

Manchester City Council Report for Resolution

Report to: Executive – 8 February 2017

Subject: City Centre Review Findings

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive – People, Policy and Reform and the Head of City Centre Regeneration Team

Summary

This report outlines the findings and recommendations of a review of the performance of public service in the city centre. The purpose of the review was to create a better understanding of the complexities, demands and pressure points for services delivering in the city centre. The review involved users of the city centre including residents, businesses, visitors and front-line staff providing public services. The review focussed on the issues affecting the way the city centre looks and feels to these different groups of users.

The review considered increases in demand. The growth of the city centre has led to increased numbers of visitors, residents, jobs and people working in the city centre. This contrasts with reductions in spending on the public services serving the city centre over the past five years. In this context, the review has produced a series of proposals to strengthen the public service offer and the way in which stakeholders can play their part. This report explains those proposals.

Recommendations

That the Executive:

1. Authorise the Chief Executive to create a post of Manager of City Centre Public Services with the role description, salary, reporting arrangements and appointment process being subject to approval by the Personnel Committee.
 2. Request the Chief Executive to establish a City Centre Accountability Board comprising appropriate Members, senior representatives of GMP and other public services and chairs of Business Improvement Districts, with the detailed membership being subject to consultation with the Leader of the Council.
 3. Note that the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council will engage with city centre stakeholders, including CityCo, about the establishment of effective stakeholder partnership arrangements for the future.
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Wards Affected – City Centre

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The perception of parts of Manchester’s city centre is currently having a negative impact on visitor, resident and business confidence. It is critical that Manchester is able to support and attract investors and visitors to the city centre. The ambition is to the city centre to continue to drive its success and attract a highly skilled workforce.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city’s economic success	Manchester’s reputation as a vibrant city with a range of amenities and assets has been central to attracting world class business and workforce. Investment in the future of the city to ensure that the city centre plays its full role in attracting and retaining a strong talent pool who will work and live in the city centre is essential.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Our Manchester principles have underpinned the review – the research, stakeholder engagement and recommendations. Ensuring Manchester city centre is accessible for all Manchester residents to use safely and confidently on a 24 hour basis is a key principle of the review and recommendations.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The increase in residential space in the city centre has contributed to the need to provide a safe, accessible and user friendly on a 24 hour basis. The review and report identifies the ways in which the city centre will be improved to encourage residents, visitors and workers to utilise all the services and facilities of the city centre.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	A key element of the review is the use of technology, providing digital solutions and infrastructure to drive change in the management and function of the city centre.

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

The financial implications of the proposed implementation plan for the City Centre review is a cost of £4.6m for activity starting in 2017/18 and being in place for at least 12 months. This will be funded from confirmed resources as follows:

1. Business rates - £3m of the estimated 2016/17 surplus from Business Rates used to establish a City Centre Review reserve.

2. £1m originally earmarked for the Our Manchester reserve.
3. £0.5 m of additional external funding for the development of proposals to enhance prevention, introduce an Emergency Hub, and to expand outreach services and other types of support in relation to a new approach to rough sleeping and begging. The funding would be from a combination of New Burdens funding from DCLG, successful bids from GM for transformation and a Social Impact Bond to fund the operation of the Emergency Hub. It should be noted there is a risk that the funding made available will be less than the £0.5 estimated, which would require a call on other resources, such as Our Manchester reserve, to fund these activities.
4. City Verve grant funding of up to £120k for digital solutions.

It should be noted that the activities in the Implementation Plan are funded from non-recurrent resource which will be exhausted within the first 1-2 years from commencement. Whilst the option to scale back the Implementation Plan and spread available resources over the three year revenue budget period 2017-20 has been considered, it was decided that this would be detrimental to the short term impact required to create evidence of what works to achieve better outcomes. The workforce implications of this approach have been assessed and will be carefully managed.

Further work will be undertaken to define the impact of the investment on outcomes and service demand. This will allow the review to potentially taper the investment following the anticipated reduction in demand. New funding would need to be identified for continued or further activity. This could come from changing the use of mainstream resource predominantly spent in the city centre and/ or additional investment from Council, Police and others who may have funds they could include.

Financial Consequences – Capital

There is potentially a small amount of capital cost relating to the Emergency Hub, however this has not yet been quantified to determine if it can be managed within existing resources.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

None

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The city centre is at the heart of the regional economy with a very strong cultural offer that attracts around 2.4million visitors each year. The last 30 years have also seen the growth of the city centre as a popular residential location with about 25,000 residents within the inner core. This is coupled with a 7% increase in employment. Even in a period of global recession, employment numbers have risen from 110,500 to 118,600 employees within the city centre over the past the seven years from 2009 – 2015. In this context, there are high and complex demands on public services in the city centre, alongside significant funding reductions and pressures over the last six years.
- 1.2 The Council is committed to improving the experience of the city centre despite the increasing complexities caused by growth and budget reductions faced by the Council and other public services. Officers have therefore worked with senior colleagues in Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to conduct a review of demand on public services in the city centre and a range of issues impacting on the way the city centre looks and feels to visitors, shoppers and businesses, those who live and work there. The review was overseen by a group of Members chaired by the Leader of the Council and including the Deputy Leader with responsibility for communications, housing and regeneration, the Executive Members for Adults Health and Wellbeing, Neighbourhoods, Culture and Leisure, Environment, the City Centre Spokesman and City Centre Ward Councillors.
- 1.3 The review looked across organisations and engaged with key stakeholders, including city centre users, providing a comprehensive picture of the key issues identified:
- Drug and alcohol consumption
 - Homelessness - illegal occupancy and rough sleeping.
 - Street begging
 - Peddling
 - Anti-social behaviour
 - Litter and waste management
 - Specific locations causing concern
 - Condition, maintenance and renewal of public realm.

2. Methodology - Our Manchester style research

- 2.1 The review has used Our Manchester approaches to engage extensively with both service deliverers and city centre users, to identify what is working well and what the key issues and gaps are. There has been extensive engagement in the review to provide a comprehensive picture of the specific demands and complexities within the city centre. The engagement targeted key city centre users and services including major employers, property developers, leisure venues, business forums, residents and retailers. Proposals for delivering different types of services for rough sleepers will be developed through the ongoing relationship with the Homelessness Charter Partnership.

The approaches taken by the review included:

- **Ethnographic** – information and data collected through participation in settings, observation of service delivery, field notes and unstructured interviews.
- **Interviews** – engagement with key partners and front line service delivery staff through structured interviews to gather their views on the city centre and identify priorities, service standards and current performance.
- **Online survey** – targeted at stakeholder groups beyond those interviewed and aimed at maximising input on issues and service delivery in the city centre.

2.2 The research involved 18 in depth semi-structured interviews with 21 stakeholders and an online survey which gathered 228 responses.

2.3 To further engage staff from the Council and GMP, an online portal was developed that asked staff to post photographs and comments about what they liked about the city centre and what negatively impacted on their experience of the city centre. Over 300 posts were submitted to the portal.

2.4 To supplement the engagement research outlined above additional activity was undertaken to support the generation of potential options for the future management of the city centre, including:

- **Data analysis** – focused on performance analysis, this work assessed trends and types of demand over time, performance against services standards and the costs associated with the delivery of these services.
- **Benchmarking and good practice** – desk top research, telephone interviews and learning visits with local authority areas and privately owned spaces recognised as high performing for the management of their public realm.
- **Perceptions data** – analysis of press coverage and information from previous surveys conducted.
- **Digital solutions** – series of workshops involving internal and external stakeholders to explore digital or technological solutions in response to the priorities.

3. Findings

3.1 Strengths

Throughout the review stakeholders commented positively on the breadth of the offer in the city centre. Manchester was seen as an important destination for residents, visitors and investors, due to:

- The **vibrant cultural offer** of theatres, museums and the art gallery within the city centre. This was seen as a core strength, alongside the variety of shops and the food and drink on offer.
- Participants in the research described the city centre as **'friendly'** and having a positive 'energy' that was welcoming of **diverse communities** and individuals.
- The **city's architecture** was praised by stakeholders, seeing the continual development of new buildings as an encouraging sign for the city's economic viability and future growth.
- In general **transport infrastructure** was seen positively, enabling people to explore the city easily. People highlighted the ease of which they can walk to different locations within the city centre and the availability of the tram and free shuttle bus.
- The proliferation of **independent retailers** and licensees in the Northern Quarter and the efforts at greenery in this area were singled out for praise by stakeholders.
- Another area that was singled out for praise in the way that it was managed was **Spinningfields**.
- Front line staff reported that the **Integrated Neighbourhood Management approach** recently implemented has had a positive effect on information and intelligence sharing across agencies and improved working relationships.

3.2 Themes

The review considered current resourcing of city centre services at a time when demands from demographic growth are increasing:

- The population of the City Centre Ward has increased from 12,374 in 2006 to 20,176 in 2016 and is predicted to increase to 31,719 over the next four years.
- A 7% increase in employment, from 110,500 to 118,600 employees within the city centre over the period 2009 – 2015.
- The numbers of domestic visitors is up 316k since 2006-8 to 2.68m in 2014-16.
- International visitors - 3rd top ranked UK city for international visitors.
- Licensed premises have increased from 604 in 2010 to 758 in 2016; a 26% increase.

The level of resource to manage and maintain the city centre has at the same time reduced. As a result, the quality of the city centre environment and experience has not kept pace with the increase in residents, development, licensed premises, jobs and visitors.

Strong themes emerged from the engagement and research, which highlighted the interconnected nature of the issues affecting the look and feel of the city centre. To support with planning and identifying future work, the issues raised have been grouped into the following thematic priority areas:

- a) **Place issues:** Draws together issues that affect the physical environment of the city centre, including: littering, alcohol and drug consumption, antisocial behaviour, charity collectors and business waste.
- b) **Rough sleeping, homelessness and begging:** Issues relating to individuals and the impact that this has on the city centre.
- c) **Public Realm:** Represents the publicly accessible areas of the city centre, looking at the space in its totality, as affected by the issues above and other issues such as events.
- d) **Management and Governance:** The leadership and coordination required to drive the delivery of improvements.

3.3 Place Issues

- 3.3.1 **Alcohol and Drug Consumption:** Although alcohol consumption was frequently observed in the city centre, this was balanced by the perspective that Manchester has an established and attractive night-time economy which was not always seen as problematic. The consequences of problematic alcohol consumption and alcohol related litter were seen as having a more significant negative impact on the image of the city centre.
- 3.3.2 Perspectives on **drug consumption and substance abuse** were more mixed, with some stakeholders not seeing any problems but most reporting evidence of drug consumption including cannabis and new psychoactive substances (so called 'legal highs').
- 3.3.3 **Litter:** Press coverage related to the city centre and stakeholder interviews and survey responses highlighted the perceived prevalence of litter in the city centre. Stakeholders acknowledged that new bins had been installed but said more should be done to maintain the bins and ensure they are emptied. This viewpoint is echoed in the Council's Litter Survey, which demonstrates an increased perception of litter in the city centre over the past three years, despite there being enough bins in the city centre.
- 3.3.4 **Trade Waste:** Survey respondents reported seeing business waste fairly often in the city centre. Businesses in the city are responsible for the collection of their waste with a variety of contractors being used who collect at varying

times throughout the day. This was seen as a significant problem by more than half of respondents.

- 3.3.5 **Peddling:** The visibility of peddling was mentioned by the majority of survey respondents, particularly along Market Street. Whilst it was seen as an issue by some people overall it did not negatively affect their experience of the city centre and for some it added to the offer of the city centre.
- 3.3.6 Stakeholders linked the issue of Charity Collectors with peddling. Charity collecting was viewed much more negatively, being reported as intrusive and inconvenient by stakeholders.
- 3.3.7 **Anti-Social Behaviour:** Stakeholders generally linked anti-social behaviour to the night time economy, with peak reporting times for complaints being 1-4am. Rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour can create an unsafe atmosphere for city centre users.

3.4 Rough sleeping, homelessness and begging

- 3.4.1 Homelessness, rough sleeping and begging were highlighted as the priority issue for the city centre and were the most frequently mentioned areas of concern. The majority of stakeholders and survey respondents did not distinguish between the three groups of homeless, rough sleepers and people who beg and saw all three as a single group rather than different groups who may require different solutions.
- 3.4.2 Rough sleeping has become much more commonplace and visible in the city centre over the last few years. This is evidenced by the official annual count required by Government. The official count has increased from 7 in 2010 to 78 in 2016. The true number is likely to be much higher. The Councils estimate from staff who work with rough-sleepers is that there will be around 260 people sleeping rough in the city centre at different times over the course of a few weeks. To a lesser degree there are also a number of rough sleepers in areas outside of the city centre. Manchester has much higher numbers of rough sleepers than all Core Cities other than Bristol. The annual count is further supplemented by a monthly count of rough sleepers conducted by the Council.
- 3.4.3 The review included a count of the number of people begging, however, much less is known about people who beg. The count conducted for the review estimated that there were 140 people begging, 58% of whom were not also rough sleeping.
- 3.4.4 The key themes that emerged, relating to rough sleeping and begging, were:
- i. **The prevalence of rough sleeping and begging is increasing and reflects negatively on the city centre.** Stakeholders reported seeing an increase in rough sleeping and begging in recent years across nearly all areas of the city centre. The negative perception of the city centre is

further exacerbated by the extent of the rubbish and detritus collected from areas where rough sleeping and begging is prevalent.

- ii. **People want to help in constructive ways but don't know how to.** Stakeholders expressed a willingness to help in the right way, acknowledging that giving someone money or food does not provide a sustainable solution. Stakeholders requested clearer public messages about how to help in a productive way.
- iii. **Partners and businesses wanted to do more.** Some stakeholders recognised that the Council could facilitate as well as deliver actions in this area, stating that other agencies also have a key role to play.
- iv. **A more developed offer that responds to the different 'groups' of rough sleepers, people who beg and those that are homeless is required.** There was some acknowledgement that not all people who are begging are also rough sleeping or homeless. This requires organisations to consider a cohesive and flexible response to address the variation in people's circumstances, and have the capacity to be deployed outside of the city centre if circumstances.

3.4.5 The Council is committed to its pledge to the Manchester Homelessness Charter to support and work together with partners to overcome homelessness.

3.5 Public Realm

3.5.1 The review also considered management of the public realm, the publicly accessible open spaces, in its totality. This recognises that improvements in the broader issues highlighted above will have a positive impact on people's perception of this space. There was a recognition that effective management of public space was essential if the city is to be considered safe, attractive and accessible. The use of public space for events was a factor in its management. The use of public space including squares, pavements and highways needs to be of a consistently high standard with responsibility for management clearly allocated.

3.6 Management and Governance

3.6.1 Stakeholders requested more opportunities to engage with city centre governance and to be able to be more proactive in delivering change for the city centre. Public services are increasingly working together and it was recognised that there was scope for strengthening this to support the demands of the city centre.

4. Proposals

4.1 **Cross cutting themes** emerging from the research are:

- Improving the **management and governance** of the city centre to drive outcomes and delivery.
- Increasing the **visibility of public services** in the city centre. Stakeholders suggested that more visible guardians are needed within the city centre.
- Increasing the **connectivity between services, partners and external organisations** to enable staff to work in a more integrated way.
- Establishing **networks and governance arrangements** around the management of the city centre that include key city centre stakeholders.
- Improving communications so that there is relentless and consistent two way communication with partners, stakeholders and especially the public.

4.1.1 Some of these issues improvements can be delivered through better process and partnerships, others may be require legislative change. Public services currently have various legal powers available according to the circumstances and location. Use of these will be reviewed to ensure that they are proactively and quickly supporting delivery of change in the city centre.

4.1.2 In addition to this powers exist and are utilised elsewhere which could be introduced in Manchester in relation to waste management, littering from vehicles, traffic management (e.g. blocking junctions), advertising, flyposting and the ability to issue Penalty Charge notices for low level environmental offences where the only current route is prosecution. Manchester will lobby with Core Cities, other cities and significant towns to secure improved powers to assist with city centre management.

4.2 Technology is being considered as a significant factor in improving the use and management of the city centre. This will focus on a number of potential issues including how technology can:

- **Provide better insight** into demand which could be used in real time to enable effective responses, analysed for trends and used to support democratic decision making.
- **Join up** services across agencies so responses are better coordinated.
- **Influence behaviour** using techniques including digital incentives.

4.3 Place issues

4.3.1 To address the issues a number of proposals have been developed. These include:

- Actions to improve street cleansing.
- An increase in the provision of enforcement staff 24 hours a day, 7 days per week and to increase the visibility of public service staff.

- Action to encourage additional Business Improvement Districts and to consider options for private ownership and management of selected public spaces.
 - Actions to effectively manage peddling and loud, amplified noise in the city centre.
- 4.3.2 There will be a new programme of work, building on the litter strategy, to promote **behaviour change** applying the Our Manchester principles and behaviours.
- 4.3.3 The number of **visible guardians** will be increased in particular hot spot areas. Visibility will be increased by adopting a single public services branding for all staff who provide a monitoring and challenging role.
- 4.3.4 There will be a thorough **review of CCTV locations** to identify more comprehensive city centre-wide coverage.
- 4.3.5 **Shaping the recommissioning of the Litter Enforcement Team** – the litter enforcement contract is due for recommissioning next year. Consideration will be given to letting the new contract with a greater payment by results element. Enforcement will be placed within the context of wider behaviour change.

4.4 Rough Sleeping, Homelessness and Begging

- 4.4.1 The values and priorities of the Manchester Homelessness Charter underpin the work on rough sleeping, homelessness and begging. The Homelessness Charter Partnership are leading the engagement on proposals for finding a solution.
- 4.4.2 A series of initial options have been developed for additional investment to reform the way services respond to rough sleepers and beggars in the city centre, including prevention. These are in line with the vision of the Charter. These include additional investment in more effective prevention to support people, a better coordinated and more effective response, and then a more assertive approach for those who refuse strong offers of help that are available, including a more assertive approach to rough sleepers who refuse help and enforcement to remove those who are begging and do not need or want help. This will reinforce the message that street begging is not acceptable in the city centre. The following proposals will be co produced with the Homelessness Charter Partnership.
- More help to **prevent** single people becoming homeless by providing more support in communities.
 - A bid to the DCLG Homelessness Prevention Programme has been developed with the Homelessness Charter Partnership and submitted to develop one new **emergency hub** in the city centre of Manchester to support individuals with a range of issues.

- The way in which the public services help and support rough sleepers will be strengthened through an improved **outreach and support** offer.
- Developing a 24 hour a day, seven days a week offer for those who need it addressing the current gap in evening provision.
- Work with organisations who provide housing to offer **move-on** accommodation and support for people to resolve their homelessness issues.

4.4.3 The impact of implementing these proposals will be monitored to avoid displacement to other parts of the city. The additional capacity for dealing with these issues in the City Centre can be deployed elsewhere in the City if circumstances warrant it.

4.5 Public Realm

4.5.1 The review has highlighted a number of potential opportunities to positively influence pride in and improved management of the public realm. This includes creating greater clarity over the maintenance of the public realm, consideration of how the public realm will be managed in the future, influencing partners' commissioning to promote greater ownership of the public spaces outside of their premises and working with CityCo to strengthen approaches to specific issues for example Charity Collectors. In summary, initial proposals are:

- To support the **continuation of the current Business Improvement Districts and explore opportunities to create future (BIDs)**. This will enable retailers and businesses to have greater influence over management of the areas in which they are located.
- To take stronger action to manage the issuing of permissions for **charity collectors**, based in the city centre, so they are not perceived to be dominating public space.
- Take robust action to control **pedlars and loud amplified music**.

4.5.2 Further work is required between Highways and Neighbourhoods to ensure that all of the public realm is managed and maintained to a good standard both in terms of usage and physical condition. Different ways of managing public space will be considered including engaging the private sector where it is appropriate and feasible to do so.

4.6 Management and Governance

4.6.1 There will be new arrangements for managing and coordinating public services in the city centre. Any new investment will be subject to improved outcomes. New arrangements will also engage all key stakeholders (including businesses, residents, visitors and those who work in the city centre) in the

successful management of the city. A robust engagement and communications plan will be developed as part of this.

4.6.2 The new arrangements will be underpinned by strong analysis and performance monitoring. Data sources will be improved and utilised to provide accurate intelligence and to enable outcomes and targets to be tracked and delivered.

4.6.3 The proposals are to:

- Recruit a **Manager of City Centre Public Services** to provide strong city centre management and leadership and coordination.
- Establish a cross sector **City Centre Accountability Board**, initially chaired by the Leader of the Council.
- The manager will be responsible for developing a **single plan for public services** in the city centre. This will need to be approved by the Accountability Board. The plan will include ambitious and measurable improvements and outcomes and requirement to intervene when outcomes are not on track.
- Reform current **partnership and governance arrangements**, in light of the point above and to ensure maximum stakeholder engagement and ownership.
- Establish more effective **stakeholder partnership** arrangements.
- Develop a **clear vision, narrative and communications** strategy about the city centre. Strong, effective and regular two way communication between partners, stakeholders and city centre users will be essential and at the heart of future communications activity.

5. Key Policies and Considerations

(a) Equal Opportunities

5.1 The review covered all sections of the city centre community. Making the city centre easier for older people to use will be a key consideration.

(b) Risk Management

5.2 Budget, reputation and service delivery risks will be addressed in the review implementation plan and incorporated into the Corporate Core risk management process.

(c) Legal Considerations

5.3 Use of legislation and potential new powers are detailed in the report.