



## Greater Manchester Green City Region Partnership

Date: 3<sup>th</sup> April 2025

Subject: FIVE YEAR ENVIRONMENT PLAN 2019 – 2024 Evaluation

Report of: GMCA Environment

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### **PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

The purpose of this report is to provide a draft evaluation of the delivery of the first GM Five Year Environment Plan 2019 – 2024 (5YEP 19-24).

The report covers key successes, actions from the plan requiring further delivery, a short review of the mission based approach, a summary of progress against the KPIs and the latest emissions pathway graph.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Partnership is asked to:

- Note and comment upon the draft report.

### **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 KEY SUCCESSES**

There has been significant progress by GMCA, LAs and wider GM organisations in delivering against the targets and actions of the 5YEP 24-29. Listed below are some of the key achievements of the last five years:

### **Energy**

- Greater Manchester was the first city region to develop Local Area Energy Plans providing a geospatial plan for where energy generation, retrofit, low carbon heat and electric vehicle infrastructure should be installed.
- The Go Neutral Smart Energy framework was launched to support decarbonising the public sector estate. £26m has been invested in delivering 18MW of an 80MW pipeline of low carbon energy opportunities.
- GMCA and LAs are supporting schools to deliver solar PV to their buildings.
- GMCA in partnership with Bruntwood, Hitachi, MMU, SSE, UoM and UoS has set up an Energy Innovation Agency (EIA) that aims to deliver innovative technological solutions to help the transition to carbon neutrality.
- The Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Centre at Manchester Metropolitan University is the UK's first Fuel Cell Centre of Excellence.
- The Hydrogen Electrolyser (at up to 200MW) at Trafford Energy Park will be the UK's largest Green Hydrogen production facility and the Cryo-Battery on the same site is a world 1st using liquid air at a commercial scale.
- Energy House 2 at Salford is the world's first environmentally controllable chamber where full sized terraced houses can be constructed and tested.
- MoU's have been signed with SSE, Daikin and Panasonic to support the demonstration, testing and deployment of new technologies.

## **Buildings**

- A Retrofit Taskforce was set up to deliver a 3-year programme to explore innovative finance solutions, building the supply chain and meeting the skills demand. The Retrofit Action Plan was launched setting out the programme and delivery targets.
- Your Home Better, an independent service delivered by retrofit experts, is providing advice, planning and support to homeowners.
- The ECO4 programme focused on retrofitting the least energy efficient housing occupied by low income and vulnerable residents.
- The Local Energy Advice Demonstrator has delivered in person retrofit advice sessions to residents across the city region.
- The Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme spent £11.5m on retrofitting 1,785 fuel poor homes.
- The Truly Affordable Net Zero homes taskforce was launched to deliver 30,000 net zero social homes.
- £112m of funding has been secured from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and social housing providers to retrofit 6,125 social homes.
- Over £120m has been secured through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to retrofit 225 (~13%) of Greater Manchester's public sector buildings.

## **Transport**

- Greater Manchester is the first city region in England outside of London to take buses back under local control. The first franchised buses are now operating as part of the Bee Network.
- As part of the Bee Active Network 100km of new cycling infrastructure has been delivered alongside the introduction of a bike hire scheme with over 1,500 bikes are now available to hire.
- More than 100 zero emission buses now operate in Greater Manchester,
- The Metrolink runs on renewable energy and has expanded to become the largest light rail network in the UK with services running on seven lines to 93 stops.

- The Bee Network app has been launched to make it easier to use sustainable modes of transport to get around and it has almost half a million downloads since launching in late 2023.
- Through GM's Streets for All Strategy, a strong emphasis is being put on reducing traffic and road danger, and on improving the street environment. This has also included integrating Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) to support nature recovery and climate adaptation as well as active travel.
- There are now over 2000 publicly available EV connectors and 11,000 privately owned Electric Vehicles in Greater Manchester.

### **Natural Environment**

- A statutory Local Nature Recovery Strategy has been drafted, setting out how we can create a greener Greater Manchester, enhancing green spaces for nature and for people.
- A Tree and Woodland Strategy – All Our Trees – has been published by City of Trees, setting out where planting trees can have the greatest benefit. Over 900,000 trees have been planted to date.
- Through the IGNITION project, a Living Lab has been established at Salford University to explore and engage businesses and residents on the benefits of nature-based solutions.
- In 2020 the Greater Manchester Environment Fund was launched to deploy funding to enhance and create new green spaces for nature and people. It has directed over £5.5m of funding into environmental projects across the city-region, including through the Green Spaces Fund.
- The Green Social Prescribing Pilot delivered activities to connect people with nature improving people's mental health and wellbeing and the natural environment at the same time.
- Through the Greater Manchester Natural Capital Investment Plan priorities for investment in the natural environment have been identified.
- Through five rounds of the Green Spaces Fund £3m has been allocated to 103 community-led projects that increase the amount and quality of accessible, nature rich green space across Greater Manchester.

- The Natural Course project has worked collaboratively to design projects to address the barriers preventing the achievement of 'good ecological status'.
- In 2022, a New National Nature Reserve was declared for the Flashes of Wigan and Leigh, a vast former industrial site.
- An Integrated Water Management Plan was launched between GMCA, Environment Agency and United Utilities in 2022.

### **Circular Economy including Waste**

- In 2022 the Sustainable Consumption and Production Plan was launched providing the framework for Greater Manchester's key activities in 4 priority areas: Moving to a Circular Economy, Managing Waste Sustainably, Reducing Food Waste, and Moving to Sustainable Lifestyles.
- The Recycle for Greater Manchester Community Fund, launched in 2021, has funded creative solutions to recycling, repairing and reusing household waste in Greater Manchester. So far 47 projects have been funded including cooking classes, repair cafes and educational workshops.
- The Renew Hub and Shops were launched to help build Greater Manchester's circular economy by reusing and repurposing items donated by residents.
- There has been work to reduce the use of avoidable single-use plastics including the Plastic Free GM campaign, GM Refill campaign, Public Sector Plastic Pact, and Academia Plastic Pledge.
- 10 schools are trialling being Eco-Refill Shops and Greater Manchester has become a Refill Destination.
- In 2022 the Textiles Circular Economy Business to Business Platform launched to develop a circular economy roadmap for textiles.
- In 2021 Bee Net Zero was launched, a collaborative programme to support organisations on their journey to becoming net zero.
- A Schools Climate Action Planner has been launched to provide schools with a free, online, action planning tool to reduce their carbon footprint and environmental impact.
- A Northwest Net Zero Youth Network has been established as a commitment taken by NW regional Mayors from COP26.

- Three phases of behaviour insights research have been completed to understand residents' opinions on climate change and the barriers and challenges that prevent them from acting.

### **Climate Adaptation**

- A joint bid from Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Manchester City Council has been successful in securing funding from the Horizon Europe: Pathways2Resilience (P2R) Programme, which aims to increase the resilience of European regions and communities in the face of climate change. This includes the development of a Climate Adaptation Investment Plan.

### **Air Quality**

- Greater Manchester investment lead Clean Air Plan (CAP) has been approved by government.
- Since 2019 the number of exceedances of the legal limit for NO<sub>2</sub> has reduced, for LAQM from 59 locations with a maximum annual concentration of 59µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2019 to 12 locations and a maximum concentration of 49.6µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2023.
- Since 2019 the maximum recorded annual average concentration of MP2.5 has reduced across Greater Manchester from 12 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2019 to 9 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2023 which is below Government's 2040 legally binding 2040 target.

## **2.0 ACTIONS FROM THE 5YEP 19-24 REQUIRING FURTHER DELIVERY**

There has been significant progress against the actions set out in the 5YEP 19-24 with the majority now complete or significantly progressed. Below is a list of actions that have not yet been sufficiently completed and will be carried forward into the delivery of the next 5YEP.

## **Energy**

- Business – Install renewable energy generation at your premises and partnering with community energy groups
- National government – decision on long term decarbonisation of heat

## **Transport**

- National Government - radically improve connectivity with other cities
- National Government - invest in rail electrification or piloting low carbon alternatives (such as hydrogen)
- GMHSP – Monitor the environmental impacts associated with suppliers transport and logistics, work with them to find ways to minimise their traffic burden
- Assessing and developing a roadmap to reduce freight emission and support modal shift

## **Buildings**

- Businesses - standardise measurement and reporting of the operational efficiency of their buildings
- GMCA and LAs – obtain an average DEC of rating D or better by 2024 for their public buildings, where economically viable
- Local policy – Investigate encouraging greater energy efficiency through council tax and business rates and other financial vehicles
- National Government. – meeting commitments on smart meter roll-out
- National Government - changing ECO funding to ensure more effective at meeting GM's needs

## **Sustainable Consumption and Production**

- LAs – develop and consult on a zero waste strategy to set out our approach to becoming a zero waste city region

## **Adaptation and Resilience**

- Local policy – develop by 2021 an investment strategy for future flood risk infrastructure

### 3.0 MISSION BASED APPROACH

Implementation of the MBA for 2019-2024 5YEP involved a multi-level framework to facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration. This consisted of three key processes:

- *Green City Region Partnership (GCRP)*: the strategic body that oversees the development, implementation, and monitoring of delivery programmes which contribute to the achievement of the priorities articulated in the 5YEPs. The GCRP meets quarterly, with its membership including representatives from local and central governments, universities, businesses, and environmental organisations
- *Challenge Groups*: Aiming to bring together experts from various sectors to tackle the interconnected priority areas of the 2019-2024 5YEP, five Challenge Groups (see below) were established. While the Groups covered most of the priority areas, there is no direct Group for the transport sector yet. These groups, overseen by GCRP and GMCA, meet quarterly and are chaired/vice-chaired by GCRP members. Additionally, the 5YEP Forum was created to address cross-cutting issues among the five Challenge Groups.
- Based on input from the Challenge Group members, GMCA is continuing this mission-based approach for the 2025-2030 5YEP with a streamlined structure comprising four Challenge Groups (see below), as well as the Forum, while exploring new delivery methods to expand participation and enhance impact.

<b>Priority Areas in 2019-2024 5YEP</b>	<b>2019-2024 Challenge Groups</b>	<b>2025-2030 Challenge Groups</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy Supply</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Homes, Workplaces &amp; Buildings</li> <li>• Resource Consumption &amp; Production</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy Innovation</li> <li>• Low Carbon Buildings</li> <li>• Natural Environment</li> <li>• Sustainable Consumption &amp; Production</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low Carbon <i>(created in 2022 by combining Energy Innovation Group and Low Carbon Buildings Group)</i></li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural Environment</li> <li>• Resilience &amp; Adaptation to Climate Change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications (<i>cross-cutting</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable Consumption and Production</li> <li>• Natural Capital</li> <li>• Communications</li> </ul>
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### **Challenges and Limitations**

1. Despite decreasing emissions trends across sectors, Greater Manchester exceeded its 2018-2022 Tyndall Carbon Budget by 21.4 MtCO<sub>2</sub>, highlighting a gap in the scale of transformation needed to meet its 2038 carbon-neutrality target. The 2025-2030 5YEP acknowledges these implementation shortfalls, recognising that more aggressive reduction strategies, including investigating the role of enhanced stakeholder engagement strategies are required to accelerate progress toward established climate goals.
2. GMCA asserts that, while initially successful, the Challenge Group structure experienced plateauing progress in its final year potentially indicating how MBAs can stagnate when organisations treat plans as fixed rather than adaptive frameworks.

In addition to evaluating Greater Manchester’s Mission Based Approach, evaluation has taken place of Valencia and Camden’s Mission Based Approach. Learnings will be taken from this for the next steps of Greater Manchester’s Mission Based Approach.

## **4.0 KPIS**

Target	Data info	KPI	Status
<b>Energy</b>			
Increase local renewable energy (electricity) generation, adding at least 45MW by 2024		76.7MW	Target Achieved

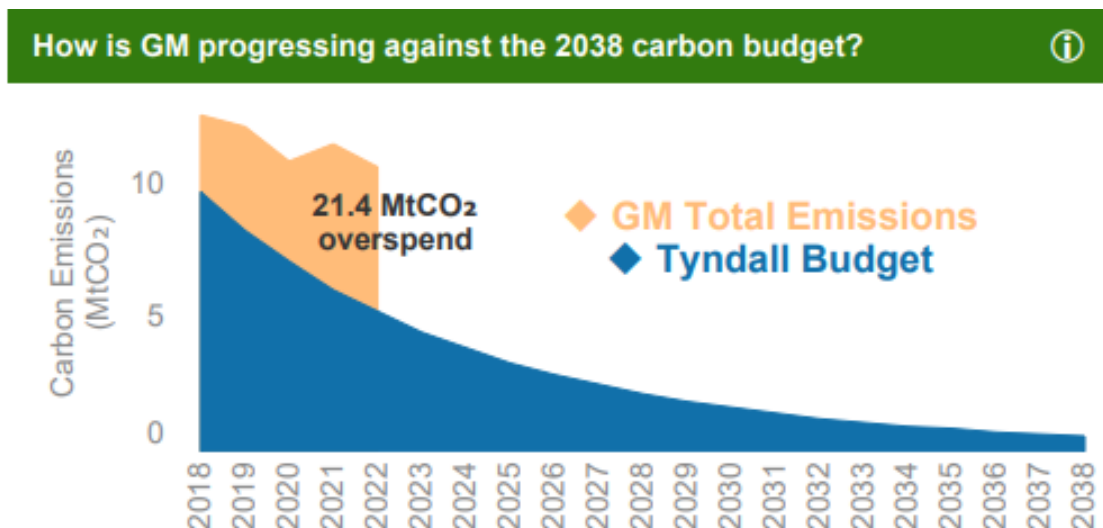
Decarbonise how we heat buildings, adding at least 10TWh of low carbon heating		0.05TWh	Target not reached
Increase diversity & flexibility of electricity supply, adding at least 45MW of diverse & flexible load by 2024		50.0MW	Target Achieved
<b>Transport</b>			
Reduce car use to no more than 50% of daily GM trips by 2040 (with remaining 50% made up of public and active travel)		69%	Target not reached
Support expansion to 200,000 EVs in GM by 2024		26,927	Target not reached
Increase the number of publicly accessible EV charging points		1,398	Target number not specified
<b>Homes</b>			
Retrofit 61,00 homes per year (305,000 by 2024)	Data for 24-25 not yet complete	54,010 homes moving from EPC D or below to C or above	Target not reached
<b>Sustainable Consumption and Production</b>			
Reduce industrial emission by 38% by 2025 (CO2)		13.75% reduction	Target not reached
Limit any increase in 2018 levels of waste to 20% by 2024	Domestic residual waste for GM WDA (excludes Wigan)	Limit 532kg/hh Current (22-23) 422kg/hh 2018-19 level 480 kg/hh	Target Achieved

Achieve a recycling rate of 55% by 2024	Data 22-23	50.4%	Target not reached
<b>Natural Environment</b>			
Plant one million trees by 2024		916,859 (23-24)	Target not reached
Improve existing areas of greenspace improved for nature	Note data for year 23/24 incomplete	1637ha	Target number not specified
Enhance 542km of waterways by 2027	Data 22-23	155km	Target not reached
Increase engagement with natural environment	Data 22-23	30,628 hours volunteered 7126 volunteers	Target number not specified

More detailed information on progress against the KPIs including charts and graphs can be viewed in the performance framework circulated as part of this pack. Please note that some of the data is not yet available for the most recent delivery years which may affect progress towards targets.

## 5.0 IMPACT ON CARBON EMISSIONS

The below graphs show the emissions reductions in Greater Manchester



## How have our emissions changed over time?

