

# **Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee**

## **Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 14 January 2025**

### **Present:**

Councillor Johns – in the Chair  
Councillors Abdullatif, Benham, Northwood, I Robinson, Sadiq, Shilton Godwin,  
Taylor and Wills

### **Also present:**

Councillor Craig, Leader  
Councillor Rawlins, Executive Member for Clean Air, Environment and Transport  
Anthony Murden, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM)  
Simon Elliot, TfGM  
Christopher Coleman, Network Rail

### **ERSC/25/01 Minutes**

#### **Decision**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2024 be approved as a correct record.

### **ERSC/25/02 Improving Journeys Engagement Outcomes**

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) which provided information on the engagement undertaken for the Improving Journeys programme.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Methodology in relation to:
  - Response methods;
  - Promotion; and
  - In-person events;
- Reach;
- Responses broken down by mode of transport; and
- Location-specific responses.

The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) informed Members that the draft City Centre Movement Plan would be brought to the Committee within the next few months.

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

- The travel experiences of people living outside of the city centre including:
  - Challenges pedestrians faced, such as pavement obstructions, poor quality and icy pavements and being soaked by cars driving through water; and

- The need for orbital bus services, in addition to bus services into the city centre;
- Passenger safety on public transport;
- Survey responses and further consultation;
- Recognising the links between the different strategies on the meeting's agenda; and
- The opportunities presented by bringing buses back under public control.

In response to Members' comments, the Executive Member for Clean Air, Environment and Transport informed the Committee that the local Bee Network Committee was being set up, which would enable Manchester Councillors to feed into the wider network. Members welcomed the opportunity to engage in this work, in order to reflect the needs and experiences of residents across all wards. The Executive Member advised that there was already a commitment to improving, as well as decluttering, pavements and she recognised the importance of supporting active travel. She outlined some of the initiatives to improve passenger safety, including the Strut Safe app, increasing the number of TravelSafe Officers and making it easier to contact Greater Manchester Police (GMP) through the Bee Network app. In response to a Member's comments, she recognised the importance of reaching all communities, using previous learning and Ward Councillors' local knowledge.

The Strategic Director (Growth and Development) clarified that the Improving Journeys programme encompassed journeys across Manchester and Greater Manchester, not only the city centre. In response to a Member's comments, she explained how the Strategic Oversight Board would ensure that the strategies being considered at today's meeting were aligned with one another.

The Chair requested that, when the Committee next received a report on Improving Journeys, it include a diagram of all the relevant strategies and who was responsible for them.

Anthony Murden from TfGM confirmed that there had been a good response to the autumn 2024 engagement exercise from a diverse range of communities. He outlined the plans for the next consultation, which would inform the public how the feedback from the previous engagement exercise had been used to shape proposals, present those proposals and invite further feedback to further shape the proposals. In response to a question from the Chair, he confirmed that data from previous consultation and engagement exercises had been considered. He informed Members that network review processes were underway in areas that were part of tranche one of bus franchising (Wigan and Bolton), that these network reviews involved an extensive consultation which Members, the public and businesses could engage with and that this, along with a range of data obtained from running the services and from local authority partners, was used to inform decision-making.

The Head of Network Management informed the Committee about work to improve drainage, declutter pavements and improve road crossings, in order to improve pedestrians' experience. In response to a Member's question, he provided information on some of the options that could be considered for dealing with A-

boards. In response to a question from the Chair about signage related to roadworks, he reported that the Council worked with its contractors on this.

### **Decisions:**

1. To note the engagement undertaken for the Improving Journeys programme.
2. To request that, when the Committee next receive a report on Improving Journeys, it include a diagram of all the relevant strategies and who is responsible for them.

[Councillor Johns declared a personal interest, having recently published a report on Greater Manchester's bus reform and the impact of cuts to bus services across the country.]

### **ERSC/25/03 Road Safety Strategy**

The Committee received a report of the Head of Network Management which set out the Council's approach to Road Safety, focussing on Manchester City Council's new draft Road Safety Strategy.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Background information, including data on collisions in the city;
- The Safe System approach;
- Completed Road Safety projects; and
- Evolving future plans.

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

- Ensuring the hierarchy of road users was fully reflected in the Strategy;
- Concern that increasing numbers of pedestrians and cyclists were being killed or seriously injured and that reducing this should be an objective in the Strategy, noting the equality and environmental implications of this;
- The reliability of the road collision data, noting that many collisions were not reported and whether data could be obtained from other sources, such as insurance companies;
- The importance of identifying near-misses, noting the intelligence that could be provided by local residents or Ward Councillors;
- Whether School Streets would be extended to all schools;
- Addressing pavement parking;
- Moving Traffic Offences;
- Requesting a breakdown by ward of the collision data in the table at 2.2 in the report;
- That the commitment to investigating collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists which resulted in death or serious injury should be strengthened;
- The importance of good maintenance of lane markings and signage;
- Ensuring that the location of pedestrian crossings met people's needs; and

- That the Strategy should take into account the different road safety environment at night.

The Executive Member for Clean Air, Environment and Transport acknowledged the Member's point about the hierarchy of road users and stated that she would look into this. She advised that School Streets were not appropriate in all locations but explained that this initiative was part of a broader suite of measures to improve road safety, including 20 mph speed limits on local roads and bringing about behaviour change.

In response to a Member's question, the Director of Highways clarified that this was the first version of the Strategy, that it would be periodically reviewed and that Members' comments would be taken into consideration. He acknowledged a Member's point that road collision data would not capture all collisions and advised that other information, such as information from Highways Maintenance on minor damage to guard rails, could be used to build up a fuller picture. He recognised a point from the Chair about the location of road crossings, while highlighting the challenges of balancing the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and cars. In response to comments from the Chair about innovations in road safety, he advised that local authorities in this country were reluctant to use measures which were not approved by the Department for Transport (DfT) due to the risk of claims being made against them but that the Council, along with TfGM, had introduced some innovations such as the floating bus stops on Oxford Road. In response to comments about near-misses, he advised that a technological solution might be required, for example, using Artificial Intelligence (AI).

The Head of Network Management advised that this was a plan for improving road safety and that it included ambitious targets to measure success and he suggested that the Committee receive periodic reports to scrutinise how effective it was in achieving these targets. He outlined some of the challenges in and opportunities to identify unreported collisions, including using hospital data to identify serious collisions which had not been reported, as well as work by a number of agencies to find a way to identify near-misses. He advised that walking and cycling had increased, leading to more accidents locally and nationally and that further work was needed to improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. In response to a Member's question, he outlined a range of changes that he would like the Government to introduce to improve road safety, including reviewing Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs), legislating on improved vehicle safety measures and income from speeding fines going to local authorities to reinvest in road safety. He reported that the Government had run a consultation on pavement parking which the Council and TfGM had responded to but that there had been no further response from the Government; however, he advised that the Council was continuing to lobby Government on this and was looking into what it could do in the interim, including trials in some areas and using leaflets to improve drivers' awareness. A Member welcomed this work, also emphasising the importance of lobbying Government on this, while recognising that in some areas with narrow roads and a lack of private parking, a balance was needed.

In response to a question about Moving Traffic Offences, the Head of Network Management advised that these powers were already in place in seven locations

and work was currently taking place on expanding this to additional locations, with Members having already been consulted on their priorities. In response to a Member's comments, he advised that TfGM could update the satnav companies if they were directing drivers down inappropriate routes and asked the Member to contact him if there were any ongoing issues which they had been unable to get resolved. In response to a Member's question, he advised that the Council was looking at 20 mph speed limits on residential roads which would benefit from this and reducing the speed limit from 40 mph to 30 mph on main roads. He advised that, even if drivers did not fully reduce their speed to the new limit, evidence showed that changing the speed limit did reduce speeds and improve safety. He informed Members that the data in the table at 2.2 in the report could be broken down in a number of different ways, including by ward. In response to comments from the Chair about investigating serious road collisions involving cyclists or pedestrians, he advised that he would look into this. He advised that the maintenance of road markings was being brought back in-house, with a new road marking vehicle being purchased and work taking place on updating the dataset of signs and road markings across the city.

In response to a Member's question, the Executive Member for Clean Air, Environment and Transport advised that she would circulate information to Members on the next steps in relation to reducing the speed limit on residential roads. In response to comments about the location of pedestrian crossings and where it was convenient for pedestrians to cross, she advised that the Council had gathered a lot of information on how pedestrians did or did not use crossings as part of the Manchester Active Travel Strategy and Investment Plan (MATSSIP) and that she would review this data with officers to see how this could be built into the road safety work.

#### **Decisions:**

1. To note the aims and objectives set out in the Road Safety Strategy.
2. To request a breakdown by ward of the collision data in the table at 2.2 in the report.
3. To note that the Executive Member for Clean Air, Environment and Transport will circulate information to Members on the next steps in relation to reducing the speed limit on residential roads

#### **ERSC/25/04 Approach to Parking Management**

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which provided an overview of issues relating to surplus parking provision, kerbside space management and pavement parking, and the development of a Parking Strategy

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Background information;
- Understanding current parking supply and estimated demand; and
- Creating a Parking Strategy.

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

- To welcome the development of a Parking Strategy which aimed to align with the Council's strategic aims and the transport strategy for the city centre;
- Noting that the report focused on the city centre and raising issues affecting wards neighbouring the city centre, in particular:
  - That there might be surplus parking in the city centre because commuters were choosing to park for free in wards neighbouring the city centre, rather than paying for city centre parking, creating problems in these areas; and
  - that planning permission was being granted for new housing developments in these areas without taking into account the parking implications;
- The methodology for determining that parking in the city centre might be under-utilised;
- The role of Parking Officers and how they interacted with the public;
- Households which owned cars but did not have off-street parking or did not have sufficient off-street space for the number of cars they owned;
- Pavement parking;
- The importance of reducing car use in the city centre;
- The need to consider the placement of city centre car parks, for example, in relation to major roads and the free city centre bus routes; and
- The need to consider loading and unloading spaces for deliveries, as well as cycle parking facilities.

The City Centre Transport Lead outlined the data sources used in calculating the parking surplus, advising that some of the data was from 2019 and some was more recent, and he clarified that it was based on an average across the year. He reported that further work was now taking place looking at variances across events and different times of the year, as well as on obtaining more accurate data on usage now that this was settling down, post-pandemic. He advised that the city centre was the area where this data was currently available but work was taking place to gather data on parking across the city, noting that the issues in other areas would be different to the city centre and that the Strategy would also need to address these, with the approach varying depending on local circumstances. He advised that this could include measures such as improved integration with public transport and park and ride facilities. In response to the point raised about new housing developments without parking provision, he advised that this was being looked at as part of the refresh of the Local Plan and that his team was pushing for transport to be considered at an earlier stage of new developments. He advised that the Parking Strategy would incorporate both behaviour change and enforcement, where needed. He highlighted that off-street car parking included both Council and commercial operators and that, as part of the work on the Strategy, the Council was looking into what influence it could have on private companies and their pricing structure, while recognising that there were limits to this. He advised that consideration was being given to the routes that drivers would take to access car parking facilities in the city centre. He highlighted examples of sites being used as loading bays during the day and taxi ranks at night, making the best use of the space depending on what was needed at different times of the day. In response to a question from the Chair, he

advised that the Strategy would set out a process for the disposal and re-allocation of on-street parking bays.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Head of Network Management clarified that double yellow lines applied from the centre of the road to the back of the highway, meaning that it also applied to the pavement but not to any space which was part of a shop frontage.

**Decision:**

To support the development of a Parking Strategy which takes into account Members' comments.

**ERSC/25/05 Strategic Transport Update (Rail)**

The Committee received a report of the Director of City Centre Growth and Infrastructure which provided a strategic update on rail infrastructure developments and long-term rail plans. It highlighted progress on key programmes such as Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR), the Manchester and North West Transformational Programme (MNTP), and ongoing challenges resulting from the cancellation of HS2 Phase 2.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- HS2 and future rail connectivity;
- Northern Powerhouse Rail and the Liverpool to Manchester Railway;
- Manchester and North West Transformation Programme (MNTP);
- Oxford Road Station remodelling and the Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF);
- Rail devolution in Manchester;
- Developing a strategic long-term rail plan for Manchester; and
- Priorities for Manchester.

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

- To welcome and support the priorities set out in the report;
- Capacity issues on the network;
- Plans for Oxford Road Station;
- Timescales for improvements;
- The importance of a good railway service for the economy and the environment;
- The importance of step-free access;
- How the Council's role on the Railway Board was being used to influence the Department for Transport (DfT) and secure improvements for Manchester's rail infrastructure and services;
- Victoria Station, including improving the commuter experience, accessibility and air quality;
- The closure of Deansgate Station during the Christmas Markets:

- The Avanti West Coast Sunday strike action and its impact on weekend visitors and Manchester's economy; and
- Proposals for additional platforms adjacent to platform 1 at Manchester Piccadilly.

Simon Elliot from TfGM outlined the importance of Oxford Road Station due to both its location at the core of the Castlefield Corridor and capacity issues related to the station itself. He advised that the proposals for the Station were intended to address both the capacity of the station itself and operational capacity through the station. He acknowledged a Member's point about the importance of public confidence in the railway, advising that a reliable service was needed so that people did not turn away from using rail and the benefits of investing in improvements were realised. In response to a Member's comments, he acknowledged that some improvements would not come to fruition until the 2030s but advised that work was taking place to improve capacity over the next few years, including improvements at Victoria Station and network improvements in north Manchester; however, these shorter-term improvements would only restore capacity to the position it was in in 2019, so more still needed to be done. He informed Members about the development of a Greater Manchester Vision for the rail network, advising that a report on this was being submitted to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) at the end of January. He also informed Members about improvements in rolling stock which would potentially be introduced over the next five years, advising that the region had some of the oldest rolling stock in the country and highlighting the environmental benefits of replacing older stock.

In response to a Member's question, the Leader explained that capacity issues related to both capacity for customers and capacity for passenger and freight trains to pass through the system, highlighting bottlenecks near Oxford Road and Stockport.

Christopher Coleman from Network Rail explained how, following the disruption caused by the over-ambitious May 2018 rail timetable, a recovery taskforce had been put in place. He outlined investments that were being made now, including a third platform at Salford Crescent, additional turn-backs in north Manchester and electrification of the line between Wigan and Manchester. He outlined longer-term proposals relating to Manchester Airport and Manchester Oxford Road. He informed Members about proposals to extend the platforms at Manchester Airport to accommodate 12 cars, which was linked to Northern and TransPennine Express's plans for new rolling stock and longer trains to provide additional capacity. He informed Members that Network Rail was committed to improving Manchester Oxford Road Station, and that this included improving accessibility, noting that platform 1 did not currently have step-free access. He reported that other planned improvements for the Station were better canopy coverage, re-mapping and re-laying the tracks, extending the platforms to accommodate longer trains and new signalling. He advised that a consultation on the plans for Oxford Road Station would commence on 20 January 2025 and that responses would then be considered before a second consultation later in the year. He advised that improvements were being accelerated as much as possible to realise benefits for customers. He reported that a South Manchester Strategic Study had been completed, with



consideration being given to what could be done to improve the service, while recognising that the network was largely at capacity.

The Leader reported that she was the Joint Vice-Chair of the Liverpool-Manchester Railway Board and she advised that this work was not only about getting better, faster trains between the two cities but about the broader impact this work would have on the network through infrastructure improvements. She advised that there had been more positive engagement with the Secretary of State for Transport and DfT since the new Government came into power.

Christopher Coleman advised that Network Rail was looking at the feasibility of additional platforms at Manchester Piccadilly adjacent to platform 1 but this was not yet funded; however, it appeared that this was more feasible than the previous proposal for platforms 15 and 16. In response to a Member's question, he advised that this new proposal sought to address a different issue from the previous proposal, which had been rejected following a cost-benefit analysis. He advised that HS2 would be arriving into Manchester from the mid-2030s but it would be arriving on the conventional network, which would be at capacity, and Network Rail was working with its partners to develop a long-term strategy which could realistically be funded and would align with partners' ambitions. In response to a question about Open Access, he advised that a number of applications had been received and that Network Rail was in discussions with the rail regulator, the Office of Rail and Road (ORR), about this, noting the importance of balancing the benefits of competition for the customer with network capacity and power.

Simon Elliot from TfGM advised that, while the national industrial relations issues had been resolved, there remained local issues to be resolved, including issues at Avanti West Coast and Northern which were affecting Sunday services, and he advised that there were ongoing discussions to resolve these. In relation to the performance of Avanti West Coast, he highlighted recent weather-related issues and issues with the network which were affecting performance and informed Members about the Network Rail Taskforce which was focused on improving the resilience of the network. He reported that Avanti had quite an old fleet which also impacted on performance. He advised that investment was needed in the infrastructure to improve reliability. In response to a Member's comments about step-free access, he assured the Committee that making stations accessible was a critical priority for TfGM. He reported that a paper on funding solutions for additional accessibility schemes at Greater Manchester stations was being submitted to the GMCA at the end of the month, advising that Levenshulme Station would be one of the stations included in this. He advised that ten locally-funded accessibility schemes had already delivered at Greater Manchester stations over the past five years.

In relation to HS2, the Leader clarified that the HS2 line north of Birmingham had been cancelled so, while the trains could still arrive into Manchester, the city would not get the same service that had been originally planned. She advised that strategies were being considered on how the network could meet future capacity needs, advising that the Manchester view was that an underground station was essential to this and that she and the Mayor of Greater Manchester would continue to lobby for the improvements to the network that the city region needed. She emphasised the importance of looking at the network as a whole.

Christopher Coleman explained that a lot of plans had been developed when HS2 was due to extend to Manchester and that, while the previous Government's decision to cancel Phase 2 of HS2 in October 2023 had forced stakeholders to regroup and assess how this decision affected those plans and how they would move forward, they remained committed to improvements in north Manchester, at the Airport, Oxford Road and through Stockport and Piccadilly. In response to a question from the Chair, he assured Members that Network Rail was committed to progressing improvements at Oxford Road, with the only caveat being if the Government removed the funding. He reported that the air quality at Victoria Station was closely monitored and that any changes at the station had to be assessed in terms of their impact on air quality. He reported that Northern closed Deansgate Station during the Christmas Markets as they felt that there was a safety issue but he advised that there were ongoing discussions about this. In response to further comments from the Chair, Simon Elliot informed Members that TfGM would pursue this with Northern in relation to the next Christmas period, advising that TfGM's view was that opening Deansgate during this period should be trialled.

The Director of City Centre Growth and Infrastructure reported that the Oxford Road SRF would include consideration of how people entered and exited the station and how to better integrate the station within the area. In response to a question about ensuring the city had the skills needed for future rail projects, she advised that a Work and Skills Strategy had been developed as part of the work on HS2 and that this work would be reviewed and revised.

**Decision:**

To note the information included in the report.

[Councillor Johns declared a personal interest due to writing on Strategic Transport as part of his job.]

**ERSC/25/06 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:**

That the Committee note the report and agree the work programme.

# **Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

## **Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2025**

### **Present:**

Councillor E Bell – in the Chair

Councillors N Ali, Amin, Fletcher, Jafri, Lovecy, McHale, Mahamed, Muse, Nunney and Sadler

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

Mr G Cleworth, Parent Governor Representative

Mr Y Yonis, Parent Governor Representative

### **Also present:**

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

Gaynor Stubbs, Executive Headteacher, Aiming High C of E Federation

### **Apologies:**

Councillors Collins, Foley, Gartside and Mandongwe

Canon S Mapledoram, Representative of the Diocese of Manchester

Ms L Smith, Primary Sector Teacher Representative

## **CYP/25/01 Minutes**

### **Decisions**

1. That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2024 be approved as a correct record.
2. To receive the minutes of the Ofsted Subgroup meeting held on 23 October 2024.

## **CYP/25/02 Attainment Headline Outcomes 2024 (provisional)**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Education which provided a summary of the 2024 outcomes of statutory assessment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 2, Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. It also provided a list of actions which were being progressed to address some of the gaps in learning following the pandemic.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Background information;
- 2024 outcomes in relation to:
  - Early Years Foundation Stage;
  - Year 1 Phonics Test;
  - Key Stage 2;
  - Key Stage 4; and
  - Key Stage 5 and
- Next steps.

Gaynor Stubbs, Executive Headteacher, Aiming High C of E Federation informed the Committee about some of the steps their schools had taken to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on children and their families. She outlined a range of steps taken, relating to the curriculum, including identifying and mitigating key aspects of teaching that had been missed through online teaching and provision for the increasing numbers of children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), pastoral support, support for staff and support for families, including parent workshops on a range of issues and SEND Local Offer parent meetings.

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

- To welcome the work taking place and the progress being made, in particular in relation to children from disadvantaged backgrounds and global majority children;
- Meeting the needs of children with SEND, including making an earlier diagnosis and learning from best practice in other countries;
- Whether there were any particular areas of the city that were a cause for concern;
- Concern about the widening gap between Manchester and the national average in relation to Year 1 Phonics; and
- Availability of T-Levels.

The Assistant Director of Education advised that there were no specific areas of the city where outcomes were lower but that thematic issues had been identified. She highlighted writing as a skill which had been particularly affected by the pandemic and advised that it was being addressed through work with the Education Endowment Foundation on the Write Beginnings project, which was being rolled out to selected schools across Manchester. She reported that "a good level of development" had also been identified as a thematic issue for some cohorts of children, linked to disadvantage, and she outlined some of the work to address this, including the Kickstarter project providing speech, language and communication support to schools, as well as educational psychology. In response to a question about Phonics, she advised that there were pre-verbal children entering Reception and that speech needed to be developed before Phonics could be effectively taught and she outlined a range of programmes to address. She reported that the Manchester approach to SEND was to meet the presenting needs rather than waiting for a diagnosis. She informed Members that a tool for identifying early indicators of neurodiversity had been trialled in an area of the city and that discussions were now taking place with Health on how this could be rolled out across the city. She advised that Manchester was strong on early identification of needs but the increase in children with SEND presented a challenge in terms of capacity to meet that need. In response to a Member's question, she outlined the support provided to Early Years settings, including childminders, in supporting children with additional needs. In response to a Member's question on when the validated attainment data, including a breakdown by gender and ethnicity, would be available, she advised that this was dependent on the Department for Education (DfE) but it was hoped that this data would be available by the Spring or early Summer Term.

Gaynor Stubbs advised that, while children with additional needs were being identified early, the challenge was in having staff that were equipped to support them, noting the difficulties at a national level in recruiting Early Years staff. In response to a Member's question, she advised that some families did not want to engage with Early Help because of previous interactions with Children's Services which they had perceived as negative and, in those cases, her schools would provide support to the families.

The Director of Education informed the Committee that currently only The Manchester College provided T-Levels but that the Council had done a lot of work to increase post-16 places in the city and that from September 2025 a new provision opening in the city centre would be offering T-Levels and discussions were taking place with other post-16 providers about offering T-Levels, recognising the importance of having a balance of academic and technical courses. In response to a question from the Chair, she outlined how a range of partners were involved in work to improve school attendance, citing as an example the multi-agency approach to improving attendance in Wythenshawe. The Chair emphasised the important role of the wider community in children's education.

The Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People reported that Manchester schools were now the best they had ever been, while noting the impact of the pandemic on children and babies and that the north-west had been particularly badly affected. She congratulated schools and officers for their work. She advised that the two-year-old offer should be available to all families and that there should be qualified teachers in Early Years and she expressed concern about poor levels of pay in the Early Years sector. She encouraged the Committee to undertake visits to Children's Services teams across the city and to look at the detail of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill which was going through Parliament.

## **Decision**

To note the report.

### **CYP/25/03 Inclusion Approaches and Exclusions Data 2022/2023 and 2023/2024**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Education which provided an update on the development of inclusion support for all Manchester schools. It also looked at available exclusions data held internally in Manchester for 2023/24 and validated Department for Education (DfE) published school exclusions data for 2022/23.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- An overview of work to support inclusion in Manchester schools;
- Data on permanent exclusions in 2022/2023 and 2023/2024;
- Data on suspensions in 2022/2023 and 2023/2024; and
- Early indications in relation to the current school year.

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

- Breaking the cycle of pupils being repeatedly suspended;
- Disproportionality regarding the pupils who were being suspended or permanently excluded;
- Sharing good practice;
- A suggestion that officers include a glossary in reports to make it easier for Members and the public to read; and
- Managed moves.

In response to a question about repeated suspensions, the AP Lead and SAFE Taskforce Lead advised that schools were encouraged to involve the Council's Outreach Services as early as possible where a pupil was at risk of disengaging to prevent suspensions from happening. She reported that, if a pupil was suspended, it was important to effectively re-integrate them back into school, which the Council could provide support on, and that this re-integration could include providing support to parents, mediation or other actions to demonstrate that it was a fresh start. In response to comments on disproportionality, she advised that there was a lot of variety of contexts between schools and that city-wide disproportionality might not reflect the population of individual schools but that the Council would provide support and challenge to schools as appropriate where there was a disproportionality of suspensions and exclusions compared to the demographics of that individual school. She advised that the Council had commissioned a study in relation to Gypsy and Roma pupils, noting that this group was an outlier, and that the Council was also working with Afruca and Dimobi to put together a strategy to address other outliers. In response to a Member's question, the Statutory Lead (Attendance and Exclusions) advised that the exclusion rate for Asian Pakistani pupils was 0.14 last year, informing Members that although the number of Asian Pakistani pupils excluded was quite high, the exclusion rate was quite low as there were a large number of Asian Pakistani pupils in Manchester.

In response to a question about the high number of White British pupils being excluded, the Assistant Director of Education advised that this was a national issue which was linked to disadvantage, low aspirations and negative feelings towards education and that a lot of work was being done by the Council and schools to engage with pupils and raise aspirations. She outlined how best practice, regarding inclusion and other issues, was shared between schools, including through webinars, Headteacher Briefings, through Senior Schools Quality Assurance Officers and the brokering of formal support between schools. In response to a Member's question, she advised that some of the local authorities with a lower exclusion rate were working in a different context from Manchester. She informed Members how the Council was working closely with other local authorities through its leadership of the North-West Change Programme for the SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan, including sharing best practice, adding that best practice was also shared through Greater Manchester Education Leads and informally.

The Director of Education informed Members that some of the schools which had had the highest exclusion rates were in areas with a predominantly white population, resulting in higher levels of white boys being excluded, and she advised that

interventions were determined at a school level. She advised that where there were concerns about either the overall level of exclusions at a school or disproportionality in who was being excluded, the Council would provide challenge to the school and support where needed. She outlined the purpose of Managed Moves, stating that it was a voluntary agreement between two schools to give a pupil a fresh start in another school and that a protocol for this had been developed between secondary headteachers. She advised that in a lot of cases it worked well but occasionally Managed Moves did break down. She advised that if the Managed Move did not work out, the child would return to the original school and that they remained on the roll of the original school until the receiving school decided that the move had been successful and agreed to take them on roll. She expressed caution about bringing this process under local authority arrangements due to its voluntary nature and the risk that it might deter schools from agreeing to it but advised that the Council could look at the numbers and in particular any pupil who had had a lot of Managed Moves which had broken down; however, she advised that the forthcoming Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill could change the local authority's role in relation to this. The Chair agreed that Managed Moves could work well but advised that it was important for the parents to understand what was happening.

The Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People advised that a lot of progress had been made on exclusions. She highlighted the challenges for teachers of dealing with disruptive behaviour in large classes. She commented on the issues relating to white working-class boys and emphasised the importance of Early Help in improving attendance and preventing exclusion.

### **Decision**

To note the report.

[Councillor McHale declared a personal interest as Operations Manager for Navigators Alternative Provision.]

### **CYP/25/04                      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.