



## Greater Manchester Green City Region Partnership

Date: 15 October 2021

Subject: WORK PROGRAMME & CHALLENGE GROUP UPDATE

Report of: Mark Atherton on behalf of Challenge Group Chairs

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### **PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

The purpose of this report is to outline the progress made by the 5 Year Environment Plan (5YEP) Challenge Groups in developing their key priorities through Task and Finish actions.

The accompanying presentation (Annex 01) provides an updated overview of the Challenge Group priorities and how these are being delivered through Task and Finish Groups.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Partnership is asked to:

- Note the progress in developing the Mission Based Approach and the associated Challenge Groups and Task and Finish Groups activity.

### **CONTACT OFFICERS:**

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## 1.0 BACKGROUND

The 5YEP Challenge Groups have now all met at least eight times and have established key priority areas to be addressed by the Task and Finish Groups. Their progress is being supported and monitored under the Mission Based Approach, as set out in the Five Year Environment Plan and Local Industrial Strategy.

## 2.0 COMMUNICATIONS AND BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

- **Key Messages** group has discussed how partners in the Green City Region can “speak with one voice” when communicating action which supports the Five Year Plan. The symbol of the Green Bee was agreed as the most appealing symbol of the Green City Region to businesses and individual carbon generators and we now have permission to use the symbol from Manchester City Council.
- **Talent and Ambassadors** led by the BBC and GMCA has identified influential spokespeople who will speak on behalf of and be supportive of GM Green City work. Care is being taken to ensure that spokespeople reflect the diversity of the region and feature people who have an appeal across all audiences and sectors.
- **Behaviour Change** led by the Carbon Literacy Project, has looked at best examples of behavior change in GM, identified key gaps and looked at target groups. Carbon Literacy training, focused around communicating the climate emergency, is pending for all Communications Challenge Group members. A bespoke piece of work, with key stakeholders has commenced on citizen engagement and sustainable lifestyles to develop a work programme for the next year.
- **Green Summit and COP26 activity**, led by GMCA has been supported by the Communications Challenge Group to ensure the event reflects the Green City Region. The group has fed into the agenda and Challenge Group members have attended a number of Green Summit Steering Groups meetings.

## 3.0 ENERGY INNOVATION

- **Energy Innovation Agency**, a partnership between the three universities, SSE and Bruntwood has formed a steering group, developed suitable Board Terms of Reference and a collaboration Agreeing acceptable to all parties. In addition, work has started on the messaging, USP development and value propositions to support the newly appointed EIA Director and Business Development lead.
- **Solar PV activity across the region.** Activity is progressing on the 10MW ERDF funded project to get the projects ready to tender the construction Works. Over 0.5MW of the 8.2MW in the GMCA-led Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 1 project has been installed, with the remainder planned to be in place by March 2022. Work has commenced on the GM-wide low carbon energy generation pipeline and route to market. Most districts have now confirmed an initial list of sites

to be considered for low carbon energy generation, with the rest to follow by November 2021. A call off framework is in the process of being set up to provide a suitable procurement route for these low carbon projects. The framework is planned to be tendered mid-October 2021 with a view to it being up and running in Q1 2021.

#### 4.0 LOW CARBON BUILDINGS

- **Retrofit Taskforce** is chaired by the Mayor of GM and brings together relevant organisations to work on developing a detailed action plan to deliver home and building retrofit at scale. The group has held three meetings and has focused on skills, finance and accelerating delivery. There is crossover with some of the members of the Low Carbon Buildings Challenge to ensure that the work of the challenge group supports that of the taskforce. The Group has begun to develop a RetrofittingGM action plan.
- **Retrofit Accelerator (RFA)** - a discussion paper outlining the approach and required work packages has been presented internally within GMCA obtaining approval to commission a study into consumer insight focused on demographics, complimenting current stock condition modeling. This work has identified 3 market segments, who together represent 31% of GM homeowners, who would be open to messaging and taking action on retrofit. It also gives insights into which messaging will have most impact in which groups. A market engagement event has also been held. This will form part of the work programme of the Retrofit Taskforce
- **Skills Group** led by GMCA and supported by a number of partners has developed a GM Retrofit Skills Action Plan. The plan sets out an informed short, medium, and long terms skills plan, matching skills support with employment demand, which supports the development of retrofit skills at the correct scale to ensure employment opportunities are achieved. Using ESF Skills for Growth, the GMCA Work and Skills Team have started to implement Short Term Skills Action Plan, which is key to developing high quality retrofit skills, with progress taking place in the following areas:
  - A programme of Retrofit training worth approximately £1.5 million, funded through ESF Skills for Growth will be commissioned imminently. This package will offer a variety of training focused on upskilling existing trades and professionals within employers and has been developed to respond to the current scale of skills need regionally.
  - This commission will also pilot CPD for skills providers who lead construction provision within their institutions. This CPD will focus on upskilling these skills providers in retrofit but also to carry out pilot projects to embed retrofit skills delivery within curriculums and carry out a feasibility study for their organisation to understand the capital resource they would need to deliver new content and training for retrofit skills at scale.
- **Public Buildings** – the delivery phase of the GM Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 1 is well underway, with interventions completed on circa 20% of buildings. The funder has agreed an extension to deliver the remaining works by the end of March 2022. Each PSDS phase 1 partner is now in receipt of a Building Energy Decarbonisation plan and toolkit, providing them with a decarbonisation

pathway to 2038 and action plan to expedite decarbonization of the wider public sector estate. GMCA is coordinating a combined partner bid into Phase 3 of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, which is due to be submitted to GMCA this month.

- **Heat Pump Accelerator** led by Southways Housing is a new task and finish group that has been set up to look at accelerating the installation of heat pumps in GM. The group has agreed three key issues to focus on, affordability, noise and network connectivity. Two meetings of the group have taken place.
- **Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme - Phase 1A** of the scheme ended on 31 August 2021. Over £2m has been invested on energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures for 116 privately owned and 212 socially rented homes in Greater Manchester. This includes 132 External Wall Insulation, 101 Solar PV, 36 Air Source Heat Pump and 63 Window and Door installations. We are now delivering Phase 1B and Phase 2 of the scheme until 31 March 2022. Letters have recently been sent to 25,000 eligible homes across Greater Manchester in Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) bands E, F and G occupied by residents with a combined gross annual household income of less than £30,000. This has resulted in over 1,000 leads that are currently being processed.

## 5.0 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- **Implementation of the GM Tree & Woodland Strategy (All our Trees)** led by City of Trees - The Trees for Climate initiative is a 5-year government funded programme of tree planting. CoT has been working with the 10 GM districts and other landowners to develop this season's Trees for Climate planting programme. The pipeline for 2021/22 currently totals 70.45 gross hectares, approximately 93,500 trees. Since the easing of Covid restrictions volunteer engagement has started to increase and this will ramp up significantly with this winter's planting programme.
- **Natural Course** – work is underway on planning Phase 4 of the project, which begins in the autumn. A request for an amendment was submitted to the EU at end of June 2021, this includes projects to address invasive non-native species, especially Giant Hogweed, in the River Irwell catchment. The first meeting of the GM Water Forum was held on 18th June 2021 as part of the GM Natural Capital Group annual conference. Consultants completed detailed river habitat survey of the Whittle Brook waterbody within the Northern Gateway strategic allocation site (Bury & Rochdale districts). GMCA, Environment Agency & United Utilities re-issued request for quotation for consultants to study micro plastic contamination of rivers in GM.
- **Support local authorities in implementing Biodiversity Net Gain** – earlier this year, GMCA commissioned work to understand how it can support local authorities and partners to bring forward proposals to deliver off-site Biodiversity Net Gain. Following 3 stakeholder workshops for public, private and third sector partners and input from the project steering group, a final Biodiversity Net Gain Off Site Scoping Study report has been produced including a detailed implementation plan. A

dedicated delivery team has been set up to support delivery of key actions set out in the plan. Biodiversity Net Gain Case Studies have been uploaded to GMCA Biodiversity Net Gain webpage and additional resourcing for the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) has been agreed by Directors of Place and WLT.

- **Nature Recovery Network** – The draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy produced as part of the GM pilot was accepted by Defra in July. Defra has since published a lessons learned document and has launched their consultation on implementation. The GM pilot report is due to be published as part of the Green Summit in October, with mapping outputs already available on Mapping GM and from GMEU. A draft GM response has been prepared to the national LNRS consultation and discussions scheduled with Defra/Natural England to discuss GMCA's likely role as Responsible Authority under roll-out of the policy next year.
- **GM Environment Fund** – Green Recovery Challenge Fund projects continue to be delivered and additional support appointed to develop projects into fully costed models ready for investment. Application to Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund (£100k) was successful and key partners Lancashire Wildlife Trust and Finance Earth are finalizing key steps with a view to starting kick-off meeting early October. Finance Earth has appointed an Investment Analyst to develop investment models for the Chat Moss site. Recycling for Greater Manchester Community Fund – Awarded £211,343 in grants to 21 community organisations across GM.
- **IGNITION** – A planning support tool to identify priority areas for green infrastructure implementation is in development. An external-facing 'interim report' was launched to share key project successes, learnings, challenges, and outputs to date. For Funding Stream 1, feasibility study of sites within UU's priority areas is ongoing with site visits by Groundwork. Specific technical and financial benefits to UU are being modelled to inform the business case for investment. For Future Funding Streams, a contactless donations trial is imminent in local parks. Network modelling of a neighbourhood SuDS programme in Walkden is ongoing. Green roofs cost-benefit calculator has been published and mapping of potential green roof retrofit locations in Manchester and Salford is complete. NBS Living Lab is being utilised for communications activities and data collection, which will be shared with partners imminently and be analysed to inform potential business models.
- **Social prescribing Pilot Programme** has progressed well and now taking referrals and delivering programme across all localities. The Greater Manchester wide stakeholder group has launched with over 100 individuals registered and training and resources will be coming soon. Generally, the interest in the programme has been significant with many organisations in the environment and health sectors keen to be involved directly or to share in the learning to support their own programmes and initiatives. The change in GMHSCP to Integrated Care System is a risk as relationships and ownership for key areas of focus (in health care) is in a state of flux across Greater Manchester - a strategy is being created to mitigate this and to continue to position Green Social Prescribing at the heart of physical and mental health pathways.

- **NGC indicators** – work is ongoing to collate a comprehensive set of indicators for the natural environment that will help the group measure its progress against the 5YEP.

## 6.0 SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

- **Procurement policy drivers/interventions** is working to identify carbon hotspots, priority sectors and contracts to target. It will look at `redlines` to include in contracts e.g. carbon neutral travel to work, local supply chain and good employment charter. A study is about to commence on how local levers can be used to encourage people and businesses to take more environmentally sustainable actions in Greater Manchester. This includes all local levers including legal, regulatory and policy control and could include procurement protocols, local authority taxes and levies and the use of `soft power`.
- **Public Sector Plastic Pact** will develop a common approach for targeting single use plastic consumables and plastic packaging across GM public sector and hence, remove inconsistency, and inform the development of authority led plastics strategies across GM. A draft report with recommendations has been produced and will be considered at a Heads of Procurement meeting in the near future.
- **Food** - work to look at supply chains is about to commence with STaR and AGMA Procurement to explore procurement avenues within catering and schools and work has resumed to create a Greater Manchester Food Strategy.
- **Circular Economy resource flow mapping** has commenced with University of Manchester to capture material flows within the City Region.

## 7.0 5YEP IMPLEMENTATION FORUM

- **Review of Green City Region activity** – received presentations and provided feedback on:
  - Challenge Group work programme
  - LA UK100 framework
- **Green Summit and COP26** – provided feedback on the Green Summit/COP26 including content, structure and format.

The group has also reflected on it's role in supporting delivery of the 5YEP and these changes have been reflected in the Terms of Reference.