

Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2019

Present:

Councillor Igbon – in the Chair

Councillors Azra Ali, Chohan, Flanagan, Harland, Hassan, Hewitson, Hughes, Jeavons, Kilpatrick, Lyons, Noor, Reid, Sadler, Strong, White and Wright

Councillor Akbar, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods

Councillor Stogia, Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport

Councillor Chris Paul, Councillor for Withington ward

James Hall, Senior Project Officer, Lancashire Wildlife Trust

Jo Fraser, Manchester River Valleys Officer, Groundwork Trust

Mike Duddy, Mersey Rivers Trust

Jon Stopp, Friends of the Rochdale 9 Volunteer Group

Apologies: Councillors Appleby and Lyons

NESC/19/01 Minutes

A Member enquired if the Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport was able to provide the Committee with an update on the recommendation made at the previous meeting in relation to extending the Chorlton Road corridor consultation exercise.

The Executive Member for Environment, Planning and Transport confirmed that the consultation exercise had been extended to the 25 of January 2019. She thanked the local ward Members for their efforts to promote the consultation exercise with local residents and businesses.

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2018 as a correct record.

NESC/19/02 Manchester Green and Blue Strategy and Implementation Plan

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director Development and the Deputy Chief Executive that provided the Committee with information on the three year review of Manchester's Green and Blue Infrastructure (G&BI) Strategy, including specific progress on the Implementation Plan over the last year, an update on Manchester in Bloom and the draft Principles of Tree Management.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report which included: -

- Describing the Strategy within a policy and wider strategic context;

- Describing the four objectives and associated actions of the G&BI Strategy and Stakeholder Implementation Plan;
- An update on the three year review of the G&BI Strategy;
- An update on the Tree Action Plan and presenting the document entitled 'Principles of Tree Management', noting that over 8,500 trees had been planted in the city over the last three years as well as over 4,000 hedge trees and 43 community orchards;
- A description of how the G&BI Strategy influenced developments and strategic regeneration across the city;
- Projects delivered in conjunction with a range of partners with schools and local communities, including case studies;
- An update on the Manchester in Bloom initiative and how this had changed over the years to facilitate successful community led projects and responded to budgetary pressures; and
- The key priorities identified for 2019.

In addition to the report the Committee also heard from a number of invited guests who described the various activities undertaken with partners and voluntary and community groups to improve local green and blue areas and engage with residents and schools.

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

- What was the approach taken to replacing dead or damaged trees;
- What was the approach to dealing with established trees that caused an issue to the immediate footway as a result of their root system;
- Did the strategy link into operational policies, such as street cleaning;
- Were Greater Manchester Police (GMP) involved in the coordination and planning of schemes to ensure public safety is considered;
- Were Peel Holdings, a significant land owner in the city engaged with the strategy;
- What was being done to improve the stretch of the River Medlock in the city centre;
- What was being done to mitigate the impacts of major infrastructure projects, such as HS2 on the local wildlife;
- There was little support from the Canal and Rivers Trust in Manchester compared to the support offered to other areas;
- More needed to be done to connect with, and support local residents, especially in the more deprived areas of the city, for example around Bloom activities;
- Consideration needed to be given to installing lighting along the Fallowfield loop; and
- Recognising the positive impact the Forest Schools Programme had on children and their learning.

The Team Leader Arboriculture informed the Committee that the ambition was always to replace any lost tree within a 12 month period. He stated it may be perceived that a tree was not being replaced depending on the time of year, advising that the replacement trees were delivered after Christmas each year and the schedule of planting would then commence.

The Team Leader Arboriculture responded to the comment regarding root damage to footways by saying this is an issue experienced nationally and always proved to be a controversial topic. He said that overwhelmingly residents did not wish to have tree's removed, noting the many benefits that tree's brought to a street scape. He advised that they always worked with colleagues in the Highways Department to repair any damage caused by roots and a tree would only ever be removed if absolutely necessary.

The Executive Member for the Environment, Planning and Transport reiterated the point that residents felt very passionately about maintaining trees in their neighbourhood and made reference to recent correspondence she had received from a young resident on Manchester.

The Senior Policy Officer reported that the Green and Blue Governance Board ensured that the strategy complemented wider operational policies and he commented that this activity had improved over the years. He advised that public safety was considered and all relevant parties, including GMP were involved with the planning and coordination of projects. He confirmed that dialogue had been entered into between Peel Holdings and the Irwell Catchment Partnership. He also confirmed that the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit were involved in the consideration of major infrastructure projects, such as HS2.

In regard to the River Medlock in the city centre the Manchester River Valleys Officer acknowledged that there were sections that would benefit from improvement works, however due to the issue of silt and the risk this could pose to the many historic buildings, any dredging or clearance work had to be managed very carefully.

The Neighbourhood Officer acknowledged the comments regarding the need to support local residents who wished to be involved with Manchester in Bloom and advised that he would welcome any referrals from Members and he gave a commitment that he would follow those up.

Decisions

The Committee: -

1. Note the progress that has been made towards achieving the objectives of the Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy as set out in the three year review;
2. Note the progress made by both the Council and external stakeholders in achieving the actions in the annual update of the Implementation Plan including progress on Manchester in Bloom;
3. Note the priorities for the Green & Blue Infrastructure Implementation Plan set out for the coming year and contained; and
4. Note the Principles of Tree Management which, as a document arising out of an approved Implementation Plan, will be subject to delegated approval by the Deputy Chief Executive.

NESC/19/03 Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan – Update

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive that provided an update on progress in the preparation of a Greater Manchester wide feasibility study (Clean Air Plan) into the options available to address Nitrogen Dioxide exceedances, and to outline a broad direction of travel in relation to next steps and decision making.

The Executive Member for the Environment, Planning and Transport referred to the main points and themes within the report which included: -

- A description of the air quality in Greater Manchester;
- The impact of poor air quality and the case for change;
- Policy background;
- UK Air Quality Plans; and
- The options for consideration by Greater Manchester and the direction of travel.

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

- The Committee were unanimous in their disappointment in receiving the report late, commenting that it was important for both Members and citizens of the city to receive information in a timely manner;
- Members fully supported the ambition of the plan to improve air quality, noting the significant health outcomes poor air quality had on the residents of Manchester;
- The Mayor of Greater Manchester should take immediate action to regulate the bus fleet;
- The plan needed to address diesel trains, the impact of motorways and diesel vehicles used at the airport site;
- The plan should not be used to penalise the poorest residents across GM, especially those with poor public transport links;
- An appropriate vehicle scrappage scheme was required;
- More needed to be done to address the issue of polluting taxi's trading within the city who were not licensed by Manchester;
- The report did not mention or offer any target to address particulate matter, noting the associated health risks;
- HGVs should not be driven through the city during rush hour;
- Impact Assessments needed to be undertaken regarding clean air zones, with particular consideration given to self-employed people;
- Consideration needed to be given to adopting the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance on planning; and
- More monitoring of air quality in wards needed to be undertaken.

Councillor Paul, Chair of the Air Quality Task and Finish Group provided the Members with an overview of the work undertaken by the Task and Finish Group that had concluded with 17 recommendations. He commented that the EU targets for air quality were very challenging however it was important to meet these, noting that the targets set by the World Health Organisation were even more challenging, and did include specific targets in relation to particulate matter. He stated that the information provided to residents needed to be accurate and not misleading, commenting that

the offer of free weekend parking in the city centre gave a mixed message when the intention was to increase the use of public transport as a means of travel and reduce the number of journeys undertaken by car. He further advised the Committee that Friends of the Earth provided testing kits and provided analysis for a very modest fee.

The Head of City Policy informed the Members that the Committee would have the opportunity to consider and comment upon the outline business case when this was available and a full consultation exercise with residents would be undertaken. The Chair recommended that when the business case was presented to the Committee both the Mayor of Greater Manchester and the Walking and Cycling Commissioner, Chris Boardman were to be invited to attend and contribute to the discussion.

The Executive Member for the Environment, Planning and Transport welcomed the comments from the Committee on this important area of work. She said this work was very complex and Manchester was working closely with the other nine authorities to ensure the final plan was appropriate and complemented other strategies. She said that work was also underway with health partners and Transport for Greater Manchester to develop the plan, noting that responsibility for the motorway network remained with central government.

Decision

The Committee recommend that when the outline business case is submitted for consideration that the Mayor of Greater Manchester and the Walking and Cycling Commissioner, Chris Boardman be invited to attend and contribute to the discussion.

NESC/19/04 Delivering the Our Manchester Strategy - Executive Member for Neighbourhoods

The Committee considered the reports of the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods that provided an overview of work undertaken, and progress towards the delivery of the Council's priorities as set out in the Our Manchester strategy for those areas within the respective Executive Member's portfolio.

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

- What was being done to monitor the Biffa contract, noting that residual waste had not been collected after the Christmas period and consideration needed to be given to arranging additional collections over this period;
- Flytippers needed to be pursued and prosecuted, with perpetrators named and shamed;
- Welcoming the Executive Member responding to the recommendations made by the Committee in relation to waste storage and fire safety in apartment blocks;
- Was there any evidence of additional costs as a result to recycling changes being passed onto residents in apartment blocks;
- The 'Recycle for GM' did not always work correctly;
- Was too much leniency given to business operating within the city centre, who's activities contributed to rubbish by the enforcement teams; and

- Consideration should be given to instructing Biffa to collect all waste on their next rounds.

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods thanked Members for their continued challenge, noting that the views and concerns of the Committee had been taken into consideration when introducing the changes to recycling collections in apartment blocks. He stated that he was unaware of any costs being transferred to residents as a result of these changes during phase one and two, however if Members were aware of any he encouraged the Members to inform him of these and this would be investigated.

The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods informed the Committee that his work complemented the wider Manchester Green and Blue Strategy, giving the example that options for the licensing of electric vehicles as taxis in the city were being considered to address the issue of emissions and improve air quality.

In response to the comments made regarding the Biffa contract and waste collection over the Christmas period, he stated that Biffa had invested in an additional 12 vehicles and the recent dispute with staff regarding night shift working had been resolved, however the pay dispute was a longstanding issue and negotiations were still ongoing. In response to the issue raised regarding the app he said he would feed this back and he would also consider the options for additional collections over the Christmas period.

With regard to the issue of flytipping he said that Manchester had a strong record in pursuing and persecuting perpetrators and when prosecutions were successful these were publicised in the local press and via social media. He commented that the dedicated flytipping team was now established, and whilst improvements were being made the issue remained a challenge, however he was committed to addressing this issue that blighted neighbourhoods.

In response to waste associated with businesses in the city centre he advised that teams would always try and work with premises in the first instance to improve and address any issues, however there were occasions where it was appropriate to expedite enforcement action.

Decision

To note the report.

NESC/19/05 Delivering the Our Manchester Strategy - Executive Member for the Environment, Planning and Transport

The Committee considered the reports of the Executive Member for the Environment, Planning and Transport that provided an overview of work undertaken, and progress towards the delivery of the Council's priorities as set out in the Our Manchester strategy for those areas within the respective Executive Member's portfolio.

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

- Concern was raised that zero hours contracts were being used by subcontractors in the Highways department, in particular to the gulley cleaning service;
- Further consideration needed to be given to the timing of gulley and highways cleaning to maximise the benefits of this; and
- More needed to be done to publicise the social value work that was achieved through the Council's procurement process.

The Executive Member for the Environment, Planning and Transport informed the Members that she had been alerted to the concerns regarding the use of zero hour contracts and had charged officers to undertake an investigation into this allegation.

In regard to gulley cleaning and road sweeping she acknowledged that this could be compromised by vehicles blocking or restricting access. She said that efforts, including installing signage to give notice of cleaning dates were being used to notify residents and teams using blowers to move debris into the middle of the road from under and around parked vehicles so this could be collected more easily.

The Executive Member for the Environment, Planning and Transport stated that reports on Social Value and the Highways Department had been submitted to the Ethical Procurement and Contract Management Sub Group. She stated that the intention was to share this good practice and lessons learnt with other departments across the council. She acknowledged the comment regarding the need to communicate this good work with residents.

Decision

To note the report.

NESC/19/06 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 Committee agreed to move the report listed for February on Homelessness and Manchester Move to the March meeting and add a report on Highways and the Flow of Traffic across the City to the February meeting.

The Chair stated that a session would be organised before the end of the month for Members and the Highways Department to discuss any outstanding concerns they had, in addition to the issues raised at the December 2018 meeting and an update on this would be provided to the March meeting.

Decisions

The Committee notes the report and approve the work programme subject to the above amendments.

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2019

Present:

Councillor Hacking - In the Chair

Councillors Andrews, Collins, Cooley, M Dar, Evans, Fletcher-Hackwood, Kirkpatrick, Rawlins and Rawson

Councillor S Murphy, Deputy Leader

Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Schools, Culture and Leisure

Michele Scattergood, Breakthrough UK

Jackie Driver, Co-Chair, Our Manchester Disability Plan (OMDP) Board

Richard Jones, Engagement Group/Manchester Deaf Centre

Apologies:

Councillor Douglas

CESC/19/01 Minutes

The Chair informed Members that the information the Committee had requested on the Council's reserves would be considered by the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee, as this fell within its remit. A Member requested clarity, when considering budget proposals, on which areas fell within the Committee's remit.

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2018 as a correct record.

CESC/19/02 Our Manchester Disability Plan (OMDP) Update

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Lead/Lead for OMDP which provided an overview of progress, challenges and achievements in relation to the OMDP and an update on other disability-related projects such as the Disability Confident Scheme.

The Strategic Lead (Adult Social Care) provided an overview of the OMDP and the work taking place as part of the Health and Social Care workstream. Jackie Driver, the Co-Chair of the OMDP Board, outlined her background and her involvement in the OMDP Board. She reported that this work was unique within the UK and recommended that it be showcased more widely. Michele Scattergood from Breakthrough UK provided an overview of the Work and Skills workstream. She thanked the Work and Skills Team for their contribution and outlined the challenges involved, including the challenge of getting more organisations to contribute. Richard Jones, the Chair of the Engagement Group, outlined the Group's role in ensuring that the Council, partners and organisations led by disabled people were involved in and influencing strategy. He emphasised the importance of all those involved taking responsibility for communicating the OMDP in an accessible way to people across

the city. He reported that, going forward, the Group needed to do more to engage with disabled people across Manchester but that time and resources were limited so support from the Council was important. He shared his experiences as a Deaf person, outlining some of the barriers facing Deaf and disabled people in day-to-day life. He reported that the OMDP aimed to break down these barriers and give disabled people a quality of life equal to that of non-disabled people and he thanked those involved.

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

- How this work could be showcased more widely;
- What was being done to ensure that disabled people who were living in residential care homes and were socially isolated were included;
- Whether the impact of the work was being measured;
- Request for more information on the Disability Confident Scheme; and
- Whether the Work and Skills workstream was aligned with sector demand.

Jackie Driver suggested that this work could be showcased through organisations such as the Local Government Association and the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Michele Scattergood informed Members about a project that her organisation, Breakthrough UK, was running to support isolated disabled people to establish themselves in their community. The Strategic Lead (Adult Social Care) reported that it was now recognised that supporting disabled people living in residential care by, for example, providing independent living equipment, should not be solely left to the care provider.

Michele Scattergood reported that the focus of the OMDP work at present was on getting people involved rather than producing statistics on outputs. The Strategic Lead (Adult Social Care) informed Members that a Research, Data and Policy Group would be developed in future. She reported that the need for an evidence base was recognised but that attitudinal change was needed first. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager reported that there was an under-representation of disabled people in the Council's workforce, particularly at a senior level. He reported that the Council was using the Disability Confident Scheme to put in place a number of approaches to increase the number of disabled people in the workforce, provide opportunities for progression and development and bring about a change in the organisational culture. Michele Scattergood reported that the Work and Skills workstream focused on enabling disabled people to have the same job opportunities as non-disabled people and did not try to direct them into particular sectors; however, she reported that the partner organisations currently involved in this work were from a limited number of sectors.

A Member who was also the Lead Member for Disabled People reported that the OMDP Board provided a high level of constructive challenge to those involved. She emphasised the many aspects of this work which related to a wide range of elements of everyday life for disabled people.

Decision

To thank the guests for their contribution and to note the report.

CESC/19/03 Delivering the Our Manchester Strategy

The Committee received reports of the Deputy Leader and the Executive Member for Schools, Culture and Leisure which provided an overview of work undertaken and progress towards the delivery of the Council's priorities as set out in the Our Manchester strategy for those areas within their respective portfolios.

The main points and themes within Deputy Leader's report included progress and outcomes in relation to:

- Our Manchester;
- Social inclusion;
- The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS);
- Homelessness and rough sleeping;
- Equalities;
- International relations; and
- The Local Government Association (LGA).

The Deputy Leader informed Members that one of the city's homeless shelters had had to close due to an electrical fault but that, with the help of partners, sufficient capacity had been identified elsewhere.

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

- Request for further details of the Adverse Childhood Experiences pilot taking place in Harpurhey; and
- What aspects of Brexit should concern this Committee.

The Deputy Leader reported that training was being given to help staff from a range of agencies understand the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences on people, stating that this approach had resulted in a 70% reduction in exclusions in one school. She highlighted the impact of Brexit on community cohesion, citing the increase in hate crime after the referendum, and the impact on European Union nationals in the UK who would need to be supported through administrative process to remain in the UK.

The Executive Member for Schools, Culture and Leisure referred to the main points and themes within his report, which included progress and outcomes in relation to:

- Libraries, culture and parks; and
- Young people.

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

- What was the new approach to the implementation of capital projects, which was referred to in the report; and
- The impact of the roll-out of Universal Credit on Free School Meals.

The Executive Member for Schools, Culture and Leisure confirmed that there would be an impact on Free School Meals from the roll-out of Universal Credit and informed Members about software which had been provided to Manchester schools to enable them to check whether a pupil was eligible for Free School Meals. He reported that the new approach to capital projects involved one officer from the Parks Team and one officer from the Capital Projects Team working together to progress capital projects in parks.

Decision

To note the reports.

CESC/19/04 Manchester Events Strategy 2019-2029

The Committee received a report of the Chief Operating Officer (Neighbourhoods) which identified the strengths of Manchester's event offer and the need to think differently about how Manchester focused its investment - differentiating investment into events that were aimed principally at supporting communities and animating the city and those which generated significant economic value and profile for the city through the development of the visitor economy. It set out the vision, principles and aims for the strategy and the need to develop a refreshed and more coherent events offer.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report, which included:

- An analysis of the current situation, including best practice from other cities worldwide;
- The vision and aims of the Events Strategy;
- The Events Programme; and
- Next steps.

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

- Whether further information could be provided on the Council resources required to develop, deliver and facilitate the events listed in the Core Events Programme 2019/20 – 2020/21;
- The importance of ensuring that an ethical approach was taken to the bidding process;
- What could be done to ensure that the employment arising from large events met minimum standards, for example, avoiding the use of zero hour contracts;
- Whether more funding could be invested in community events; and
- Whether the criteria for funding community events had been reviewed through a co-design process, using an Our Manchester approach.

The Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure and Events) reported that an ethical, fair and transparent bidding process was used and that one of the aims of the new Events Strategy was Collaborative Leadership and Good Governance which included an ethical approach to decision-making. He informed Members that the Strategy aimed to attract more events which would remain in the city for a number of years, rather than one-off large events, and this would enable the Council to use its procurement

process to ensure better employment opportunities for local people, for example, avoiding zero hour contracts. He reported that work was taking place with both the universities in the city to ensure that Manchester had the skills to support the delivery of these events. He informed Members that Manchester was not currently investing as much in events as some comparator cities in the UK. He advised the Committee that he would identify the best way to provide Members with further details of the Council resources being invested in core events without compromising commercially sensitive information.

The Executive Member for Schools, Culture and Leisure reported that he had been trying to increase the allocation of funding for community events and that he recognised the value of these events on neighbourhoods and community cohesion. He reported that new groups were being encouraged and supported to apply for funding for events and that the Council was looking at ways to secure more funding for community events. The Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure and Events) reported that one of the ways the Council was looking at to do this was to get the commercial events taking place in the city to make a donation to the cost of the community events. He also informed Members that, while funding for global events had been reduced by 44.5% since 2010, funding for community events had been protected as the Council recognised the importance of community events. He reported that, although the criteria for funding community events had not been developed through a co-design process, the criteria meant that groups which adopted an Our Manchester approach, for example, engaging with local residents, were more likely to obtain funding.

Decision

To request that the Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure and Events) provide Members with further details of the Council resources being invested in core events.

CESC/19/05 Overview Report

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report 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.

The Chair recommended that the Committee receive a report at its March meeting on how Greater Manchester Police (GMP) had prioritised the additional police resources funded through the precept and how this had benefited residents. A Member requested that the Committee also receive a report on Community Events at its March meeting, to which the Chair agreed.

Decision

To note the report and agree the work programme, subject to the above amendments.