

MANCHESTER CLIMATE CHANGE AGENCY

By email

Jonny Sadler
Programme Director
jonny.sadler@manchesterclimate.com

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Dear Manchester City Council

RE: Our Manchester Strategy Reset – Manchester Climate Change Agency Response: making Manchester a greener, fairer, healthier and world class city by 2025

1. Summary

- This response forms part of the work by the Manchester Climate Change Agency and Partnership to support Manchester City Council with the city's recovery.
- It builds on the Agency and Partnership's letter to the City Council in June 2020, which set out that delivering on the city's existing climate change commitments (in the Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25) will help the city to reset, recover, and thrive.
- We have made a total of twelve proposals in this document, setting out how action on climate change will contribute to the successful realisation of the aim and the five priorities in the Our Manchester Strategy consultation.
- Our proposals are underpinned by a compelling and growing body of evidence, which sets out that a 'green recovery' will deliver better economic and social outcomes than returning to life pre-COVID.
- Aim: we propose that science-based, urgent action on climate change should be a central part of the Strategy's aim, with the following wording suggested: '...on track to become zero carbon and climate resilient, with 50% less direct CO₂ emissions in 2025 than in 2019.'
- Five priorities: we have made ten proposals that will contribute towards the Strategy's priorities, based on the commitments made in the Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25.
- Working in partnership with Government: we have proposed that Manchester City Council and city partners need to broker a new partnership with Government, to enable the city to contribute fully to the UK Net Zero target and participate in the Government and UN-sponsored global Race to Zero.
- Next Steps: building on this document, in December 2020 the Agency and Partnership will publish a 'Recovery Annex' to the current Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25, to set it within the context of the city's recovery; it will be published alongside the work plan for the Framework's refresh during 2021-22.

2. Introduction and Background

Launched in March 2016, the current Our Manchester Strategy sets out the commitment that Manchester will *'play its full part in limiting the impacts of climate change'*.

In February 2018, the Manchester Climate Change Partnership (MCCP) was established to champion the city's work to achieve this commitment. MCCP is part of the Our Manchester structure of thematic groups. The groups that make up this structure have responsibility for their particular priority (Climate Change Partnership, Health and Wellbeing Board, Work and Skills Board, Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Board, etc).

MCCP is made up of over 60 organisations from across 10 sectors, with collective responsibility for over 20% of the city's direct CO₂ emissions, and with a level of influence over the remaining c. 80%. The Partnership is supported by the Manchester Climate Change Agency (MCCA).

In October 2018, the Partnership and Agency published 'Playing our Full Part: how Manchester's residents and businesses can benefit from ambitious action on climate change'¹ (POFP). The report set out four proposals to further define and ensure the city could make progress towards achieving the commitment to 'play our full part'.

The document was positively received by Manchester City Council and its proposals were formally agreed by the Council's Executive in November 2018². The agreed proposals included recognition that 'by taking urgent action to become a zero carbon city, starting in 2018, we will achieve more benefits for Manchester's residents and businesses up to 2025 and beyond.'

The Council also formally agreed to the POFP proposal to 'adopt the Tyndall Centre's proposed targets and definition of zero carbon on behalf of the city', formally committing the city to act in line with the latest science and the Paris Agreement.

In February 2020, the Partnership and Agency published a refreshed set of science-based climate change commitments, taking into account the latest science, and a proposed strategy for meeting them. This document, the Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25 ('the Framework'), was endorsed by the City Council's Executive in March 2020, formally establishing it as the city's strategy for tackling climate change.

Since March 2020, COVID-19 has fundamentally changed the context for the Framework's delivery. However, the priorities remain the same. Not only does the latest science tell us the agreed priorities are still necessary for the city to play its full part, but the growing body of evidence in favour of a green and fair recovery tells us that that they are now more relevant than ever in helping the city to reset, recover, and thrive. On that basis, MCCP and MCCA have welcomed the invitation³ to work with City Council colleagues since July 2020, to ensure that the Framework's commitments are fully embedded within the city's recovery work.

¹ <http://www.manchesterclimate.com/targets-2018>

² <https://democracy.manchester.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=147&Mid=289&Ver=4>

³ <http://www.manchesterclimate.com/green-recovery>

This response to the Our Manchester Strategy reset consultation has been developed as part of this ongoing work. It has been developed according to the structure and priorities of the consultation:

- Aim to be a world-class city by 2025
- Five priorities:
 - A thriving, forward-looking city
 - A highly skilled city
 - A fairer city
 - A liveable city
 - A connected city
- Plus, the need for Manchester to develop a new partnership with Government

In developing this response, MCCP and MCCA have drawn on the pre-existing commitments in the Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25 and recently published research and reports. In particular, this response will draw upon the six headline areas for action set out in the Framework: buildings; 100% renewable energy; transport, including aviation; food; the things we buy and throw away; and green infrastructure and nature-based solutions.

3. Our Proposals to Help Make Manchester a Greener, Fairer, Healthier and World Class City

This section sets out 12 proposals that will simultaneously help to deliver the aim and priorities in the Our Manchester Strategy, and the objectives in the Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25.

3.1 Aim to be a world-class city by 2025

Proposal 1:

To include as part of the vision: ‘...on track to become zero carbon and climate resilient, with 50% less direct CO₂ emissions in 2025 than in 2019.’

Rationale and evidence:

Becoming a world-class city for climate action: C40 is a network of leading global cities on climate action. They set the benchmark for best practice globally and are widely recognised as defining ‘world-class’ in terms of climate action and the wider socio-economics co-benefits that come as a result. C40 Mayors have set out their ‘Agenda for a Green and Just Recovery’⁴. The agenda sets out how a green and just recovery can contribute towards three key city priorities, which align well with the five priorities in the Our Manchester Strategy: jobs and an inclusive economy (thriving, forward-looking city; highly skilled city); health and wellbeing (liveable city; connected city), and; resilience and equity (fairer city).

Social and economic co-benefits: As well as putting us on track to meet our climate change targets, urgent action on climate change will also enable us to realise better social and economic outcomes, over the short, medium and long-term. This is in line with the ‘Playing Our Full Part’ proposal, as outlined above.

In 2019, 861 global cities reported their climate performance to the CDP-ICLEI platform (including Manchester⁵). 76% of these cities reported they were achieving social and economic co-benefits alongside their efforts to reduce CO₂ emissions and increase resilience to changing climate. Benefits

⁴ https://www.c40knowledgehub.org/s/cities-and-coronavirus-covid-19?language=en_US

⁵ <http://www.manchesterclimate.com/gcom-cdp-reports>

included: new jobs created; jobs with more security; increasing the value of goods and services produced in the city; improved public health; poverty reduction/eradication; engaging groups that are traditionally excluded; addressing inequalities; improved food, water and energy security; increased preparedness of a city to respond to hazards; and others.⁶

Public and business support: there is strong and growing public and business support for a green and fair recovery. This is the headline from the All Party Parliamentary Group's September 2020 'Time to Reset: the public desire for a fairer, greener Britain after Covid'⁷. The report is based on conversations with 55,000 people from across the UK and calls for life in Britain to be completely reshaped. Driven by the desires of ordinary citizens, the report recognises that, as well as improving people's quality of life, many interventions would also help the UK to meet its climate change targets, including: more green spaces, liveable streets, less traffic, more flexible working patterns and food grown closer to home.

Research by UK charity Hubbub has similar findings. Only 12% of people want life to return to 'exactly as it was before lockdown', with 74% thinking that COVID-19 has given society an opportunity to make changes to the way we live, including in terms of sustainable travel, local food growing, improving our relationship with nature and other priorities⁸.

The UK Climate Assembly was convened in 2020, to explore the British public's views on the actions needed to meet the UK Net Zero 2050 commitment. 79% 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that steps taken by the government to help the economy recover should be designed to help achieve net zero, while 93% 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that, as lockdown eases, government, employers and/or others should take steps to encourage lifestyles to change to be more compatible with reaching net zero.⁹

Joined-up decision-making: Unless we place action on climate change at the heart of everything we do as a city, bringing about fundamental changes in short and long-term plans and policies, investment and infrastructure decisions, work with Government, individual behaviours, and others, we will fail to meet our commitment to 'play our full part' on climate change. The Manchester Climate Change Annual Report 2020¹⁰ shows our current trajectory: 2% and 4% reductions in direct CO₂ emissions achieved in 2018 and 2019 (projected) versus the 13% annual target; 26% of the city's direct emissions carbon budget for 2018-2100 spent during 2018-19; aviation emissions on an upward trajectory.

Embedding urgent climate change action as a central part of the city's aim will enable us to make joined-up decisions, as political leaders, as business leaders, as community leaders, as educators and as individuals. As a result, our actions will contribute positively towards meeting our climate change commitments, rather than taking us further away, as the evidence demonstrates is happening at present.

⁶ <https://www.tyndall.ac.uk/news/co-benefits-climate-action-accelerating-city-level-ambition>

⁷ <https://reset-uk.org/>

⁸ <https://www.hubbub.org.uk/greenprint>

⁹ <https://www.climateassembly.uk/report/>

¹⁰ <http://www.manchesterclimate.com/progress>

3.2 Thematic Priorities

3.2.1 'A thriving, forward-looking city'

Proposal 2:

Include the following actions from the 'Inclusive, Zero Carbon and Climate Resilient Economy' section of the Framework, as part of this priority:

- 1) 'Support existing and new businesses in the low carbon and environmental goods and services sector to provide the expertise and products the city needs to act on climate change.'
- 2) 'Support 'non-environmental' organisations to act on climate change, including those currently in fossil fuel-heavy industries where major changes to business activities will be needed and where workers may need support to transition into new jobs where they can deploy their skills.'

Rationale and evidence:

Becoming a world-class city for climate action: there is strong alignment with the recommendations set out in the C40 Agenda for a Green and Just Recovery.

Business views: In spite of uncertainties and challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, 97% of business professionals say their long-term sustainability strategy remains unchanged, while 80% say their company has been able to maintain their current climate actions during the crisis. But nearly half (47%) said they still need more support to be able to achieve their sustainability goals¹¹.

The Confederation of British Industry (CBI; with over 190,000 members) have set out their view that the COVID-19 recovery presents a real opportunity to do things differently, by delivering the benefits of a low-carbon transition fairly around the country¹².

3.2.2 'A highly skilled city'

Proposal 3:

Include the following actions from the 'Inclusive, Zero Carbon and Climate Resilient Economy' section of the Framework, as part of this priority:

- 1) Embed climate change throughout the city's education and training system to help Manchester become a Carbon Literate city.
- 2) As we invest in infrastructure to become a zero carbon city, we need a proportionate investment in the skills sector to ensure that our education and training providers can respond. In particular, we need to develop the 'green skills' the city needs to deliver the projects and programmes planned for 2020-25 and to prepare for further initiatives from 2026.

¹¹ <https://www.theclimategroup.org/news/long-term-climate-strategy-not-impacted-covid-19-says-global-business-governments-have-bigger>

¹² <https://www.cbi.org.uk/articles/the-government-decisions-needed-to-deliver-a-green-recovery/>

Rationale and evidence:

Becoming a world-class city for climate action: there is strong alignment with the recommendations set out in the C40 Agenda for a Green and Just Recovery.

Business views: The CBI have set out that action taken now will not only set the UK on a path to net-zero, but will also help secure the thousands of jobs that can be secured through investment in low-carbon technologies and services.

The TUC have also set out their views on a zero carbon economy. Their 'Voice and Place: how to plan fair and successful paths to net zero emissions' report sets out that, with the required levels of investment from Government, 1.24m jobs could be created across Britain over the next two years. These jobs could be in innovative new industrial sectors, providing an alternative for those currently in fossil fuel sectors of the economy, which are expected to decline in the transition to a zero carbon economy.¹³

3.2.3 'A fairer city' and 'a liveable city'

The proposals in this section contribute to both the 'fairer city' and 'liveable city' priorities.

Proposal 4:

Residents and communities programme: Include an action to 'develop and deliver a programme to engage and support individual and community-led action on climate change, focusing in particular on those that stand to benefit most from the support'.

Rationale and evidence:

This proposal aligns with the commitments made by MCCA and MCCP in the Manchester Climate Change Annual Report 2020 and in Manchester City Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2020-25.

Supporting community-led action on climate change and the environment can deliver a range of important co-benefits, including: increased physical activity, reduced air pollution, connection with nature, growing and eating fresh food, making homes warmer and healthier, saving households money, gaining knowledge and skills, and a greater sense of belonging and connection – as well as reducing waste and CO₂ emissions¹⁴.

Proposal 5:

Buildings: Include an action to 'retrofit our existing homes to reduce their energy bills and CO₂ emissions, focusing in particular on households currently living in fuel poverty and with the lowest standards of energy efficiency; at least 11,500 homes retrofitted every year'.

¹³ <https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/voice-and-place-how-plan-fair-and-successful-paths-net-zero-emissions>

¹⁴ <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/insights/community-action-for-the-environment>

Rationale and evidence:

The UK Green Building Council estimate that a radical overhaul in the energy efficiency of homes and small businesses could catalyse some £7 billion of investment annually and create up to 250,000 jobs by 2030¹⁵.

Proposal 6:

100% renewable energy: include an action to ‘install renewable energy technologies within and on the rooftops of homes across the city, to reduce energy bills and improve resilience to changing energy prices; at least 50% of all homes to have photovoltaic (PV) panels by 2024’.

Rationale and evidence:

According to research by the International Renewable Energy Agency, significant investment in renewable energy generation and energy efficiency, as part of the global recovery, would create 5.5 million more jobs by 2023, outweighing the loss of 1.07 million jobs that are expected in the fossil fuel and nuclear energy sectors¹⁶. Given, (Greater) Manchester’s strong existing base in low carbon products and services, this gives the city (region) an opportunity to capitalise on any growth in the global renewable energy sector.

Proposal 7:

Food: include an action to ‘transform Manchester’s food system so that it works in the interests of people within the city and beyond, local businesses and wildlife’.

Rationale and evidence:

The food system makes a contribution to climate change which is on par with transport and buildings, as well as having significant implications for citizens’ physical and mental health. The way food is provisioned affects the economic welfare and social cohesion of communities, through the opportunities for selling, accessing, growing, sharing and eating food, and the social interaction that can accompany these activities. Adopting a ‘food systems’ perspective presents opportunities to simultaneously address multiple issues, including poor diet, food waste, food security and social isolation, as well for stimulating a reduction of embedded greenhouse gas emissions¹⁷.

The New Economics Foundation, an independent economic think tank based in London, compared what happens when people buy produce at a supermarket versus a local farmer's market or community supported agriculture and found that twice the money stayed in the community when consumers bought locally¹⁸.

¹⁵

https://www.ukgbc.org/sites/default/files/130705%2520Retrofit%2520Incentives%2520Task%2520Group%2520-%2520Report%2520FINAL_1.pdf

¹⁶ <https://www.irena.org/publications/2020/Jun/Post-COVID-Recovery>

¹⁷ [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(18\)31788-4/fulltext?fbclid=IwAR0WKJ5VBBHvY9OfuBrOcdy05GIwmgblt3omMekeKcU4KypnRF129ccGE](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(18)31788-4/fulltext?fbclid=IwAR0WKJ5VBBHvY9OfuBrOcdy05GIwmgblt3omMekeKcU4KypnRF129ccGE)

¹⁸ <http://content.time.com/time/business/article/0,8599,1903632,00.html>

Proposal 8:

Things we buy and throw away: include an action to 'buy products and services from socially responsible businesses that make a positive contribution to their workers, supply chains and the natural environment, including those based within Manchester'.

Rationale and evidence:

Citizens Assembly UK members strongly supported a future in which businesses make products using less energy and materials. They backed a range of specific policies to support this aim, including 'resource efficiency targets and standards' (91%), an 'amended procedure for awarding government contracts that gives preference to low carbon companies and products' (83%), taxes on producers, products and services (83%), and 'extended producer responsibility' (79%).

Assembly members also felt strongly about the need for better information to promote informed choice and changes in individual behaviour. They supported 'labelling and information about the carbon emissions caused by different products and services' (92%) and 'product labelling and information campaigns about what can be recycled and why it's important' (92%). They also backed 'advertising bans and restrictions' on high emissions products or sectors (74%).

Proposal 9:

Green infrastructure and nature-based solutions: include an action to 'ensure that all communities have access to high quality green spaces that are good for their health, protecting the neighbourhood from the changing climate, and for wildlife'.

Rationale and evidence:

According to the Wildlife Trust's 'Valuing Nearby Nature: how local nature helped the people of Manchester and beyond get through the Coronavirus Lockdown', 99% of Manchester residents surveyed said being able to connect with nature during the restrictions was 'very important' or 'important'. 67% visited nearby nature 'much more' or 'more' often, compared with a usual week pre-lockdown.¹⁹

58% of people surveyed by Hubbub said spending time in nature during lockdown made them feel more relaxed.²⁰

The Greater Manchester IGNITION project has identified a wide range of benefits that green infrastructure and nature-based solutions can provide. Including, reducing air temperatures by 3°C (particularly important as Manchester's climate continues to change, particularly for the most vulnerable residents), 9% improvement in air quality within parks compared to the surrounding area, 22-50% improvement in air quality on streets with green walls, 38% more likelihood of exercising for residents with a green space within a mile, 23% decrease in sick leave for workers with a view of green space, and many others.²¹

¹⁹ <https://www.lancswt.org.uk/our-work/projects/my-wild-city>

²⁰ <https://www.hubbub.org.uk/greenprint>

²¹ <https://www.bitc.org.uk/report/nature-based-solutions-to-the-climate-emergency-ignition-project/>

3.2.4 'A connected city'

Proposal 10:

- Ground transport: include an action to 'continue to improve access to the city centre and other key employment and education centres by sustainable and active travel, and explore making Manchester a 15-minute city, where all residents have easy access to goods and services, via a safe and pleasant 15-minute walk or bike ride'.

Rationale and evidence:

We know that public support for walking and cycling and less travel has increased during lockdown. 66% of citizens believe we should all use our cars less and 77% think we should walk more. During lockdown over a third of people (36%) had walked or cycled for journeys they would otherwise have driven or taken public transport for²².

The 15-minute city²³ is one of the key aspects of the C40's Agenda for a Green and Just Recovery and could therefore align well with Manchester's aim to be a world-class city.

Proposal 11:

Flying: include an action to 'ensure that all emissions from all flights from Manchester Airport are within the context of a limited carbon budget for global aviation emissions, and that all Manchester residents can access their fair share of this budget and the benefits of having an international airport on their doorstep'.

Rationale and evidence:

Decarbonisation of the aviation sector is one of the most challenging aspects of meeting the Paris Agreement. Given the nature of aviation, it requires an international and national strategies to address it. No such strategies currently exist and views differ widely on what the component parts should be, including market-based demand reduction, technology improvements, carbon offsetting, alternative fuels, and others.

However, Manchester has been proactive in starting to address this challenge; the Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25 commits to all emissions from all flights from Manchester Airport being managed in line with the Paris Agreement, as part of a UK aviation strategy; Manchester Airport Group are a founding member of the Sustainable Aviation Group and one of only two airports / airport groups participating in the Government's new Jet Zero Council; and the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of Manchester and the Centre for Aviation, Transport and the Environment at Manchester Metropolitan University both have extensive academic expertise in this subject.

The potential exists for Manchester to build on this platform to become a key player in helping to solve the aviation decarbonisation challenge, drawing on the knowledge and experience of those already employed in the sector.

²² <https://www.hubbub.org.uk/greenprint>

²³ <https://www.c40knowledgehub.org/s/article/How-to-build-back-better-with-a-15-minute-city>

it's also critical that the limited global carbon budget for aviation is shared out evenly. It's estimated that 70% of UK flights are taken by 15% of the population²⁴.

3.3 Working with Government

Proposal 12:

Include an action to 'establish a new partnership to enable local and national government to work together to remove the structural and systemic barriers that will otherwise prevent the successful delivery of this Strategy, including through developing and delivering new policies, infrastructure, funding, incentives and other interventions our residents and businesses need'.

Rationale and evidence:

Across all the priorities to be set out in the reset Our Manchester Strategy, support and joint working with Government will be required. On climate change specifically, it is well-recognised that UK local authorities', businesses' and individuals' action on climate change is currently limited by a wide range of structural and systemic barriers. For example, lack of clear policy and incentives, lack of funding, lack of sustainable transport infrastructure, and others.

Research by the Coalition for Urban Transitions²⁵ estimates that for cities around the world to realise their climate ambitions the powers and responsibilities for action are: 28% with the city; 35% with the national government; 37% through working together.

Many of the studies referenced in this response provide further evidence, setting out the critical role that Government needs to play to ensure a green and fair UK recovery, in line with the UK Net Zero target. This is echoed by UK Committee on Climate Change²⁶ and the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment at the University of Oxford²⁷, both of which made strong public statements early on in the lockdown about the need and the opportunity for the UK's recovery to contribute towards national climate change commitments.

It's essential that Manchester is proactive in working to establish this partnership and calling for the support we need. As we have done countless times before, including in establishing much of the city's sustainable transport infrastructure.

There are cities around the world who have been successful in this approach, establishing a long-term strategic partnership with their national government, beyond the scope of the usual stop-start approach that follows from project-based government funding competitions. The Helsinki Smart and Clean initiative offers a useful example that Manchester could build on²⁸.

It's likely that such a partnership would also need to involve the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Core Cities. And would ideally be part of a wider programme for local and national government collaboration across the UK. With COP 26 in Glasgow in November 2021 just over 12 months away, now is the ideal time for the UK Government and cities to build a world-leading

²⁴ https://neweconomics.org/uploads/files/58e9fad2705500ed8d_hzm6yx1zf.pdf

²⁵ <https://urbantransitions.global/en/publication/climate-emergency-urban-opportunity/>

²⁶ <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/letter-building-a-resilient-recovery-from-the-covid-19-crisis-to-prime-minister-boris-johnson/>

²⁷ <https://www.smithschool.ox.ac.uk/research/covid-19/>

²⁸ <https://smartclean.fi/en/>

programme of local climate action. The potential is there, we now need to make it a reality, ensuring the UK can rightly stand on the world stage as a leading player in the global Race to Zero²⁹.

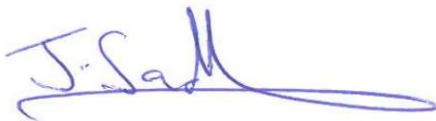
4. Next Steps

This response draws together work since July 2020 by the Agency and partners. It forms part of our work with the City Council to help ensure a green recovery for the city. Further work is planned during October and December 2020 to build on the evidence in this response and develop a 'Recovery Annex' to the current Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25.

The purpose of the Annex is to help set the city's climate change agenda in the context of the city's social and economic recovery, and a recovery of the natural environment. This work will be supported by between two and four new research projects (subject to funding) that the Agency will be jointly delivering with the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University: Decarbonising Consumption in Manchester's COVID-19 Recovery; Towards a Green Recovery in Food Provision in Manchester; Climate Adaptation and Resilience Planning and Action in Manchester; and The Case for Embedding Science-based Climate Action in Manchester's Recovery (draft title).

The Annex will be published in December 2020, alongside a work plan for the refresh of the Manchester Climate Change Framework during 2021-22.

Yours sincerely



Jonny Sadler
Programme Director
Manchester Climate Change Agency

Manchester is leaving CO₂ behind - come with us!
www.manchesterclimate.com/zerocarbon
[@McrClimate](https://twitter.com/McrClimate)

²⁹ <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/race-to-zero-campaign>