

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP

16 November 2022

Commenced: 4.30pm

Terminated: 6.05pm

Present: Councillors Boyle (Chair), Affleck, Mills, Newton, Roderick and Turner

In Attendance: Emma Varnam Assistant Director, Operations and Neighbourhoods
Lindsay Johnson Head of Asset Strategy
Lee Holland Head of Engineering Services
Natasha Freeman Project Lead, Economy, Employment & Skills
Christina Morton Environmental Development Officer
Lewis Bowick Energy Systems Catapult

Apologies for Absence: Councillors B Holland and Pearce

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

17. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Climate Emergency Working Group held on 7 September 2022 were approved as a correct record.

18. GREATER MANCHESTER GREEN CITY REGION UPDATE

The Chair, Councillor Boyle, gave a verbal update in respect of the above, and advised that the Greater Manchester Green Summit 2022, hosted by the Mayor of Greater Manchester, had taken place at the Lowry Theatre, Salford on 17 October. It was explained that the summit sought input from businesses, policymakers, local communities and industry on how the city-region could accelerate action on its five-year environment plan.

19. LOCAL AREA ENERGY PLANNING

The Group received a presentation from the Local Energy Transition Consultant, Energy Systems Catapult (ESC) concerning Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP) across Greater Manchester. LAEP was a concept developed by the ESC to enable data driven, spatial and collaborative planning, to help unlock investment and delivery of smart local energy systems.

Details of Local Area Energy Planning were outlined to the Group:

- Setting out priority areas for different elements of the energy system in Greater Manchester, including insulation measures;
- Identifying areas where heat pumps and heat networks were cost effective to use;
- Identifying priority/opportunity areas for the introduction of other technologies at pace;
- Setting out a need for continued expansion of capability, capacity and understanding so further wide-scale transition could be delivered; and
- Informing design of the local energy market.

Members were informed that each Greater Manchester borough, including Tameside, had its own Local Area Energy Plan. A map of the borough, broken into sub-areas, showed the priority energy measures for each sub-area. First step priorities included retrofitting, home EV charging, solar PV and heat pumps. Longer-term deployment measures for areas of the borough included hydrogen

for heat opportunities and flexibility and storage opportunities. The appropriateness of particular measures for certain areas were highlighted to the Group. For example, a more rural part of the borough with lower housing density was unlikely to see a hydrogen network and heat pumps would be a more realistic option.

In Tameside, it was explained that a cost effective transition would require investment of £5.3 billion to meet the city region's carbon budget. Thousands of homes and buildings needed to see changes in the next few years and longer term, this included:

- 68,300 home insulation retrofits (62 per cent of homes);
- 50,000 domestic electric vehicle charge points;
- 75,000 domestic heat pumps; and
- 775MW of solar PV technical potential (rooftop and ground mount).

Mapping of the borough showed the areas of highest fuel poverty and these areas could be prioritised for insulation retrofitting and solar PV.

It was hoped that by 2038 gas and oil could be virtually eliminated from the energy network, shifting much more demand onto electricity networks. Capacity would need to be increased in low voltage substations, though flexibility and storage could reduce the investment required.

Details of the potential for improving electric vehicle charging in Tameside were also presented. Mapping showed the areas of the borough with the highest density of cars without off-street parking. It was highlighted that public charging hubs would be critical for homes without off-street parking. Potential charging hub locations were detailed, and this included sites on car parks, public land and at unoccupied buildings.

A discussion ensued regarding the investment required for the transition to cleaner forms of energy and it was explained that much of the investment would come from households, but business models to attract household investment and private finance were also needed.

The Chair thanked the Energy Transition Consultant for the detailed presentation and encouraged Members to submit any further questions regarding the information by email so that Energy Systems Catapult could provide a more detailed response.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

20. OCTOPUS AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMP OFFER

The Group received a presentation from the Environmental Development Officer concerning the Octopus Energy air source heat pump offer for Greater Manchester.

Members were informed that the government was providing a grant of £5,000 towards heat pump installation. Octopus Energy would apply for the grant on behalf of residents and the resident would be required to pay the difference. The offer provided an air source heat pump for £3,000 to £4,000 after Octopus claimed the £5,000 government grant. Additional radiators could be provided at around £200 each. Engineers directly employed by Octopus would install all of the pumps.

Details of the benefits of air source heat pumps were provided to the Group. It was explained that heat pumps were up to 4x more efficient than gas, electric or oil boilers. In addition, they had lower running costs, were environmentally friendly when paired with a green energy tariff and had a long life span of over 20 years.

Council branded letters would be sent to 27,780-targeted homes across the city-region that were suitable for an air source heat pump. The selection criteria for addresses was summarised for

Members:

- Owner-occupied. Therefore, social and privately rented housing was excluded;
- House or bungalow. Flats were excluded;
- Bedrooms: two to four;
- Size: less than 200m²;
- Age: built between 1930 and 1990;
- EPC Band: A – D;
- Walls: insulated to a 'good' or 'very good' level;
- Roof: insulated to a 'good' or 'very good' level; and
- Windows: double glazed in 'average', 'good' or 'very good' condition.

Members queried if support to install heat pumps was available for social housing tenants. The Environmental Development Officer explained that social housing providers could bid for grant funding through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund to retrofit measures such as an air source heat pump. In Tameside, Jigsaw Homes had successfully bid for a portion of the available funding.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

21. GREENER BUSINESSES

The Group received a presentation from the Head of Economy, Employment and Skills concerning the Council's efforts to support the borough's businesses to go green and become more sustainable.

An overview of the functions and services of Economy, Employment and Skills was provided to Members:

- Business support;
- Employment support, including job fairs and local stewardship of welfare to work providers;
- Reducing the number of young people not in education, training or employment (NEET);
- Skills support, including careers & apprenticeship fairs and digital events such as the Tameside Hack;
- Statutory careers guidance contract management;
- Routes to Work – supported employment service;
- Tameside in Work – in work progression support; and
- Household Support Fund assessment and payments.

Details of the Business Growth Hub were provided to Members and it was explained that the Council had a Business Growth Hub Account Manager who worked with the borough's businesses to link them to fully funded expertise to become more sustainable and reduce costs. This included the Resource Efficiency Team.

It was highlighted that in the UK alone, businesses wasted £60 million worth of energy every year. To help combat this issue, the Enerlytic Platform provided businesses with key insights into energy data, allowing them to measure, analyse and reduce energy consumption, costs and the carbon footprint. A colleague from the organisation would go in to individual businesses to assist them with working out where they were losing energy.

The GM Skills Map enabled businesses to source funded training across a wide range of areas, including Net Zero. The 'Journey to Net Zero' training was an online programme exclusively for SMEs in Greater Manchester that wanted to get on the path to net zero emissions, but were unsure of where to start. It was explained that through group workshops, study material and one-to-one advice, environmental specialists would guide businesses through what net zero meant and how to prioritise action. A strategic plan would be devised to help the business cut their carbon footprint,

reduce costs, minimise risk and capitalise on the benefits of a net zero world.

Members were informed that Economy, Employment and Skills were keen to develop new ideas and support important initiatives. The team were working with Tameside College and Chester Zoo to look at how the borough could champion sustainable palm oil. Large employers in Tameside, such as Hill Biscuits, were already signed up.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

22. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL UPDATE - CYCLING AND WALKING

The Group received a presentation from the Head of Engineering Services updating Members on cycling and walking projects within the borough.

Members were informed that the Council had been successful in bidding for a number of different sources of funding to support active travel in Tameside. Funding streams included the Mayor's Challenge Fund, the Emergency Active Travel Fund, the Active Travel Fund (tranches 1, 2 and 3), the Capability & Ambition Fund and School Streets. It was explained that once in principle approval had been received, schemes were developed that were affordable, deliverable and had political and community support. In some circumstances, funding had been secured to develop schemes but further funding was required to bring it to fruition.

The benefits of cycling and walking were highlighted to Members:

- Improved air quality;
- Reduction in congestion;
- Improved health and wellbeing; and
- Improved attractiveness of neighbourhoods.

It was explained that whilst infrastructure was important, it was key that work was also undertaken to change behaviour and develop a culture of cycling. Engineering Services were working with other colleagues across the Council to deliver community and business initiatives to give the community the skills, confidence and resources to switch to active travel.

A Walking and Cycling Activation Task Group had been developed consisting of colleagues from Highways, Population Health, the Youth Service, the Arts and Events team, Employment and Skills, Active Tameside, British Cycling, Cycle UK and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM). The Council's Walking and Cycling Project Lead would chair the group.

In relation to active travel schemes in the borough, the Head of Engineering highlighted that the construction work on the Chadwick Dam and Hill Street schemes had been completed. The Chadwick Dam scheme extended the cycling and walking facilities that were completed in 2019 and improved connections from Chadwick Dam towards Ridge Hill, Mellor Road, Tameside Hospital, Mossley Road and the residential areas to the north of Ashton-under-Lyne. The Hill Street development improved links with the existing cycle scheme along Victoria Street to Stockport Road in Ashton-under-Lyne.

Details of the proposed Active Travel Fund 2 schemes were outlined:

- Oldham Road, Ashton-under-Lyne;
- Newman Street, Ashton-under-Lyne;
- Stockport Road, Ashton-under-Lyne; and
- Guide Lane, Audenshaw.

These schemes would deliver cycle lane upgrades and improve the segregation of cyclists and motorists on the highway. A six-week consultation on the Phase 2 schemes had concluded and 65

responses were received. Overall, 47 per cent of respondents expressed positive feedback, 28 per cent indicated no preference and 25 per cent of respondents expressed concern. The consultation was seen as a crucial part of supporting behaviour change. Targeted engagement had also been undertaken with key stakeholders including the Council's Youth Council, Deaf Association, Big Chat Disability Event and Blind Association.

A number of further priority schemes as part of the Mayor's Challenge Fund were included:

- Stamford Drive area, Ashton-under-Lyne/Stalybridge;
- Clarendon Road, Audenshaw;
- Rayner Lane, Droylsden; and
- Wellington Road/Albion Way, Ashton-under-Lyne.

These schemes were subject to approval and the outcome of consultation.

Members sought clarity on proposed improvements to cycling infrastructure in Denton town centre. The Head of Engineering Services confirmed that the Denton proposals were part of the successful tranche 3 bid. To date, £1.9 million of funding had been received towards the scheme, which was focussed on Crown Point and the A57 towards Hyde. The whole scheme would cost £8 million to deliver and discussions were ongoing to as to whether the project would need to be reduced to match the funding allocated or if there was the option to bid for further funding to complete the scheme in its entirety.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

23. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

24. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Environment and Climate Emergency Working Group was scheduled to take place on 15 March 2023.

CHAIR