



Greater Manchester 5YEP Partnership

Date: **10th October 2025**

Subject: **Q2 PROGRESS REPORT - 5 YEAR ENVIRONMENT PLAN (5YEP)**

Report of: **Mark Atherton, Director Environment, GMCA**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report provides the usual update on progress of the 5 YEP Partnership for the second quarter of 2025/26 (Jul. – Sep. 2025) and key milestones for the third quarter (Oct. – Dec. 2025).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Partnership is recommended to:

1. Note and comment upon the progress outlined in this report and latest position set out in the dashboards attached at:
 - a. Detailed Performance Report Against each 5YEP Objective/Action (Annex A)
 - b. The metrics dashboards is available online at:
<https://public.tableau.com/views/GMCA-5YEP-2025-30/5YEPContentsPage>

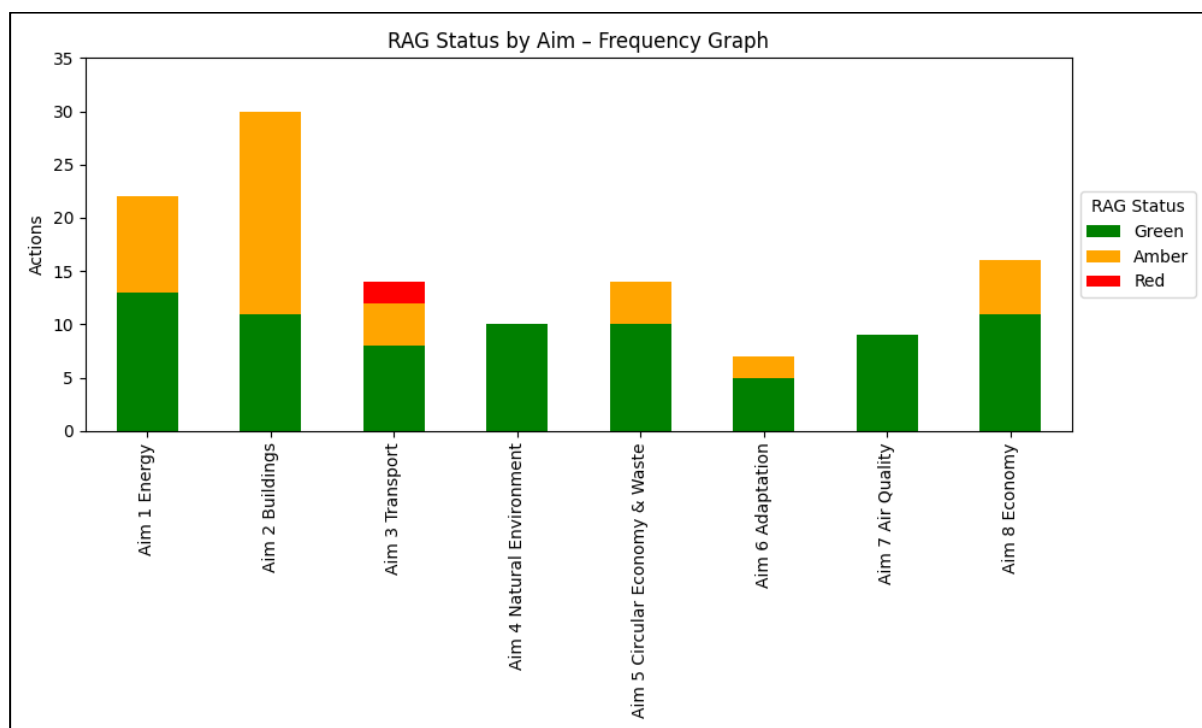
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1. OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS AND KEY ANTICIPATED ACTIONS IN THE NEXT QUARTER

The update below provides a summary of key progress across all areas within the 5 Year Environment Plan for Q2, together with an assessment of key challenges. The spreadsheet (Annex A) contains a fuller account of this year's 5YEP enabling actions in their entirety.

- Most strategic aims show steady progress, with many activities on track (Green).
- Common challenges include delays in procurement, technical launches, stakeholder engagement, and integration of new models or pilots (Amber/Red).
- Areas needing attention: infrastructure pipeline (Transport), circular economy platform launch, adaptation coordination, and some finance/retrofit activities in Buildings and Energy.



A Note on "Red Actions" - Two "Red Actions" can be found within the Report. Both belong to Aim 3, Transport. The first is "9.2.3, Prepare infrastructure pipeline proposals for the 2027-2032 investment period"; which states that due to the delayed spending review the whole action is behind schedule. The second is "10.2.5, Complete Metrolink

city centre track renewals, tram management system server renewal, fibre optic network renewal, and customer-facing asset renewals (lifts etc)."; which is also behind schedule.

2. PROGRESS BY 5YEP THEME

A) ENERGY

- **Progress:**

- Financial models for low carbon tech in social housing are advancing, with pilots planned for 2026.
- The Low Carbon Heating Industry Group is launching, and feasibility studies for wind and solar projects are underway.
- "Powering Our Schools" Phase 1 has completed first installs; Phase 2 planning is in progress.
- Community Energy study draft is complete, with recommendations and dissemination planned.
- Local Area Energy Plans and grid planning are progressing, with stakeholder engagement ongoing.

- **Challenges:**

- Some business engagement and comms activities (Bee Net Zero) are still in early stages (Amber).
- Local Energy Market pilots, smart energy connectivity, flexible services, and tariff awareness are progressing but not fully embedded (Amber).
- Heat network zoning and hydrogen fuel cell pilots face funding and feasibility uncertainties (Amber).

B) BUILDINGS

- **Progress:**

- Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) delivery is ongoing, with extensions pending for some partners.
- Local Grant roles recruited; framework agreements signed and call-offs commencing.

- NHS referrals and promotional campaigns for Warm Home Prescription are underway.
- Net Zero Guidance published; workshops with developers and Registered Providers held.
- Embodied Carbon Calculator promoted and used in procurement.
- **Challenges:**
 - Retrofit Portal launch delayed to October; integration with able-to-pay market and credit unions in progress (Amber).
 - Finance models and private investment approaches are being tested and socialised (Amber).
 - Knowledge baseline for public estate decarbonisation and cooling pilots is still being established (Amber).
 - Policy engagement for new buildings and low carbon heating systems is ongoing (Amber).
 - TANZ (Truly Affordable Net Zero Homes) pipeline development and funding rules are under review (Amber).

C) TRANSPORT

- **Progress:**
 - Local Transport Plan (LTP) consultation planned for Nov–Feb 2026.
 - Bee Active Routes and cycle hire expansion are exceeding targets.
 - Metrolink business cases for new stops and fleet upgrades are underway.
 - Night Bus evaluation and active travel articles published.
 - Inclusion and Equalities Strategy refresh and travel diary survey analysis ongoing.
- **Challenges:**
 - Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) and infrastructure pipeline proposals delayed pending government confirmation (Amber/Red).
 - Passenger information displays and journey planning app improvements are in development (Amber).
 - Metrolink track renewals and asset upgrades are ongoing, with some procurement and migration activities delayed (Red).
 - Rail reform and pay-as-you-go integration require further stakeholder agreement (Amber).

D) NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- **Progress:**

- New Sites of Biological Interest surveyed; interim report due.
- Active management of protected sites and funding allocated by six local authorities.
- Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) published and being embedded in planning.
- SuDS interventions at schools and community sites; training sessions planned.
- Green Spaces Fund Round 6 received 58 applications; assessments underway.

- **Challenges:**

- Decision on GMCA Responsible Body service for Biodiversity Net Gain pending.

E) CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND WASTE

- **Progress:**

- Bee Net Zero Task & Finish groups established for sector development and comms.
- Promotion of exemplar circular economy businesses and support for transition to circular models.
- Eco Grants for Schools and School Eco Refill Shops expanded; Wave 3 launched.
- Renew Community Fund supported 20 projects.
- Borro and Bee Cup initiatives expanded to 23 locations.
- Food Programme Board established; waste collection efficiency promoted.

- **Challenges:**

- BeeGreenGM Asset Reuse Platform in testing; communications toolkit and soft launch planned (Amber).
- Material Recovery Facility procurement and pilot resource management projects for recycling are in early stages (Amber).

F) ADAPTATION

- **Progress:**
 - Toolkit for communicating heat risk to older people complete.
 - Property Flood Resilience measures and awareness campaigns ongoing.
 - Good Employment Charter comms material produced and shared.
 - Climate Adaptation Strategy development continues.
- **Challenges:**
 - Coordination between decarbonisation and adaptation, and flood resilience awareness, are ongoing but not fully resolved (Amber).

G) AIR QUALITY

- **Progress:**
 - Smoke control legislation enforced; annual status report submitted.
 - Domestic burning information campaign planned for winter 2025–26.
 - Clean Air GM website updated; monitoring and press releases highlight improvements.
 - Daily Air Quality Index (DAQI) has 744 subscribers.
- **Challenges:**
 - No major challenges flagged; most activities are on track (Green).

H) ECONOMY

- **Progress:**
 - Bee Net Zero (BNZ) campaigns and website refresh planned.
 - Place-based and sector engagement ongoing; events and support for businesses in progress.
 - Innovation support (Made Smarter, Energy Innovation Agency) provided.
 - Green Economy and Business Growth Hub supporting diversification and skills.
 - Good Employment Charter engagement and academic partnerships underway.
- **Challenges:**

- Industrial decarbonisation, green skills, circular economy business support, and university spinouts are being developed through BNZ Task & Finish groups (Amber).

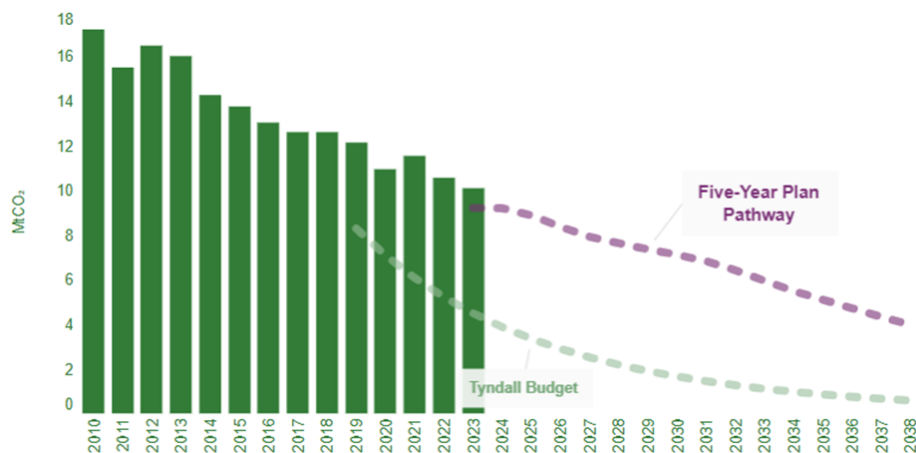
3. IDENTIFIED RISKS AND EMERGING ISSUES

- 3.1 Officers and sub-groups have identified a number of risks to existing, and particularly future, programme delivery. Mitigation of these risks, as far as possible, will be managed by the responsible Accountable Body.

In terms of the priorities set out in the 5 Year Plan, the following areas remain flagged as “red”.

Key risks:

- **Failure of the 5 Year Environment Plan to achieve a step change in reducing carbon emissions.** To achieve the 2038 mission, the GM 5-Year Environment Plan outlines our ‘fair’ carbon budget contribution of 67 mega tonnes of CO₂ for 20 years (2018-2038). This budget was exceeded in 2023 when cumulative emissions reached 67.8 mega tonnes. With the exception of the post-pandemic rebound in emissions between 2020 and 2021, emissions have steadily decreased year-on-year from 2018 to 2023. However, this rate of decrease has not been as rapid as the required rate of decrease to remain within the Tyndall budget. Despite this early exceedance of the budget, it remains important to not only focus on the end goal of 2038 but also consider the amount of emissions over this period and aim for as rapid a decarbonisation as possible. The Tyndall pathway remains in our projected emissions graphs for full transparency of our original targets.



- Failure to accelerate decarbonisation of buildings to meet low carbon heating targets.** Measures continue to be implemented with a focus on accelerating decarbonisation and increasing energy generation including the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, Go Neutral project including schools solar PV offer, and Advanced Zoning Pilot project delivery to identify Heat and Energy Network Opportunity Areas across Greater Manchester.
- Level and depth of retrofit required to meet our overall ambitions is highly challenging.** The decarbonisation of Greater Manchester homes through deeper whole house retrofit is being mitigated by the publication of a Retrofit Report that sets the priorities and framework for action and, along with the Retrofit Taskforce is focused on delivering home and building retrofit at scale.
- Failure to enhance our water bodies against level of ambition.** The GMCA, Environment Agency and United Utilities (through their Tripartite Agreement) have published an Integrated Water Management Plan to draw together a collective vision, objectives, and actions, and identify accountability and resources for delivery. The plan will deliver progressive improvements in sustainable water management, enhancement of the natural environment, accelerate natural flood management interventions and reduce the operation of storm overflows.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

The Partnership is recommended to:

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