

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

SOME BRIEF FACTS

Now that we've explained the importance of local authority activism, here are some quick facts about Manchester City Council to get you up to speed:

Manchester City Council is made up of 96 elected councillors across 32 wards, from Higher Blackley in the north to Woodhouse Park in the south. Each ward has three councillors. Councillors stand in elections, held in May of three years out of four. The winner of the election gets a four-year term as a councillor.

Of these 96, 93 of these councillors are Labour. If you're a Labour supporter, this may sound like a really good thing- but it's important to point out that this means that the Council has had no effective opposition since 2010ish. Because of this, it can be very difficult for less than satisfactory actions by the council to be internally scrutinised and opposed.

THE COUNCIL'S STRUCTURE

Like many local and national governments, Manchester City Council operates a very 'top-down' approach. At the top is the council's executive committee- they're responsible for major decision-making, and for implementing the policy and budget. The executive is made up of the leader of the Council, the deputy-leader, and seven other executive members each with responsibilities for particular areas of the Council's administration.

Below the Executive committee are the six scrutiny committees for different areas of the Council- these are Children and Young People, Community and Equalities, Economy, Health, Resources and Governance, and Neighborhoods and the Environment.



Each scrutiny committee meets 10 times a year, and covers a variety of policies over the course of approximately two hours. You may notice that climate issues do not have their own scrutiny committee- this is something that Climate Emergency Manchester wants to change, as you'll see on the following page.

The existing scrutiny committee that occasionally covers climate change is just too busy with other matters.

In relation to climate change, the Council's record so far is not commendable. There are lots of lovely promises, but not much action. All the way back in 2009 the council promised steep emissions reductions and the creation of a "low carbon culture." Emissions went down for the Council, because of austerity. The low carbon culture promise was quietly forgotten.

A climate emergency was declared in July of 2019, but this has been largely revealed as a PR stunt due to the lack of urgency in all their actions on climate since this declaration. MCC's lack of action over climate change has led to numerous accusations of greenwashing from local authority activists. You can find out more on the following page.