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GREATER  
MANCHESTER

**#GMGreenCity**

**GREATER MANCHESTER GREEN SUMMIT 2019**  
**MARCH 25, THE LOWRY**

# **Carbon Neutral by 2038: Paris-aligned, science based**



# Taking Action Within The Public Sector

We as a planet and city-region face major environmental challenges that threaten our health, wellbeing, community and prosperity.

At the second Green Summit, held on 25 March 2019, Mayor Andy Burnham launched the 5-Year Environment Plan outlining how we as Greater Manchester will respond.

The plan was produced through more than a year-long process of engaging stakeholders, practitioners and citizens. It sets out a long-term environmental vision for Greater Manchester — including to be carbon neutral by 2038 — and the immediate actions we all need to take in the next 5 years in order to achieve this ambition.

During the Green Summit there were a number of different ‘zones’ that delegates were encouraged to participant within to explore the 5-Year Environment Plan and be inspired to take the actions in support of the plan.



One of the zones, hosted by the Environment Agency focused on *taking action in the public sector*.

This targeted people working across all roles within all public sector organisations, from local authorities and schools to health sector practitioners.



The aims were to inspire and motivate people in whatever role they are in, to come up with clear actions that they and their organisations could implement to help make a difference and change current business as usual practices to being more environmentally conscious.

This space focused on 5 core themes:

- Sustainable transportation
- Buildings & Energy System
- Improving our natural environment
- Waste, procurement & the circular economy
- Inspiring leadership within the public sector

The first four themes were discussed in dynamic, participative workshops while the fifth theme was explored through a moderated panel discussion.

## Key Highlights from the Public Sector Zone

Many different ideas were discussed about how the public sector could support the actions called for within the 5-Year Environment Plan. However, there were several themes that were raised consistently throughout the five thematic sessions in the Public Sector Zone:

- The 5-Year Environment Plan is a meaningful policy document that needs sufficient resourcing if the public sector is going to implement its objectives;
- There needs to be strong leadership across all public sector organisations (from schools, health sector, transport, local authorities) to ensure sufficient and strong buy-in to implement the 5-Year Environment Plan;
- The public sector needs strong buy-in and support at all levels within organisations for the 5-Year Environment Plan to be delivered;
- The public sector needs to play the leading role of community facilitator to help amplify local positive actions taking place throughout the city-region;
- The public sector needs to be sufficiently resourced to deliver stakeholder engagement and communications to implement the 5-Year Environment Plan objectives, such as encouraging all stakeholders to take action to improve their impact on the environment;

In addition to these general outcomes from the Public Sector Zone, there were also numerous takeaways from each thematic session that are worth noting (see below).

Over 500 Green Summit attendees participated in at least one thematic session in the Public Sector Zone, which involved over 40 stakeholders from over 25 different Greater Manchester organisations.

Overall, the Public Sector Zone made a positive contribution during the Green Summit in both demonstrating the scale of the challenge as illustrated in the 5-Year Environment Plan and enrolling participants to see themselves as key allies in taking meaningful action over the next 5 years and beyond.



# Sustainable Journeys and Transport

The choices we make about how we travel can have positive or negative implications on our health and wellbeing, our local economy and on our environment.

With Greater Manchester facing major challenges around air pollution, people's physical and mental wellbeing, there are many options available to us to make the right choices to have the best impact for us now and in the future. Public sector organisations are well positioned to be leading this change, for increasing public transport routes and uptake, encouraging people to cycle and walk, particularly for shorter journeys, and exploring improving our natural environment, making our places more attractive, safe and inviting to travel in, improving health as well as improving air quality and reducing carbon emissions.

Key themes to make change:

- Better public transport and active travel networks
- Encourage reduced travel by employees where possible
- Improved infrastructure in work places to encourage walking / cycling

**Key actions for all public sector organisations to implement:**

- CEO Challenge – lead by example
- Change own pool cars / fleets from petrol to electric vehicles
- Install electric charging points at offices
- Implement incentive schemes for employees to choose sustainable travel instead of using private cars
- Explore creating competitions to encourage active travel among employees / across departments
- Introduce flexible working hours to reduce unnecessary travel and time in traffic jams
- Allow remote working, reducing travel emissions and time wastage
- Establish car sharing schemes and encourage car sharing among employees
- Provide changing facilities for employees
- Further promote cycle to work schemes to encourage uptake
- Install secure cycling infrastructure and bike parking facilities at offices
- Encourage people to wear trainers to work, to encourage more walking to and during work
- Provide public transport options for attendees in joining instructions for external meetings

**Key actions for the Mayor and the Combined Authority:**

- Explore free public transport
- Explore orbital routes for public transport
- Enable public transport to have space for bikes
- Incentives for making electric vehicles more affordable
- Funding to incentivise walking and sustainable routes
- Establish public sector hubs for cross-team working across GM – to reduce car use, increase car sharing

**Key actions for Local Authorities and Transport authorities:**

- Run campaigns to encouraging uptake of electric vehicles by citizens and private taxi firms
- Run campaigns to discourage people to drive private cars and use public transport
- Create safer pavements / routes for walking and cycling
- Prioritise pedestrians on roads by increasing road crossings
- Increase public transport – routes and capacity
- Improve public transport access to hospitals
- Improve surfacing and safety of paths in towns and cities
- Install more secure cycling infrastructure and bike parking facilities in the public realm and for this to include green infrastructure
- Plant and maintain hedges and other green infrastructure along streets to absorb pollution
- Introduce a Police Community Support Officer scheme to keep traffic flowing
- Run regular car free street days, such as once a month
- Integrated payment system for public transport
- More awareness of pollution levels and impacts of pollution

**Key actions for the Environment Agency:**

- Run campaigns to discourage colleagues to drive private cars and use public transport
- Explore putting on shuttle buses to/from train stations and main offices at key times
- Plant and maintain hedges and other green infrastructure on own estates to absorb pollution

**Key actions for Local Authority Planning and Housing departments:**

- Ensure new housing development applications have included active travel routes into designs
- Ensure new developments have adequate public transport infrastructure, reducing need for car ownership

**Key actions for Schools and other educational establishments:**

- Set up school walking groups
- Set up 'Walk to school' challenges
- Encourage more children to walk to school
- Training for children in road safety, with lessons and group support rolled out across schools
- Limit road access for cars around schools
- Work with local authorities to make roads near schools more accessible for active travel

# Our Buildings and Energy System

Improving the fabric of our public sector buildings and residential housing stock is essential for reducing energy wastage as well as helping to tackle fuel poverty.

Along with this, it is vital the public sector looks to reduce its energy consumption as well as educate others to do the same, whilst also switching to energy companies which use renewable energy and opting to install energy efficient and renewable energy technologies.

Taking actions like this does not only make financial sense, it is also better for our environment and for our communities.

Key themes to make change:

- Lead by example - installing renewables and energy efficient technologies
- Educate all employees / stakeholders to be less wasteful with energy
- Switch to clean energy suppliers

**Key actions for all public sector organisations to implement:**

- Whole life costing prior to investment, taking into account the environmental and social impacts
- Develop policy frameworks (similar to best value)
- Change procurement 'weightings' to reflect a carbon budget (influencing contractor behaviour)
- Collaborate financially and ambitiously
- Planning for strong guidance
- New funding mechanisms
- Replace gas heating systems and install more energy efficient boilers
- Install radiator foils and LEDs in all public sector owned buildings
- Ensure all public sector organisations switch to using low carbon energy suppliers
- Identify ways for group purchasing to strengthen buying power for energy
- Run campaigns across own organisations and externally to promote energy efficiency behaviours and reduce energy wastage, e.g. switching off IT / lights when not in the office / out of office hours
- Lead the way on installing renewable energy technologies in public sector estates
- Use short cycles for large energy intensive appliance such as washing machines or dishwashers
- Install green roofs / green walls to help improve insulation and help wildlife

**Key actions for the Mayor and the Combined Authority:**

- Explore how to deliver messages on importance of improving housing and energy via media, and TV programmes, such as on Soap Operas
- Increase transparency by the energy suppliers of network constraints to encourage users to be more efficient with their energy use
- Run campaigns to encourage uptake of renewable energy technologies
- Push for stronger National Planning Policy on embedding renewable energy technologies in new builds
- Further explore hydrogen in the gas grid
- Look to further develop insulation for solid walls
- Install renewable energy systems within transport hubs and switch fleets to electric vehicles
- Encourage viable finance options for low carbon energy alternatives
- Provide infrastructure allowing for micro renewable energy generation
- Invest in skills, training and jobs in the green sector

**Key actions for Local Authorities and Social Landlords:**

- Explore ways to communicate better to homeowners through case studies and pilots to educate them on reducing energy demand / making changes to opt for energy efficient technologies in their homes
- Incentives for owner occupiers to retrofit
- Run campaigns to encourage uptake of renewable energy technologies
- Better take up of the Renewable Heat Incentive for combined heat and power using air source and ground source heat pumps in residential buildings
- Lead with delivering district heating schemes on existing sites or new sites
- Social landlords to be more transparent with energy sources and costs
- Private rented sector to have greater enforcement
- Switch off street lights for some hours at night (reducing costs, carbon and supporting nocturnal wildlife)
- Install smart meter in own buildings and encourage tenants / landlords to do so

**Key actions for the Environment Agency:**

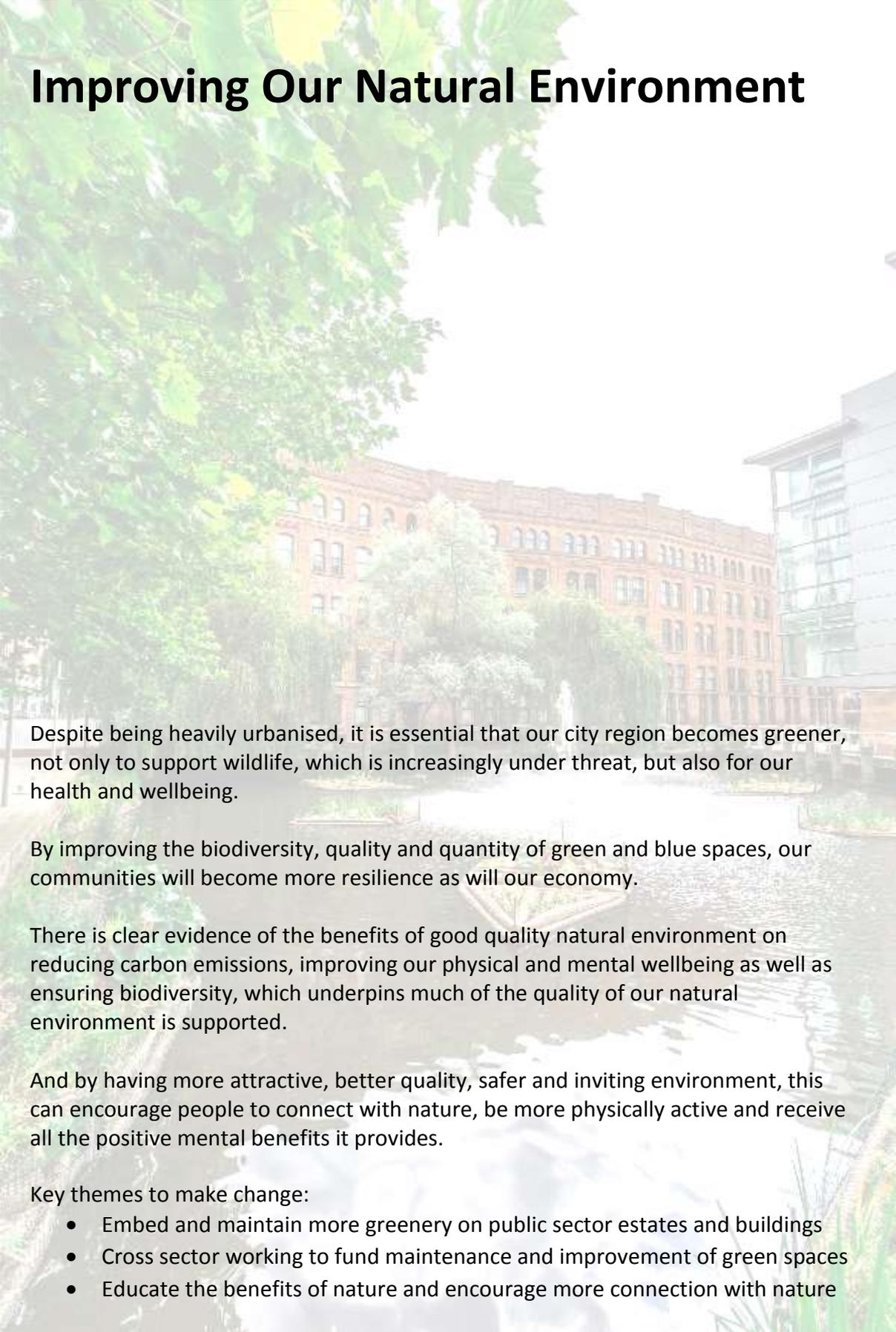
- Look to install renewable energy technologies on own buildings
- Run internal campaigns to promote energy efficiency behaviours and reduce energy wastage
- Switch to using low carbon energy suppliers

**Key actions for Local Authority Planning and Housing departments:**

- For all new builds to be carbon neutral, with renewables, energy efficient technologies and fabric
- Remove planning permission for retrofitting renewable energy technologies, such as solar PV on residential and commercial buildings
- Challenge restrictions to allow for retrofit of listed buildings

**Key actions for educational establishments:**

- Universities to develop models of delivering carbon neutral homes

A photograph of a city park with a fountain, surrounded by trees and buildings. The image is slightly faded to allow text to be overlaid. The fountain is in the center, with water spraying upwards. There are many green trees and bushes around the fountain. In the background, there are several multi-story buildings, some with brick facades and others with modern glass and steel. The sky is bright and overcast.

# Improving Our Natural Environment

Despite being heavily urbanised, it is essential that our city region becomes greener, not only to support wildlife, which is increasingly under threat, but also for our health and wellbeing.

By improving the biodiversity, quality and quantity of green and blue spaces, our communities will become more resilience as will our economy.

There is clear evidence of the benefits of good quality natural environment on reducing carbon emissions, improving our physical and mental wellbeing as well as ensuring biodiversity, which underpins much of the quality of our natural environment is supported.

And by having more attractive, better quality, safer and inviting environment, this can encourage people to connect with nature, be more physically active and receive all the positive mental benefits it provides.

Key themes to make change:

- Embed and maintain more greenery on public sector estates and buildings
- Cross sector working to fund maintenance and improvement of green spaces
- Educate the benefits of nature and encourage more connection with nature

### **Key actions for all public sector organisations to implement:**

- Adopt the principle of ‘Something green everywhere’ (such as green walls, green roofs, green paths, green squares etc. in developments, in own public estates)
- Promote the uptake of green infrastructure, such as green roofs and green walls on own buildings and non-public sector estates
- Plant native landscaping in public sector estates
- Embed nature / green infrastructure into everyday life, in public sector estates, identifying opportunities to green built environment
- Ensure connectivity of green spaces across own public sector estate, land and beyond, and that it is well maintained and accessible
- Public sector to help fund maintenance of green and blue spaces
- Lead by example in biodiversity net gain, maintenance and management of green spaces
- For public sector land to be used to support schemes, such as Incredible Edible
- Create community gardens within own estates and encourage stakeholders to do the same, supporting food growing, community development, social cohesion and volunteering opportunities
- Ensure all employees across the Public Sector have a good understanding of current levels of biodiversity to know how to make improvements
- Run campaigns around the health and wellbeing benefits of volunteering in green and blue spaces
- Encourage employees and stakeholders to fund, host and participate in clean-up projects in parks, other green spaces and around blue spaces
- Run campaigns to promote safety around blue spaces
- Improve the water quality of rivers and water bodies through nature based solutions
- Install grey water recycling, for conserving water as well as look to retrofit SUDS in public sector estates
- Start a compost pile in the grounds of the public sector estate
- Participate in community tree plantings
- Remove leaves and debris from storm drainage
- Stop using pesticides on own managed land

### **Key actions for the Mayor and the Combined Authority:**

- Work with stakeholders to develop a plan of how GM can improve its natural environment, to become more resilience to the impacts of climate change
- Resilience forums to use modern technology to capture shocks as early as possible to help reduce impact of extreme weather events
- Incentivise the creation and long term maintenance of new green spaces and green infrastructure within new developments and for long term investment plans to be identified
- Influence Defra to create a consistent standardised approach for natural capital assessments to increase usage as a tool for promoting the environmental benefits
- Create a GM plan for Ash dieback

### **Key actions for Local Authorities:**

- Ensure infrastructure / construction projects use permeable paving across towns/cities / in developments
- Local authority local plans to ensure fair allocation of green space across the district, and ensure each resident is within a reasonable distance (e.g. 300m) of good quality green space
- Address accessibility to green spaces, addressing inequalities and improving green space in deprived areas, where there is less or low quality natural environment
- Ensure green spaces are managed and maintained for wildlife as well as for people
- Incentivise the creation and long term maintenance of new green spaces and green infrastructure within new developments and for long term investment plans to be identified
- Identify ecological networks to help improve wildlife and connection to nature
- Highlight specific habitats of importance for retention and enhancement
- Have long term maintenance and management plans, ensure available resources, link with health sector
- Local authorities and health sector to work together to raise awareness of the health and wellbeing benefits of spending time in nature
- Educate and raise awareness of opportunities to place nature based solutions within cities and towns
- Support community groups with green projects

- Work with conversation organisations / charities to run more activities to connect people with nature
- Contribute to funding for forest school sessions to educate children and enable them to connect with nature and improve wellbeing
- TPOs on all mature trees
- Cut grass verges less, planting wildflower seeds on grass verges / roundabouts, on amenity grassland
- Switch off street lights for some hours at night (reducing costs, carbon and supporting nocturnal wildlife)
- Resilience forums to use modern technology to capture shocks as early as possible to help reduce impact of extreme weather events

#### **Key actions for the Environment Agency:**

- Cut grass less, allocate space for wildflower to grow, plant more wildflowers/trees on own land
- Explore installing green roofs / walls and SUDS on own land/buildings
- Install grey water recycling systems in own buildings
- Ensure all owned assets are managed to promote and enhance the natural environment and biodiversity

#### **Key actions for Social Landlords:**

- Run campaigns to encourage residents and landowners to green their gardens
- Work with conversation organisations / charities to run more activities for connecting people with nature

#### **Key actions for the Health Sector:**

- Promote the existing green open spaces within own districts / areas to encourage use and improve health and wellbeing
- Fund green spaces and health related projects in green spaces, such as Ecotherapy
- Work with conversation organisations / charities to run more activities for connecting people with nature
- Contribute to funding for forest school sessions to educate children and enable them to connect with nature and improve wellbeing
- Run campaigns around the health and wellbeing benefits of volunteering in green and blue spaces
- Work with local authorities to raise awareness of the health and wellbeing benefits of time in nature
- Explore green prescriptions, working with conservation charities to deliver nature therapy programmes

#### **Key actions for Local Authority Planning departments:**

- Ensure infrastructure / construction projects use permeable paving across towns/cities / in developments
- Address accessibility to green spaces, addressing inequalities and improving green space in deprived areas, where there is less or low quality natural environment
- Local authority local plans to ensure fair allocation of green space across the district, and ensure each resident is within a reasonable distance (e.g. 300m) of good quality green space
- Provide detailed guidance for developers on biodiversity net gain
- Ensure policy and legislation for biodiversity net gain is embedded
- Ensure new developments include habitats which are of local importance

#### **Key actions for educational establishments:**

- Schools / educational establishments to run courses / programmes on growing fruit and vegetables
- Schools to lead more activities outside in nature / increase forest school type activities / programmes
- Schools and other public bodies to collaborate on running more campaigns for reducing litter (e.g. working with Keep Britain Tidy)
- Schools to hold competitions to see which school can make the biggest difference for improving green spaces and run activities, such as litter picking
- Influence the curriculum to include climate change and environmental issues in schools at all levels

# Waste, Sustainable Consumption and Production and the Circular Economy

It is vital that we in Greater Manchester eliminate as much of our waste as possible and become as efficient as possible. Moving towards a circular economy model is key, tackling particular issues of plastic and food waste, as well as demonstrating the links between purchasing power and the environment.

There are clear links between consumption and production of products and our environment, predominantly around degradation of the natural environment from unsustainable products, the carbon emissions of transporting these and the throw-away society, resulting in waste going in to the environment, leading to greater costs for disposing on this waste, or when it lands in the natural environment in forms of litter and illegal waste, leading to further degradation of the natural environment.

However, by improving our supply chains, the public sector can make a significant different with its own purchasing decisions and how reducing and disposing of waste, making sustainable and less environmentally harmful choices the preferred options, this can also make it easier for everyone to make those changes and be more aware of their purchasing power and level of consumption, to help improve the environment.

Key themes to make change:

- Eliminate plastic packaging and single use plastics from public sector facilities
- Reduce as much waste, collect food waste and promote reusable products
- Procure more sustainably

### **Key actions for all public sector organisations to implement:**

- Procurement of circular products and packaging
- Ensure supply chain operates more sustainably
- Introduce certification schemes to ensure sustainability standards are embedded into procurement of contractors
- Promotion of circular economy – promoting leasing products instead of ownership
- Mandatory whole life costing
- For the public sector to ensure waste procurers take greater responsibility for the disposal of their products, ensuring cradle to grave systems
- Focus on local suppliers to reduce carbon footprint
- Ensure public sector procurement avoids purchasing products with non-sustainable palm oil, such as cleaning products, food products
- Ensure suppliers/contractors don't use products which have non-sustainable palm oil
- Set benchmarking / league table standards to improve sustainable supply chains and procurement
- Procure more locally
- Public sector procurement to avoid purchasing products in plastic packaging
- Public sector contractors – e.g. catering facilities avoid / eliminate plastic packing on food products
- Public sector campaigns to change the status quo to avoid plastics
- Implement policy change around using less plastic in supply chains
- Replace all products (e.g. bottles / packaging) with re-usable alternatives to reduce waste
- All employees in GM public sector (including LAs, Hospitals, Schools) to have reusable cups and cutlery
- Ban disposable single use plastic cutlery and crockery in all public sector estates, facilities and hospitality
- Push for clearer guidance on products being certified as recyclable
- Increase recycling facilities internally and externally to make it easier and more transparent
- Have recycling stations in offices and remove desk based bins
- Encourage colleagues / suppliers to consider how they can reduce and reuse materials before recycling
- Better waste segregation in public spaces
- Collect food waste in offices to encourage waste separation further
- Upskill and train catering and procurement teams to help reduce food waste
- Plan, monitor and evaluate that people are doing the right thing in relation to food waste
- Add food waste into Health and Safety induction programmes
- Better infrastructure to handle food waste across all local authority districts and public sector estates
- Use excess agricultural produce- looking at whole crop purchasing
- Less meat and dairy in public sector catering facilities
- Buy in bulk, using reusable containers
- Lead and help run community litter picks
- Use social media to share information with the public about behaviour changes that can make a difference (i.e. unplugging not-in-use appliances, tips to reduce food waste, information about recycling, etc.)

### **Key actions for the Mayor and the Combined Authority:**

- Wider procurement of items across GM with Local Authorities taking the lead
- Consistent GMCA approach to procurement using recycled content
- Consistent waste and recycling collections across GM for Households and businesses
- Database of reusable items to encourage reducing new purchases
- Stimulating the re-use market – promoting the repair market – through new guidance
- Animal by-product regulations need to be reviewed
- Develop an innovation fund to support farming processes and preparation to reduce waste
- Expand network of water fountains and refill points across the city region
- PlasticFreeGM to certify plastic free shops
- Run campaigns to educate on what is essential plastic and innovate to remove plastics from supply chain

### **Key actions for Local Authorities and the Local Authority Waste sector:**

- Better waste segregation in public spaces
- Educate consumers on where you can access and purchase circular economy products and services
- Raise awareness and explore incentivising smaller businesses to avoid using disposable products
- Provide great clarity and uniformity on your local recycling schemes
- Expand network of water fountains and refill points across the city region
- Run campaigns to encourage citizens to avoid purchasing products in plastic

- Run campaigns to raise awareness internally and externally for the waste hierarchy, and encouraging reducing and reusing before recycling
- Highlight the costs of disposing of plastics, to support campaigns on reducing purchasing plastic products
- Run campaigns to education on what is essential plastic and innovate to remove plastics from supply chain
- Support repair cafes and promote the principle of buy once, buy well, to reduce unnecessary waste
- Better forecasting working with the agricultural sector
- Put pressure on Government to make policy changes for enforcing the polluter pays principle

**Key actions for the Environment Agency:**

- Upskill and train catering and procurement teams to help reduce food waste
- Use less meat and dairy in EA catering facilities
- Ensure suppliers/contractors don't use products which have non-sustainable palm oil
- contractors – e.g. catering facilities avoid / eliminate plastic packing on food and drink products
- Create allotments onsite to grow food
- Ensure catering facilities use local suppliers / source locally
- Ensure the polluter pays principle is enforced
- Ensure waste hierarchy is being followed, such as when advising businesses, provide guidance on resource efficiency to encourage waste reduction
- Set up systems for purchasing / acquiring used or unwanted equipment to avoid purchasing new products

**Key actions for educational establishments:**

- Education in the classroom about food waste
- Reusable products and packing in schools
- For schools to run competitions on reducing plastic use, e.g. straws, cutlery
- Better recycling and waste collections
- Encourage schools to have eco-warrior champions to push schools to run campaigns, change procurement to change behaviours, such as having meat free days, plastic free weeks
- Schools to consider becoming hubs for waste collection of non-recycling packaging, such as crisp packets

# Stakeholder input

These sessions were made a success as a result of the positive input provided by the many stakeholders who participated in the day:

- Big Clean Switch
- Canal and Rivers Trust
- Centre for Local Economic Strategies
- Defra
- Electricity Northwest
- Energy Savings Trust
- Energy Systems Catapult
- Environment Agency
- Eunomia
- Food Sync
- GM Health & Social Care Partnership
- GM Moving
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- Great Places Housing
- Lancashire Wildlife Trust
- Living Streets
- Manchester City Council
- Manchester Environmental Education Network
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- Natural England
- Oldham City Council
- Procure Plus
- Suez
- Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
- Transport for Greater Manchester
- United Utilities
- University of Manchester
- University of Salford



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