

By email:
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Contact:
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24th June 2020

Dear Sir Richard

RE: Embedding Ambitious Climate Change Action at the Heart of Manchester's Recovery and Our Manchester Strategy Reset – proposal from Manchester Climate Change Partnership

When we last wrote to you on 28th February 2020, it was to share the Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25. Our proposal was for the Framework to be formally established as the city's strategy towards meeting Manchester's commitment to *'play its full part in limiting the impacts of climate change'*¹. We were pleased to see the document was well-received and was formally endorsed by the Executive on 11th March 2020². Sincere thanks to you and your colleagues.

Since then, the world has changed immeasurably. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought chaos, hardship and grief to communities and businesses around the world, including our own. However, it has also created one other important outcome: the opportunity to reimagine the world we live in; the opportunity for citizens' quality of life, health and wellbeing to become the overriding aim of politicians, business and community leaders; the opportunity to fundamentally reshape the global economy so it acts in the interests of people, planet and profits, and; the opportunity to ensure we can get on track to meet the 1.5-2°C aim of the Paris Climate Change Agreement.

It is clear the City Council also recognises that now is the time to accelerate our efforts towards these goals, as set out in the report to the Executive on 6th May 2020 on the city's recovery³. We particularly welcome the statement in Section 3.5 of the report: *'The global, national and local context in 2020 is now very different. As well as the inevitable economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need to tackle climate change has become even more urgent and is one of the defining challenges which has implications for the city's economy, transport, energy, buildings and green and blue infrastructure.'*

We couldn't agree more.

¹ <http://www.manchesterclimate.com/framework-2020-25>

² <https://democracy.manchester.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=147&MId=625&Ver=4>

³ <https://democracy.manchester.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=147&MId=3627&Ver=4>

On that basis Manchester Climate Change Partnership and Manchester Climate Change Agency would like to put forward an offer of support to the City Council, to contribute towards Manchester's recovery work and the reset of the Our Manchester Strategy. Our offer is based on the belief that a recovery with ambitious action on climate change at its heart is not only good for the planet, but will also enable us to achieve better outcomes for Manchester residents and businesses over the short, medium and long-term.

An Outline of Our Proposed Approach

We believe that while the context for their delivery has changed, the aim, objectives and priorities we set out in the Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25 have not. Not only does the latest science tell us they are still the right ones for the city to play its full part on climate change, but the growing body of evidence in favour of a green recovery tells us that that they are now more relevant than ever in helping the city to reset, recover, and thrive.

We will therefore use the Framework as a key element of our input, working with City Council colleagues to ensure its commitments are fully embedded in the city's recovery and the Our Manchester Strategy reset.

We will help ensure that the Framework's aim, for *'Manchester [to] play its full part in limiting the impacts of climate change and create a healthy, green, socially just city where everyone can thrive'* forms part of a clear overarching aim for the city's strategy.

We will help ensure that our climate change-focused objectives are right at the heart of the city's recovery, over the short, medium and long-term:

- **Staying within our carbon budgets** for direct CO₂ emissions (from homes, schools, workplaces and ground transport), for aviation emissions from all flights from Manchester Airport, and addressing the consumption-based emissions embedded in the services and products we buy and throw away, and
- Ensuring we **adapt to and increase our resilience to the changing climate**.

We will help ensure that the six areas for action in the Framework are fully embedded within the strategy. We will do this by setting out why action in these areas is so crucial to support the city's recovery. In particular, setting out how action will simultaneously improve the health and wellbeing of Manchester residents, secure existing and new jobs, restart the economy, and at the same time deliver on the commitment to make our full contribution to the Paris Agreement. We will help define the opportunity the city has to retrain residents to move from roles that are now structurally redundant and which did not make the most of people's talents and their ambitions for positive change, to new higher value and more purposeful roles that will help the city to tackle climate change. Building retrofit, local renewable energy generation, and natural capital are among the sectors we believe offer potential for significant growth and the creation of secure jobs for Manchester residents in need of employment right now, and over the coming decades.

- **Buildings:** now is the time for major domestic and non-domestic energy efficiency and on-site renewable energy generation programmes. Urgent action here will secure jobs for our residents already working in the construction sector and create new

employment opportunities. Prioritising our residents in fuel poverty will help to improve the lives of the 38,307 households (17.9%)⁴ who can't afford to heat their homes adequately. Rather than adding to our retrofit challenge we believe now is the time for Manchester to become a first-mover in establishing zero carbon as a standard for all new developments, as set out in our response to the Local Plan consultation in May 2020⁵.

- **Renewable energy:** according to the World Health Organisation fossil fuels and the pollution they cause cost society and the environment over \$5 trillion dollars every year⁶. Money the world can ill-afford as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. Accelerating our shift to 100% renewable energy will ensure we play our part to address this, as well as investing our money in Manchester and UK companies.
- **Transport:** now is the time to clean up our air once and for all. It's time for major investment in new routes to make walking and cycling our favourite modes of transport and for our public transport system to finally catch up with the 21st century. Cars will still have a role where no alternatives exist, but only those producing zero emissions. Manchester Airport will continue to be a key employer but we must use this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to accelerate the decarbonisation work already underway in the sector, particularly where the Government provides financial support.
- **Food:** locally produced, fresh, healthy, sustainable food needs to be at the heart of a transformed Manchester food system, one that places people, nature and profit on an equal footing. We have many great businesses in the city that already follow these principles; we now need to make sure they can be supported to recover and succeed, providing a model for others in the city to follow.
- **The things we buy and throw away:** local businesses already provide many of the products and services we use every day. Many of them doing so with sustainability at the heart of their practices. These are the businesses we want to see succeed, providing inspiration for those who are yet to start their zero carbon journey.
- **Green infrastructure and nature-based solutions:** our natural environment has provided a critical refuge over the last three months, a place for much-needed relaxation and play, and a source of inspiration and calm. We can expect these needs to increase, as should the resources we invest in our green and blue spaces.

Support from Our Partners

As part of our contribution to the city's recovery, we propose to draw on the ideas, expertise and experience of our partners, from inside the city and beyond.

The Manchester Climate Change Partnership and our members remain committed to ambitious action on climate change, embedded as part of our own organisation and sector-specific recovery and business plans. Through our proposed work we will set out

⁴ http://www.manchesterclimate.com/sites/default/files/ZeroCarbon_AR_19_1.pdf

⁵ <http://www.manchesterclimate.com/news/2020/05/manchester-local-plan-issues-consultation-mcca-response>

⁶ <https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/who-manifesto-for-a-healthy-recovery-from-covid-19>

the areas where Partnership members are already able to act, and those where they will require support, including through actions that can only be delivered by local and/or national government. Partnership members will also be reviewing and developing their own green recovery plans over the next six months.

We will also draw in the ideas and expertise of other local partners, to help us work through the detail of why and how to embed our climate change commitments at the heart of the city's recovery.

Our partner cities in the UK and Europe will also provide a rich source of inspiration, sharing ideas they believe will help Manchester to build back greener, healthier and happier.

We should expect the ideas coming forward through this proposed process to be both exciting and challenging, in equal measure. Change is not easy, particularly when it is of the scale of the transformation ahead of us. We want to give the City Council the confidence there is support for such ideas and far-reaching transformation. This will come from Climate Change Partnership members, their networks and their communities.

By December 2020

Over the next six months we want to work with the City Council to achieve two key outcomes.

Firstly, an Our Manchester Strategy and recovery with the city's ambitious climate change commitments at their heart.

And secondly, to have undertaken the preparatory work for the refresh of the Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25. This will include a new 'Recovery Annex' (working title) that reframes the current document in the context of the city's recovery, and sets out the work plan for the production of Version 2.0 of the Framework, during 2021-22. This refresh / Version 2.0 will be supported through Manchester's participation in the EU-funded Zero Carbon Cities project⁷.

Next Steps

Manchester is increasingly being recognised for our ambitious commitments on climate change, within the UK and internationally. Other cities are watching and waiting for our next move at this most critical time. By getting it right here we can be confident we'll be providing a model for others will follow.

But most importantly the opportunity in front of us is right here. The opportunity to create jobs for Manchester residents retrofitting homes. The opportunity to give our businesses the support they need to succeed. The opportunity to clean up our air. And the opportunity to create communities where all our residents can live healthy, happy and fulfilled lives.

⁷ <https://urbact.eu/zero-carbon-cities>

We invite you and City Council colleagues to consider this proposal and how best the Partnership and Agency can contribute at this pivotal moment in the city's history.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Conrad". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Chair (interim)
Manchester Climate Change Partnership