

GREATER MANCHESTER GREEN CITY REGION PARTNERSHIP

Date: **24 July 2020**

Subject: **GREEN CITY REGION STRATEGIC NARRATIVE**

Report of: **Hayley James, Asst Director Communications, GMCA**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present work that has been undertaken to develop a Strategic Communications Narrative for the Green City Region Portfolio of the Greater Manchester Strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Partnership is requested to:

- Agree the Green City Region Strategic Narrative
- Note the proposed next steps

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On 17th September 2019, GM Leaders received a paper outlining the approach to updating the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS). Part of this included a connected piece of work related to narrative development. This paper was also tabled at Wider Leadership Team on 9th October
- 1.2 The paper referenced how the Greater Manchester Strategy, launched in November 2017, sets out our collective vision for the city region: to be one of the best places in the world to grow up, get on in life and grow old.
- 1.3 To achieve that vision it is vital that the various GM wide partners and our wider stakeholders are clear how our marketing and communications work fits together behind this common goal.
- 1.4 Over 2018 work took place to develop a brand for Greater Manchester, building on our history of collaborative work and sitting above individual place and organisational messaging to give it a regional context.
- 1.5 The result was the GM Brand Framework (see appendix). At a very high level it sets out the single, aligned Greater Manchester story for use by all Greater Manchester partners, articulating how this single story translates and is flexed directly for:
 - a) Largely international marketing activity encouraging specific target audiences to 'buy' the Manchester 'product' – branded 'M' and using Manchester as the focus
 - b) Local, regional and national communications activity aimed at building awareness, reputation and ultimately trust in the 'promises' made by the partnership with regional and national stakeholders, as well as public audiences within Greater Manchester – branded 'Doing things Differently' and using Greater Manchester as a focus.
- 1.6 In January 2019, the promises were encapsulated in the Future of Greater Manchester event, where we brought our Doing Things Differently identity to life, making clear and bold statements about us working as one to make this a place where we focus together on good jobs, good housing, good transport and so on.

2. NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 During 2019, work took place with relevant stakeholders to develop more detailed strategic narratives, sitting underneath the Brand Framework, for Greater Manchester's marketing work i.e. our major 'products'.

- 2.2 We have now developed similar top level messages for the communications work i.e. our major 'promises', ensuring we consistently communicate our ambition for good housing, good transport, clean air, digitally connected communities and so on.
- 2.3 This work was not started from scratch. The process to develop these narratives has utilised and built upon the wealth of knowledge that GMCA, wider Greater Manchester staff and partners already had on each promise, as well as the major published strategies and plans for each. The objective was to distil these in to distinct, top level narratives for each promise.
- 2.4 The narrative development process was intended to form part of the GMS refresh engagement process running over winter 2019 and spring 2020, with the output forming the framework for the top level narrative for the new strategy. This would ensure the messaging and strategy were entirely consistent, reinforcing our one shared story and enabling a wide range of staff, partners and stakeholders to advocate confidently and communicate consistently on behalf of Greater Manchester.
- 2.5 The GMS development process has changed due to the pandemic. A one year plan is in development and this, along with wider work being undertaken in support of strategic priorities for the city region, will instead be the starting point for use of the narratives.

3. PROCESS

- 3.1 The aim of the project was to develop succinct, top-level strategic narratives for each of the key promise areas in the Greater Manchester Strategy: transport, ageing, culture, green, economy, work and skills, safe and strong communities, young people, housing, health and care, plus an overarching pan-Greater Manchester narrative to tie them all together. An additional narrative to support digital was also created, so twelve in total.
- 3.2 Each strategic narrative builds upon the detailed strategies and plans that already exist around each policy area, distilling and developing these into a clear and compelling narrative, to ensure Greater Manchester's shared story, is more shareable.
- 3.3 The result is a messaging framework which people and partners can flex and adapt, but which ensures core themes and key messages remain consistent and compelling.
- 3.4 They are specific to each of the 'promises' but aligned to one overall city region story.

4. PROCESS – GREEN CITY REGION NARRATIVE

- 4.1 The scoping work for development of the Green City Region narrative followed a model which included insight and information on:
- Audiences: Insight on what they think, feel, know
 - Attributed and activities: What had taken place so far and what was in plan
 - Context: International, national and local experience and expectation/situation
- 4.2 Once this information was gathered, initial ideas were shared and refined, resulting in a workshop at the inaugural Communications Challenge Group in October 2019.
- 4.3 At this session ideas, sentiment and statements were tested and a draft narrative was developed. Further changes were made following additional feedback from the GCR Comms and Behaviour Change Challenge Group on key messages and tone and an update was shared with members of the Challenge Group.

5. STRATEGIC NARRATIVE FOR GREATER MANCHESTER GREEN CITY REGION

5.1 Headline narrative

Taking action today, tomorrow and together

Greater Manchester is adopting a clear and ambitious approach to climate action, driven by the science and evidence but with individual, community, industry and institutional action at its heart.

An approach that recognises the role we can all play in taking action to reduce carbon emissions and improve our environment and one that champions collective endeavour, partnership, innovation and positive action.

Where we all take action - making better choices, smarter swaps, buying and consuming more consciously, replacing, re-using or reducing. Investing in and embracing more sustainable businesses, organisations, lives and lifestyles – today, tomorrow and together.

5.2 Key messages

Bold in ambition and approach: An ambitious and aspirational strategy and vision that recognises urgency, with clear targets to achieve carbon neutral by 2038. The first UK city-region adopting a science based approach with a desire to make change quickly and at scale.

Active, clean and green places and spaces: With a clear vision and target to clean up the air, protect nature and recognise and build value in outdoor spaces and places across the region. Encouraging all to enjoy, use and spend time active and outdoors.

Powered by partnership: A place with a rich history of social action and people powered movements, putting people at the centre. Collaborative, inclusive and collective in ambition and in delivery - across sector, across strategies, across communities, across the region.

Investing in our future: A place that's taking an approach which encourages action, innovation and investment today, to accelerate change and achieve impact tomorrow. Re-thinking the rules, challenging the old models and ensuring a new approach and new mind set is central - in technology, in processes, in financial and business models and in education and skills. Whilst also building resilience into systems and places to ensure shocks and strains can be managed in the short-term.

Making better choices, alone and together: An approach that recognises to achieve impact, it requires change from all of us. From the small and individual, to the collective and at scale. Citizens, businesses, developers, local authorities, policy makers, healthcare providers, government making positive choices and changes (smart swaps, sustainable investments, active travel, conscious consumption and procurement) to make a positive difference. Reduce, reuse and switch to renewable energy.

6. OTHER ALIGNED WORK

- 6.1 Further development of the Doing Things Differently identity: 'Doing Things Differently' is the identity we use when a project, programme or campaign is delivered by a number of different Greater Manchester partners i.e. it is not a specifically TfGM, GMCA or Partnership piece of work. It gives us one, single, consistent identity for our place, which signifies our distinct partnership approach and begins to build brand awareness for the city region with regional and national stakeholders.
- 6.2 It's flexible enough to be used across our ten 'promises' and has been used for the Future of GM event, GMSF, Police and Crime Plan, Ageing Hub digest and more.
- 6.3 However, it needs further work to ensure it becomes an identity with longevity as well as impact and is flexible enough to meet all requirements. As the narrative development nears completion we propose a piece of work to complete the creative development of this identity, giving GM a look and feel of which it can be proud.
- 6.4 This is the identity we would use for the one year GMS plan and subsequent supporting activity
- 6.5 Work is also being undertaken by the challenge group to capitalise on the Manchester bee emblem and incorporate the concept of environment into the identity of the city region. Further work on this will be shared as this is developed.

7. THE END PRODUCT(S)

- 7.1 We will bring together the narratives and the further developed Doing Things Differently identity to create a messaging and asset toolkit. This will give us a place where staff and stakeholders across Greater Manchester can come to draw down the consistent, simple, clear and professionally produced story of who we are and what we're about, in order to learn more about us and/or use this content in their own communications.
- 7.2 This will sit alongside the same product for our marketing work, so, for example, should someone need to talk to international digital investors they'll have the collateral they need to do that. Likewise should they want to present to head teachers about our digital skills vision they'll have what they need to do that. And if they want to weave in our story of transport connectivity and a healthier population they can draw that down too.
- 7.3 This will enable internal stakeholders to align their local narratives with the Greater Manchester story, helping organisations and districts explain how they fit within the regional story.
- 7.4 And we can share this resource proactively with our newly identified and activated influencers and partners, providing them with the tools they need to advocate on our behalf.

8. COVID IMPACT

- 8.1 The narrative project was completed shortly before the pandemic happened. As the COVID impact became clearer, and the decision to create a one year GMS 'bridging plan' was taken, it was agreed that the overarching ambitions of Greater Manchester had not changed. The prioritisation of activity to support the city region through the next year and beyond aligns to the aims in the original GMS and, as such, the strategic narrative still compliments this work.
- 8.2 In terms of application, there has already been some work done by the Communications Challenge Group to use the strategic narrative and evolve it specifically for COVID; this is the precise purpose the narrative was created for. By using the strategic narrative as a starting point, and adapting elements for a specific theme, programme or in this case, moment, the narrative enables connection between areas of work all linked to the same agenda.

9. NEXT STEPS

9.1 Now the final Green City Region narrative has been shared and trialled with the Challenge Group, through a task and finish key messages group, and all the other strategic narratives have been developed having gone through similar processes, roll out of the suite of narratives is planned. The Doing Things Differently identity refresh will also be included in this roll out. The process will include:

- Roll out within the Communications and Engagement function and Green City Region Policy team at GMCA
- Sharing and cascade through the Greater Manchester Head of Communications network during August (including Local Authorities, NHS organisations and GMHSCP, GMP, Marketing Manchester, TfGM)

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Partnership is requested to:

- Agree the Green City Region Strategic Narrative
- Note the proposed next steps

Greater Manchester Brand Framework

Vision (GM Strategy): 'To be one of the best places in the world'..

For our 'customers':
in which to invest, do business,
study and visit

For our population:
to grow up, get on and grow old

Shared story of our city-region:
A place of progressive thinking and pioneering ideas, with the original modern city
at its heart, where everyone can achieve their potential

Our values/principles

A place that
cares where
everyone can
achieve their
potential

A place of ideas
and innovation
where we think
and do things
differently

Inclusive and
welcoming
to all

A productive
economy in
which business
thrives

A green, clean
and safe region

A place of
positive
partnership
and strong
networks

Evidence in support of values / principles

-Developed health
and social care
system response to
Arena attack
-Commitment to
freetravel for 16-18
year olds

-City of firsts:
graphene, split atom
-Radical
Suffragette/co-op
-Largest CDTI hub
outside London
-International
culture, music and
sport

-200 languages
spoken
-20% population
BAME
-Pride festival - 25
years
-International student
population
-This is the place

-UK's leading city
for attracting FDI
outside London
-Four universities
-100k students
-Concentration of
\$1bn unicorns e.g.
AO.com, AutoTrader,
The Hut Group

-Access to 4
National Parks
-Commitment to
congestion plan and
BeeLines, largest
cycling network
in UK

-International
connections
-Strong civic
leadership
-Private/public
partnerships e.g.
Health Innovation
Manchester

For our 'customers':
in which to invest, do business,
study and visit

For our population:
to grow up, get on and grow old



Marketing Greater Manchester to
national and international audiences

Brand: Manchester

Communicating about and within
Greater Manchester to local,
regional and national audiences



Brand: Greater Manchester

Our key products:
Creative, digital and technology
Financial, professional and business services
Advanced Manufacturing
Life Sciences and Healthcare
Leisure Tourism
Business Visits and Events

Our key themes:
Culture, Music and the Arts
Sport
LGBT

Our key promises:

- Every child gets a good start in life
- All young people are equipped for life
- Older people are valued and is a great place to grow old
- People are healthy, independent, and in fulfilling jobs
- Everyone has a decent and affordable home in a safe and strong community, with quality care and support if they need it
- There's a thriving and productive economy and a great leisure and cultural offer in all parts of Greater Manchester
- It's easy to get around our clean, green city region
- We're digitally connected

Audiences

Audiences

Investors
Business conference organizers
Influencers & Intermediaries
Leisure visitors
Students

Partners & colleagues
Service providers and business
Influencers
Media
Residents and community influencers

Campaigns
Invest | Meet | Study | Visit

Campaigns
Transport | Homelessness

Cross cutting themes: Green, growth, digital