

# Climate Emergency Manchester's Response to Manchester Climate Change Partnership's Proposal to Manchester City Council

30 June 2020

Dear Sir Richard and Jonny,

CEM agree with Manchester Climate Change Agency (MCCA) / Partnership (MCCP) that COVID-19 has brought about fundamental change and with it an opportunity to reimagine the city we live in. This is especially important in the wake of a respiratory illness pandemic where thousands of survivors in the city will be scarred for life from their experience, both physically and mentally, not to mention all those that who have lost ones, or been impacted economically.

CEM appreciates the sentiment of the letter, but is concerned that beyond the warm words of support, there is little commitment from MCCP to articulate how they will create the pathway to embrace the opportunity to reimagine our city. We have previously posted an [article](#) (4 Feb 2020) from an expert on local authority climate action highlighting this same point. We also produced a [briefing paper](#) about the Action Plan on 2 March 2020, which again highlighted the lack of details or commitments within the plan. It also asked for more creativity when introducing measures in response to the city's zero carbon targets.

We hope the vision and pathway are improved upon with firmer details of action and more creative thinking in the next iteration of the Framework, and that our concerns are addressed in the meantime.

CEM also has the following questions:

1. How will you ensure that the Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-25 is fully embedded in the city's recovery and the Our Manchester Strategy reset?
2. How will you help ensure that Manchester 'plays its full part in limiting the impacts of climate change' will form part of a clear overarching aim for the city's strategy?
3. How will you help ensure that our climate change-focused objectives are right at the heart of the city's recovery?
4. Why, given that so many people do not own cars and do not want to risk using public transport, are you not seizing the opportunity to normalise cycling in this city, by creating pop-up cycle lanes as a short-term measure?

It is good to see that you are both recognising the co-benefits from actions on climate change bring to other problems the city is trying to tackle and that you focus on health and jobs. However, the problems are much deeper and systemic in nature. There are links between climate change and multiple forms of discrimination and inequality, which have not been acknowledged, such as racism. This profoundly concerns us and must be explicitly tackled concurrently with any COVID-19 recovery plans. We expect this as a bare minimum from a council run by a progressive political party. We would like to see you build a case for action that runs much deeper across your six areas of the Framework and explore co-benefits that commit

to tackling a much broader set of problems that are unfortunately prevalent within our city. This city requires strong and bold leadership clearly making the case for why we should not 'return to normal'.

We agree that prioritising residents in fuel poverty is right when it comes to domestic building retrofit.

5. It is not clear whether your vision goes far enough to reduce CO2 emissions on the pathway set out in the Framework. Could you clarify this and also ensure that actions from the council are sufficient in size and scale to meet the emissions reduction required (talking in tonnes of CO2 as a common measure of impact)?

We welcome your recommendation in Manchester becoming a first-mover in establishing a zero carbon standard for all new developments. We believe this should come into immediate effect for any proposals that are currently being considered by the planning committee. We also challenge you to get those developers that have planning consent, but are yet to start construction to voluntarily implement these zero carbon standards as part of their social license to operate and as a symbol of their solidarity as a partner of Manchester's recovery. We do not want future stranded assets from poor quality development and nor, we are sure, does the city council.

We are concerned that there is a lack of creativity in taking short-term actions in response to the climate emergency declaration to significantly reduce emissions whilst also tackling other embedded inequalities within Manchester.

6. We can only see commitments to assisting in the redrafting of strategy documents and Frameworks and would like to know where does the drafting / implementation of policy action fit into these commitments?

We believe more emphasis on policy development and implementation would bring about the changes in emissions that you already have outlined within your Framework, rather than more time on plans and strategies. We would like to see firm commitments to actions in the short-term and implemented before 31 Dec 2020 ahead of any updated Framework refresh.

Finally, could you clarify, besides a case study on the CDP [website](#) for Greater Manchester, how this city is recognised for its ambitious commitments on climate change, within the UK and internationally? And by whom? We would also be interested to know which cities are watching and waiting on Manchester for its recovery from COVID-19.

We look forward to your reply.

Climate Emergency Manchester core group  
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