



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
GREEN CITY REGION PARTNERSHIP**

**HELD VIRTUALLY ON FRIDAY 17 MARCH 2023 AT 10.00AM**

**PRESENT:**

Councillor Martyn Cox	GMCA Environment Portfolio Lead & Chair (Bolton Council) (Chair)
Councillor Alan Quinn	Waste & Recycling Committee (Bury Council) (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Mike McCluster	Planning & Housing Commission (Salford City Council)
Harry Catherall	GMCA Environment Portfolio Lead Chief Executive (Oldham Council)
Patrick Allcorn	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
Leigh Broadhurst	Suez (Vice-Chair Sustainable Consumption & Production Challenge Group)
Steve Connor	Creative Concern
Phil Korbel	Cooler Projects (Vice-Chair Communications & Engagement Challenge Group)
Carly McLaren	University of Manchester (Chair 5 Year Environment Plan Forum)
Roger Milburn	Arup
Liz Price	(For Andy Gibson) Manchester Metropolitan University
Ian Rutherford	Greater Manchester Faith Communities
Anne Selby	Independent Member (Chair Natural Capital Challenge Group)
Will Swan	University of Salford (Vice-Chair Low Carbon Challenge Group)

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mark Atherton	Director of Environment, GMCA
Richard Banks	Senior Manager – Logistics & Environment, TfGM
Sam Evans	Head of Natural Environment, GMCA
Oliver Fenton	Business Support Officer, Governance & Scrutiny, GMCA
Jenny Hollamby	Senior Governance & Scrutiny Officer, GMCA
Sarah Hollard	Programme and Policy Lead, GMCA

BOLTON  
BURY

MANCHESTER  
OLDHAM

ROCHDALE  
SALFORD

STOCKPORT  
TAMESIDE

TRAFFORD  
WIGAN

## **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Andrew Hunt	Green Energy and Sustainability Manager, Oldham Council
Claire Igoe	Greater Manchester NHS Integrated Care
Sarah Mellor	Head of Consumption and Production, GMCA
Garry Parker	Assistant Director, Environment and Regulatory Services, Bolton Council
Robyn Smith	Project Manager for the Mission Based Approach, GMCA
David Taylor	Executive Director – Waste, GMCA
Michelle Whitfield	Head of Communications and Behavioural Change, GMCA

## **GMGCRP/61/23 INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Eamonn Boylan (GMCA), Helen Boyle (Cadent), Mark Easedale (Environment Agency), Richard Halsey (Energy Systems Catapult, Chair Low Carbon Challenge Group), Paul Hooper (Manchester Metropolitan University, Chair Sustainable Consumption and Production Challenge Group), Bernard Magee (Siemens), Sheona Southern (Marketing Manchester) and Nailin Thakker (University of Manchester).

It was reported that Ian Crewe had replaced Lesley Worswick as the new Environment Agency Area Director. The Chair, on behalf of the Partnership, thanked Lesley for her valuable contribution.

## **GMGCRP/62/23 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS**

It was advised that Greater Manchester's new devolution deal with government had been published. The full detail was available on the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk). The key points of interest to the Partnership were:

- Retrofit and Net Zero funding - the government would pilot the devolution of retrofit funding to GMCA through allocation rather than competition from 2025 onwards. This pilot would include, but was not necessarily limited to, funding for buildings retrofit and would form part of GMCA's single department-style settlement.

- Strategic energy planning - the deal recognised GMCA's strategic roles and activity in planning future energy systems for net zero and included further work on standards, green finance and advice to increase household energy efficiency. It also supported the GMCA's offer to work with the existing City Decarbonisation Delivery Programme on heat zoning.
- Nature recovery - the Greater Manchester Mayor would be appointed as the responsible authority to develop the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Greater Manchester. The government would support the GMCA to accelerate the delivery of its Natural Capital Investment Plan and overcome the barriers to implementation of local investment in natural capital. This might include funding support, specialist expertise, co-ordination of peer support and networking, and/or local partnership working with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) arm's length bodies.
- Adapting to climate change – the deal also confirmed that government had agreed that Greater Manchester would be a testbed to explore and develop options for how flood risk management, including other relevant adaptation activities, could best be addressed and accelerated at the local level.

## **GMGCRP/63/23     DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

### **RESOLVED/-**

Councillor Alan Quinn declared a personal interest in Item 5 – Quarter 4 Progress Report, by virtue of him being an Interim Board Member of the City of Trees and the Greater Manchester representative on the North West Regional Floods and Coastal Committee.

**GMGCRP/64/23 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED  
27 JANUARY 2023**

**RESOLVED/-**

The minutes of the last meeting, held on 27 January 2023, were approved as a correct record.

**Matters Arising**

- Arising from minute number GMGCRP/52/23 (Quarter 3 Progress Report), it was reported that the Director of Environment would imminently write to Defra regarding ash die back and possible markets/solutions for ash die back trees. The Chair of the Natural Capital Challenge Group confirmed that the ash die back action had been progressed.
- Arising from minute number GMGCRP/53/23 (Work Programme 2022/23 and Challenge Group Updates), it was noted that workshop to pilot a systemic approach to identifying new locations for tree planting would be held in Oldham later this month.
- Arising from minute GMGCRP/57/23 (Integrated Water Management Plan), it was advised that a roundtable chaired by the Greater Manchester Mayor would be held on 31 March 2023 to review progress on the development of an Integrated Water Management Plan for Greater Manchester.

**GMGCRP/65/23 QUARTER 4 PROGRESS REPORT – 5 YEAR ENVIRONMENT  
PLAN (5YEP)**

Councillor Alan Quinn declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of his appointment of Interim Board Member of the City of Trees and the Greater Manchester representative on the North West Regional Floods and Coastal Committee.

A report was considered that presented the usual update on the progress of the Green City Region Partnership for the fourth quarter of 2022/23 and key milestones for the first quarter of 2023/24.

Attention was drawn to the following:

## **Energy**

- It was reported that Greater Manchester had been awarded £70k from Innovate UK's Net Zero Living programme to help accelerate the delivery of the city-region's Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs).

## **Buildings**

- With regards to Retrofit Greater Manchester (Your Home Better), a new pricing structure had been developed to reflect the cost of delivery of a dedicated solar survey offer and a comprehensive whole house retrofit plan. Metrolink advertising was planned for the end of March 2023.
- The Partnership heard that a £1.78m grant had been secured for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Phase 3b programme (roughly £5.5m total project value). Consultancy commissions of 45 building decarbonisation feasibility studies was underway. Next quarter would see the close out of the PSDS Phase 3a programme and continue the consultancy commission with a focus on completing the site surveys.
- It was reported that initial engagement meetings had been undertaken within GMCA on a payroll loan (not salary sacrifice) to help staff with upfront costs of retrofit.

## **Transport**

- In terms of the Clean Bus Fund, it was noted that currently 92% of buses awarded retrofit funding had been upgraded. Overall, the Greater Manchester based bus fleet would be around 92% compliant once all planned retrofits and replacements were completed in the next six months. In the next quarter, TfGM would continue

with depot power upgrades and charging infrastructure ready for the deployment of the first 50 electric buses onto the Bee Network expected in September 2023.

### **Sustainable Consumption and Production**

- It was reported that a tender was about to be issued to review GMCA's scope 3 emissions through public sector expenditure, identify and recommended key actions to support further decarbonisation.
- It was noted that research would commence on Greater Manchester consumer behaviour insights to identify low carbon solutions and levers to drive change.
- In the next quarter, work would continue on the development of a Community Climate Change e-learning course delivered via the Greater Manchester Green City website.

### **Natural Environment**

- Regarding the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), it was advised that the resource and project management planning for the refresh of the LNRS had commenced with Natural England and Greater Manchester Ecology Unit.
- It was noted that 76 applications had been received for round 2 of the Greater Manchester Green Spaces Fund. A new Grant Manager and Communications Officer had been appointed. The next quarter would see the grants awarded and round 3 would be opened.

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero representative asked about the payroll loan scheme and if there were any barriers. The Director of Environment, GMCA agreed to speak to the representative outside of the meeting.

### **RESOLVED/-**

1. That the Partnership noted the progress outlined in the report and the latest position set out in the dashboard, [Annex 01 \(5 Year Environment Plan\)](#)

[Performance Overview\) and available online at: Five Year Environment Plan \(2019-24\) Progress \(gtableau\).](#)

2. That the Director of Environment, GMCA contact the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero representative outside of the meeting regarding the payroll sacrifice scheme.

**GMGCRP/66/23      WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23 & CHALLENGE GROUP  
UPDATES REPORT AND PRESENTATION BY CHALLENGE  
GROUP CHAIRS**

Members considered a report provided by the Challenge Group Chairs, which outlined the progress made by the 5YEP Challenge Groups in developing their key priorities through the task and finish action groups.

The presentation that accompanied the report provided an updated overview of the Challenge Group priorities and how they were being delivered through task and finish action groups.

The main points referred:

- The Low Carbon Challenge Group had met three times since it merged with the Energy Innovation Challenge Group. At their last meeting, updates were received about generation, storage and flexibility (Electricity Northwest), public estate (GMCA), innovation (UoS) and domestic retrofit (Turner Townsend) priority areas. The focus was on progress to date and the key challenges/barriers to accelerated delivery. Presentations were also received around green finance and the commercial building retrofit task and finish group.
- It was advised that the new governance Natural Capital Challenge Group arrangements were being embedded. The Chair of the Group was pleased that the devolution deal made nature recovery and natural capital priorities and suggested it was in recognition of the work in this area over the years. It was reported that work was well underway in terms of LNRS, which the Greater Manchester Mayor was responsible for delivery. It was highlighted that the Greater Manchester Environment Fund action was amber; work was taking place to secure income sources.

The Vice-Chair raised the Water Framework Directive, which identified 76 invasive non-native species and how Scotland was trying to control Japanese knotweed with grazing sheep. A concern was also raised about rivers and how invasive species were taking over. Concerns would be raised at the North West Regional Floods and Coastal Committee.

- At the last meeting of the Sustainable Consumption and Production Challenge Group, updates were received on the priority areas. Two gaps identified for further work were good systems and technological innovations to address waste streams. It was reported that a textiles working group had been set up with the ambition of developing a textiles circular economy and platforms were being established. Further work would include a residual composition assessment, a high level assessment of the commercial and environmental performance and sorting and pilot assessments of textile flows from high use sectors. Updates were also provided about the Greater Manchester water fountain/refill scheme, a refresh of the catering data and single use plastics, the feasibility of an e-module to support the reduction in single use plastics for producers of goods and services, the 'One Bin to Rule them All' scheme, the three dimensional printing project, and procurement pieces to look at scope 3 emissions and a toolkit to reduce carbon emissions in the public sector and the Green Summit. Regarding sustainable lifestyles, a behaviour change task and finish group was being set up to consider consumer habits and messaging. A further task and finish group was also being established to consider food waste and the whole food system in Greater Manchester.

The Vice-Chair who was also a Member of the Waste Committee reported that concerns had been raised about the Resources and Waste Strategy for England and its implications.

- As part of the new Green Communications Delivery Challenge Group update, it was reported that the first meeting was held in January 2023, which considered an overview of the mission based approach and 5YEP. An audit of communications channels, green communications narrative and strategy and a 5YEP listening events task and finish groups had been set up. Work was progressing quickly given the Group's new focus on producing a communications strategy and



providing consistent messaging across Greater Manchester with a greater emphasis on delivering campaigns and supporting the Green Summit.

- In terms of transport, it was reported that work had been undertaken on the Electric Vehicle (EV) charging network to support 200k vehicles and a report would be considered by the GMCA on 24 March 2023 regarding the recommendations of the study that considered how the public sector could best influence and optimise the future rollout of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI). In terms of the Clean Air Plan, government had requested further evidence, which required detailed modelling of the plan against the benchmark of a charging Clean Air Zone that addressed the exceedances identified in central Manchester and Salford. With regard to the clean bus fund, it was advised that 92% of buses had been upgraded.

A discussion took place about the electric vehicle market, sales, and the suggested barriers of price, confidence, charging points/coverage and the skills gap.

- An update was received from the 5YEP Implementation Challenge Group, where the new governance structure was bedding in. The connection and engagement with transport was being strengthened and the Transport Commissioner had attended a meeting to discuss the Bee Network and the red, amber, green (RAG) ratings detailed in today's presentation. The Chair of the Group had also attended a Bee Network Partnership meeting. It was recognised that whilst work was being delivered to decarbonize transport, more was needed across every area to hit the targets in the 5YEP.

## **RESOLVED/-**

1. That the Partnership noted the progress in developing the Mission Based Approach and the associated Challenge Group activity.
2. That the Vice-Chair would raise concerns about rivers and how invasive species were taking over at the North West Regional Floods and Coastal Committee.

## **GMGCRP/67/23      DEVELOPING THE NEXT 5YEP**

A presentation was provided by the Project Manager for the Mission Based Approach, GMCA.

The plan was to launch the next 5YEP in autumn 2024; there were 13 months to produce a draft. The presentation outlined the steps proposed to follow, the shape of the proposed plan.

The Partnership was asked for reflections, lessons learned from the last plan, comments on the wireframe and timeline and for any other feedback.

Discussions surrounded:

- It was asked that a higher level of engagement took place with the private sector and representation be strengthened.
- It was suggested there was an opportunity for more engagement with the Digital sector in this space as it was a key driver around environment, health, wellbeing, and resilience.

## **RESOLVED/-**

1. That the Partnership approved the shape of and steps towards developing the proposed plan.
2. That the Partnership's comments noted above be included in future 5YEP planning.

3. Officers offering assistance were asked to contact the GMCA's Project Manager for the Mission Based Approach.

## **GMGCRP/67/23 GO NEUTRAL AND PHOTOVOLTAICS (PV) GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS**

The Partnership received a presentation that provided an update on the delivery of the Go Neutral programme, which sought to identify and install local renewable energy generation on Local Authority owned sites across Greater Manchester. The current programme had a cumulative value of pipeline equating to 15.7MW or £17m investment. Also introduced was a PV guide for schools.

The Partnership was asked to consider an aggregated pan-Greater Manchester portfolio approach to finance and to address concerns about leasing arrangements, how the schools solar PV guide could be disseminated and if it was appropriate for other sectors to help build awareness and accelerate delivery of solar PV.

Questions surrounded:

- In terms of European Regional Development fund, it was clarified that a scheme was due to be completed in September 2023. There was an opportunity to take up some funding, which Oldham and Stockport had taken advantage of.
- A Member asked if the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) could be used as a funding stream. Various forms of finance including PWLB were being explored; they were complex and the legal side of agreements were being understood. The key to unlocking accelerated work was finance.
- The Faith Sector representative advised that work on solar PV on faith buildings was taking place and offered assistance in this area.
- A concern was raised about academization of schools, and if schools would risk using funding on buildings that could be taken over or separated out of Local Authority funding. Whilst academies provided a huge opportunity to accelerate as many had the finance, there was a risk to Local Authorities and a model was being considered where financial returns and ownerships would be wrapped into

agreements; details needed working through but there was a solution. Further discussions with the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero would take place.

- A Member asked about engagement with schools, especially School Governors via GovernorHub, and offers of briefing sessions. Engagement with Governors was key and Officers welcomed the ideas to share information and raise the profile. The intention was to generate interest as a whole so there was a better chance of moving it forward.
- Another Member, who was a School Governor, asked Officers to be mindful of the current climate in terms of surplus balances and the teacher's pay award but agreed to find out the best way to communicate with School Governors.
- The Carbon Literacy representative asked that it be used as a channel for dissemination.
- Given the enthusiasm and interest in this area, the Chair proposed and it was agreed that he and the GMCA's Director of Environment would discuss the scheme with the Greater Manchester Mayor.

#### **RESOLVED/-**

1. That the presentation and accompanying information be received and noted.
2. That Officers wanting to get involved were asked to contact the Programme and Policy Lead, GMCA.
3. That the Chair and GMCA's Director of Environment would discuss the scheme with the Greater Manchester Mayor.

#### **GMGCRP/68/23 NHS GREEN PLAN**

A presentation was provided by the Net Zero Programme Director, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care, which updated on the delivery of the NHS Green Plan published in May 2022. Focus areas of the Green Plan were largely aligned with the Greater Manchester 5YEP and there was a good cross representation between GMCA and NHS groups.

The Partnership was asked to provide comments on the presentation, advise how work could continue to improve links with the GMCA/Local Authorities/key partners and work more closely on shared priorities, and how to embed health improvement into policies and strategies.

The main points referred to:

- A Member asked how much effort was being put into health and wellbeing outside of the strategy. Generally, within the acute sector it was mostly around helping people to get well once they were ill. However, within Greater Manchester there were a number of programmes focusing on green social prescribing, making smoking history, alcohol free pregnancies, which were around tackling those areas. There was also a big programme of work around social care, which was working with people to keep them out of hospital and keeping support within the community. It was suggested that more preventative activity would be beneficial and showing how interventions could save money and carbon.
- A point was raised by the LEP representative about switching appliances off to save energy and how this was not practical in a clinical setting. It was further highlighted that given the trailblazer announcement and moving towards 2025, it was suggested discussions were needed around making further progress on being able to connect the greater control over health and social care and the financial co-benefits of tackling carbon. It was agreed that discussions would take place outside the meeting.
- A Member who sat on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund suggested that it could help especially around interesting paths to get people closer to the jobs market.
- The Chair asked how information was shared with the Integrated Care Board (ICB). It was noted that a presentation would be provided around May 2023.

#### **RESOLVED/-**

- That the information be received and noted.
- That the points raised by the LEP representative be addressed outside the meeting.

- That the UK Shared Prosperity Fund be approached by the Net Zero Programme Director, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care.

## **GMGCRP/69/23 GREATER MANCHESTER STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT**

Consideration was given to a report that provided an overview of the key messages and findings from the second progress report developed, at 12 months into delivery of the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS). The full progress report would be published on [17 March 2023](#).

The information gathered for the report showed that a responsive set of actions had been taken to the main findings and the implications from the first progress report, although overall further pivot, pace, and scale would be required if overall GMS ambitions were to be achieved.

The progress report focused on key strategic opportunities presented to Greater Manchester, raising visibility of how whole system responses, and applying GMS ways of working could support maximising those opportunities.

The main points referred:

- Member's attention was drawn to sections 2.8 to 2.12 of the report. Carbon neutrality was still achievable by 2038. However, carbon reduction needed embedding across the wider GMCA strategy and policy functions. Work was taking place with the Tyndall Centre and further resources had been secured to help embed carbon across the broad. Barriers were being understood and the refresh of the 5YEP provided an opportunity to ensure carbon was embedded in the wider agenda.
- In response to the request for wider commitment, the Greater Manchester Faith Communities representative reported that a climate audience was taking place with Pope Francis on 20 April 2023 in Rome. It was envisaged that work would move forward within the strategy and plan in terms of lifestyles and access. A report would be provided in due course. Broader work was needed with sectors who were aligned but not actively engaged. There were opportunities with the leisure, heavy

industry and health sectors. The 5YEP would focus on those sectors which needed the most help.

- A point was raised about reducing carbon emissions by exporting it to other countries and it was asked if there was any work in this area. Work was taking place with companies in Greater Manchester to ensure they were considering scope 3, which might have an impact on wider supply chains as they started to develop their own carbon neutral plans.

#### **RESOLVED/-**

1. That the Partnership noted the findings of the report and agreed that a presentation on future progress be brought to a future meeting of the Partnership.
2. That a report from the Greater Manchester Faith Communities be considered at a future meeting following the climate audience with Pope Francis.

#### **GMGCRP/70/23 ENVIRONMENT COMMUNICATIONS IMPACT REPORT**

A presentation was provided by the GMCA's Head of Communications and Behavioural Change that provided Quarter 3 2022/23 Impact report.

It was reported that the City of Trees had a very productive meeting with TfGM on possible tree planting sites.

#### **RESOLVED/-**

That the presentation be noted.

#### **GMGCRP/70/23 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The Annual meeting would be held virtually on Friday 21 July 2023 at 10.30am.