

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Economy Scrutiny Committee – 25 November 2015  
**Subject:** Update on the National Careers Service  
**Report of:** Jerry Stokes, The Work Company

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**Summary**

To provide an update on delivery of the National Careers Service in Manchester.

**Recommendations**

Economic Scrutiny members are invited to:-

- (i) Note the current position of the National Careers Service in Manchester.
  - (ii) Comment on future priorities for delivery across the City.
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**Wards Affected:** All

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## 1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The National Careers Service operates across England providing information, advice and guidance to help adults make decisions on learning, training and work opportunities. The service offers confidential and impartial advice via a network of qualified careers advisers. All adults aged 19+ (18+ if in receipt of work related benefits) can access the service via face to face or telephone appointments. Group careers workshops are also delivered and a full range of careers information is available online<sup>1</sup>.

1.2 The current NCS contract commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014, with Manchester being part of the Greater Manchester, Cheshire, Warrington and Staffs contract package area. The service is delivered in Manchester by The Work Company.

1.3 This report includes data for the first 12 months of delivery (1<sup>st</sup> October 2014 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015). The contract is funded by the Skills Funding Agency on a payment by results basis, and aims to equip and empower customers to be able to move forward with career plans independently. It is designed to operate as an added value service, specifically to add expert careers information, advice and guidance to a customer's journey into work or learning.

1.4 Differentiated funding incentivises providers to work with 'priority group' customers. This includes: Low-skilled adults without a level 3 qualification; young adults aged 18-24 not in education, employment or training; adults facing redundancy, newly redundant or distant from the labour market (that is the customer has not been in any type of work for two years or more); Jobcentre Plus customers on DWP Jobseekers Allowance (JSA), Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and in the work-related activity group (WRAG) who are unemployed, people who are claiming Universal Credit who are looking for work and are at least 18 years old; adults in custody aged 18 years or over, or an ex offender; and adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## 2. CURRENT POSITION – OVERVIEW

2.1 Over the 12 month period to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015, 7,275 Manchester residents were supported by the National Careers Service, representing 24% of the Greater Manchester total of 30,131 customers. Of this total, 90% were classified as 'priority group' customers as defined above in paragraph 3.3.

2.2 Of the total customers seen, the following tables provide a breakdown of age and gender profiles.

Age Group	Greater Manchester	Manchester
18-19	5.67%	4.11%
20-24	16.15%	15.95%
25-49	58.62%	62.90%
50+	19.56%	17.04%

Table 1 Age group breakdown of NCS customers

Gender	Greater Manchester	Manchester
Male	35.49%	32.77%
Female	64.49%	67.22%

Table 2 Gender breakdown of NCS customers

2.3 At a Greater Manchester level, 24% of customers identified themselves as being of a BME background but this was higher in Manchester at 39% including 6% identifying as African and 5% Pakistani.

2.4 Across Manchester, 17.25% of customers identified themselves as having a disability (GM 19%).

2.5 The majority of customers supported by NCS were claiming a work related benefit (85%). This rate is lower than the GM average of 93%. A breakdown of benefit type claimed by this group of customers can be seen in table 3 below.

Benefit Type	Greater Manchester	Manchester
ESA (WRAG)	6.79%	6.97%
JSA	60.83%	59.74%
Not known/not provided	7.78%	6.34%
Other (including lone parent IS)	5.93%	6.85%
Universal Credit	12.05%	11.12%

Table 3 Benefits claimed by NCS customers

2.6 The majority of customers supported had relatively low skill levels with 68.6% of customers stating that they held qualifications at Level 2 or below (compared to the Manchester population in which 35% of residents hold qualifications at this level), thus indicating that the service effectively targeting residents with low skills. This results from a combination of effective local partnerships and referral agencies and also reflects demand from customers in need of advice about further learning. The following table shows the qualification levels of NCS customers compared to the Manchester population.

Highest skill level	Greater Manchester	Manchester NCS customers	Manchester population <sup>ii</sup>
No qualification	15.46%	16.77%	11.7%
Level 1 or equivalent	20.93%	23.11%	9.3%
Level 2 or equivalent	33.5%	28.7%	14.1%
Level 3 or equivalent	13.34%	10.98%	21.8%
Level 4 or above	13.53%	16.79%	36.3%
Unknown	3.24%	3.65%	6.7%

Table 4 Skill levels of NCS customers

2.7 Of the 7,275 customers supported in Manchester, 95% (6886) have stated that they were satisfied with the guidance received. This is ahead of the national target for customer satisfaction of 92%.

2.8 Following support from a careers adviser, 93% (6752) of customers have gone on to take independent steps to move forward with their career plans. Steps that are taken by customers in this measure include: applying for or starting a vocational course, undertaking voluntary work on a regular basis, creating a new CV or attending a careers workshop. In order for this measure to be recorded, steps taken by a customer must be in line with the advice and guidance provided by the service. The Manchester rate is significantly higher than the national target which is to ensure that 74% of customers take subsequent steps to manage their career and is ahead of current national average of 88%.

### **3. CASE STUDIES**

3.1 Examples of customer case studies are provided below to illustrate the support provided by the National Careers Service to two Manchester residents.

3.2 Kayleigh, aged 28, was on her way to becoming a physiotherapist in 2013 but was then unable to start in her chosen career as she had a child. After being out of the labour market for two years to look after her daughter whilst claiming Income Support, Kayleigh was referred to NCS from her Jobcentre adviser. Kayleigh's Careers Adviser encouraged her to get back into physiotherapy and supporting her to seek funding for an HCPC licence. The NCS Careers Adviser also supported Kayleigh with targeted job search activities and helped with an application to Salford Royal Hospital. Kayleigh is now working as a therapy assistant with Salford Royal Hospital and has said 'I would have struggled without NCS help'.

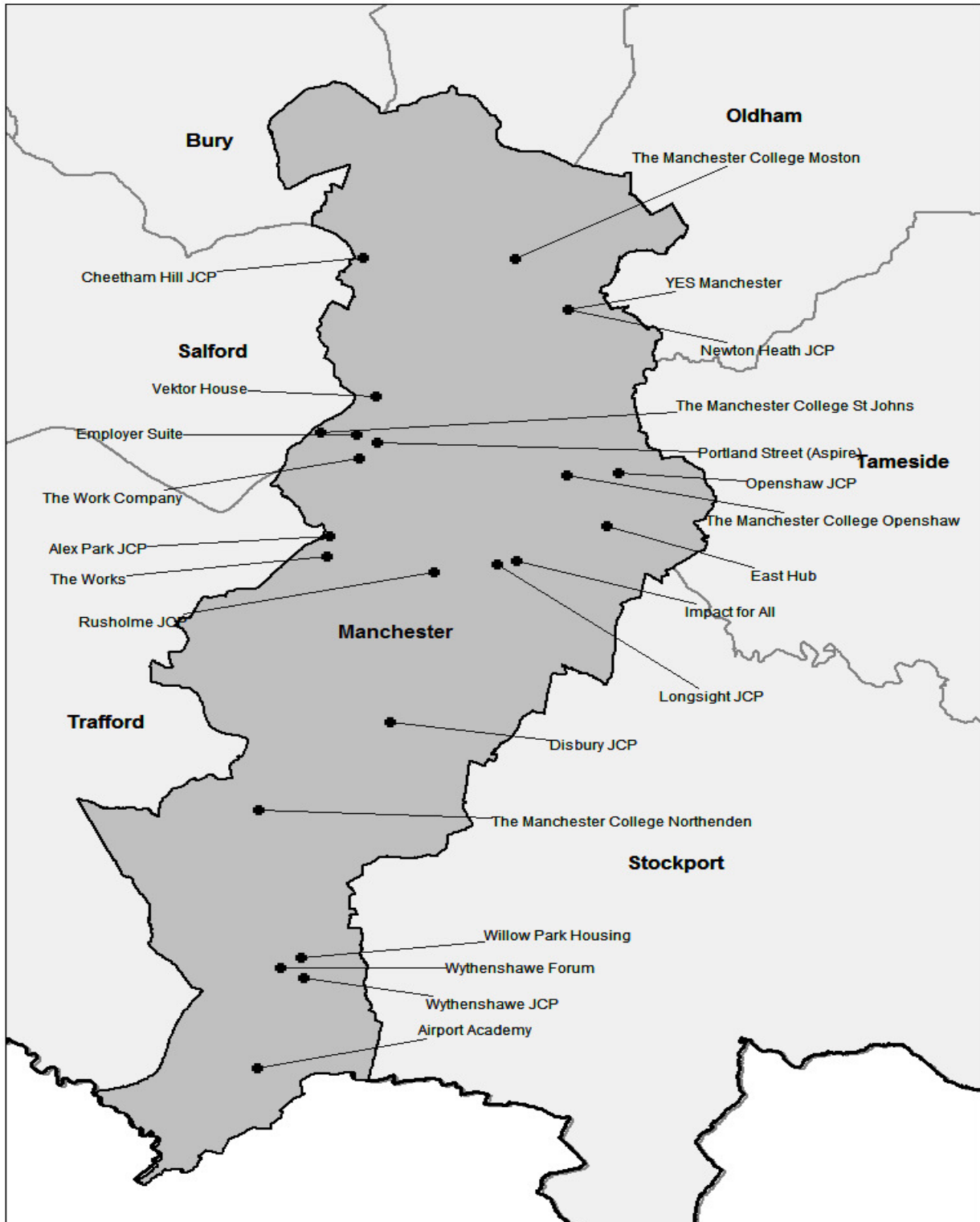
3.3 Ryan, aged 27, was unemployed and claiming JSA when he first sought support from the National Careers Service. He was referred to NCS in December 2014 by Real Opportunities in Wythenshawe. Ryan's NCS Adviser helped him with the creation of a new CV and referred him to the Airport Academy to undertake a vocational course. He then undertook a work placement at the airport and subsequently secured full time employment with World Duty Free in May 2015.

### **4. PARTNERSHIPS IN MANCHESTER**

4.1 The Work Company holds a Greater Manchester contract for NCS, without specific targets for each local authority. Staff are deployed in all 10 LAs across GM, prioritising local partnerships and venues via which the service can support adults that are in greatest need of careers advice and guidance. A number of strong and well established partnerships exist across Manchester, enabling careers advisors to be co-located in more than 25 venues across the city. This includes:

- All Jobcentre Plus offices
- The Employer Suite
- The Manchester College campuses
- Probation service
- The Works (Moss Side)
- Learning providers
- Registered social landlords
- Wythenshawe Forum
- Airport Academy

4.2 The following map shows venues in which the National Careers Service is delivered across Manchester.



4.3 Residents from all Manchester wards have received careers advice and guidance from NCS with the highest number of customers residing in Moss Side, Miles Platting/Newton Heath and Gorton. High levels of support were also provided in Harpurhey, Hulme and Ardwick. A full breakdown of customers per ward is available below.<sup>iii</sup>

4.4 Regular reviews of partnerships and the effective targeting of the service are undertaken with MCC officers to ensure NCS is able to support City priorities in terms of neighbourhoods, customer groups and partnership provision. For example, a recent review highlighted the opportunity to start working with MAES in Abraham Moss. This has subsequently been established. The City Council have also been very helpful in supporting the NCS team to establish partnership links with Working Well provision and with Learning Hubs. The NCS team is able to regularly review partnership arrangements and is keen to continue liaison with MCC to ensure careers advisers are deployed to be able to support residents in greatest need of support.

## 5 FUTURE OF THE NATIONAL CAREERS SERVICE

5.1 The National Careers Service is currently funded until 2017, with a possible extension for a further two years to 2019. At the time of writing this report, it is known that departmental budget cuts of between 25 and 40% are to be implemented. However, the impact of this on the National Careers Service is currently not quantified. Where there are reductions in future resources, it will be increasingly important to ensure the service is targeted effectively.

<sup>i</sup> <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>

<sup>ii</sup> Source: NOMIS. ONS annual population survey Dec 2014

<sup>iii</sup>

<b>Manchester Ward</b>	<b>Total number of NCS customers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Ancoats and Clayton	250	3.44%
Ardwick	264	3.63%
Baguley	208	2.86%
Bradford	293	4.03%
Brooklands	140	1.92%
Burnage	135	1.86%
Charlestown	171	2.35%
Cheetham	200	2.75%
Chorlton	153	2.10%
Chorlton Park	227	3.12%
City Centre	25	0.34%
Crumpsall	166	2.28%
Didsbury East	60	0.82%
Didsbury West	65	0.89%

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Fallowfield	184	2.53%
Gorton North	314	4.32%
Gorton South	289	3.97%
Harpurhey	312	4.29%
Higher Blackley	144	1.98%
Hulme	293	4.03%
Levenshulme	148	2.03%
Longsight	221	3.04%
Miles Platting and Newton Heath	376	5.17%
Moss Side	470	6.46%
Moston	210	2.89%
Northenden	222	3.05%
Old Moat	156	2.14%
Rusholme	182	2.50%
Sharston	296	4.07%
Whalley Range	313	4.30%
Withington	122	1.68%
Woodhouse Park	253	3.48%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6862</b>	<b>94.32%</b>
Unknown	413	5.68%