



Greater Manchester Green City Region Partnership

Date: 4 April 2024

Subject: Q4 PROGRESS REPORT - 5 YEAR ENVIRONMENT PLAN (5YEP)

Report of: Mark Atherton, Director Environment, GMCA

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

The report provides the usual update on progress of the Green City Region Partnership for the fourth quarter of 2023/24 (Jan – Mar 2024) and key milestones for the first quarter of next year (Apr – Jun 2024).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Partnership 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 \(gmtableau\)](#).

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1. OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS

The update at Annex 01 (5 Year Environment Plan Performance Overview) contains a summary of key KPI progress across all areas within the 5 Year Environment Plan.

During the last quarter there are many key successes to be highlighted, set out below:

1.1 Energy

- Energy Efficiency Awards - GMCA won 'Regional Council or Local Authority Body of the Year', Stockport Council won 'Regional Large Scale Project (>250K) of the Year' and Rochdale Council recognised as highly commended for their 'Regional Small-Scale Project (<250K) of the Year' submission.
- DEEP Phase 3 (Heat and Energy Network Opportunity Areas) – Revised programmes are underway, with Stockport submitting their Green Heat Network Fund (GHNF) application.
- Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs) – Department for Energy Security and Zero Net (DESNEZ) Grant Funding Agreement due to be signed for the Net Zero Accelerator (pending from Quarter 3).
- Local Energy Advice Demonstrator (LEAD) – [‘Feel the Benefit’](#) campaign launched (4th March 2024) to help Greater Manchester residents access support, advice, and potentially free upgrades to improve their homes. The campaign is being delivered through paid advertising, social media advertising and circulation of a partner toolkit.
- Go Neutral Smart Energy – Site surveys completed for six Districts (Wigan, Oldham, Bury, Salford, Rochdale, and Stockport). Tender documents being drafted for nine sites in Salford. Salford Lot 1 proceeding to procurement.
- Smart Energy – Powering our Schools Solar PV roof surveys approaching completion. Specification completed for Owner’s Engineer to provide technical advice to schools during procurement, construction, and handover.
[Largest community-owned solar array](#) has now been completed at Wellington High School in Timperley as part of Greater Manchester Community Renewables Limited (GMCR) benefit society.
- Trafford Energy Park – Project moving towards final investment decision. Phase 2 application being prepared to expand the Trafford scheme to a total capacity of up to 45 megawatts (MW).

- Bee Net Zero (BNZ) – [‘Bee Net Zero Trafford Park’](#) initiative launched (20th March 2024) to help and support businesses at Trafford Park to decarbonise.

1.2 Buildings

- Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) – SHDF Wave 1 due to close at end of March 2024 with final grant payments being made to partners. SHDF Wave 2 continues to progress across all milestones with installations and completion of works ongoing.
- Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) – PSDS 1 - Discussions ongoing with Carbon Architecture for programme extension. Final project at Ramsbottom Library, Bury expected to complete in Quarter 3. Majority of PSDS 3a single-year and multi-year programmes due to complete end of March 2024 (Manchester due August 2024, Trafford subject to further delay, expected completion October 2024). PSDS 3b - three out of four projects moving into delayed completion. SEE appointed for Measure and Verification works.
- Retrofit GM (Your Home Better) – Work on customer sites has been successfully accelerated. Links between Your Home Better and the LEAD project have been strengthened to offer additional support for customers as required.
- Good Landlord Charter – Over 270 responses received to the consultation with an additional 100+ tenants and landlords engaged through focus groups.

1.3 Transport

- Active Bee Network – Four schemes completed in the period 15th October 2023 to 15th January 2024 delivering a total of 10.3km of Bee Active Network, taking the total completed to 109.8km. Guided bike pilot on trams commenced 29th February 2024.
- Bike Hire Scheme – Starling Bank announced as the first official bike hire sponsor in January 2024 with the roll out of branded bikes progressing well. The Cycle Hire Recovery Plan remains in place with around 700 bikes available in February 2024.
- Salford E-scooter Trial – Over 1 million Lime e-scooter trips completed in Salford. This has replaced over 250,000 car trips. Lime e-scooter fleet is anticipated to grow from 550 to 800 vehicles from June 2024 and will be operational over a

greater footprint in Salford until Department for Transport (DfT) trial ends in May 2026.

- Bus Franchising - Tranche 2 commencement of services in Oldham, Rochdale, Bury, Salford and North Manchester from 24th March 2024 (a small proportion of new fleet will not be available on Day 1). Electrification of Oldham depot complete. Stockport's new transport hub and rooftop park opened to the public.
- City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS) Zero Emission Buses (ZEBs) – Anticipated to have 100 ZEBs operation by May 2024. This is 11.8% of anticipated fleet (850) – exceeding target of 10%.
- Streets for All - Streets for All Design Guide adopted and now in use by Local Authorities. Workshop with Planning Officers held on how the guide could be used in planning policy (to continue through 2024). Training workshops delivered to TfGM staff in partnership with GM Moving.
- [Taxi EVI project](#) - 57 (previously 42) Taxi EV charging points have been delivered out of 60 in total.
- Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Delivery – As of 1st March 2024 (Zap Map) there are 1751 publicly available connectors in Greater Manchester. Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Capital and Capability funding allocated to Greater Manchester.
- Clean Air Plan – Evidence now submitted to Government that the proposed Greater Manchester investment-led plan can achieve compliance in 2025.

1.4 Sustainable Consumption and Production

- Scope 3 Emissions - Work continues to progress on profiling the Combined Authority's scope 3 carbon emissions. Phase 1 results now expected end of March 2024.
- Consumer Behaviour Insights – Next phase of fieldwork is due to commence April 2024 with a further three waves to follow (October 2024, April 2025, and October 2025).
- School's Eco Refill Pilot – Pilot to reduce single-use plastics and increase refill and reuse in the community is progressing. All schools have now launched their [Eco-Refill shops](#).

- Refill (City to Sea) – Communications to promote Greater Manchester as a [Refill Destination](#) are continuing with the number of Refill stations in our city region increasing.
- Food Waste Prevention – Feasibility study is underway to identify surplus food in Greater Manchester and opportunities available for redistribution. Report expected end April 2024.
- Climate Change E-learning Module – New module on single-use plastics and plastic waste in development.
- Recycle for Greater Manchester (R4GM) – Annual Food Waste Action Week (18th to 24th March 2024) supported with events at Swinton Gateway Centre, Ashton Library and Bury Market. Social media toolkit developed and distributed to Districts. [Repair Week campaign](#) delivered (11th to 17th March 2024). Two events held in the Renew Hub and general on-line promotion of repair events held across Greater Manchester including bike repair, sewing classes and repair cafes.

1.5 Natural Environment

- Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) – [State of Nature](#) report published, and [public consultation](#) released to engage residents, community groups and businesses with the strategy. Longlist of habitat priorities and measures developed, and nature recovery targets drafted. Shortlisting of priority species and opportunity mapping for nature recovery underway. Continued delivery of communications including press releases, social media content, [project blog](#) and newsletters.
- Natural Course – [Grand finale](#) held (February 2024) to celebrate the end of the project after eight and half years. Over four phases the project has completed 50 actions, 81 sub actions and 182 deliverables. Feasibility study produced by City of Trees on priority locations for future interventions to tackle contamination from road run off. Water Framework Directive resource for planners produced and online and in-person workshops held.
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) – New guidance published in March 2024 setting out a Greater Manchester wide approach to implementation of BNG. Work has continued with Local Authorities to progress offsetting options on land in their ownership, including a market engagement exercise led by Oldham. Walkden Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) neighbourhood progressing through detailed design work and preparations underway for delivery.

- Greater Manchester Environment Fund - [Evaluation report](#) published in March 2024. Green Spaces Fund 'before and after' social media content developed.
- Growth Locations – Project to embed LNRS and Natural Capital principles in Growth Location development and design (using Timperley Wedge as an example) concluded.
- Nature for Health – Bid submitted by Greater Manchester partners to the Green Social Prescribing (GSP) extension call on 22nd March 2024.
- Integrated Water Management Plan - Introduction video launched - [Enhancing life through water: a new way of managing water in Greater Manchester](#)

1.6 **Green Summit**

- Green Summit – Planning for Green Summit 2024 is continuing. Options paper in development.

1.7 **Greater Manchester 5 Year Environment Plan 2024 onwards**

- Work is ongoing with ARUP on the emissions pathway. Workshops have been held with 5 Year Environment Plan Challenge Groups, Youth Combined Authority, and Greater Manchester Equality Alliance for feedback on the draft actions and plan development.
- Analysis of District surveys has been completed and presented to District Officers and elected members through the Green City Region Board. Survey also circulated to elected members.

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 – Bolton and Oldham to proceed with their respective procurements. Rochdale and Stockport to commence detailed project designs in readiness for the next round of Green Heat Network Fund (GHNF) in Autumn.

- Go Neutral – Complete Salford procurement and proceed Rochdale procurement (two-three sites). Support Oldham with Wrigley Head tender and evaluation. Commence solar PV site surveys for GMCA waste sites (Reliance Street, Longley Lane, Bredbury, Cobden Street, Arkwright Street, Bayley Street, Chichester Street, Every Street, and Nash Road). Support Wigan on fleet electrification and solar PV opportunity.
- Smart Energy – Tender and appoint Owner’s Engineer to provide technical advice to schools. Continue to evaluate different finance options including Power Purchase Agreement (PPA - long-term contract to buy power between a generator and a corporate entity or Local Authority), asset finance, Local Authority borrowing and self-fund. Develop partnership with Solar For Schools Community Benefit Society (BENCOM) for PPA solution.
- Energy Innovation Agency (EIA) – Continued focus on expanding and converting end user pool into commercial delivery.
- Trafford Energy Park – Continue to progress project to final investment decision and application for expansion. Progress planning permission for new scheme in Wigan to provide hydrogen to an industrial site.
- Bee Net Zero (BNZ) – Finalise forward plan focused on five pillars of activity (Partner Support Services, Advocacy and Networks, Campaigns and Marketing, Research and Intelligence, and Major Programme Delivery). Launch BNZ commitment, accompanying roadshow and employee engagement workshop (after Purdah).

2.2 Buildings

- Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) – Continue wave 2 progress with majority of partners to have commenced on-site installations.
- Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) – Resolution and commencement of PSDS 1 Measurement and Verification approach. Continued support of PSDS 3a single-year delivery and multi-year delivery. Commence PSDS 3c programme mobilisation subject to confirmation of grant fund award.
- Retrofit GM (Your Home Better) – YHB to continue in an independent capacity without GMCA resources.
- ECO4 Flex scheme – Work with NHS Greater Manchester to enable NHS Project Manager to be in post to assist in working with GP surgeries to promote the scheme.

- Good Landlord Charter – Complete consultation analysis. Commence market engagement with potential providers of charter implementation unit.
- Net Zero New Development - Continued development of net zero homes pipeline.

2.3 **Transport**

- Active Bee Network – Seven additional schemes are forecast to complete in the period 15th January 2024 to 15th April 2024, delivering an additional 7.9km of Bee Active Network.
- Bike Hire Scheme - Availability to increase to 1200-1500 bikes whilst onboarding the sponsor and monitoring vandalism and theft. Re-open suspended stations. (To note: Predicted higher levels of vandalism and theft Easter to May 2024.)
- Bus Franchising – Tranche 3 mobilisation across small and large franchises. Award tranche 3 contract for schools in May 2024.
- City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS) Zero Emission Buses - Finalisation of plans for electrification of depots in Bolton (Phase 2), Middleton and Queens Road, and Ashton and Hyde Road. Approval of Central Park Strategic Outline Business Case prior to planning application submission.
- Bus Fare Evaluation - Summary report (wave 2) to be published online by end of Quarter 4.
- Streets for All – Greater Manchester SuDS design guide due to be published Summer 2024 with Local Authority workshops planned for Spring/Summer 2024.
- Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) – Conclude Taxi EVI project. Mobilisation of LEVI and CRSTS EV programmes. (To note: these programmes are not likely to involve publicly owned infrastructure.)
- Freight Strategy – Continue to develop policy in line with Local Transport Plan.

2.4 **Sustainable Consumption and Production**

- Scope 3 Emissions - Complete phase 2 development of action plan and toolkit to support reduction of scope 3 emissions.
- Consumer Behaviour Insights – Analysis and dissemination of phase 2 study (April 2024).
- School's Eco Refill Pilot – Continue to support the 10 pilot schools with the running of their eco refill shops, data collection and communications.

- Refill (City to Sea) – Continue to roll-out programme of communications to promote Greater Manchester as a Refill Destination and encourage businesses to sign up as a refill station.
- Foundational Economy Innovation Fund – Announcement of successful phase 2 applications expected after Purdah.
- Food Waste Prevention – Complete feasibility study to identify surplus food in Greater Manchester and opportunities available for redistribution.
- Climate Change E-learning Module – Launch new module on single-use plastics and reducing plastic waste.
- Recycle for Greater Manchester (R4GM) – Applications to the [Community Fund](#) to open on 8th April 2024 (closes 31st May 2024) with three online workshops to be held (28th March, 16th April and 8th May 2024). ‘Cotton on to Textile Recycling’ campaign to launch in April 2024 to educate residents on the correct disposal of damaged textiles.

2.5 **Natural Environment**

- Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) – Progress draft of LNRS strategy, including finalising quantitative targets, priorities, and measures. Complete opportunity mapping for nature recovery and wider engagement work and survey. Continued publication of newsletters, local nature champions and wider social media.
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) – Focus on emerging offsetting market in Greater Manchester including how Local Authorities will determine whether to enter into s.106 agreements, what responsible bodies might be able to enter into conservation covenant agreements and taking forward local authority sites to be able to provide offsets.
- Green Spaces Fund - Continued support and delivery of projects. Further funding rounds subject to the outcome of the Mayoral election.
- Growth Locations - Disseminate findings and learning to other Growth Locations.
- Nature for Health – Commence Green Social Prescribing (GSP) programme (subject to outcome of funding proposal).

2.6 **Green Summit**

- Consider options paper and confirm venue and date for Green Summit 2024. Begin initial communications planning including engagement with the Communications Challenge Group.

2.7 **Greater Manchester 5 Year Environment Plan 2024 onwards**

- Continued development of draft plan and actions. Analysis of elected members survey results.

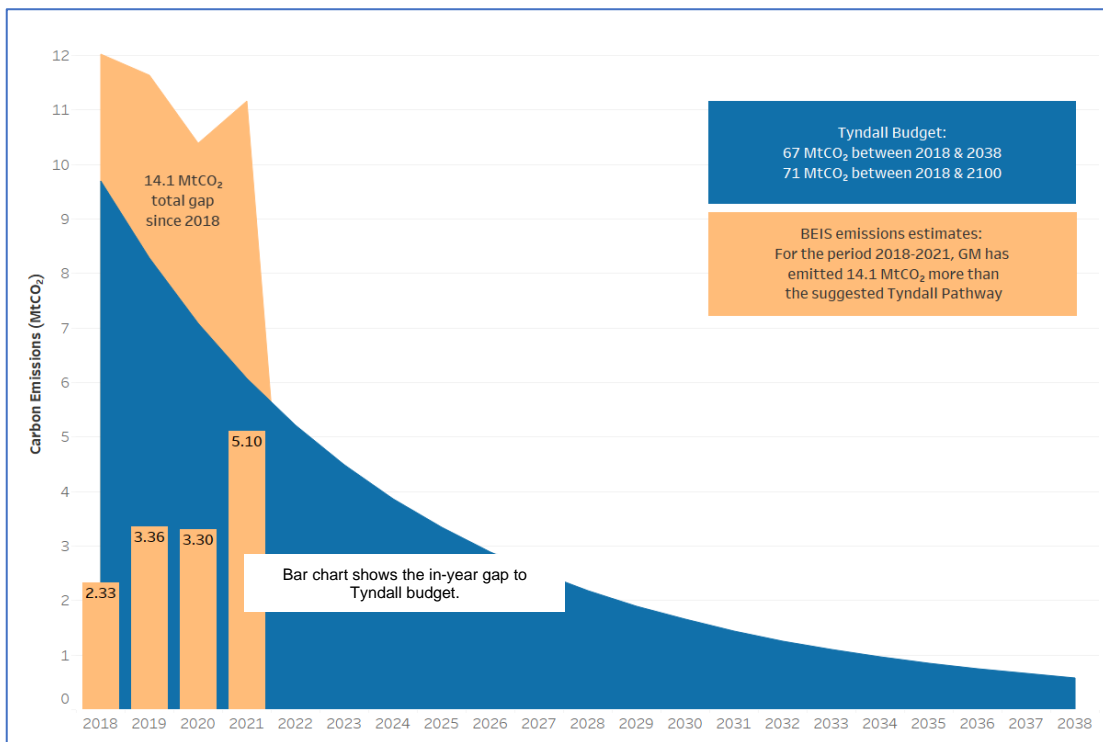
3. **IDENTIFIED RISKS AND EMERGING ISSUES**

- 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 2022/2203 show a slight decrease in the recycling rate for Greater Manchester to 50.4% from 51.1% in 2021/22, compared to 48.4% in 2020/21. The previous increase in recycling rates in 2021/22 was due 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%).

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

The Partnership 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)