

## **PASS IT UP!** Why the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee needs to recommend that Full Council debate the possibility of creating a 7<sup>th</sup> scrutiny committee dedicated to climate change

### 1760 citizens of Manchester signed an official petition calling for a 7<sup>th</sup> scrutiny committee dedicated to climate change

- This is the highest number for any citizen-led petition campaign to Manchester City Council.
- Signatures came from wards right across the city, collected online and also safely at community markets, parks, garden centres and local independent businesses.
- Councillors, including several of the councillors who sit on Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee, signed the petition.
- Manchester Trades Council gave a public endorsement.
- 15 groups from civil society signed an open letter calling for a new committee.
- Lemm Sissay, poet and University of Manchester Vice Chancellor, posted a short film voicing his support.



### The current scrutiny arrangements must be updated to reflect the climate emergency

- The Council needs a dedicated scrutiny committee to help ensure successful implementation of its science-based 2038 zero carbon target, and to avert the near-term risk of its failure.
- Without a trebling of carbon reduction efforts, Manchester's carbon budget will be completely spent within 5 years - the current timeframe of the 2020-25 climate change framework.
- Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee (NESC), the scrutiny committee which is supposed to cover climate change, has not had a meeting dedicated to the climate emergency for at least 10 months.

**Flood events** like storm Christoph are projected to get worse as our climate changes. A 7<sup>th</sup> scrutiny committee would help Manchester adapt to the risks from more extreme weather events and opportunities from transitioning away from fossil fuels.

- Our citizens-group has regularly reviewed NESC meetings since July 2019 in the hope that the climate emergency would be seriously addressed. This has not happened.
- The NESC remit is vast. At meetings there is insufficient time to address an issue on the scale of climate change with sufficient depth and detail.
- Responding to the climate emergency requires bold, timely action that is effective in cutting emissions while advancing social justice. The urgency and complexity of responding to climate change makes a dedicated scrutiny committee essential.
- Other issues - housing, policing - fall between the cracks and the status quo prevails. Subgroups are a stop-gap measure with limited capacity. Climate change demands transformative change to the status quo, which includes co-benefits to other issues such as health, housing and poverty. A full committee, of equal stature to existing scrutiny committees, is needed to help realise opportunities for transformative change.

**According to a Manchester Climate Change Agency [report](#) in 2020, a quarter of Manchester's remaining carbon budget for the 21<sup>st</sup> century has been burned in the space of just two years.**

We need scrutiny and policymaking to get back on track.

### All 96 councillors voted for the declaration of a climate emergency in July 2019

- Let's now give all councillors the chance to have their democratic say on the possibility of a 7th scrutiny committee.
- The declaration of the emergency was the first step; we now need to find the best way to implement the commitments that have been made.
- With a scrutiny committee dedicated to the climate emergency, Manchester will have more credibility with its claims to be leading the way and at the vanguard of progressive change.

### Rejecting the petition would send the wrong message

- Members of the public will be baffled and outraged if the petition is rejected without even being considered by elected members of Full Council, who all voted for the climate emergency.
- A rejection could be viewed as an endorsement of the view that current governance arrangements are adequate and that nothing needs to change: but real change is needed!
- A rejection risks no real change, sending us back to square one with a significant risk that the 2038 zero carbon target will be missed. The Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee should not allow this to happen. Pass it up!

#### **Alternative Proposals must be robust**

If the Council Executive proposes an alternative to a 7<sup>th</sup> scrutiny committee, that proposal must prove demonstrably robust and readily implementable. At Full Council, any alternative from the Executive will have to be properly outlined and debated, alongside the option of a 7th scrutiny committee. **Pass it up!**