

**Economy Scrutiny Committee  
4 September 2013  
Impact of Welfare Reform**

**Organisations attending**

**Northwards Housing** - Mike Steven, Director of Neighbourhood Services & Tracy Langton, Welfare Reform Lead

Established in 2005, Northwards Housing is the Council's Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) managing the Council's 13500 homes in north Manchester. Based in north Manchester, and with three neighbourhood housing offices, Northwards is overseen by a Board made up of tenants, Councillors and independents. Following a test of tenants' opinion, in April 2013 Northwards and the Council signed a 30 year management agreement, reviewable every 5 years.

**Help with Rent** - Stephen Dawson, Manager

Since December 2011 the Help With Rent team, formerly known as the Local Housing Allowance Transition Team (LHATT), have been helping customers who have experienced a reduction in their Housing Benefit due to the government's Welfare Reform programme. The team works across the 10 Greater Manchester Local Authority areas plus Warrington Council, and have been funded by the DWP, DCLG Homelessness Prevention funding, and a contribution from each Local Authority. The team's service comprises the following:

- A telephone advice line – 0845 120 2093
- A website – [www.helpwithrent.org.uk](http://www.helpwithrent.org.uk)
- A mobile advice centre which visits various locations across the region offering both appointments and a drop in advice service
- A team of 10 advisors who offer in depth advice on the effects of Welfare Reform and actions that customers can take

**Jobcentre Plus** - Chris Hulse & Molly Brown

Jobcentre Plus is the Department for Work and Pensions' primary support service for claimants of out of work benefits pre Work Programme. There are two offices which serve the majority of North Manchester residents, namely Cheetham Hill and Newton Heath.

**North Manchester work club partnership** – Collette Carroll, Work Club Leader and volunteer /service user

The North Manchester Work Club partnership is a voluntary sector led organisation who deliver 5 work clubs in the heart of North Manchester's highest concentrations of worklessness. Managed by our work club leader and supported through a network of

volunteers, there are currently weekly sessions in Cheetham, Collyhurst, Harpurhey, Moston and Charlestown.

Each work club is open to any individual seeking support to find employment or raise their skill levels, with dedicated impartial advice and guidance. They support jobseekers with CVs, applications and jobsearch, along with referrals to training, volunteering and other dedicated employment support where appropriate.

**Manchester Credit Union** – Christine Moore, Manager

Manchester Credit Union is a not-for-profit financial co-operative serving people who live or work in Manchester, Tameside, Trafford, Rochdale and the High Peak.

Credit unions exist solely to provide affordable financial services to their members. In our case we offer savings, loans and a whole range of other financial services.

We are run by our members, for our members. Our range of innovative financial products includes ethical savings, affordable loans, Christmas club accounts and money guidance sessions to name but a few. All these services are supported by the excellent service of a dedicated, well-trained staff.

Manchester Credit Union started as Beswick and Openshaw Credit Union in 1991 and was known as East Manchester Credit Union until February 2007.

**Manchester CAB** - Karen Dyson, Social Policy, Training and Equalities Manager

Manchester CAB service provides free, independent, impartial and confidential advice for the people of Manchester. Around two thirds of our enquiries relate to debt or benefits issues, but we advise on a 'whoever you are, whatever the problem' basis. In the last two years, around 20% of the adult population of Manchester have used our services. We have bureaux where clients can drop in to be seen without an appointment at Moston, Moss Side and Wythenshawe, and we also provide advice by telephone and email. If clients need further assistance after an initial diagnostic or triage interview, we will make them an appointment, either with one of our generalist or specialist advisers, or by referring them to another organisation, e.g. for complex immigration or legal enquiries. We hold the legal aid contracts for housing advice in Manchester, and also host a number of funded projects, for example, British Gas funded fuel and debt advice workers and one of four national Citizens Advice contact centres. We also carry out research, preventative and campaigning work and reached the national finals for Best Campaigning Bureau for our recent social policy work.

**Cheetham Hill Advice Centre** - Jeremy Engineer, Cheetham Hill Advice Centre Manager

Cheetham Hill Advice Centre (CHAC) is an independent advice agency established in 1977. We provide free, independent, confidential advice, information, representation and support to residents of Manchester with a focus on those that live in the Cheetham and Crumpsall wards in North Manchester

CHAC's overall aim is to improve the financial stability and wellbeing of our clients. Our service offers holistic advice to support people to stabilise their financial situation, maximise their income and manage their money. Areas of advice include:

- Welfare benefits,
- Debt advice,
- Housing problems,
- Employment,
- Basic immigration advice (OISC level 1),
- Consumer
- Accessing support for those who are destitute or facing severe hardship

We do this by providing face to face one to one advice sessions for our clients, where we diagnose their legal problems, help and support them to make a plan for how to deal with them and carry out any actions that are required like contacting 3<sup>rd</sup> parties to negotiate debt repayments, lodging appeals to the Tribunals Service.

**Cheetham Hill Medical Centre - Dr Faizan A Awan, GP**

Cheetham Hill Medical centre has a team of 7 GP's looking after a practice population of 12000 patients. The main medical centre is on Cheetham Hill Road and there is also a branch surgery on Rochdale Road.

**Public Health representative – Jenny Osborne, Public Health Manchester**

The Council took over responsibility for local Public Health from the NHS in April 2013. Public Health Manchester delivers on five mandated responsibilities: Health Protection, providing specialist advice to primary care services eg. GPs, commissioning sexual health services, NHS Health Checks and the Child Measurement Programme. It also delivers on other Council responsibilities including tobacco control and smoking cessation, alcohol and drug misuse, obesity and weight management, public mental health, work and health, local nutrition services, the health of children and young people. Public Health Manchester is part of the Directorate for Families, Health and Wellbeing.



# North Manchester SRF Context

Impact of Welfare Reform: Economy Overview & Scrutiny  
Committee, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2013

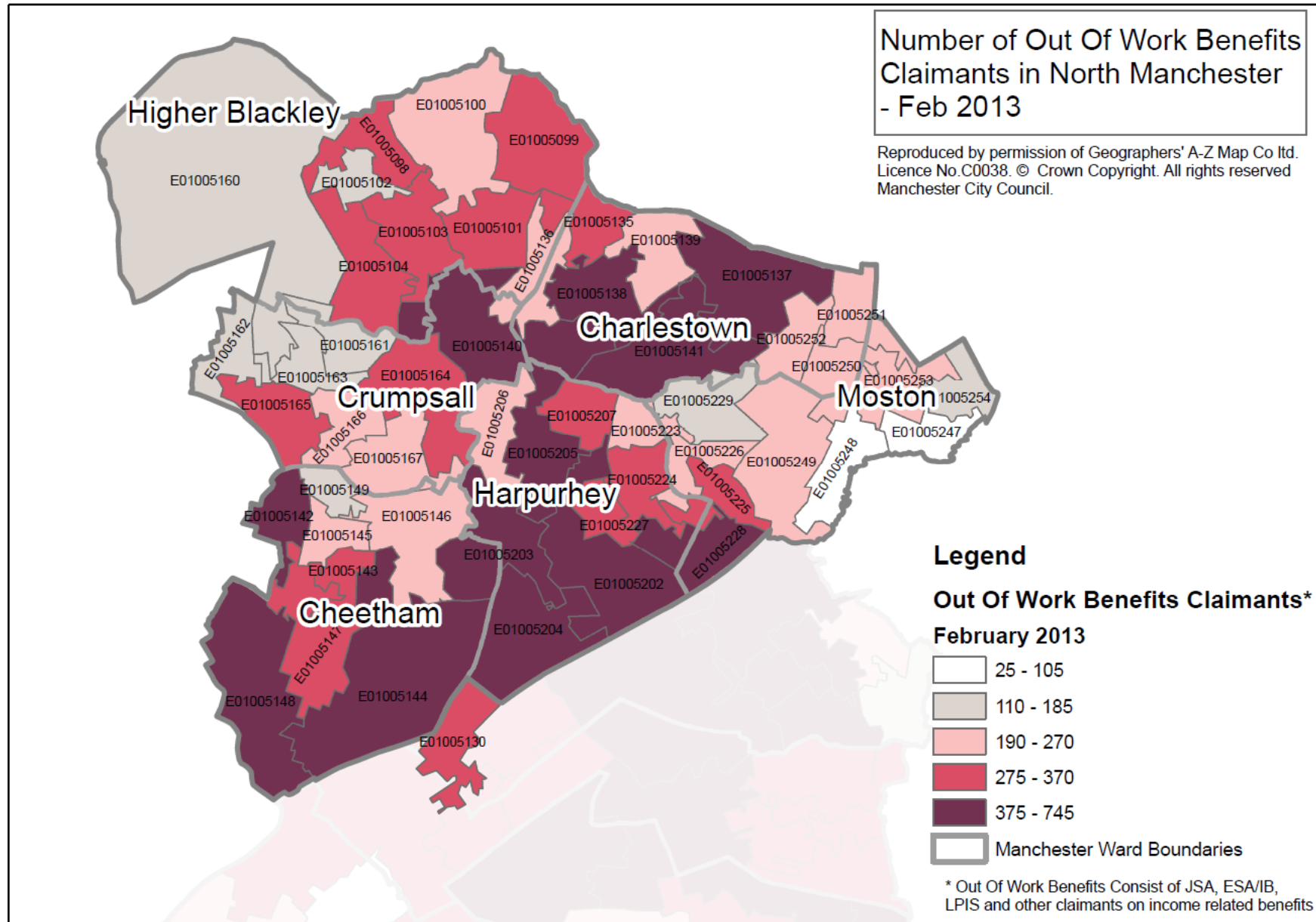
Mark Rainey- Regeneration Manager: North Manchester  
Neighbourhood Regeneration Team (NRT)

## North Manchester- Baseline

- **6 Wards:** Harpurhey, Cheetham, Crumpsall, Higher Blackley, Charlestown & Moston (including Collyhurst neighbourhood);
- **Role in the City:** Strong residential neighbourhoods that support the growth of the regional economy;
- **Strategic location:** City Centre/M60 Motorway- access to jobs (NM- 2,200 Businesses & 26,000 Jobs);
- **Population:** 98,000 residents / 67,000 (working age);
- **Benefit Claimants:** 14,740 (22% of working age);

North Manchester Ward	February 2012	February 2013	Change
Charlestown	2,525	2,430	-95
Cheetham	2,650	2,540	-110
Crumpsall	2,270	2,250	-20
Harpurhey	3,645	3,535	-110
Higher Blackley	2,255	2,100	-155
Moston	1,990	1,885	-105
<b>North Manchester SRF Total</b>	<b>15,335</b>	<b>14,740</b>	<b>-595</b>

- **Benefit Type:** **IB/ESA** (8,045), **JSA** (4,450), **IS** (1,910), **Other** (335);



## North Manchester- Economic Response

- Examples:
- Welfare Reform Action Group;
- Troubled Families support;
- Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers in GP Practices;
- Work Clubs;
- Business in the Community (BITC) Business Connector (Fujitsu); and
- Manchester Credit Union offer