

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Executive – 13 September 2017

Subject: Arena Attack, Recovery Update

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive

Summary

This report provides an update on Recovery from the Manchester Arena terrorist attack. It outlines next steps, including considerations for integrating recovery arrangements into mainstream service delivery.

Recommendation

The Executive is asked to note the report.

Wards Affected: City Centre

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Background documents

Nil

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Manchester Arena terrorist attack on the 22nd May resulted in a prolonged multi-agency emergency response over a number of days. On 31st May, the response phase of the incident was formally handed over to the recovery phase. Manchester City Council leads the recovery and established of a Recovery Co-ordination Group (RCG) to oversee and co-ordinate activity.
- 1.2 An agreed multi-agency Recovery Strategy continues to drive recovery activity which has been commissioned by the RCG through 6 workstreams; Welfare and Health, Community Recovery, Business and Economic Recovery, Communications, Finance, Debrief and Learning. A Recovery Action Plan sets out this activity. The Council and partner organisations continue to draw upon national and international expertise to support recovery.
- 1.3 A political reference group is in place to provide oversight of recovery work. The group is chaired by the Leader of the Council and includes the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Neighbourhoods as well as Baroness Beverly Hughes who holds the brief for crime and policing from the GM Mayor's office.

2. Update

- 2.1 The Recovery Co-ordination Group continues to meet regularly to deliver the Action Plan. Work has progressed on target and plans are now being developed to ensure that the priorities are embedded in mainstream work. The timescales for this will vary with business engagement already incorporated into the Council and partners activity. Supporting the bereaved, injured and psychologically distressed will be more complex and require the introduction of new and, where appropriate, enhanced services.

- 2.2 Key Issues to be aware of:-

(a) Work continues to focus on the impact of the attack on the bereaved, injured victims and witnesses. Activities have concentrated on the immediate requirements, as well as the on-going support. It is underpinned by the determination that those impacted by the attack will never be forgotten. The support that they receive will be integrated, bespoke and last as long as necessary. Before recovery work is transitioned to business as usual, it will be clear where improvements to business as usual is required.

(b) The creation of the Greater Manchester Resilience Hub will provide screening to identify psychological support required for children and adults affected by the arena attack. The latter through an online screening tool. In addition, fully comprehensive discharge plans have been put place for all the people physically injured. This includes lead workers and support in the places where they live.

(c) In the aftermath of the arena attack the Council understood the need to provide a swift and high quality welfare offer to our staff, both in terms of those

who had friends and relatives directly involved, and those individuals who had worked as immediate responders. The Employee Assistance Programme offers structured counselling, both by telephone and face to face, and group counselling for Council staff and their dependents. This offer was also extended to Manchester schools.

(d) Access to consistent, accurate and up to date information is essential for people who are seeking support and advice. The creation of a web presence will ensure that those seeking help can easily find the right information for their needs. A website has been created www.manchesterattacksupport.org.uk to provide referral and guidance linking individuals to partners' websites. This will be expanded to be interactive and an authoritative source of advice and news.

(e) A Greater Manchester wide approach to challenging extremism & building community cohesion has been developed. This includes encouraging volunteering and participation, ensuring events attract diverse communities, development of social media champions, challenging division narratives and myth busting, further rolling out training and briefings on prevent and developing a range of cohesion engagement projects. Specific plans have been developed in conjunction with youth providers and with Schools to focus on the specific issues. Manchester schools have been signposted to prevent/ community cohesion/ building resilience/ dealing with hate crime resources and offer of training given through circular letter and attached brochure.

(f) The reopening of the Arena has been announced. A benefit concert will take place on 9 September. Families of the bereaved and victims of the attack will have the opportunity to visit the Arena in advance of the opening. The proceeds from the 'We are Manchester' Benefit Concert will go to the Manchester Memorial Fund, a separate Charitable Trust under the Lord Mayor's Charity.

(g) An Advisory Group has been established to oversee the development of plans for permanent memorial(s), chaired by the Vice Chancellor of Manchester Metropolitan University and comprising Civic and Business Leaders from the city. This group will meet for the first time in early September and after this report is published so an oral update will be provided at the Executive meeting. No decisions have been taken with regard to the format or location of any memorials and decisions will be taken in careful communications and consultation with the bereaved families and others injured in or affected by the attack. The Advisory Group will also consider the future of the tributes provided in St. Ann's Square. It is estimated that around 300,000 bouquets and 2,000 soft toys were provided. Considerable work has been undertaken by the Council and other partners to ensure all items are respectfully treated. This includes preserving a number of bouquets, utilising others for compost, cleaning toys, planting potted plants (e.g., Wythenshawe Park). Plans include archiving items and producing a memorial book.

(h) The We Love Manchester Emergency Fund has received over £14.5 m to date with an expectation of receiving over £17.2m. To date £5.3 m has been paid out to bereaved and injured, with approval given to pay a further £3.960m

to the bereaved families. The Fund Trustees are now considering criteria for distribution of remaining resources. An oral update will be provided at the Executive meeting. In line with similar funds for Westminster and Grenfell Tower incidents, a request has been made to Government to fund administration costs for three years.

(i) Debriefs about the response to the attack have taken place, including single agency, multi-agency and specialist debrief sessions. The Greater Manchester Mayor has announced an independent review which is set to commence in September and is scheduled for completion (publication of final report) by April 2018.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 To ensure delivery of effective support is sustainable into the long term, the Recovery Coordination Group is driving forward long term planning, with particular focus on potential future impacts, resource requirements and best means of service delivery. The needs of those affected by the attack will continue to be the key priority.
- 3.2 In the long term, the Recovery Coordination Group is driving forward long term planning, with particular focus on potential future impacts, resource requirements and best means of service delivery. The needs of those affected by the attack will continue to be the key priority.