

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 25th September 2024
Subject: Draft Five Year Environment Plan 2025 – 2030
Report of: Councillor Tom Ross, Portfolio Lead for Green City Region

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present the first draft of the next Greater Manchester Five Year Environment Plan (2025-30) for comment, to provide an overview of the process undertaken to develop the draft to date and the next steps prior to its final approval in November 2024.

Recommendations:

The GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to:

1. Note and provide feedback on the first draft for the new 5 Year Environment Plan
2. Note the development process and next steps and that a sustainability and equality assessment will be conducted on the final draft document

Contact Officers

Name of key contact Officer and email address to be included

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Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

An assessment will be undertaken once the final draft has been developed, ahead of GMCA approval. To note that there is a section within the plan focusing on the links between the environment and inequalities and numerous links to the co-benefits of delivery.

Risk Management

The main risks associated with publishing the plan are reputational if we fail to deliver it.

Legal Considerations

This is a non-statutory plan and the targets are mostly non legally binding.

Financial Consequences – Revenue

Where possible, the Local Authority revenue implications of the plan will be estimated in advance of the GMCA approval paper.

Financial Consequences – Capital

The capital implications of the plan will be difficult to estimate as they will be spread across different sectors. A Strategic Outline Business Case of our Local Area Energy Plans suggest that a full low carbon transition may cost £64bn by 2038 however 70% of this would have been required under business as usual scenarios.

Number of attachments to the report:

One attachment – Draft Five Year Environment Plan 2025-2030

Background Papers

The First Five Year Environment Plan published in 2019 can be viewed here [Five-Year Environment Plan - Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

The latest progress report can be viewed here under item 9 [Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

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

Bee Network Committee

TBC

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 The first Five Year Environment Plan (5YEP) was published in 2019. It set out the ambition for Greater Manchester to become a carbon neutral city region by 2038. Alongside publishing the plan, a climate emergency was declared by GMCA and the ten Local Authorities and, in 2021, a biodiversity emergency was also declared.
- 1.2 The first 5YEP ran from 2019 – 2024 and focused on five key priority areas: energy supply, transport and travel, homes and buildings, production and consumption, and the natural environment. The previous plan set out how we would tackle the environmental challenges we face, meet our environmental responsibilities, and secure our economic future and wellbeing.
- 1.3 Since 2019 there has been significant progress made against the targets in the 5YEP, however achieving the carbon targets remain challenging. To stay on track to achieve carbon neutrality by 2038 there will need to be an acceleration and scaling up of current activities. An overview of the progress made since 2019 can be seen in section 5 of the draft plan. We also intend to insert an infographic at the front of the report.
- 1.4 Reaching our environmental targets will require significant changes across all sections of society in how we live, travel and work – from individuals and communities to businesses and the public sector. Road transport and domestic heating are the two largest sources of carbon emissions in Greater Manchester. Achieving reductions in these areas is key to achieving carbon neutrality.
- 1.5 The new 5YEP will run from 2025-30 and builds on the previous ambitions and progress against the first plan. The commitment to be a carbon neutral city region by 2038 remains and the urgency of the climate and biodiversity emergency is reiterated. It is important to note that the carbon budget set under the first plan is likely to soon be exceeded, however we believe that this target should be maintained as a benchmark of our fair and equitable share of global carbon emissions.
- 1.6 The new plan has eight key aims: Energy, Buildings, Transport and Travel, Natural Environment, Circular Economy and Waste, Resilience and Adaptation, Air Quality and Sustainable Growth. Underneath each of these aims sit key objectives which are the specific results needed to achieve the aims.

1.7 Each of these aims form a chapter within the plan that outlines the challenge specific to that area, the action required over the next five years, the co-benefits of delivering each aim and factors that will either enable or inhibit delivery e.g. finance and skills.

1.8 A key focus of the plan has been to ensure that it is reflective of the action needed from all sectors across Greater Manchester showing public sector action as just one part of the journey to 2038, alongside private, third sector and citizen action. The plan also includes enabling actions which will support decision makers to make an environmentally conscious choice.

1.9 Alongside the development of the draft plan, work has been ongoing with ARUP to develop an emissions pathway to 2038. More detail on this can be seen in section 6 of the draft document. We have utilised the best data we have available however, there are some gaps, particularly for industry, where estimations will have to be made. We have tried to make the targets in the new plan challenging but achievable.

2. Development Process

2.1 The plan has been developed throughout 2024 by the GMCA Environment Directorate and TfGM with support from the GMCA Research team. A first draft has now been developed and is being consulted upon with our key partners.

2.2 To develop the plan, officers initially reflected on the previous plan including review of the vision, priorities and the progress made after five years of delivery. Key changes from the first plan include the addition of aims on air quality and sustainable growth.

2.3 After internal development, initial engagement with external partners began to further develop the new Vision, Aims and Objectives for the new plan. External engagement has continued throughout the development process and a key focus has been developing those actions outside of Local Authority control. External organisations have been encouraged to feedback on the specific actions for their sector/organisation.

2.4 In addition to engaging with external partners, the plan in its initial stages has been presented to the equalities panel, the Youth Combined Authority, GM Bee Net Zero Board and the Sustainable Energy Association.

2.5 To develop the Local Authority led aspects within the plan, several surveys were conducted at an officer and councillor level. Feedback from the surveys has particularly informed the Local Authority led actions as can be seen in Annex 3 of the draft document. Local Authorities face particular challenges around financing and resourcing the more ambitious actions in the plan. This has been reflected in the wording of the actions.

2.6 The draft document attached was circulated to Local Authorities in August for initial comments on the structure and any key inaccuracies and omissions. The draft was then amended and has now been circulated for feedback from external partners.

3. Next Steps

3.1 The first draft of the plan is now out for final comment from Local Authorities and external partners with a deadline of the 27th September. These comments will be incorporated into the next draft ahead of the plan being taken to the Green City Region Partnership and Board in October and GMCA in November 2024.

3.2 Throughout September and October, work is continuing to finalise the targets for each of the aims/objectives as highlighted in the draft document. This will then also inform the monitoring framework that is used to track progress throughout the duration of the plan. Additionally, as highlighted in the draft document, there are still small sections to be developed over the next month.

3.3 Following GMCA approval and any final amendments required, the plan will be launched publicly at the annual Green Summit on the 9th December.