, particularly in regard to food waste and textiles. He said the service would continue to promote this offer with building managers. He advised that there was no legal requirement for buildings to provide food waste recycling facilities.

The Project Officer, Waste, Recycling & Street Cleansing Team acknowledged the comment from Members regarding the frustrations expressed in their attempts to report incidents of flytipping using the Councils CRM (Customer relationship management) system. He commented that the introduction of a new RDXP system should resolve the issues articulated.

The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods said that delays in the governments Waste Strategy (2018) was very frustrating, however Manchester had taken the decision to invest additional resources to address flytipping and develop initiatives to work with and support communities to tackle flytipping. She further paid tribute to the many volunteers across the city who were working to ensure Manchester was a clean and greener city. She called for all businesses and landowners to support this ambition.

The Chair in concluding this item of business welcomed the recycling data that had been provided and the information relating to the arrangements over the Christmas period.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCNSC/23/54 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 (SUPs) as part of the action under Workstream 3 of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2020-25.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing a background to this work;
- updates on actions taken by the Council to deliver its pledge to eradicate the use of avoidable Single Use Plastics by the end of 2024;
- Information on the national ban on SUPs introduced by Government; and
- Providing an update on the communications and engagement work undertaken to reduce SUPs use within the Council and with businesses and residents across the city.

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

- Who had determined what was classed as avoidable or unavoidable plastic and was there a comprehensive list of what fell into which category;
- Welcoming the joint work on this issue across Greater Manchester;
- Lamenting the plans to deliver a circular economy had been rolled back by the government;
- Welcoming the Refill campaign and called for an increase in the number of Refill points to be delivered in public spaces;
- What monitoring was undertaken to ensure that all MCC Markets and Parks meet the Council's Single Use Plastic Free Pledge; and
- Would there be monitoring of business occupying units in the Wythenshawe Civic Centre to ensure that they were complying with the action to reducing single use plastics from across the Council's operational estates.

The Sustainability Project Manager stated that a report on how this work had been developed was reported to the Committee at the meeting of 8 December 2022 and she made reference to the Council working group that had contributed to the Council's SUPs Action Plan. She stated that a SUP Action Plan that was described within the report would be agreed by the SUP Working Group, and then passed for wider approval later this year.

The Sustainability Project Manager advised that the GM SUP group met quarterly and was an opportunity to share good practice and learning, share resources and explore opportunities to access additional funding. She stated that opportunities would also be explored to link with other core cities on this issue, however Manchester was leading on this issue.

The Sustainability Project Manager said that she would provide information following the meeting regarding the approach adopted by the Market Teams to ensure appropriate monitoring was undertaken to of MCC Markets and Parks, so they met the Council's Single Use Plastic Free Pledge. She added that the Christmas Market was monitored by the Specialist Markets Team.

The Sustainability Project Manager said that the ambition was to work with different landowners to explore all options to extend the refill scheme and all options for

maximising opportunities would be considered by the established Task and Finish Group, however currently they had to work within the existing infrastructure. She advised that a trial had been conducted in Bury and this was subject to evaluation.

The Sustainability Project Manager stated that she would need to take away the specific request regarding arrangements for Wythenshawe Civic Centre however added that Licensing and Trading Standards would be working with businesses on this issue, adding the Councils Licensing Policy would have specific reference to SUP.

The Head of Integrated Commissioning and Procurement informed the Committee that meaningful data on Scope 3 emissions for suppliers should be available next year.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport said the Council had invested in additional resources to drive this work to support the Council's commitment to reducing emissions.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCNSC/23/55 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 noted that under consideration of a previous agenda item it had been agreed to consider the Manchester's 2023 Emissions Report from the Manchester Climate Change Partnership and Agency at the November meeting.

Decision

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

Environment, Climate Change and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2023

Present:

Councillor Shilton Godwin – in the Chair
Councillors Chohan, Collins, Ilyas, McCaul, Wiest and Wright

Apologies: Councillor Holt

Also present:

Councillor Rawlins, Executive Member for Environment and Transport
Councillor Foley, Deputy Executive Member for Environment and Transport
Councillor White, Executive Member for Housing and Development
Samantha Nicholson, Director of Manchester Climate Change Agency
Peter Boulton, Head of Highways, Control & Operational Support, TfGM

ECCNSC/23/56 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 12 October 2023 as a correct record.

ECCNSC/23/57 Revenue Budget Update 2024/25

The Committee considered the report of Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that described that the Council was forecasting an estimated budget shortfall of £46m in 2024/25, £86m in 2025/26, and £105m by 2026/27. After the application of approved and planned savings, and the use of c£17m smoothing reserves in each of the three years, this gap reduced to £1.6m in 2024/25, £30m in 2025/26 and £49m by 2026/27. This position assumed that the savings approved as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy in February 2023 of £36.2m over three years were delivered.

This report provided a high-level overview of the updated budget position. Each scrutiny committee was invited to consider the current proposed changes which were within its remit and to make recommendations to the Executive before it agreed to the final budget proposals in February 2024.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Updates on the refreshed position including progress in reaching a balanced budget, reflecting preliminary savings and investment options;
- The government was expected to announce the Autumn Statement on 22 November 2023, but no major changes were expected;
- Government funding for 2024/25 would be confirmed in the provisional finance settlement, expected late in December 2023;
- The accompanying report set out the priorities and officer proposals for the services within the remit of this committee. This included a reminder of the

savings proposals identified as part of last year's budget setting process (£36.2m across three years) and additional savings for consideration (£2.5m from 2024/25). As far as possible these were aimed at protecting the delivery of council priorities and represented the least detrimental options; and

- There remained a forecast shortfall of £1.6m next year. Any further reduction to the underspend this year would reduce the need to top back up General Fund reserve in 2024/25 and help bridge this shortfall. In addition, the Collection Fund position would be finalised in January and the final levy amounts from GMCA confirmed.

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

- That compared to other local authorities, Manchester was a financially well managed authority; and
- To pay tribute to the significant work undertaken by all Executive Members and the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer and her team.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCNSC/23/58 Neighbourhoods Directorate Budget 2024/25

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhood Services) that set out a service overview and key priorities including an update on the Climate Action Plan, along with the latest draft budgets for the services within the remit of this scrutiny committee.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Noting that as part of the 2023/24 budget process, savings were identified over a three-year period and it was intended that the 2024/25 budget would be light touch and no further savings would be required;
- In light of the current financial year's pressures and ongoing high inflation rates it had been necessary to revisit the initial assumptions and identify further savings options for consideration;
- As part of identifying further savings options the initial priority had been to protect service delivery wherever possible, and this had included looking to increase income generation opportunities where possible; and
- The proposed savings from services within the remit of this scrutiny committee were summarised and set out in more detail in Appendix 1.

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

- With regard to staff retention, what was being done to retain technical knowledge amongst staff;
- Expressing caution at introducing a charge for replacement bins, commenting that this could result in increased incidents of flytipping and decreased propensity to recycle that would be undesirable and would result in increased costs

- Any proposals for charges for replacement bins needed to be subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment;
- More information was sought on proposals for income generation from parks and green spaces; and
- What data informed the reported Growth and Pressures 2024-27 at section 3.8 of the report.

The Strategic Director (Neighbourhood Services) advised the Committee that the Council maintained a register of all contracts, and these were RAG rated and monitored. He stated that within this list there were 'Gold' contracts that warranted additional monitoring, and this included the Biffa waste contract. The report described that a new Contract Management System was expected to go live during the current financial year. Once operational, this would provide Directorates with consistent contract performance information to support contract managers to ensure that contracts delivered against expectations and opportunities for improvement could be identified and realised more easily.

In regard to staff retention, the Strategic Director (Neighbourhood Services) commented that this had always been an issue, and to address this the Council had striven to be an attractive employer by offering good terms and conditions, training and development opportunities for staff and providing career progression.

The Strategic Director (Neighbourhood Services) stated that the issue of charges for replacement bins had been debated at length in the previous round of budget setting discussions and that additional resources had been specifically allocated to address flytipping. He further explained the rationale regarding the statement provided in the report at section 6.1, however he was mindful of the comments raised by the Committee regarding Equality Impact Assessments and said that if these proposals were to be considered in the February round of budget discussions, following the Financial Settlement, further consideration would be given to the Equality Impact Assessment.

The Strategic Director (Neighbourhood Services) said that the Growth and Pressures analysis as described in the report was based upon a range of data sets available to the Council, including projected population growth data and footfall data in the city centre.

In regard to parks and income generation, the Strategic Director (Neighbourhood Services) said that there had been significant investment in parks to reduce ongoing costs and to generate commercial returns.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport stated that the funding cuts and nature of the budget allocations made it very difficult to plan long term and deliver the ambitions the Council had for the city. She stated that she endorsed the ask of the Leader in her recent letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer ahead of the Autumn Statement.

The Chair noted that compliance and enforcement budget information had been omitted from this report and requested that this be included in the report submitted to the February meeting.

Decision

The Committee recommend that if the proposal to charge for replacement bins were to be considered in the February round of budget proposals following the provisional financial settlement, expected late in December 2023, that a full analysis of the impact of this should be undertaken.

ECCNSC/23/59 Manchester's Emissions Report

The Committee considered the report of Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency that provided a summary of Manchester's Emissions Report, which was due to be published by Manchester Climate Change Agency in November. It covered the city's direct, energy-related emissions in 2021, plus an estimate for 2022, and was based on the latest data released by the UK Government's Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ).

Key points and themes in the report included:

- The Emissions Report enabled Manchester to track its progress against the carbon reduction targets, carbon budget and zero carbon date of 2038 that were set out in the city's Climate Change Framework (2020-25), and its 2022 Update;
- The report showed that, in 2021, Manchester had the second lowest per capita emissions among Greater Manchester authorities, with a figure of 3.4t CO₂ per person. This was 14% lower than the Greater Manchester average of 4.0t CO₂ per person and more than 20% below the national average of 4.5t CO₂ per person. This was explained by a mixture of urban density, which had led to more efficient living, and the high levels of deprivation. Those with least, emit least. High levels of carbon emissions are overwhelmingly emitted by the wealthiest in society; and
- Over the five-year period from 2018 to 2022, Manchester emitted 9.54 million tonnes of CO₂ (m tCO₂), against a total carbon budget of 15m tCO₂, allocated to last until 2038 and beyond (until 2100). This meant that 63% of the city's total 30-year carbon budget had been used in its first five years.

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

- Describing the data provided as alarming and disappointing;
- Noting that the report called for 'urgent action at pace and scale to ensure Manchester stays within its carbon budget' and asked what this would look like;
- Was there now a need to publicise those organisations and sectors that were large emitters of carbon but had not engaged with the Partnership and/or failed to develop an action plan to reduce their emissions;
- Would any funding be released to Manchester from the revised plans for HS2 to help fast track greener transport schemes;
- The Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25, and its 2022 Update provided a list of 175 actions, were these being delivered upon; and
- Would the Trailblazer Devolution arrangements provide an opportunity to support the scale of work to reduce carbon emissions across the city.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency commented on the question raised regarding the scale of action required and referred to Local Area Energy Planning as an example of this. Members noted that the Committee would be receiving a report at their December meeting on the topic of a Power Purchase Agreement to decarbonise the energy supply. In regard to a 'carrot or stick approach', she said that all levers of influence should be utilised to engage on the issue of carbon emissions and mitigation actions.

The Director, Manchester Climate Change Agency directed the Members to the report that was considered at the meeting of 25 May 2023 that discussed the approach to the actions in the Updated Framework. (See section 4 of the report 'Manchester Climate Change Framework 2022 Update – Progress Report' considered 25 May 2023).

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport emphasised the need for a just transition in relation to climate change and commented that the Council continued to use all available levers and spheres of influence to address climate change and made reference to the Planning report that was to be considered later on the agenda as one example of this. She stated that the Trailblazer Devolution arrangements would support the work to address carbon emissions as it would be used to address a number of areas of activity, including housing retrofit works. She stated that it needed to be recognised that inflationary pressures reduced the funding available in real terms and funding to deliver the scale of work required remained a significant challenge.

The Chair concluded this item by reiterating that it was everyone's responsibility to take immediate actions to reduce carbon emissions. She further recognised and thanked the Partnership and the Agency for their continued hard work on behalf of the city.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCNSC/23/60 Manchester Active Travel Strategy and Investment Plan – Update on Progress

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director, Growth and Development that provided a summary of progress on delivery of the aspirations and commitments of the Manchester Active Travel Strategy and Investment Plan.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- A summary of progress to date across a range of activities; and
- Next steps.

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

- Was there any evidence that delivery of School Streets increased the levels of walking to and from school;
- Should there be an ambition to have more than one school street per ward;
- Noting that outside London, dedicated national funding for active travel had reduced in 2023 from approximately £308 million over the following two years to approximately £100 million, a reduction of around 67%;
- Welcoming the update provided in relation to cycle hangars and asking what criteria was used to identify high demand areas;
- The need to ensure that there was connectivity across local authority borders for active travel schemes;
- Expressing concern that the temporary scheme on Deansgate was not meeting its ambition to increase walking; and
- Were there any further low traffic neighbourhood schemes planned, noting that these schemes needed to be communicated and managed appropriately.

The Active Travel Lead, Infrastructure and Environment stated that during the academic year 2022/23, seven primary schools had taken part in a pilot scheme to implement a 'School Street'. He said that monitoring was incorporated as an element of the pilot and that an evaluation exercise would be undertaken, adding that initial feedback obtained had been very positive. With reference to the reduction in dedicated national funding he said that he shared the Committee's frustration, however there was a pipeline of schemes that had been developed so that when funding opportunities did arise these could be bid for. In regard to cycle hangars he said that details of the locations would be released in early 2024, at around ten locations around the city, focusing on areas where there was known demand, and a large percentage of terraced houses or apartments. He confirmed that this information would be shared with Councillors at the appropriate time.

The Interim Head of Infrastructure and Environment stated that the roll out of the Bee Network would improve active travel connectivity across local authority boundaries. In regard to the specific question regarding Deansgate he commented that this was a relatively new scheme and would continue to be monitored. The Strategic Director Development stated that the current scheme on Deansgate was a temporary measure and would be subject to change as part of the wider ambitions for Deansgate that were referenced in the table provided at 3.2 of the report.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport stated that the lessons learned from the School Streets pilot would support the wider roll out of these schemes, noting that this required buy in from the schools and consideration of the surrounding neighbourhood as these could impact on them. She said that it was not the intention to limit School Streets to one per ward. She said that the ambition was to develop a network of support that included schools and local community groups to share learning and good practice and encourage schools to adopt this model. In regard to the comment raised in relation to low traffic neighbourhood schemes she said that consideration needed to be given to the use of appropriate language when articulating these and similar initiatives. She said that the ambition was to create a 'streets for all' model, with a distinct neighbourhood focus and that all local Councillors and residents would be consulted with on these plans and proposals as they developed.

The Chair commented on the ACES Europe Capital of Cycling bid adding that if successful this would significantly raise the profile of cycling across Manchester and would be very welcomed.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCNSC/23/61 Vision Zero - Update

The Committee considered the report of Strategic Director, Growth and Development that provided a summary of progress on the development of a Vision Zero strategy for Greater Manchester.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background;
- Providing a definition of Vision Zero;
- An overview of road safety data in Greater Manchester and in Manchester;
- Noting that the adoption of Vision Zero and the MCC Road Safety strategy provided the opportunity to implement effective and sustainable practices to reduce collision rates and enable the uptake of more walking, wheeling and cycling, supporting the Our Manchester goals of creating a sustainable, liveable and connected city;
- An overview of the number of programmes currently being delivered which could make significant improvements to road safety;
- Information on the three principles of the Safe Systems approach; and
- Next steps.

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

- Requesting an update in relation to the introduction of 20mph speed limits on current 30mph roads;
- Irresponsible cyclists were also responsible for collisions;
- Enforcement action by the Police was important, particularly in relation to speeding and driving standards to support the ambitions of Vision Zero; and
- The term accident was not appropriate and a more suitable term would be crash or collision.

The Head of Highways, TfGM noted the comments and concerns articulated regarding dangerous cyclists, however stated that the vast majority of deaths and serious injuries on roads were caused by motorists, hence the focus of the work described. However, he stated that consideration would be given to engagement with the gig economy as he acknowledged the proliferation on motorised bicycles on the roads and the hazards these presented to other road users and pedestrians. He added that it was the responsibility of all road users to drive carefully and considerately with due regard to the prevailing conditions. He further acknowledged the comments expressed regarding the appropriate use of language and terminology.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport stated that the areas of the road network to introduce 20mph zones were being considered and mapped. She commented that all relevant Members would be consulted with at the appropriate time as this work developed. The Head of Network Management said that consideration would also be given to reducing some 40mph zones to 30mph as part of this mapping exercise.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport concluded by referring to the importance of cycling proficiency training for young people and that all Members should promote and support Road Safety Week that would commence 20 November.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCNSC/23/62 Refreshed Tree and Woodland Action Plan 2024 - 2034

The Committee considered the report of Strategic Director, Growth and Development that described that a refreshed Tree and Woodland Action Plan (TAWAP) had been developed in the context of the adopted Green and Blue Infrastructure (G&BI) Strategy. This had been reported to the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee and was agreed in March 2023.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background, noting that the report set out how the TAWAP was being updated in line with best practice and our most recent evidence;
- The Headline Actions had been revisited and streamlined down from 21 to 16 across the four key objectives as this would help provide clarity, maximise their effectiveness and avoid duplication;
- Describing the vision and objectives of the TAWAP;
- Information in relation to the governance and leadership arrangements;
- Describing how a refreshed Tree Action Plan would sit with the G&BI Strategy;
- Noting that as a key part of delivering the City's G&BI Strategy, the TAWAP benefited from a strong cohort of supportive partners, both internal to the Council and externally;
- Discussion of the challenges and opportunities;
- Delivery of the TAWAP noting that the TAWAP would be updated and reported on annually as part of the wider Green & Blue Infrastructure Implementation Plan;
- Discussion of funding; and
- Next steps.

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

- Noting that the report stated that 'The TAWAP will allow a focus to be given to trees, helping to ensure that they will continue to be planted in Manchester selectively and appropriately, with due regard given to location, landscape character and sustainability', how would these locations be identified;
- Expressing the need for community and resident involvement in these decisions;

- Developers needed to be reminded of their responsibilities in relation to greening and tree management;
- What was the approach to 'difficult to plant' areas;
- What was the approach to the size and types of trees to be planted; and
- Further information was sought on the duration of the draft Action Plan public consultation.

In presenting the report to the Committee the Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing paid tribute to her team for producing the detailed report and bringing forward the Action Plan, stating that the Manchester was pioneering on this work and approach.

The Senior Policy Officer advised that intelligence mapping and consideration of a neighbourhood focus would inform the correct location for future planting of trees, and this included community engagement activities on this specific subject. With reference to other landowners, he commented that the principles of tree management could be accessed and used by all and was a useful resource. He further commented that the public consultation would commence following this meeting and noted the views of the Committee. This would be an 8 week online public consultation, using the same questions that were asked during the 2017, online public consultation as this would provide useful benchmarking information. He stated that a communications campaign would also be used to promote this consultation, in addition to promoting this at appropriate events across the city.

The Senior Policy Officer stated that the approach in Manchester was to plant the correct tree in the correct location, and careful consideration needed to be given to this. He further commented that it was important to recognise that each ward was different, and a 'one size fits all' approach would not be appropriate. He said this work would be delivered in collaboration with different Council Departments and different partners across the city.

The Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing said that with the support of City of Trees they were seeking to develop a document that would be accessible to all, including developers and relevant stakeholders that would address the issue of difficult to plant areas. This resource would provide information and examples of good practice and technical information. She stated that it would demonstrate the 'art of the possible' and tackle the myth that nothing could be done.

The Chair in concluding this item stated that the Committee endorsed the commencement of the draft Action Plan public consultation. She further commented that those areas with fewer trees should be prioritised, particularly when engaging with developers, noting the importance of trees and the shade they provided during periods of extreme heat that were a consequence of climate change.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCNSC/23/63 Planning Policy, Construction and Climate Change

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director, Growth and Development that described how planning policy could seek to address climate change, with specific consideration of the emissions associated with the construction phase.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- An update on the Local Plan and climate related issues;
- A summary of the emerging evidence base that would help inform draft planning policies in the Manchester Local Plan around construction standards;
- Noting that the evidence base had been prepared with the support of the members of the Manchester Climate Change Partnership and wider industry experts;
- Information on the Manchester Climate Change Partnership's City Challenge Net Zero New Buildings task and finish group that had been established to convene the expertise and capacity of local stakeholders towards increasing the low carbon standards of new buildings and support the refresh of Manchester's Local Plan, noting that their findings and recommendations would be published in a final report, due to be published before the end of 2023;
- An update on The Places for Everyone joint local plan; and
- Discussion of the consideration around the Planning Application Process.

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

- Noting that the 2022 Framework Update stated that to meet the city's plan to be Zero Carbon by 2038, all new buildings in the city from 2023 should be Zero Carbon and asking for an update on this;
- Did the work reported ensure that Manchester was compliant with The Paris Agreement;
- Members appointed to the Planning Committee should receive awareness training on this subject area;
- Noting that emissions associated with the construction phase could be significant, especially in those locations where there were multiple projects underway in close proximity, and what was being done to mitigate this;
- Examples of good proactive innovation, such as the West Gorton Sponge Park should be replicated across developments; and
- Recognising the important work of the Manchester Climate Change Partnership and wider industry experts in informing this important work.

The Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing commented that she was mindful that there were a number of new Members on the Committee and stated that she would provide a briefing note on the Local Plan that would be circulated to all members of the Committee for information.

The Planning and Infrastructure Manager commented that buildings and the building process was recognised as a significant contributor to carbon emissions, hence the focus of the work described throughout the report. He said that the approach would be to consider emissions in the context of the whole life cycle of building. He said this

approach would be tracked and reported as part of the ongoing reporting of the city's overall carbon budget. In response to the discussion regarding net zero buildings, he said the adoption of The Places for Everyone joint local plan and the emerging Manchester Local Plan would include an evidence based Net Zero new development policy. He added that there was good practice already being applied within new developments across the city including the use of standards such as BREEAM (BREEAM was the world's leading science-based suite of validation and certification systems for a sustainable built environment) and NABERS (NABERS UK was a simple, reliable system for rating the energy efficiency of office buildings across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland). In response to the comments raised regarding Biodiversity Net Gain he described that significant work was already underway in Manchester in regard to this, noting that a report considered by the Committee at their February 2023 meeting discussed this.

The Planning Section Manager said that all proposed developments were required to submit an Environmental Impact Assessment, and this included consideration of the 10% requirement of Biodiversity Net Gain, adding that they always challenged developers to deliver more. He said that all major developments were subject to a Construction Management Plan. This provided a framework of control, which was subsequently embedded in a condition of planning permission. He commented that enforcement action could be taken by relevant departments for any breach of these conditions, noting that some breaches would be subject to different legislation. He added that Construction Management Plans were used to mitigate the worst impacts on residents when developments were in the construction phase.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development made reference to the number of new build, zero carbon social housing that had been delivered and stated that the Council remained committed to being net zero by 2038. He further acknowledged the comments raised regarding training for members of the Planning Committee and stated that this would be considered with a view to progressing this.

The Chair expressed her appreciation for the work undertaken by the Manchester Climate Change Partnership and wider industry experts to consider the current wider policy background and guidance documents for net zero, financial implications for net zero, evidence base of developments and their performance in terms of carbon, and recommendations for planning policy in relation to Net Zero development. She further noted an invitation to visit some examples of development good practice in relation to commercial properties that had been developed and that she would liaise with officers outside of the meeting.

Decision

To note the report.

ECCNSC/23/64 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.

Decision

The Committee notes the report and agrees the work programme.