

## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP

13 March 2024

**Commenced: 4.35pm**

**Terminated: 6.05pm**

**Present:** Councillors Pearce (Chair), Affleck, Axford, Ferguson, Jones and Mills

**In Attendance:**

Dean Kleban	Project Manager, Economy, Employment and Skills
Kelly Gray	Stakeholder Manager, Business Growth Hub
Jordanna Rawlinson	Head of Communications
Christina Morton	Environmental Development Officer
Marie Hare	Community Initiatives Officer
Neil Charlesworth	Head of Strategic Asset Management
Nicola Marshall	Greenspace Development Manager
Ellie Cassidy	Graduate Communications Officer

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillors S Homer

### 31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 32. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Climate Emergency Working Group held on 15 November 2023 were approved as a correct record.

### 33. GREATER MANCHESTER GREEN CITY REGION UPDATE

The Environmental Development Officer provided a summary of the items discussed at the most recent meeting of the Greater Manchester Green City Region Board:

- A quarter three progress report for the Greater Manchester Five Year Environment Plan was provided. Areas of key progress during that quarter included energy, sustainable consumption and transport.
- A new Five Year Environment Plan would be produced in the coming months. The Board recently came to all 10 Greater Manchester councils to complete questionnaires around key topics that would feed into the updated plan.
- A report was submitted on accelerating retrofitting commercial buildings across Greater Manchester.

The Chair requested that the minutes of the Green City Region Board be circulated to Members of the Panel going forward.

### 34. GREENING BUSINESS UPDATE

The Group received a presentation from the Project Manager, Business, Support and Engagement, and the Stakeholder Manager, Tameside Business Growth Hub in relation to greening business in Tameside.

Members were informed that the Tameside Means Business Net Zero Festival was held on 8 December 2023. The free event sought to bring Tameside businesses together to embrace the journey to net zero. It was reported that over 70 businesses/individuals attended the festival at

Global Grooves in Mossley. Sponsored by Dukinfield-based World Heat Cylinders, the event was supported by the GM Business Growth Hub and Green Economy team. Members had welcomed the attendance of members of the Tameside Youth Council. The engagement of young people was seen as particularly important.

Feedback in relation to the event had been overwhelmingly positive and plans for a summer festival in 2024 were underway.

The reporting officer explained that there had been a number of joint visits to local businesses between the Council and GM Business Growth Hub to learn more about their green journey. The visits covered a range of subjects and were seen as important in facilitating the best lines of support for businesses. In addition, the Tameside Business Resilience Clinic also offered free advice and guidance to support local businesses on their journey to net zero.

Details of the Business Growth Hub were then provided to the Group. The Hub offered a range of support, including:

- Starting a business and supporting the self employed;
- Selling more and opening new markets;
- Becoming more efficient and resilient;
- Innovation and digitisation; and
- Accessing finance and funding.

The Hub had a dedicated Green Economy and Resource Efficiency Team, which helped businesses to decarbonise with advice, training and support that delivered long term resilience, environmental credibility and financial savings. The team also helped to grow local green technologies and supported the entire green supply chain to deliver equitable net zero transition. This included working with local government and combined authorities to implement business support that simplified the business path to net zero, whilst also removing barriers linked to slow or low adoption of green technologies.

Members were provided with details of the Green Skills Academy based at Trafford Park. The Academy was part of a pan-northern effort to lead the UK's transition to net zero. This green technology department delivered courses in a number of areas, such as air source heat pump installation, solar panel installation, wind turbine installation, EV charging point installation and cavity wall insulation extraction. Elected Members were invited to attend the Academy, along with any local businesses who would benefit from the support provided.

In total, it was advised that 40 Tameside businesses were classified as being in the Green Tech sector, who were also on the Growth Hubs Green Tech sector network.

The Chair thanked the officers for an informative presentation and encouraged Members to share the details with those businesses that could benefit from the services outlined.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the presentation be noted.**

## **35. ACTIVE TRAVEL UPDATE**

The Community Initiatives Officer provided an update in respect of active travel across the borough. The aim was to work with a range of providers across Tameside to address barriers to movement and promote better conversations to increase activity.

Details of a range of active travel schemes in Tameside were provided, including Stockport Road in Ashton-under-Lyne and Chadwick Dam and Hill Street between Ashton and Stalybridge. It was reported that there had been updates to cycle lanes on Stockport Road in Ashton and this had been

achieved in conjunction with local businesses. There was an ongoing offer alongside the Employment and Skills team to work with all SMEs to promote active travel, TfGM grants and travel for both utility and leisure.

In relation to Chadwick Dam and Hill Street, it was reported that a number of projects had been completed, including jingle jogs, a programme of holiday activities, cycle training and school bike sales. A number of other schemes were also in progress, including story walks with local schools, local resident and college student audios and art awards.

It was explained that there had been some difficulty to engage in activation at the Hill Street scheme but there had been upgrades to the Cavendish crossings to assist with walking and cycling.

To encourage activation among businesses, a 'One Day a Week' scheme had been launched. The scheme was a behavioural nudge campaign that encouraged people to make small reductions to the amount they drove. Employees could take part by travelling by a mode of transport that was not driving a car. Those who participated could be entered into a monthly prize draw by posting a picture of themselves using the hashtag 'my1DAW' on social media.

The reporting officer provided information in relation to Modeshift, an organisation that aimed to secure increased levels of safe, active and sustainable travel in business, education and community settings. It was explained that licences were available for all SMEs to become Modeshift accredited. Businesses could access cargo bikes to transport goods. The Manchester Bike Kitchen based in Hyde was available to loan e-bikes to businesses.

A summary of future schemes was provided to Members, including Rayner Lane and Stamford Drive. It was highlighted that the Rayner Lane scheme would provide an improved off-highway cycle and pedestrian route between the Ashton Moss Metrolink stop and a cycle/pedestrian route on the Audenshaw old railway line via filtered access points. Plans were in place to activate the scheme working in collaboration with British Triathlon and local football clubs.

Regarding the Stamford Drive scheme, Members were informed that the programme aimed to improve the environment for neighbourhoods south of the A635 Stamford Street between Ashton and Stalybridge. It was hoped that there would be a reduction in the volume and speed of vehicles on residential streets. Cycling would also be promoted by providing safe crossings and a direct quiet route.

Members were keen that the next meeting of the Group had a focus on transport.

The Chair thanked the reporting officer for a useful update on active travel schemes across the borough.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the presentation be noted.**

## **36. QUARTERLY 'THINK GREEN' COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a presentation of the Head of Communications providing an update on the Council's Environment and Climate Emergency communication's strategy.

The Council's one-stop webpage called 'Think Green' brought together all elements of the Council's aim to tackle climate change, tips on being more environmentally friendly and access to information on public transport, walking & cycling and parks & countryside. Information on making homes more energy efficient was also available. The reporting officer highlighted that between 16 October 2023 and 21 February 2024, the Think Green webpage had been visited 2,509 times, with recycling the most visited page. There had been web page spikes between the end of December and January.

Details of the monthly focuses for the 'Think Green' campaign were highlighted. In the previous

quarter, these had been:

- November – Tameside Green Business Pledge
- December – Have a Green Christmas
- January – Veganuary
- February – Greenspace Volunteering

Communications had been promoting a number of other events, including Ryecroft Conservation Day, which involved a day of conservation work and maintenance at Ryecroft Hall on 5 March.

Upcoming monthly themed communications were outlined to Members. Themes to be promoted included 'The Great British Spring Clean' in March, 'World Earth Day' in April, 'Tameside Walking and Cycling Month' in May and 'Let it Bloom' in June.

Members were once again encouraged to contact the Communication's Team with any items that would generate good publicity for the Think Green campaign.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the presentation be noted.**

### **37. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

### **38. 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 5 June 2024.

**CHAIR**