

## **Appendix 2: Summary of Climate Change Research and Insight**

### **1. Overview**

Manchester City Council's Communications Service commissioned insight among Manchester residents to understand the views of residents from across the city in relation to climate change. The research was delivered in two phases:

- **Phase 1**

A face-to-face on-street survey with over 1,000 Manchester residents to gauge their perceptions, awareness and understanding of climate change and explore their behaviours relating to climate change and establishing what Manchester City Council should prioritise in order to combat climate change and become a zero carbon city by 2038.

- **Phase 2**

A series of focus groups with Manchester residents recruited from the on-street survey to gain a greater depth of insight into topics covered in the survey, particularly around behaviours, as well as exploring ideas for the Council's campaign.

Strict quotas on age, gender, ethnicity and geographical area were implemented to match the population of the city as a whole. Through the research we have gathered a broad range of views to understand:

1. What residents know about climate change
2. What residents are currently doing to counteract climate change
3. What is stopping residents to do more or behave differently
4. How the Council and / or partners could encourage residents to do more
5. What activities/actions residents think the Council should prioritise in order to achieve the aim of being a carbon zero city by 2038.

### **2. Research results**

A summary of key results from the climate research can be found below.

#### **2.1 Effects of climate change**

A question was asked, unprompted, on what people thought the effects of climate change are. Responses included:

- Extreme hot weather/global warming
- Extreme weather (eg storms)
- Rising sea levels, flooding
- Extreme cold weather
- Increased pollution
- Changes in plants/wildlife, increased wildfires

Subgroups aged between 55-64 and 65+ were more likely to say they do not believe in climate change (4% overall).

Across the board people felt that climate change would affect the UK more than

Manchester (City) or their local area.

Of those who believe in climate change, 75% said that the issue is very important to them (34%) or somewhat important (41%). 10% said it is unimportant to them.

## **2.2 Behaviours to reduce climate change**

A list of behaviours and activities were shown to respondents who were asked to indicate whether they currently did these specifically to reduce the impact of climate change.

For any activities they were not currently doing, respondents were subsequently asked to state whether they would be willing to do this, or not, to reduce the impact of climate change.

- 73% avoiding use or using fewer carrier bags
- 34% avoiding or eating less red meat
- Manchester (city) residents least likely to grow own food or drive an electric/hybrid car
- 73% would use renewable or green energy at home (sustainable supplier)
- 72% would retrofit boiler/insulation/windows

Focus groups pointed out that this is as much about money/poverty as climate change. There was a discrepancy between homeowners and those who rent and what people are prepared to do and what they are able to do.

## **2.3 People were not prepared to do the following:**

- Almost half were unwilling to grow food at home
- Minimise travel by air (38%)
- Campaign against climate change
- Avoid or eat less dairy/animal products

## **2.4 Barriers to behavioural change**

In order to understand potential barriers to behaviour changes, respondents were asked what stopped them from doing more to reduce the impact of climate change. This question was unprompted and respondents could provide more than one response.

The most common response, provided by 37%, was that respondents did not know enough about what they can do or that they need more information. This was followed by three in ten (30%) respondents who felt as though they already do enough to reduce the impact of climate change.

Clear barriers were identified by some respondents, including changes being:

- Too expensive (24%)
- Too time consuming (20%)
- Too inconvenient (17%)
- 6% said poor public transport stopped them doing more

- 7% believed that they would not make a difference
- 2% that it is too late to reduce the impact of climate change
- 2% said they were not interested or did not want to make any changes

## **2.5 What should the Council prioritise?**

People were asked which areas the Council should prioritise or focus on. They were asked to pick three options from a list.

- Improve public transport  
6% said public transport is poor, 27% say if it was cheaper they could use it and 47% said supporting better public transport should be a Council priority. Focus group attendees also linked this to safety and suggested that they would walk/cycle/use the tram more if public safety was improved.
- Clean air initiatives, increase green spaces
- Increase awareness/provide information/advice and influence

## **2.6 What would incentivise behavioural change?**

Given that a common barrier to doing more to combat climate change was the expense, it is perhaps unsurprising that financial incentives were popular when considering how to combat climate change.

A quarter (26%) said that financial incentives or money off their Council Tax would encourage them to do more, which was also a common topic of conversation amongst focus group participants.

A suggestion from the focus groups was to introduce a discount scheme for residents, whereby those who recycle correctly are rewarded with discounted Council Tax and those who do not recycle are conversely penalised.

Others suggested targeting businesses to be carbon neutral, reduce food waste (work with caterers) etc...

## **2.7 There is no one-size fits all answer**

The research confirmed that there is now one size fits all answer. There was no consistency across age, gender, diversity or locality.

There were however some consistent trends:

- Young people aged between 16-34 were more willing to change behaviours
- There was also a female bias with regard to the willingness to change behaviours
- Older people are aware, but less willing to change behaviours
- Less awareness in North Manchester (9%), compared to South (17%) and Central (17%)
- Data shows broadly stronger awareness among white respondents as opposed to Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) respondents

### **3. Next steps**

The research and insight is being used to inform a citywide communications campaign which will be launched in spring 2020.