



GM GREEN CITY REGION PARTNERSHIP

Date: 18th March 2022

Subject: PROPOSED CHANGES TO CHALLENGE GROUPS
AND KEY INFRASTRUCTURE LOBBYING POINTS

Report of: Mark Atherton on behalf of Challenge Group Chairs

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

The purpose of this report is to outline proposals for changes to the way some of the Challenge Groups currently operate and to present key Infrastructure Lobbying Points considered by the Strategic Infrastructure Board, as requested at the last meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Partnership is asked to:

- Note the discussion by Challenge Group Chairs and Vice Chairs on how to accelerate progress on the Mission Based Approach and the associated Challenge Groups and Task and Finish Groups activity.
- Comment on the proposals for changing the way that Challenge Groups operate (Sections 3)
- Note the key strategic infrastructure messages identified by the Strategic Infrastructure Board (Annex 01) and that a similar exercise is being undertaken for wider key messages (non-infrastructure related).
- Agree that revised Terms of Reference for each of the Challenge Groups would be presented to the next meeting of the Partnership for agreement alongside a prioritised work programme for 2022/23.

CONTACT OFFICERS:

Mark Atherton: mark.atherton@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 In response to the discussion at the last Partnership meeting on Performance reporting, recognizing that a greater scale of activity would be required to meet the GM 5 Year Environment Plan targets, the Challenge Group Chairs and Vice Chairs have met twice to consider what further measures could be considered.

2.0 DISCUSSION

2.1 The Chairs & Vice Chairs received a presentation on progress to date and the provisional GMCA work programme for 2022/23. There was recognition that a lot of excellent work was underway and more planned, however the scale of activity was still insufficient to meet 5 Year Environment Plan goals and create market change.

2.2 The Group agreed that it would be helpful to identify future 5YEP activities within the scope of:

- **Policy Push** – creating a supportive policy framework to incentivise change and embedding these across organisations
- **Demand Pull** – communications and awareness raising to create consumer demand for change
- **Enabling Actions** – making it easy for consumers to change activity/behaviour

and spend sufficient time at each Partnership meeting discussing these.

2.3 Chairs needed to feel more empowered to make change happen, subject to decisions which would require political or financial approval. Increased political capital was also required to accelerate and scale up.

2.4 It was recognized that most Challenge Groups have performed well over the last two years but some were beginning to plateau and are in need of reinvigoration (new blood and ideas). Challenge Groups are well attended (30-40 organisations at each meeting) but the delivery activity was falling on a much smaller number.

- 2.5 There needs to be a common narrative on what needs to change that the Partnership can push to enable change to happen quicker.

3.0 PROPOSALS

- 3.1 To increase the outputs and outcomes from the Challenge Groups, the Chairs/Vice Chairs have suggested that:
- 3.1.1 Chairs and Vice Chairs should meet two weeks before each Partnership meeting to review progress, assess current barriers and report these to the Partnership meeting.
 - 3.1.2 Create sufficient time at future Partnership meetings to discuss the barriers and potential solutions to accelerate action
 - 3.1.3 To review membership of the Challenge Groups, maintain Challenge Group meetings, but on a quarterly basis, for a wide audience. Hone down the Task and Finish Groups to just the 'doers' and seek other members to support delivery of defined actions.
 - 3.1.4 Need to develop a common narrative that the Partnership could sign up to and the Chairs/Vice Chairs could use to stimulate change

4.0 KEY INFRASTRUCTURE LOBBYING POINTS

- 4.1 As an example of 'Policy Push', the GM Strategic Infrastructure Board has agreed a set of Key Infrastructure Lobby Points (See Annex 01).
- 4.2 A separate piece of work has been conducted to look at key barriers to progress (wider than Infrastructure) and potential 'Asks' by GMCA officers. A draft of this work has been circulated to Chairs and Vice Chairs for comment. Once complete, this work can be presented to the Partnership as well as GMCA Leaders/CEX.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Partnership is asked to:

- Note the discussion by Challenge Group Chairs and Vice Chairs on how to accelerate progress on the Mission Based Approach and the associated Challenge Groups and Task and Finish Groups activity.
- Comment on the proposals for changing the way that Challenge Groups operate (Sections 3)
- Note the key strategic infrastructure messages identified by the Strategic Infrastructure Board (Annex 01) and that a similar exercise is being undertaken for wider key messages (non-infrastructure related).
- Agree that revised Terms of Reference for each of the Challenge Groups would be presented to the next meeting of the Partnership for agreement alongside a prioritised work programme for 2022/23.

ANNEX 01 - GREATER MANCHESTER STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE BOARD – STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE MESSAGES TO CONVEY TO GOVERNMENT AND REGULATORS

Infrastructure investment

1. The Government should give local areas greater control over funding and decision making on infrastructure investment to support net zero and levelling up.

The role of hydrogen

2. Government to confirm that there is no place for fossil fueled boilers for space and water heating from 2025 as this undermines net zero carbon buildings by 2028.
3. Confirm the UK policy position to support hydrogen use for HGVs (and other industrial heat applications) before 2026.

Buildings

4. Set a pathway to future building standards that supports Greater Manchester's aspirations for net zero carbon (new buildings) by 2028.
5. Provide non-competitive, long-term funding for whole-house retrofit works, to avoid the current piecemeal approach which is less effective and more costly.
6. Create a Heat Pump Sector Deal (cf Offshore Wind Deal) located in GM (hub and spoke across North of England).
7. DLUHC – programmes for affordable housing (managed by Homes England) grant funding should include support for net zero social housing.

Renewable energy generation

8. Socialisation of connection costs for low carbon technologies (LCTs) - The current energy taxation policy principally born by electricity is regressive and the approach recommended by the Climate Change Committee of paying for the net zero transition, through existing taxation, is the fairest way.

Resilience and environmental Outcomes

9. To change weighting criteria in other departmental spend to include resilience

standards/SUDs and 25YEP outcomes.

Sustainable Drainage and Water supplies

10. Defra should embark on a programme of drainage reform. Changes to Section 106 of water Industry Act 1991 should be made to make the right to connect surface water to the public sewer conditional on the inclusion of sustainable standards.

Nature based Solutions

11. Government and Ofwat to provide incentives for and support the creation of natural capital markets to support investment into nature-based solutions in urban areas.

Transport

12. A London style transport system.

Digital

13. Implement the GM Digital Strategy - Acceleration of full fibre and mobile connectivity investment