

Greater Manchester Housing, Planning and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 8 October 2020

Subject: Green Summit 2020 – Diversity Review

Report of: Director of Environment, Mark Atherton

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update Scrutiny Committee on how the Green Summit 2020 was planned and delivered; to reflect on the lack of diversity of keynote speakers and to review how future events can ensure greater inclusivity.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Work will continue to seek inspirational environment ambassadors from the region who represent people from a black and minority ethnic background and whose actions and work reflect the content of the 5-Year Environment Plan for Greater Manchester.

CONTACT OFFICERS:

Mark Atherton, Director of Environment

Sarah Mellor, Head of Sustainable Consumption & Production

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In June it was agreed that, due to the current pandemic, the Green Summit 2020 event would be hosted on a virtual platform over four days. Feedback from the event has been very positive. Throughout the four days we had 5465 visitors to the Summit, 10,077 site sessions and, on social media, Green Summit posts were seen 372,000 times.
- 1.2 Planning for the event was completed taking in to account the views and feedback from the GM Youth Combined Authority; the 5-Year Environment Plan Forum and with members of the Challenge Groups working with GMCA on delivering the plan; with the additional challenge for the team managing the event working from home.
- 1.3 The aims of this year's event were to: demonstrate the work achieved by partners from the last 12 months; highlight work to be commenced over the next year and announce important project work which has been successfully funded within the city region.

2. Keynote speakers and content

- 2.1 The majority of speakers and session content were provided by GMYCA and those partners working with GMCA, on an unpaid basis, to deliver the 5-Year Environment Plan through Challenge Groups. The actions within the Plan cannot be achieved by Local Authorities working alone; the plan is reliant on the work from the region's many partners from the business, third party, charity and community sectors.
- 2.2 An open invitation was given to partners to put forward sessions and spotlight content which represented the work undertaken. Partner organisations put forward the best people they had to speak on the given topic. The event team therefore had less control over the content/speakers than in previous years.
- 2.3 Careful consideration is given every year to reflect the diversity of the region's population. However, it continues to be a challenge to curate an agenda which both truly reflects the hard work of our partners with the rich diversity of our region's population.
- 2.4 The planning team acknowledges the lack of high-level speakers from a BAME background represented on the main agenda this year. The event microsite features over 40 hours of filmed content as well as links to additional resources. Some of these items did have a broader diversity of participant. Encouraging items to note include the short 'Talking Heads' films and the GM YCA Environment Working Group document, which feature the new, up and coming generation for the environment sector and reflect a more diverse group of ambassadors within Greater Manchester.

3. Future planning

- 3.1 It is a recognised criticism that the wider environment sector does not yet reflect an equal gender balance nor truly reflects the BAME population within the region and the UK. The wider issue is therefore a lack of diversity in the sector as a whole.
- 3.2 The planning team recognises the importance of engaging different audiences and will endeavour to amplify the voices of people from different backgrounds in future. The planning team would welcome the input of Councillor Stilton-Godwin and look forward to her recommendations and contacts for ambassadors and speakers for future environment events.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Work will continue to seek inspirational environment ambassadors from the region who represent people from a black and minority ethnic background and whose actions and work reflect the aims and aspirations of the 5-Year Environment Plan for Greater Manchester.