

## **CARBON AND WASTE REDUCTION PANEL**

**9 September 2020**

**Commenced:** 4.30 pm

**Terminated:** 5.55 pm

**Present:** Councillors Mills (In the Chair), Cooper, B Holland, Jones, Lane, Mills, Patrick and Pearce

**In Attendance:**

Ian Saxon	Director, Operations and Neighbourhoods
Alison Lloyd-Walsh	Head of Environmental Development
Christina Morton	Environmental Development Officer
Garry Parker	Head of Waste Management
Lee Holland	Head of Engineering Services
Danielle Bamford	Project Support Officer

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillors Boyle and Gosling

### **7. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

#### **RESOLVED**

**In the absence of the Chair, Councillor Boyle, that Councillor Mills be appointed as Chair for this meeting.**

### **8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **9. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Carbon and Waste Reduction Panel held on 8 July 2020 were approved as a correct record.

### **10. CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

The Panel received a presentation from the Head of Environmental Development updating Members on the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan. The Executive Leader had declared a climate emergency on behalf of the Council in February and the Action Plan would strive to put climate change at the heart of everything the Council did. Tameside Council was already committed to the Greater Manchester Five Year Plan on climate change and much of the Council's own Action Plan would be derived from this.

Members were informed that a cross-Council officer group had been created to better support the coordination of climate-based action and activity. The group had recently met for the first time and would meet on a monthly basis to discuss a wide range of issues. It was intended that an introductory report would be submitted to the Council's Board in October outlining the proposals contained within Tameside's strategy and how the aims would be supported. At present, the Action Plan was still a working progress and Members were invited to give their input. The intention was that the strategy and Action Plan would be formalised in February or March of 2021 and it would be the responsibility of Panel Members to monitor progress against the objectives outlined.

The Head of Environmental Development stressed that there would need to be awareness raising in relation to the climate agenda among both officers and Members and this would include comprehensive carbon literacy training. A discussion ensued regarding the provision of greener transport options available to staff. The Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods explained that the Council had launched a bike loan scheme, run from the Tame Street depot in Stalybridge, which

had proved very popular. It was hoped that as more staff returned to Tameside One, following the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council would also be able to introduce loan bikes at that location.

Panel Members were provided with an overview of the environmental actions that the Council intended to pursue across a range of areas including; buildings and energy use; travel and transport; the natural environment; reducing consumption and procuring sustainably; and influencing the behaviour of others. Members were pleased that work was already underway to fulfil a number of the actions. The Council had also had some success in achieving some of the actions outlined, notably the procurement of renewable energy across the public estate. Influencing the behaviour of others would also be a critical part of achieving the objectives outlined and the Council would look to work with small and medium enterprises (SMEs), energy companies and local residents.

Whilst much could be achieved at a Borough level, the Council would also work with local authorities across the city region and with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to lobby for additional project funding. The Council would also coordinate with partners across Greater Manchester to lobby central Government for changes in policy at a national level. It was reported that the Chair of the Panel would sit on the Greater Manchester Green City Region Board and attend a meeting in October reporting details to Members at the next Panel in November.

#### **RESOLVED**

- i. That the content of the presentation be noted.**
- ii. That the Chair provide an update to Members on the Greater Manchester Green City Region Board meeting at November's Panel.**

#### **11. NEW GOVERNMENT ENVIRONMENT FUNDING UPDATE**

The Panel received a presentation from the Environmental Development Officer outlining measures recently announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to provide a combined £3 billion in energy efficiency funding to be delivered through a number of schemes.

Members were informed that the Government would invest £1 billion over the next year in a Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme that would offer grants to public sector bodies, including schools and hospitals, to fund both energy efficiency and low carbon heat upgrades. The Council was hoping to have a number of 'shovel ready' projects that could be submitted for this funding. In addition, the Government was creating the Green Jobs Challenge Fund that would invest up to £40 million for environmental charities and public authorities to create and protect 5,000 jobs in England. The jobs would involve improving the natural environment, including; planting trees; restoring habitats; clearing waterways; and creating green space for people and wildlife.

Funding streams would also be available to improve the energy efficiency of homes through the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (LAD) Scheme, the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and the Green Homes Grant Scheme. It was explained that phase 1 of the Green Homes Grant LAD Scheme had been launched and Greater Manchester local authorities had submitted a joint bid for £5 million. The funding would be targeted at low-income households with a combined income of less than £30,000 per year and a property with a poor EPC rating. The Council was working E.ON, who in turn were working with local installers, on a number of projects to provide low carbon heating measures and insulation to such homes to ensure their improved energy efficiency.

The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund would provide a total of £50 million in funding to social landlords to improve the least energy-efficient social rented homes. A competition to bid for funding would be launched in October 2020 and would be open to applications from local authorities and local authority-led consortia.

A wider £2 billion Green Homes Grant Scheme had also been launched that would enable homeowners and landlords in England to apply for vouchers worth up to two thirds of the cost of upgrading the energy efficiency of their home. The Environmental Development Officer explained

that most householders would be able to apply for a maximum contribution of £5,000 but those on the lowest incomes would be eligible for up to 100 per cent funding, up to a maximum of £10,000. In order to apply for funding households would be required to install at least one primary energy saving measure, such as upgrading to double or triple glazing when replacing single glazing, in order to qualify for vouchers to install secondary measures, including roof insulation and a ground source heat pump.

A discussion ensued regarding the steps that were being taken to advertise the various schemes to local residents. Members were advised that information would be displayed on the Council's website and the Communications team would also be circulating information through the Council's social media platforms. Elected Members were also urged to make contact with residents in their wards so as many people as possible could take advantage of the funding.

## **RESOLVED**

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

## **12. WALKING AND CYCLING SCHEMES UPDATE**

The Panel received a presentation from the Head of Engineering Services updating Members on the progress of delivering enhanced walking and cycling provision in Tameside and across Greater Manchester. Currently, 80 per cent of Greater Manchester residents were physically inactive and 70 per cent of air pollution could be attributed to vehicle traffic.

Members were informed that as part of the Greater Manchester Mayor's Challenge Fund to deliver the Bee Network, all local authorities across the city region had mapped out their vision for a walking and cycling network, detailing where current blockages and issues existed. In Tameside there were currently 11 projects, totalling £11.5 million, which had been approved. The two year delivery phase had begun and schemes at Chadwick Dam in Ashton/Stalybridge and Hill Street in Ashton were due to commence in November 2020 pending a critical frame review by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM).

The COVID-19 crisis had also presented a unique opportunity to further enhance walking and cycling provision in Greater Manchester as part of a strategy to 'Build Back Better' and ensure that the area became carbon neutral by 2038. Figures collated so far during the pandemic showed that cycle trips had increased 16 per cent on pre-lockdown levels with 200,000 trips per day now being made by bike in Greater Manchester. The Panel were informed that additional money had been made available by central Government to improve green modes of transport in response to coronavirus. As part of tranche one of COVID funding, a pop-up cycle lane from Lord Sheldon Way in Ashton along the A635 to the Manchester boundary had been introduced. A further four schemes across the Borough were put forward by Greater Manchester as part of tranche two funding totalling almost £1 million. £500,000 had also been made available to each Greater Manchester local authority to facilitate the quiet streets initiative.

The Head of Engineering Services explained that the schemes outlined were part of a longer-term project to transform the way that people travelled and lived their lives. The benefits of increased walking and cycling were outlined and included; better air quality; reduced levels of congestion; improved health; an improved environment; and increased community cohesion. Whilst some of the measures were introduced on a temporary basis, the current challenges arising from COVID-19 gave the Council an opportunity to reallocate road space permanently subject to consultation with residents and Members. The Bee Network would also need to adapt and change in response to demand from increased development.

A discussion ensued regarding the integration of the Bee Network with the wider public transport network across Greater Manchester. The Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods explained that TfGM were working on developing an integrated transport strategy for 2040 to establish how all modes of transport could work together.

## **RESOLVED**

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

### **13. GM CLEAN AIR AND MINIMUM LICENSING STANDARDS UPDATE**

The Panel received a verbal update from the Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods updating Members on the implementation of the Greater Manchester Clean Air Zone and Minimum Licensing Standards for taxi drivers. Air pollution was linked to a range of serious health conditions and contributed to around 1,200 early deaths in Greater Manchester each year.

Members were informed that local authorities across Greater Manchester had been mandated by central Government to bring nitrogen dioxide levels on local roads within legal limits as soon as possible. The 10 Greater Manchester local authorities had worked together to consider a wide range of measures to tackle air pollution, including a Clean Air Zone. A public consultation on the planned Clean Air Zone would be launched in October 2020 that would apply only to the most polluting commercial vehicles. The scheme would include financial assistance to help the city region's people and businesses to switch to cleaner vehicles and avoid the charge.

Proposals had also been put forward to introduce a Greater Manchester Minimum Licensing Standard for taxis to support the wider Clean Air Plan. It was hoped that the proposals would achieve a single vision for licensed vehicles across the 10 local authority areas and lead to a zero emissions taxi fleet.

The Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods advised that the consultation on both schemes would take place from 8 October 2020 for eight weeks. Members hoped that that the consultation would not only allow local people to give their views but also provide an opportunity to dispel a number of myths related to the proposals.

## **RESOLVED**

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

### **14. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

**CHAIR**