

Summary of suggestions from Steady State Manchester for local economic development. *Analysis of progress May 2013-February 2014.*

Key:

Substantial progress

Modest progress

Little or no progress

Developing a planned approach to a Steady State Economy

1. New Economy or another body could be commissioned to review and consider using the methodology employed by Prof. Peter Victor to model alternative low growth and no growth scenarios, with maximum employment. Victor's work on the Canadian economy demonstrates via simulation how you can have a non-growing economy without plunging everyone into poverty.

Council: no progress

SSM – further work on “the viable economy” planned for 2014.

2. For every decision taken by every organisation ask the question (supported by indicators outlined below), “does this action take us closer to or further from a just, safe and sustainable society?”

Council: Overview and Scrutiny Sustainability sub group recommended that all council reports include statement on environmental implications. For adoption?

SSM: supported this discussion at Overview and Scrutiny sustainability sub-group.

Redistribution

3. Adopt the principle of shorter working hours to share the work alongside reducing pay differentials to make this practical for people on lower wages and increasing income equity. Agree a maximum of 35 hours including paid and unpaid overtime in council and is contract partners.

Council: no progress

SSM – worked up this proposal in short-list of 4 more detailed proposals to Economy Scrutiny..

4. Encourage local businesses to become 'Living Well Partners' adopting shorter working hours for ecological reasons, as well as work-sharing and well-being gains.

Council: no progress

SSM – as for rec. 3 but no further work done on this..

5. Some local authorities in Greater Manchester have set excellent examples in adopting progressive and responsible pay policies, such as Living Wages for their workforces. Build on this by encouraging responsible pay dispersion in the council's procurement partners, through favourable tendering towards suppliers with more equitable pay policies, ensuring the greatest social return from public funds.

Council: no further progress beyond Manchester Living Wage.

SSM – carried out a major comparative study of local authority pay policies, including in procurement partners (with

	Equality NW). Report due early 2014..
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Localisation

6. Investigate supply chains for food provided by council and its contract partners, with a plan to increase year on year the amount of foodstuffs produced within 50 miles of city boundary. Currently only an estimated 0.25% of our food is sourced within 50 miles - not a good position to be in!

Council: established a Food Board. Adopted a resolution linking food poverty and sustainable food in January, 2014. Implementation to follow?	SSM: provided input on these issues with members and officers of the council, establishing a constructive relationship. SSM is member of the Food Board.
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7. Offer land owned by public sector and other organisations rent free to any group that is prepared to cultivate food. This could be under a usufruct or a peppercorn rent arrangement with the requirement that the land is used productively.

Council: no formal policy on this but generally supportive of the idea.	SSM – presented this idea within one of the 4 more detailed recommendations to Economy Scrutiny. Have not pursued it in detail since.
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Defining and measuring well-being and prosperity

8. Public Health and Economic Development could work together on a dashboard using an assortment of measures to reflect key aspects of social and ecological well-being, with interested outside people: we suggest the Oxfam 'doughnut' model to organise this, defining a safe operating zone for Manchester in terms of ecological boundaries and standards of population well-being.

Council: interest shown in this. Progress to date has probably been limited by officer capacity and 'silo' structures? However a similar proposal has been made in the report of O and S Sustainability Working Group.	SSM – conducted some further research on options and provided some input to discussions. Made arguments that the reporting should align and integrate economic, social and ecological well-being, building on existing reporting mechanisms (annual and monthly).
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Debt, money and ecological austerity

9. Since household debt, payday loans, and loan sharks are a big issue for local people, work with credit unions and local mutual/co-operative financial organisations to ensure Mancunians have access to credit at fair rates and without contributing to the generation of fiat money (money 'printed' by banks).

Council: no developments so far.	SSM – no further work on this proposal.
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10. Conduct an audit of council investments, with a view to reducing their exposure to and complicity with financial derivatives and speculation, unethical and unsustainable vehicles.

Council: Finance Scrutiny Committee has commissioned 2 reports on ethical dimension of council's short term banking and	SSM – made the request to Finance Scrutiny Committee to consider the question of ethical investment policy. Carried out some information gathering on
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on GM pension Fund's investments. Council is aware of the ability to use ethical criteria when it replaces the co-op bank as its banker (a result of the bank's change in policy). A constructive discussion on these matters has taken place at Finance Scrutiny Committte meeting in February, 2014 and further discussion will take place.	the nature of the rules governing this and the possibilities. Presented arguments and information at the Finance Scrutiny meeting in February, 2014.
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11. *Establish a Manchester Green Investment Bond issued by the council, or perhaps a body established through the City Region arrangements – allowing the combination of government funding, local government funding and income, and savings investment by local people.*

Council: no progress	SSM – No further work conducted on this proposal. Currently considering how to take this forward.
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The replacement economy

12. Build on Manchester's good record in local procurement with preferential treatment and support for local co-operatives and SME's that prioritise ecological responsibility, along the lines explored in Tameside and Oldham.

Council: no progress	SSM – initiated and co-sponsored a conference: "Rethinking Prosperity: Local Economic Experiments" in November, which explored these ideas. No more detailed local work on this proposal.
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13. Consider job creation incentives for small and medium enterprises/co-ops etc with green and social products / services (e.g. business rate rebates).

Council: no progress	SSM – as above (12).
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14. Find ways to increase the pace of buildings retrofit and climate change adaptation to create jobs. This could be linked to the city's efforts to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment and training (NEET), providing much needed work experience and an opportunity to learn trades. SSM is currently working on a delivery model for such a programme.

Council: "The is one of the priorities of the GreaterManchester Low Carbon Hub Skills Group." However it is not clear whether this constitutes an increase in the pace of retrofitting.	SSM – no further work done on the specific proposal. GM Low Carbon Hub presented at the conference mentioned at 12) above.
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Reducing consumption and strengthening community

15. Sponsor a big debate on how people view their happiness and well-being, linked to the work proposed above for a Manchester dashboard of ecological, social and economic well-being.

Council: No work done on this.	SSM – no further work done on the specific proposal. There has been some coverage in our series of In Place of Growth workshops.
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16. A hearts and minds campaign to counter the propaganda of advertising. Prominent local personalities demonstrate how they are living satisfied lives on less.

Council: Nothing.	SSM – no further work done on the specific proposal..
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17. Follow the lead of Sao Paulo and ban advertisements in city controlled spaces, or failing this, and as a first step, the imposition of a levy to fund public information and other advertising for social good would be feasible.

Council: Nothing.	SSM – no further work done on the specific proposal..
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18. Explore the active promotion of sharing: car share, bike share, tool share, book share, domestic appliance and house and garden share schemes.

Council: Nothing.	SSM – no further work done on the specific proposal..
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19. Building on the collective energy purchase scheme in Greater Manchester, build incentives and support to reduce consumption of energy, and a target for Renewables Obligation Certificate (ROC) retirement into a new tender. This would reduce expenditure on fuel, reduce consumption, and increase the proportion of renewables in the mix.

Council: Nothing.	SSM – no further work done on the specific proposal: an article on the technicalities was planned but not written.
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20. Manchester could adopt the principles of the "slow city" along the lines of the network of towns that, inspired by the 'slow food' movement have signed up to a charter that prioritises quality of urban life over flashy consumption.

Council: not a lot of interest in the idea.	SSM – no further work done on the specific proposal.
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February, 2014.

Original paper, May, 2013.