

Date: March 2021

Subject: Preparations for COP26

Report of: Councillor Andrew Western, Portfolio Lead for Green City Region and
Alison McKenzie-Folan, Portfolio Lead Chief Executive for Green City
Region

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To provide GMCA with an overview of the opportunity for Greater Manchester presented by COP26 UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow on 1-12 November 2021. The paper outlines how, working in partnership, GM hopes to utilise COP26 to exemplify Greater Manchester as a premier Green City.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The GMCA is requested to:

1. **Note and comment on the paper which is presented for information to ensure Leaders are aware of activity to date and the current collaboration and potential partnership opportunities that are being explored.**

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BOLTON
BURY

MANCHESTER
OLDHAM

ROCHDALE
SALFORD

STOCKPORT
TAMESIDE

TRAFFORD
WIGAN

Equalities Implications:

There is no significant differential impact of these proposals on protected groups. Any materials produced for COP26 will be developed in line with accessibility protocols.

Climate Change Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures –

- 1. Every effort will be made to minimize direct and indirect carbon emissions produced as a result of GM's engagement with COP26.*
- 2. The limited unavoidable carbon emissions resulting from public transport utilized in association with the event and embedded energy in the production of materials will hopefully be more than offset through the behaviour change stimulated from the advanced communications activities.*

Risk Management:

There are no significant risks emanating from this proposal.

Legal Considerations:

There are no significant legal implications of this proposal.

Financial Consequences – Revenue:

There will be financial implications for GMCA revenue budgets. GMCA has already approved £30k for a GM Green Summit in 2021. Any additional activities agreed will need to find revenue funding, including from external partners, in addition to existing time from GMCA and District Officers.

Financial Consequences – Capital:

There are no capital funding implications of this proposals.

Number of attachments to the report: 0

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

This has not yet been discussed at Scrutiny.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

| TRACKING/PROCESS | |
|--|-----|
| Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution | Yes |
| EXEMPTION FROM CALL IN | |
| Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency? | no |

| | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| GM Transport Committee | Overview & Scrutiny Committee | |
| | 12 th November 2020 | |

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.0 For the first time, the UK will host the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow on 1-12 November 2021. The climate talks will be the biggest international summit the UK has ever hosted; bringing together heads of state, climate experts, young people, civil society, trade unions, faith groups and Indigenous Peoples to agree coordinated action to tackle climate change.
- 1.1 Since 1995, government representatives from around the world have gathered annually for the UN Climate Change Conference (often referred to as the Conference of the Parties, “the COP”). At COP21, hosted in Paris, world leaders committed to a historic agreement to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the rise to 1.5 °C. They also agreed to step up efforts to adapt to the impacts of climate change and to make finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development.
- 1.2 At COP26, governments, businesses, cities, the scientific community, and civil society will work together to accelerate the transformation of our economies, deal with the inevitable impacts of climate change, and bend the curve on global emissions.
- 1.3 The UK is committed to fulfilling the potential of the Paris Agreement by facilitating a balanced negotiated outcome that accelerates climate action by encouraging Parties to submit ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and long-term strategies, increased commitments on climate finance and real economy change. At COP26, the UK is seeking to bring governments, business, civil society, and young people together to accelerate progress on the following shared challenges of climate change:
- Adaptation and resilience - to help communities adapt to, and prepare for, the worst impacts of climate change.
 - Nature- to safeguard and restore natural habitats and ecosystems to preserve the planet’s biodiversity.
 - Energy transitions- to accelerate the clean energy transition by encouraging the use of cheaper renewables and storage.
 - Clean Transport- to clean our air by speeding up the global transition to zero emission vehicles.
 - Finance - to encourage our financial systems to be cleaner to unlock growth and create green jobs.
 - Cities and built environment to unlock the key role that cities and buildings play in the pathways to net zero.

2.0 THE COP26 SUMMIT

- 2.1 Hosted in Glasgow, COP26 will be delivered across two sites - the Scottish Events Campus (SEC) (referred to as the Blue Zone) and the Glasgow Science Centre (known as the Green Zone). The two sites are 9 minutes apart and accessed via a bridge.
- 2.2 The **Blue Zone** is an UN-managed space which hosts the negotiations. The space brings together delegations from 197 Parties, alongside observer organisations to share their stories at panel discussions, side events, exhibits, and cultural events. All attendees within the Blue Zone must be accredited by the UNFCCC.
- 2.3 The **Green Zone** is managed by the UK Government, and is a platform for the general public, youth groups, civil society, academia, artists, business, and others to have their voices heard through events, exhibitions, workshops and talks that promote dialogue, awareness, education, and commitments. However, a decision will be made in March regarding delivering the Green Zone virtually and scaling back the floorplate of the conference due to the pandemic.
- 2.4 Marketing Manchester (on behalf of the GM Green City Partnership), MMU, Manchester University, Salford University have each applied for observer status at COP26. If successful they would have access to the 'secure' Blue Zone. This is GM's preferred location. Observer status accreditation will be announced in May.
- 2.5 It is believed that Core Cities are being allocated space in the Green Zone by Glasgow City Council. This will be predominantly to hold an investment summit focused on green recovery with Core Cities and London. Government's Cities Catapult are involved and helping to fund.
- 2.6 Proposals to host events and requests for exhibition space in the Green Zone can be made in-line with 5th March deadline. There is no limit to the number of Expressions of Interest which can be submitted and there are likely to be several Eols that Greater Manchester is involved in.

3.0 GM PROPOSALS FOR COP26

- 3.1 Greater Manchester is currently working with Liverpool City Region, Cheshire and Warrington LEP, Net-Zero North West (Industrial Cluster Decarbonisation) and Energy Network Operators (Electricity Northwest, Cadent and Scottish Power) to develop a collective expression of interest for submission in March. It is believed that the best proposals will be elevated to the Blue Zone.
- 3.2 The partners above have agreed the following key messages:
 - This is a unique partnership, bringing together political leaders, local enterprise partnerships, local energy infrastructure providers, and industry
 - NW partners are coming together to set out a collective roadmap for net zero in the North West, and this can only be strengthened with diverse involvement from other public and private sector partners across the region

- We will be the first UK region to have a cohesive plan to be carbon neutral by at least 2040, establishing a blueprint for others to follow
- A unified energy masterplan for the region will inform and influence North West organisations and key stakeholders, acting as a catalyst to rapidly accelerate low-carbon energy solutions
- We will work with our businesses and communities to enable the transition to low-carbon energy solutions and to ensure they benefit from it. We are working together to quantify those wide-ranging benefits, including the economic benefits
- Whilst different sectors across the region may require different energy solutions, it is vital that we act now to drive adoption of low-carbon technologies (hydrogen, wind, tidal, solar, nuclear, heat, energy efficiency) for the future resilience of the region
- Ahead of COP26 in November 2021 we are establishing the North West as the UK leader in regional climate action, informing and leading national and international conversations about climate action

These key messages were communicated in a launch conference held on 22nd February.

- 3.3 A small group has been formed to translate the above into an attractive proposition to put into an EoI for submission to COP26. Current thinking includes using the hook “Northwest England presents: The Essential Revolution”. The NW is a region with innovation and change in its DNA. From the industrial revolution of the 1800's to the cultural revolution of the 1960's, from Ada Lovelace to John Lennon, this is a place which drives change through action. The final proposition is likely to be innovative in nature and include events, films and podcasts. For Greater Manchester specifically, it is likely that we will focus on our activities on topics surrounding decarbonisation of transport, retrofit of buildings for energy efficiency and smart energy innovation.
- 3.4 In addition, consideration is being given to submitting a GM specific Expression of Interest on behalf of the GM Green City Region Partnership. This is likely to include a digital piece of content, a documentary style film outlining the how Greater Manchester has established the first City-region clean growth mission for carbon neutral living. This would be screened at COP26 but have a much wider and longer legacy. The digital piece would be delivered with a range of key partners across Greater Manchester including the Universities. A series of events are also being explored which can also be delivered with key GM Partners. There is also a potential opportunity to work collectively with the M9 and Glasgow to host a Mayoral event in the Glasgow civic centre (tbc).
- 3.5 In advance of COP26, it is intended to host a number of local events and communication campaigns which are still in the early stages of planning:

Events

- A Greater Manchester business Expo at Manchester Central, organized by Marketing Manchester – live (potentially July tbc) focused on engaging businesses
- A Greater Manchester Green Summit – virtual (October) focused on engaging citizens
- A Northwest Pre COP Summit - virtual (October) with wider NZNW partners

Communications Campaigns

- Behaviour Change Campaigns – linked to national business/citizen campaigns – lead by GMCA
- Green GM – led by Marketing Manchester – focus on GM's outstanding attributes

3.6 International elements of COP26 will focus on three key areas:

- Finding common cause with other city-regions by leading and supporting joint activity that helps amplify our COP objectives as well as enable us to share our climate ambitions and credentials.
- Develop new and build on international partnerships that support the delivery of GM's International Strategy.
- Support where appropriate on the coordination of market specific activity with MIDAS and DIT with the Mayor's key priority markets – Ireland, Japan, Germany, the US as well as independently, Bangladesh.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 GMCA has previously agreed a small budget for the delivery of the 5 Year Environment Plan from retained business rates. There is currently £30k assigned for hosting a Green Summit in 2021. Previous experience suggests that this is sufficient to cover the marketing and communications costs of a GM focused event. In addition, approximately £10k has been assigned for the development of communications material, which will be tailored to the specific audiences we aim to target in GM and will support the wider communications campaigns to residents and GM stakeholders.

4.2 Our partnership with NW Net Zero partners suggests that, to have a substantial presence at COP26, a budget of £250k will be required, to be split between the partners. There are also opportunities to engage with private sector partners to bring in sponsorship. As GM is also considering a separate EOI specifically for the City Region, a similar budget requirement is anticipated and needs to be sourced, however the sponsorship opportunities do overlap between the NW and GM EOIs.

4.3 We will not know the outcome of the EOI process until May 2021, when likely costs can be finalized. GM Environment Team and Marketing Manchester will work with GMCA's Treasurer to consider where funding may be sourced at that time and come back to GMCA for approval as necessary.

5.0 OPPORTUNITIES/RISKS

5.1 The key risks include:

- There are few significant risks associated with these proposals, other than the reputational risk of not being visible or present.
- GMs inclusion in multiple EOIs reduces the risk of not being present at all, however the costs of being present will need to be rationalized once EOI acceptance is known in May 21.

5.2 The key opportunities include:

- Using COP26 to encourage our businesses and citizens are moving towards more sustainable business practices and lifestyles.
- Establishing Greater Manchester as a leading Green City Region to attract interests from global partners, future project delivery and opportunities for inward investment.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS:

The GMCA is requested to:

- 1. Note and comment on the paper, which is presented for information to ensure Leaders are aware of activity to date and the current collaboration and potential partnership opportunities that are being explored.**