



Greater Manchester Business Board (LEP)

Date: 19th July 2023

Subject: Green City Region Partnership Update – Q1 (Apr - Jun 2023)

Report of: Steve Connor, GM Business Board (LEP) Lead for Net Zero

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report provides the usual update on progress of the Green City Region Partnership for the first quarter of 2023/24 and key milestones for the second quarter.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Business Board is recommended to:

1. Note and comment upon the progress outlined in this report and latest position set out in the dashboard attached at:
 - a. Annex 01 (5 Year Environment Plan Performance Overview) and available online at: [Five Year Environment Plan \(2019-24\) Progress \(ghtableau\)](#).

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1. OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS

The update at Annex 01 (5 Year Environment Plan Performance Overview) contains a summary of key progress across all areas within the 5 Year Environment Plan. During the last quarter. There are a number of key successes to be highlighted, set out below:

1.1 Energy

- Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs) – A Phase 1 feasibility report, exploring the social (non-technical) barriers to net zero, has been developed and submitted to Innovate UK.
- DEEP Phase 3 (Heat and Energy Network Opportunity Areas) – First regional Heat Network meeting held with the 5 Districts that are currently at detailed project design stage. Bolton and Oldham are progressing with their designs. Remainder due to be procured.
- Go Neutral Smart Energy Framework – Contracts awarded for Rochdale and Stockport (ERDF) schools solar PV projects (0.6MW) and Wigan's (ERDF) leisure centre roof mounted solar PV scheme (c. 300kW). Two of Stockport's schemes have been installed with the rest due to be completed by September 2023. Workshop held, and action plan agreed for remaining shortlisted sites for Rochdale. Consultancy support (Wave 2) appointed to support Bury, Oldham, Salford, Wigan and GMCA Waste Dept with reviewing sites and bringing forward a portfolio of opportunities to market. Commission is expected to complete in March 2024.
- Smart Energy – Schools solar PV engagement guide published and discussions underway with NHS and other sectors on how this can be repurposed. Outline scope of schools solar PV offer developed with Districts. Work ongoing to develop the detail, with a view to having the offer in place by October 2023. Initial discussion held with Department for Education (DfE) to discuss potential collaboration opportunity.
- Energy Innovation Agency (EIA) – Work continues to refine the business model for post year 2 funding, this includes the addition of new funding partners and the revised shape and size for the EIA. Funds have been secured from the Greater Manchester Innovation Accelerator and new marketing collateral has been developed to promote the work of the EIA to innovators and potential buyers.
- Trafford Energy Park - Confirmation of shortlisting and updated information submitted to UK Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ). Amendment approved to increase initial hydrogen production facility to 15MW and to vary the pipeline from natural gas to hydrogen. Schrodgers Greencoat and Carlton Power have formed the Green Hydrogen Energy Company Ltd (GHECO) to accelerate development of green hydrogen projects in Trafford (Greater Manchester), Barrow-in Furness (Cumbria) and Langage (Devon). This includes an initial funding commitment of £200million.

1.2 Buildings

- Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) – Wave 1 retrofits nearing completion and project close-down process begun. Wave 2 activities commenced.
- Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) – Grant funded element (£11.1m) of PSDS 3a programme successfully completed across twenty projects. Four delivery partners have completed works, the remaining three are due to complete by April 2024. PSDS 3b programme underway. Consultancy commission for PSDS pipeline development activity ongoing with site surveys complete (44 buildings) and technical reports being finalised.
- Retrofit GM (Your Home Better) – Year two milestones agreed and direct mail programme to Greater Manchester residents complete. Current Solar PV and Battery Pipeline is £200k with the value of fabric works to follow on support with Your Home Better at circa £275k. Engagement has commenced with Your Home Better clients (delivered by Salford University) to further understand what consumers want.
- Local Energy Advice Demonstrator (LEAD) awarded (£1.9m grant programme funded by North West Net Zero Hub over 2 years) to bring together the regions ECO 4 Flex programme (Fuel Poor) and Your Home Better (Willing to Pay) with energy advice to ensure an end-to-end offering.
- ECO4 flex scheme (support for fuel poor/low-income households with home energy efficient upgrades) – Marketing activities commenced. Web portal to enable eligible households to be referred for the scheme has been developed and tested. [Press release](#) and [installer blog](#) issued.
- Net zero new development – Detailed Greater Manchester net zero standard agreed.
- Good Landlord standard and enforcing Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) – The Good Landlord Scheme trainee programme is operational with ten trainees recruited across each District. The Regulatory Compliance Officer apprenticeship commenced in May 2023.

1.3 Transport

- Active Bee Network - Network audit complete. Geographical Information System (GIS) work is ongoing to combine audit data with current programme mapping to enable full network delivery figures and forecasts to be produced.
- Bike Hire Scheme – Average of 387 available bikes in June 2023. Drop due to rise in antisocial behaviour since Easter.
- E-hubs pilot - The pilot demonstration phase of the e-hubs project finished in December 2022. Currently exploring potential of further hub trials to increase network and wider roll-out of a Greater Manchester wide car club offer. The first phase will be a group of pilot sites in Salford, using co-located e-scooters and cycle hire bikes to create light touch Mobility Hubs.
- Bus franchising - Go North West and Diamond Buses fully engaged and mobilising ready for commencement of Tranche 1. First batches of zero emission buses have been delivered and preparation to electrify the Bolton depot is underway. Several

existing buses in the area have been branded to familiarise the public with the Bee Network brand. Tranche 1 schools contracts awarded to Stagecoach and Vision. Pre-planning application submitted to Stockport MBC for electrification of Stockport depot. Non-bus zero emission fleet delivery and infrastructure installation is progressing.

- Streets for All - Final draft of Streets for All guide to be circulated to Districts by end of June 2023 for review and comment.
- Clean bus fund - Currently 95% of buses awarded retrofit funding have been upgraded. Overall, the Greater Manchester based bus fleet will be circa 92% compliant once all planned retrofits and replacements have completed in the next 6 months.
- Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) - Discussions being held with Office for Zero Emissions Vehicles (OZEV) relating to Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding to support EVCI delivery.
- Taxi EVI project (dedicated rapid charging points) - As of June 2023 most of the 120 charging points have been installed. Charging points at Parkway and Walkden Park and Ride now commissioned. Etihad charging point installed and commissioned and one further site in Marple to be installed (4 additional connectors).

1.4 Sustainable Consumption and Production

- Invitation to tender issued to support profiling of GMCA's scope 3 emissions including spend and investment carbon impact analysis and development of an action plan/toolkit to reduce carbon emissions.
- Bee Net Zero – questionnaire sent to 400 GM businesses to assess their state of readiness to be on a path towards net zero by 2038.
- Expressions of interest submitted to Sustain for GMCA to become a regional partner to support a 'Good Food for All' approach in Greater Manchester.
- Consumer behaviour insights - Work commenced with initial focus groups, digitally excluded interviews and online quantitative survey completed.
- Single-Use Plastics – Work programme agreed. GMCA and Manchester City Council committed to becoming a Refill Destination with support package in place from City to Sea. [Press release](#) issued on World Refill Day. Dedicated webpage for forthcoming [single-use plastic ban](#) published on GMGreenCity website, PlasticFreeGM factsheets updated, and social media toolkit developed and circulated to Districts.
- Greater Manchester Sustainable Textiles and Fashion - Funding application submitted to UKRI's circular fashion and textile programme's Network Plus call to support development of a feasibility study for a national sorting and recycling infrastructure demonstration on textile waste.
- In The Loop campaign launched by Recycle for Greater Manchester (R4GM) to encourage recycling and educate residents on circular economy principles. Community Fund 2023 application round closed with 70+ applications.

1.5 Natural Environment

- Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) - Statutory regulations and guidance have now been published (awaiting funding from Defra). This includes a requirement to undertake a public consultation on the strategy. Communications and stakeholder engagement plans being drafted. Work on a State of Nature review, to form the evidence base for the strategy, has commenced (expected publication in summer 24). Brief developed with Trafford Council officers to integrate LNRS and Natural Capital approaches into the master planning of the Timperley Wedge site.
- ELMS Test and Trial Pilots - Workshop held with range of partners to discuss recommendation for a farm outreach/advice service. A proposition is being developed with United Utilities (focussing on phosphates) and discussions with Environment Agency and GMCA also taking place.
- Natural Course Phase 3 – Natural Course natural capital event held in Manchester, April 2023, and on-line water governance event, May 2023. Final samples taken for study of micro plastic contamination of Greater Manchester rivers. Invitations to tender for resources for planners and identifying priority locations for nature-based solutions to tackle road runoff circulated. Second survey of otters in the rivers of South Manchester commenced.
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) – Needs and supply assessment reporting complete with dissemination of results to Districts (8 Districts now seeking to bring forward supply sites). Greater Manchester Environment Fund (GMEF) offer of support to Districts published and Additional Burdens funding from Defra received. Legal advice on securing offset site received via the GMEF and distributed to Districts on S106.
- IGNITION - Final audit report received with only 2% of costs across partners rejected.
- Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund (NEIRF) – NEIRF I final report submitted to Defra. Natural England considering how carbon offsetting findings may support restoration of Chat Moss land now in their ownership.
- Round 2 of the Greater Manchester Green Spaces Fund (GSF) awarded and round 3 opened. 52 community projects have now benefitted from GSF funding.
- Green Social Prescribing (GSP) – New Nature for Health steering group set up to work to embed the outcomes of the pilot.
- Water Management – Integrated water management plan approved and published to accelerate improvements in our water systems through co-delivery (GMCA, Environment Agency and United Utilities).

1.6 Communications

- Green Summit 2023 – Programme planning progressing with regular updates and 'sound checks' with stakeholders. Sponsor Pack circulated to previous Green Summit sponsors, all challenge groups, and new partners. Two Headline Sponsors (Electricity Northwest and SSE) and three Official Partners (Suez Recycling and Recovery, Environment Agency, and Manchester Metropolitan University) secured.

Questionnaire circulated to all previous attendees asking for feedback on previous event (what worked well) and what they would like to see at this year's event.

- Environment Plan 2024 onwards – Initial pathway development and target setting discussions for the next Environment Plan have commenced. Greener Greater Life listening event held in Rochdale to gather insights to climate change from the ageing population. University of Manchester event 'Green Rising' planned for October 2023 to engage with communities on environmental sustainability.

2. KEY ANTICIPATED ACTION IN THE NEXT QUARTER

As a priority, the following activities will be delivered in the next Quarter:

2.1 Energy

- Deep Phase 3 – Detailed project design to be completed for 5 Heat Networks.
- Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs) – Phase 2 bid submission to be developed.
- Go Neutral – Complete ERDF funded solar PV installations. Agree and deliver approach with Rochdale and Stockport for remaining wave 1 consultancy support. Complete site surveys for wave 2 consultancy support and progress priority projects through development process.
- Smart Energy – Commission and deliver consultancy support as required to develop schools solar PV offer and toolkit. Agree and finalise schools solar PV financial model. Continue discussions with DfE to explore collaboration opportunity.
- Energy Innovation Agency (EIA) – Hold Net Zero event to attract new innovators into the EIA. Recruit new staff to meet capacity needs and new sustainable finance business plan to be presented to the Board.
- Trafford Energy Park - Commence negotiations on Low Carbon Hydrogen with DESNZ.

2.2 Buildings

- Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) – Outstanding wave 1 retrofits to be completed. Continue to progress wave 2 activities including procurement and tenant engagement.
- Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) – Complete consultancy commission on PSDS pipeline development activity and confirm list of buildings for a potential application to the PSDS 3c funding call. Identify replacement buildings for PSDS 3b due to three delivery partners withdrawing buildings from the programme. Develop and launch Greater Manchester decarbonisation case study video.
- Retrofit GM (Your Home Better) – Assess level of uptake through direct marketing campaign. Report back on the Salford research and incorporate the findings into Your Home Better and Local Energy Advice Demonstrator (LEAD) offers.

- ECO4 Flex scheme - Launch web portal and continue marketing and promotional activities through Districts and the NHS.
- Net zero new development - Continued development of net zero homes pipeline and review of Truly Affordable Net Zero Homes (TANZ) Implementation Plan.
- Good Landlord standard and enforcing Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) – Further places to be offered on the Advanced Professional Certificate in the Private Rented Sector at Middlesex University.

2.3 Transport

- Active Bee Network - Complete GIS network mapping to enable forecasts of future delivery and facilitate planning of future schemes.
- Bike Hire Scheme – Manage antisocial behaviour and repairs to maintain an acceptable level of bike availability. Operational plans to be developed by Beryl in response to the current situation.
- E-hubs pilot – Salford trial sites to be up and running. Develop typologies to demonstrate how Hubs should function in line with Right Mix targets and spatial themes. E-scooter rack to be installed at Salford Crescent.
- Bus franchising – Tranche 1 contracts to commence in September 2023. Bus fare evaluation summary report (wave 2) to be published in Quarter 3. Full planning application for electrification of Stockport depot to be submitted. TfGM (non-bus) zero emission fleet to be fully operational.
- Clean Air Plan – Continue to prepare additional evidence as requested by Government including detailed modelling in support of Greater Manchester’s case for an investment-led, non-charging Clean Air Plan.
- Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) – Formalise funding arrangements. Additional resource secured and in post.
- Taxi EVI project (dedicated rapid charging points) – Districts to lead further installation go charging points using LEVI and City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS) funding pots.
- Freight Strategy - Build logistics into Local Transport Plan (LTP) considerations and ensure appropriate policies in place for growth locations.

2.4 Sustainable Consumption and Production

- Award public sector scope 3 emissions tender and commence work.
- Set up new task and finish groups for Plastics (Circular Economy) and Food Waste.
- Consumer behaviour insights - Findings of the focus groups and questionnaire to be evaluated and next steps to be considered.
- Single-Use Plastics – Develop staff communications and engagement toolkit to raise awareness of commitments under the Plastic Pact. Explore potential pilot of reusable cup scheme in Greater Manchester with City to Sea.
- Continue development of Community Climate Change e-learning course delivered via the Greater Manchester Green City website.

- Subject to outcomes of the textiles UKRI funding application and Sustain food expression of interest commence programme of work.

2.5 **Natural Environment**

- Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) – Sign off governance arrangements and set up of Taskforce for Nature. Complete stakeholder engagement and communications plan. Secure technical support for Timperley Wedge site and begin delivery of the commission. Await statutory regulations and guidance in advance of mandatory BNG commencing in November 2023.
- ELMS Test and Trial Pilots - Prepare for project closure, including final events and production of project report. Agreement to be made on how to take forward farm advice work.
- Natural Course Phase 3 – Conclude external commission on microplastics research. Commission roadside green infrastructure locations work and Water Framework Directive advice. Deliver final phase of Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) delivery projects and consider next steps.
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) – Ensure all Districts are moving forward with offsite BNG and agree template BNG policy wording. Develop template Section 106 for all Districts to use. Refresh of Greater Manchester BNG guidance underway led by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU).
- Award Green Spaces Fund round 3 grants and open round 4 in September 2023.
- Hold first meeting of Nature for Health steering group and develop work programme.

2.6 **Communications**

- Green Summit 2023 – Progress sponsorship engagement, evaluate questionnaire feedback and finalise event programme. Develop 'Road to Green Summit' campaign including ticket sale launch and sponsorship announcement.
- Bee Net Zero – communications campaign to promote PV to businesses to be commenced.
- Further listening activities to be planned in line with the development of the next 5-Year Environment Plan.
- Announcement of successful applications to R4GM Community Fund 2023, Green Spaces Fund round 3 and first corporate sponsor of Greater Manchester Environment Fund.
- Support development and roll out of the LNRS including national announcement, communications and stakeholder engagement planning, content series building to public consultation in Quarter 4.
- Continue Your Homes Better and single-use plastic legislation communications and complete SHDF wave 1 communications (1,286 homes).

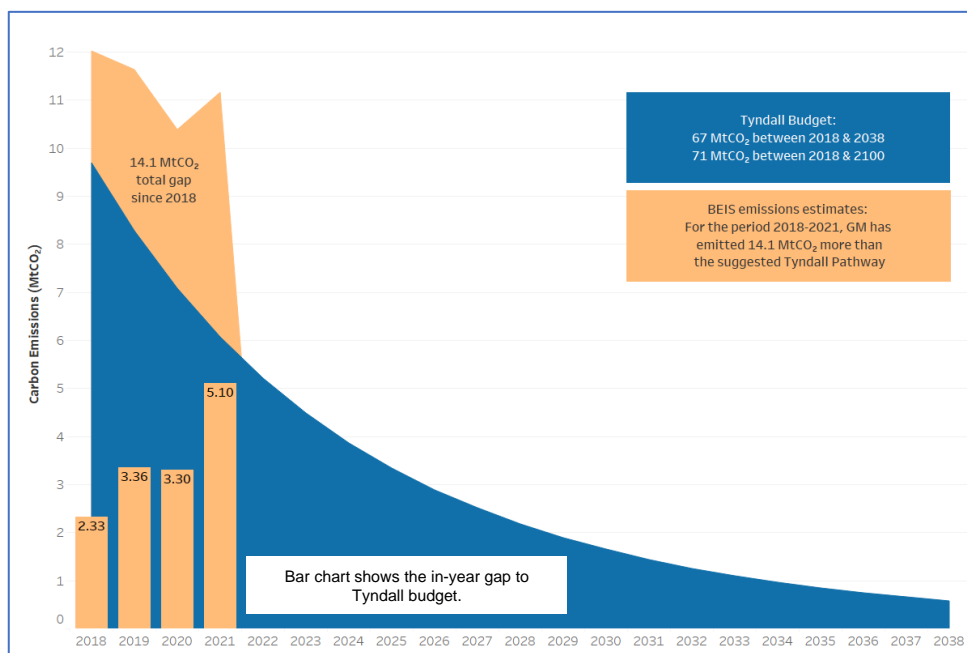
3. IDENTIFIED RISKS AND EMERGING ISSUES

- 3.1 Officers and sub-groups have identified a number of risks to existing, and particularly future, programme delivery. Mitigation of these risks, as far as possible, will be managed by the responsible Accountable Body.

In terms of the priorities set out in the 5 Year Plan, the following areas remain flagged as “red”.

Key risks:

- **Failure of the 5 Year Environment Plan to achieve a step change in reducing carbon emissions.** To achieve the 2038 mission, the GM 5-Year Environment Plan outlines our ‘fair’ carbon budget contribution of 67 mega tonnes for 20 years (2018-2038). The critical focus is not exceeding our total budget (67MtCO₂). From 2018 to 2021, GM’s emissions are 14.1MtCO₂ above the Tyndall budget, i.e. an additional 14.1MtCO₂ savings need to be made on top of the Tyndall budget. This gap has been increasing year on year, with new annual emissions data showing a rebound in emissions in 2021 as we emerged from the pandemic. The key point is that significant cuts must happen now. At our current rate of emissions, we will have exhausted our carbon budget within the next few years.



- **Failure to accelerate decarbonisation of buildings to meet low carbon heating targets.** Measures continue to be implemented with a focus on accelerating decarbonisation and increasing energy generation including the launch of Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, Go Neutral project including schools solar PV offer, and DEEP project delivery to identify Heat and Energy Network Opportunity Areas across Greater Manchester.

- **Level and depth of retrofit required to meet our overall ambitions is highly challenging.** The decarbonisation of Greater Manchester homes through deeper whole house retrofit is being mitigated by the publication of a Retrofit Report that sets the priorities and framework for action and, as part of that the Retrofit Challenge Group along with the Retrofit Taskforce is focused on delivering home and building retrofit at scale. Progress is also being made with the launch of the 'Your Home Better service' and Octopus Heat Pump offer. Greater Manchester has also joined a consortium, led by the UK Green Buildings Council including West Yorkshire, London and the West Midlands and funded by Climate-KIC to develop proposals for city-led retrofit. Additionally, the GM Skills team have produced a Skills Action Plan which with the newly actioned Low Carbon Finance Challenge Group complements the exist building and energy Challenge Groups which manage the actions arising from the Greater Manchester Retrofit Task Force, Chaired by the Mayor.
- **Failure to enhance our water bodies against level of ambition.** The GMCA, Environment Agency and United Utilities (through their Tripartite Agreement) have published an Integrated Water Management Plan to draw together a collective vision, objectives, and actions, and identify accountability and resources for delivery. The plan will deliver progressive improvements in sustainable water management, enhancement of the natural environment, accelerate natural flood management interventions and reduce the operation of storm overflows.

Previous areas flagged as “red”.

- **Failure to meet ambitious recycling and waste diversion targets.** Verified figures for 2021/22 show an increase in the recycling rate from 48.4% in 2020/21 to 51.1% in 2021/22 for Greater Manchester. The increase is down to improved recycling facilities across the network of 20 household waste recycling centres operated by SUEZ recycling and recovery UK. This includes new containers for mattresses, carpets, and hard plastics as well as containers where household items can be donated for reuse. Diversion from landfill remains at over 98%. Measures continue to be implemented to increase recycling rates at HWRCs and household kerbside recycling to deliver against 2024 target (55%). This item is now flagged as “amber”.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

The Business Board is recommended to:

- Note and comment upon the progress outlined in this report and latest position set out in the dashboard attached at:
 - a. Annex 01 (5 Year Environment Plan Performance Overview)