



## Greater Manchester Green City Region Partnership

**Date:** 21 July 2023

**Subject:** Work Programme 2023/24 and Challenge Group Updates

**Report of:** Challenge Group Chairs/Vice Chairs

---

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

The purpose of this report is to outline the progress made by the 5 Year Environment Plan (5YEP) Challenge Groups in developing their key priorities through Task and Finish Groups.

The accompanying presentation provides an updated overview of the Challenge Group priorities and how these are being delivered through Task and Finish Groups.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Partnership is asked to:

- Note the progress in developing the Mission Based Approach and the associated Challenge Groups.
- Consider any particular issues raised by the challenge group chairs or vice chairs.

### **CONTACT OFFICERS:**

[Mark.Atherton@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:Mark.Atherton@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

[Robyn.Smith@greatermanchesrer-ca.gov.uk](mailto:Robyn.Smith@greatermanchesrer-ca.gov.uk)

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of the Challenge Groups is to:

- Deliver the 5YEP work programme
- Report back on progress and key challenges/barriers to the Green City Region Partnership
- Utilise lobbying/influencing function when appropriate to drive agenda.
- Work in collaboration with other challenge groups to identify cross cutting issues.

An update on the progress towards the Five Year Environment Plan has been presented at all of the challenge groups.

## **2.0 GREEN COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE GROUP**

### **Topics discussed**

The Challenge Group held its second meeting since it was reviewed and refreshed.

The meeting covered:

- The Terms of Reference and purpose of the group
- Audience mapping
- Partner campaigns to be amplified and shared across by challenge group members across their channels and networks including,
  - ENW Powering our communities fund
  - Bee Net Zero solar campaign
  - Plastic campaign, Making Waves
  - Net zero week, 1-7<sup>th</sup> July

### **Challenges/opportunities raised**

- Showing leadership – share partner’s upcoming events and badge Green City Region
- More sharing audiences– using each others channels for engagement.

#### **Future priorities/work/topics**

- Supporting communications from the GM Retrofit Taskforce
- Mapping out the audience reach of challenge group members

### **3.0 LOW CARBON**

#### **Topics discussed**

The last Challenge Group meeting focused on progress in developing and deploying Solar PV across GM in support of carbon budgets and local area energy plan targets for renewable energy deployment. This included deep dives with presentations on:

- Faith Community Energy Projects
- Growth Company work with SMEs
- Barriers and opportunities for scaling up deployment of Solar PV across city regions larger businesses.

The approach of each challenge group meeting focusing on a low carbon deep dive topic was supported and agreed by the group.

#### **Challenges/opportunities raised**

It was agreed that an action plan would be developed with Bee Net Zero to support awareness, learning and scaling going forward.

#### **Future priorities/work/topics**

Transport was suggested as a possible future deep dive topic to support alignment of mobility and decarbonisation ambitions across GM.

### **4.0 NATURAL CAPITAL GROUP**

### **Topics discussed**

The Natural Capital Executive Group's recent meeting focused on several of the plans in development/recently developed

- Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Integrated Water Management Plans
- Five Year Environment Plan

### **Challenges/opportunities raised**

Discussions on the Five Year Environment plan emphasised the need to prioritise natural environment alongside carbon reduction in the next Five Year Environment Plan. In addition, different suggestions were given for how the actions should be structured by audience type.

It was also noted that in the executive group the business plan should be used to consider strategic risk and new areas of work were suggested to add to the business plan and this will be updated ahead of the next meeting.

### **Future priorities/work/topics**

An item of peat will be picked up at a future meeting.

## **5.0 SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION**

### **Topics discussed**

At the June meeting, the Challenge Group had updates on the following items:

- Behaviours Insights from the Public First research. The results were shared from the initial focus groups and the plan for the poll was presented.
- Single Use Plastics Task and Finish Group with the Local Authorities
- GM Fashion and Textiles from MMU

### **Challenges/opportunities raised**

A discussion was held on the new subgroups that are being set up with an ask made to members to consider which task and finish group they would like to join. The membership for the following groups is currently being determined and meetings will be held ahead of the next Challenge Group meeting,

- Plastics
- Food waste
- Behaviour Change

Overall, there are now 4 Task and Finish Groups with the most advanced being the GM Sustainable Textiles and Fashion Group, which has identified core priorities for the shift to a more circular economy of textiles focusing on:

- Reduced fashion consumption – promotion of higher quality more durable goods
- More effective utilisation of post-consumer waste (PCW) fashion

Short-term actions to deliver on the latter priority include:

- Comprehensive mapping of segregated PCW fashion and textile flows across the region
- Extension of planned existing residual waste compositional assessments through pilot kerbside collection initiatives to characterise clothing/textile waste in residual waste streams
- Trialling new/alternative clothing/textile collection options
- High-level assessment of the commercial and environmental performance of existing UK re-processing options and those that could be introduced to increase the value extracted from non-reusable textiles (NRT) fraction of collected fashion and textile items
- Identification of the optimal range of NRT sorting grades (i.e. ranges of material composition) best suited to the preferred downstream re-processing options
- Pilot assessment of clothing and textile flows from a limited number of high-use sectors (e.g. NHS/PPE, school uniforms, HMP, etc)

Whilst some of these actions can be pursued by the GMCA and GCR Partners, funding is needed to progress many. This is actively being sought. Unfortunately a recent bid for [NetworkPlus](#) funding under UKRI's Circular Fashion and Textiles Programme, whilst shortlisted for interview, was not ultimately funded.

### **Future priorities/work/topics**

The next meeting will pick up the next steps for the sub groups.

## **6.0 FIVE YEAR ENVIRONMENT PLAN FORUM**

### **Topics discussed**

The last meeting of the Forum focused on the development of the next Five Year Environment Plan with items on the following topics:

- Carbon pathways and setting targets for the next 5 YEP
- Local Authority action and spheres of influence
- Transport 2040 Strategy
- Potential for a Greenwash Free Charter for GM

The members were then asked to provide feedback on actions to include in the Five Year Environment Plan Forum that sit outside of Local Authority influence. This feedback will be considered throughout the development of the Five Year Plan.

### **Challenges/opportunities raised**

On transport, the discussion included whether there was potential to be more ambitious and transformative than aiming for a reduction from 60% to 50% of journeys in the city region being taken by car by 2040 and a suggestion to consider approaches in Scotland. The level of political will for more transformative system changes that discourage certain options rather than only encouraging lower carbon options and whether choices about 'acceptable' policy options were transparently considered was also discussed.

### **Future priorities/work/topics**

- How to best accelerate and capture business commitments and actions in the plan – focusing on deliverable actions.
- Exploring definitions of ‘sustainable economic growth’ and being specific on our commitments here.
- Greenwash free city initiatives