



Executive

Date: Wednesday, 17 January 2024

Time: 2.00 pm

Venue: Council Antechamber, Level 2, Town Hall Extension

This is a **combined agenda pack** for information only

Access to the Antechamber

Public access to the Council Antechamber is on Level 2 of the Town Hall Extension, using the lift or stairs in the lobby of the Mount Street entrance to the Extension. **There is no public access from any other entrance.**

Filming and broadcast of the meeting

Meetings of the Executive are 'webcast'. These meetings are filmed and broadcast live on the Internet. If you attend this meeting you should be aware that you might be filmed and included in that transmission.

Membership of the Executive

Councillors

Craig (Chair), Akbar, Bridges, Hacking, Igbon, Midgley, Rahman, Rawlins, T Robinson and White

Membership of the Consultative Panel

Councillors

Ahmed Ali, Butt, Chambers, Douglas, Foley, Johnson, Leech, Lynch and Moran

The Consultative Panel has a standing invitation to attend meetings of the Executive. The Members of the Panel may speak at these meetings but cannot vote on the decisions taken at the meetings.

Agenda

- 1. Appeals**
To consider any appeals from the public against refusal to allow inspection of background documents and/or the inclusion of items in the confidential part of the agenda.
- 2. Interests**
To allow Members an opportunity to [a] declare any personal, prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests they might have in any items which appear on this agenda; and [b] record any items from which they are precluded from voting as a result of Council Tax/Council rent arrears; [c] the existence and nature of party whipping arrangements in respect of any item to be considered at this meeting. Members with a personal interest should declare that at the start of the item under consideration. If Members also have a prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interest they must withdraw from the meeting during the consideration of the item.
- 3. Minutes**
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2023. 5 - 14
- 4. Our Manchester Progress Update** **All Wards**
Report to follow 15 - 22
- 5. Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2024/25 and Budget Assumptions** **All Wards**
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer attached 23 - 34
- 6. Changes to Council Tax Support Scheme from April 2024** **All Wards**
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer attached 35 - 130
- 7. Increasing Council Tax Premiums on Empty Properties** **All Wards**
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer attached 131 - 142
- 8. Joint Targeted Area Inspection** **All Wards**
Report of the Strategic Director (Childrens and Education) attached 143 - 170
- 9. Revisions to the Council's Corporate Policy and Procedures on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (IPA)** **All Wards**
Report of the City Solicitor attached 171 - 208
- 10. Proposal for the Next Phase of Selective Licensing** **All Wards**
Report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) attached 209 - 236

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| <p>11. Former Central Retail Park (Part A)
Report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development)
attached</p> | <p>Ancoats and
Beswick
237 - 246</p> |
| <p>12. Exclusion of Press and Public
The officers consider that the following item or items contains exempt information as provided for in the Local Government Access to Information Act and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. The Executive is recommended to agree the necessary resolutions excluding the public from the meeting during consideration of these items. At the time this agenda is published no representations have been made that this part of the meeting should be open to the public</p> | |
| <p>13. Former Central Retail Park (Part B)
Report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development)
attached</p> | <p>Ancoats and
Beswick
247 - 258</p> |

Information about the Executive

The Executive is made up of 10 Councillors: the Leader and two Deputy Leaders of the Council and 7 Executive Members with responsibility for: Early Years, Children and Young People; Health Manchester and Adult Social Care; Finance and Resources; Environment and Transport; Vibrant Neighbourhoods; Housing and Development; and Skills, Employment and Leisure. The Leader of the Council chairs the meetings of the Executive

The Executive has full authority for implementing the Council's Budgetary and Policy Framework, and this means that most of its decisions do not need approval by Council, although they may still be subject to detailed review through the Council's overview and scrutiny procedures.

It is the Council's policy to consult people as fully as possible before making decisions that affect them. Members of the public do not have a right to speak at meetings but may do so if invited by the Chair.

The Council is concerned to ensure that its meetings are as open as possible and confidential business is kept to a strict minimum. When confidential items are involved these are considered at the end of the meeting at which point members of the public and the press are asked to leave.

Joanne Roney OBE
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Further Information

For help, advice and information about this meeting please contact the Committee Officer:

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Executive

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 13 December 2023

Present: Councillor Craig (Chair)

Councillors: Akbar, Hacking, Igbon, Midgley, Rahman, Rawlins, T Robinson and White

Also present as Members of the Standing Consultative Panel:

Councillors: Ahmed Ali, Chambers, Douglas, Foley, Johnson, Leech and Lynch

Apologies: Councillor Bridges, Butt and Moran

Exe/23/104 Minutes

Decision

The Executive approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting on 15 November 2023.

Exe/23/105 Our Manchester Progress Update

The Executive considered a report of the Chief Executive which provided an update on key areas of progress against the Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025 which reset Manchester’s priorities for the next five years to ensure the Council could still achieve the city’s ambition set out in the Our Manchester Strategy 2016 – 2025.

The Deputy Leader (Statutory) reported that a Joint Targeted Area Inspection of multi-agency working to safeguard young people at risk of serious violence or criminal exploitation had been published last month and had praised their effectiveness. The headline findings of the detailed inspection noted the strength of multi-agency arrangements between the Council, Greater Manchester Police, schools, health agencies and other partner organisations such as the Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit and the voluntary and community sector in preventing and tackling serious youth violence and criminal exploitation – including early intervention initiatives to identify those at risk and put measures in place to support them. It was also noted that whilst recognising the strength of partnerships, the report had also identified areas for improvement. These included enhanced multi-agency evaluation of projects to understand better how they worked together as part of an overall system and more consistency in information recording and sharing between partners.

Councillor Leech sought clarification on why the Inspectors had identified the need for more consistency in information recording and sharing between partners as an area for improvement

The Deputy Leader (Statutory) also reported on the decision of English National Opera (ENO) to relocate its main base for the opera company to the City by 2029. The announcement followed an agreement reached with Arts Council England in July

in which £24m was awarded to ENO to enable the organisation to develop an artistic programme in a new base outside London during the 2024-26 period. It would develop significant performance and learning activity in Greater Manchester, whilst still delivering an opera season every year in its London home, as it works towards establishing a new main base by 2029. ENO cited Manchester's thriving cultural ecosystem as a key factor in its decision, as well as the chance to inspire and work with new audiences and communities and scope for exciting and ambitious new collaborations around new innovations in opera.

Councillor Leech sought clarification as to whether there was any indication of the proportion of work that the ENO would deliver would be in Manchester as opposed to London.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport reported that Manchester had retained its high placing on a global list recognising cities that were showing leadership on environmental action and transparency. For the second year in a row, Manchester had received the top score – an A rating – which meant it was rated as being one of the cities in the forefront of building momentum in taking climate mitigation and adaptation measures. The list, compiled by global not-for-profit environmental organisation CDP, showed that A rated cities demonstrated their climate leadership through concerted and effective action, just as national governments will be asked to do at COP28 and were taking four times as many mitigation and adaptation measures as non A List cities.

The Deputy Executive Member for Housing and Development reported that plans for the regeneration of Wythenshawe town centre had been bolstered with the confirmation of £20 million funding from the Government's Levelling Up Fund. The money had been awarded by the Department of Levelling Up, Homes and (DLUHC) as part of the third round of national funding in recognition of the progress already made on proposals for Wythenshawe Civic, the high quality of the planned project and the fact it was ready to deliver. The Council was currently going through a formal tender process to find a joint venture partner to drive the 'once-in-a-generation' programme of investment over the next 10 to 15 years.

Councillor Johnson welcomed the additional funding secured to help deliver the aspirations for the redevelopment of Wythenshawe town centre.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development reported that Manchester Foyer, a leading provider of housing and support services for young people in the city, has marked its 25th anniversary. Since opening its doors in 1998, Manchester Foyer had provided a safe and supportive environment for more than 1,000 young people. Many of these young people come from challenging backgrounds and had experienced difficulties early in life, such as family breakdowns, abusive environments, mental health issues, or substance abuse. The Foyer was committed to providing these young people with the support they need to achieve their full potential and live independent, happy, and fulfilling lives.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development also reported on the proposals being brought forward for a raft of new Selective Licensing schemes to improve private rented sector housing standards in Manchester. Nine new Selective

Licensing areas across six wards, covering 1,872 private rented sector homes, had been proposed and were set to be subject to local consultation next year once Executive approval has been sought. The areas had been chosen following a 'hotspot' mapping exercise that looked at areas of the city where licensing could make a positive impact on those communities and where they met the criteria for a Selective Licensing scheme.

Decision

The Executive note the report.

Exe/23/106 Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024/27

The Executive considered a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods), the Director of Housing Services and the Assistant Director – Homelessness, which set out the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for Manchester (2024-2027)

The Deputy Leader reported that it was a legal requirement for the Council to publish a strategy, informed by a homeless review, at least once every five years and the strategy would provide the Council and its' partners with a strategic direction and framework to achieve the city priority of reducing homelessness and rough sleeping.

The strategy built on the existing aims and overarching city-wide vision and had been developed in collaboration and co-produced with Manchester's Homelessness Service as well as wider Council Services including Adults and Children Services, Strategic Housing, Reform and Innovation, Health Services and the Manchester Homelessness Partnership (MHP) which consisted of voluntary, community and faith organisations, statutory organisations and businesses as well as individuals with personal insight into homelessness.

At the heart of the Strategy were people, with an ambition to achieve better outcomes for everyone, where every contact counted and those who were vulnerably housed or groups who were disproportionately impacted by homelessness were reached in the first instance. It was framed around the four principles of Manchester City Council's Homelessness Transformation Programme (A Place Called Home):-

- Increasing prevention
- Reducing rough sleeping
- More suitable and affordable accommodation
- Better outcomes, better lives

and complemented other existing Manchester Strategies, in particular the Housing Strategy and Making Manchester Fairer Framework, and would have a dynamic action plan sitting alongside it to provide the governance and operational framework to ensure the vision of the Strategy was achieved.

The Executive also heard from representative of Caritas and Manchester Communications Academy as to how they currently worked in partnership with the Council in supporting families and young people who were either experiencing or at risk from becoming homeless.

Councillor Leech sought clarity on how realistic were some of the ambitions of the strategy and whether Officers had undertaken a cost exercise to the Council if it was to fulfil all the criteria of the Homelessness Act. He also suggested that the Equality Impact Assessment of the strategy needed to consider hidden victims of homelessness insofar as those being families who were just about managing.

The Leader stated that it had been as a result of over a decade of national political choices that the city and the country was now facing a crisis housing and homelessness crisis, with a 75% increase in rough sleeping and 175% increase in homelessness since 2010.

Decision

The Executive agree to adopt the Manchester Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy (2024-2027)

Exe/23/107 Single Use Plastics Action Plan and Policy

The Executive considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which provided an update on work being undertaken across the Council on Single Use Plastics (SUPs) as part of action within the Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2020-25, which included work to develop the 'Avoidable Single Use Plastic Free Action Plan' and 'Single Use Plastics Policy'.

The Executive Member for Environment and Transport reported that the picture on single-use plastics was complex and was not as straight forward as removing or replacing all SUPs, as for some there were no viable alternative. A working group had been established and had developed an approach, which ensured the Council fully embedded SUP reduction practices in decision making across Council services, as well as fulfil its influencing and leadership role outside of the Council. This included three levels of control, which underpinned the action plan:-

- Direct Purchases
- Indirect Purchases (contracts, concession and commissioning)
- Influencing (workforce, residents, partners and businesses)

New procurement regulations would come into effect from October 2024 and guidance and documentation for inclusion in tenders was to be developed before mid-2024. This would include requirements to eradicate avoidable SUPs as per the policy and would incorporate guidance for suppliers to help them provide relevant responses including how to develop and implement action plans that were appropriate to the service / goods being procured with achievable targets.

It was recognised that continued communications and engagement actions would be fundamental to the success of the SUP Action Plan.

Councillor Leech queried whether the target of 60% of products to come in bulk containers by the end of 2024 was going to be achieved or whether it was ambitious enough.

Decision

The Executive endorse the approach set out in the 'Avoidable Single Use Plastic Free Action Plan' and the Single Use Plastics Policy.

Exe/23/108 Victoria North Development Area Business Plan 2: Dantzic Street Plots

The Executive considered a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development), which provided a high level summary of the second Development Area Business Plan for the Victoria North programme, which was being taken forward by the City Council operating in a Joint Venture Partnership with Far East Consortium (FEC). The report also provided an update on the current position with regards to the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) grant allocation of £51.6m that had been provided to the Council by Homes England for the delivery of core infrastructure works which would unlock a development platform for up to 5,500 homes in the New Town and Red Bank neighbourhoods in Cheetham Ward

The Executive Member for Housing and Development reported that following the refresh of the Strategic Business Plan, FEC have now brought forward the next formal Development Area Business Plan in line with the governance arrangements established at the outset of the partnership. The entire Development Area site extends to circa 7 acres and was bounded by Dantzic Street, Dalton Street and the Trans-Pennine Rail / Metrolink Viaduct. Other than a small parcel of land for which the Council had freehold ownership, FEC had acquired the freehold or long-leasehold ownership of the majority of land that the Development Area would utilise. This had been made possible through negotiation with landowners where they have been identified. There were however, a number of parcels of land, that were either unregistered, with no known legal owner, or where FEC had only been able to register "possessory title" meaning that there was insufficient documentation to register absolute title. Without contact information available for the unregistered parcels of land, FEC had been unable to identify or contact owners to acquire the land through negotiation. This presented a risk to the delivery of the scheme covered by the DABP2 and as such a proposed approach to mitigate against this would see the Council making a Compulsory Purchase Order for the parcels of land.

It was also reported that as part of the proposal an affordable housing contribution of 5% has been secured through the formal Planning process, however FEC would work with their panel of Registered Providers with the aim to increase affordable housing to deliver a 20% provision outside of the confines of the s106 which will allow access to grant funding from Homes England

In relation to the HIF, it was reported that since its commencement a number of packages of work had been completed. However, as with many current construction projects, the programme had experienced a number of delays and impacts from the pandemic, cost inflation and labour and supply chain instability as well as previously unidentified contamination being found onsite. In addition, the Council and appointed contractors would be unable to prosecute in-channel flood resilience measures as originally envisaged within the project programme. This would result in on-plot solutions being required that would materially increase project delivery costs for

residential development schemes as they came forward in the future. As a consequence of these unforeseen issues, the Council had been in a position of General Default against the terms of the GDA. The intention was that, subject to Homes England approval, a variation to the GDA would be entered into, including a new cashflow, and extended programme milestone events and end date for eligible expenditure. Homes England had confirmed their in-principle approval of variations sought by the Council and had instructed Solicitors to draft a Deed of Variation to the GDA.

Decisions

The Executive:-

- (1) Note the summarised content of the second Development Area Business Plan which will focus on the delivery of 1,551 homes at Dantzic Street and delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Deputy Leader and the Executive Member for Housing and Development to approve the detailed Development Area Business Plan in conjunction with FEC.
- (2) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) and the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer to finalise terms for the disposal of the Council's land interests within the Development Area Business Plan and to agree any adjustments to the Joint Venture partnership documentation that helps secure the Council's objectives and facilitates the delivery of the Development Area Business Plan.
- (3) Note the historically complex nature of land interests acquired by FEC and that a separate report on the agenda sets out a proposal to use Compulsory Purchase Powers to ensure the delivery of the Development Area Business Plan.
- (4) Note that Council Officers are currently negotiating with Homes England to secure some adjustments to the approved Housing Infrastructure Fund grant funded programme which will facilitate delivery of the Development Area Business Plan and delegate authority to the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) and Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer to finalise the terms of a Deed of Variation to the existing Grant Determination Agreement to reflect agreed adjustments.
- (5) Authorise the City Solicitor to enter into and complete all necessary documents to give effect to the recommendations set out in this report.

Exe/23/109 Victoria North - The Proposed City of Manchester (Dantzic Street) Compulsory Purchase Order 2023

The Executive considered a report of the Strategic Director (Growth and Development), which sought approval of a proposed compulsory purchase of land within the Red Bank neighbourhood, which consisted of former industrial land and highway as part of the wider Victoria North scheme.

The Executive Member for Housing and Development advise that the proposed Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) would be made under the provisions of sections 226(1)(a) and (1A) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to facilitate development, redevelopment and improvement of land between Dantzic Street and the railway line for the provision of 1,551 new residential dwellings, public realm and ancillary uses.

As referred to in the previous item (Exe/23/??), without the acquisition of the unregistered land, and the land for which absolute title could not be registered with the Land Registry, there remained inherent risks to the delivery of the Scheme. Given that there was no available route to acquire the land through negotiation, or upgrade titles within the required programme, it was proposed that the use of CPO powers represented the most suitable option available to secure the delivery of the Scheme and which was determined to be in the public interest due to the benefits and target outcomes as reflected in the Statement of Reasons.

Decisions

The Executive:-

- (1) Authorise the making of the City of Manchester (Dantzic Street) Compulsory Purchase Order 2023 (“the Order”) under Section 226(1)(a) and (1A) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 to acquire the Order Lands for the purpose set out in the Statement of Reasons.
- (2) Note the content of the Statement of Reasons attached at Appendix 2 of the report.
- (3) Note that all costs associated with the CPO and the acquisition of the Order Lands will be met by Far East Consortium International Limited who will reimburse the City Council of all costs incurred in accordance with a CPO Indemnity Agreement to be entered into between the City Council and Far East Consortium International Limited.
- (4) Authorise the Assistant Director Development and Investment Estate to approve the Indemnity Agreement between the City Council and Far East Consortium International Limited
- (5) Authorise the City Solicitor to seal the Order and to take all necessary steps, including the publication and service of all statutory notices and presentation of the Council’s case at Public Inquiry, to secure confirmation of the Order by the Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities and the vesting of the land in the City Council.
- (6) Authorise the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) to confirm the Order, if the Secretary of State is satisfied that it is appropriate to do so.
- (7) Authorise the Assistant Director Development and Investment Estate to approve agreements with landowners, if identified, setting out the terms of withdrawals of

objections to the Order including where appropriate the exclusion of land from the Order.

- (8) Authorise the Strategic Director (Growth and Development) and the City Solicitor to make deletions from, and/or minor amendments, and modifications to the proposed Order and Order Plan or to agree to refrain from vesting any land included within the Order should this be in their opinion appropriate.
- (9) Authorise the Assistant Director Development and Investment Estate to negotiate terms for the acquisition by agreement of any outstanding interests in the land within the Order prior to its confirmation.
- (10) Authorise the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) to take all necessary steps to secure the closure of all relevant highways streets and alleyways which are required for the development to proceed, if requested by the Director of Strategic Housing and Development.
- (11) Agree that the resources of the City Council are sufficient to carry out the duties resulting from the making of the Order, as outlined in this report.
- (12) Authorise the City Solicitor to do all things necessary or incidental to implement the above.

Exe/23/110 Large Scale Renewable Energy Generation - PPA Purchase (Part A)

The Executive considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which provided an update on the progress of the City Council's proposal to purchase renewable energy supplies via a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) to ensure the Council has a long-term, cost-effective supply of renewable energy to meet its energy needs and achieve its Zero Carbon objectives to reduce the Council's CO2 emissions.

The Leader advised that following on from the decision in February 2023 not to progress with the acquisition of the solar farm, procurement activity to secure a suitable Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) opportunity was now concluding. The procurement was led by the Council with technical, financial and market advice being provided by Ernst & Young (EY), alongside DLA Piper who were advising on legal and contractual matters.

Following assessment of the current market conditions and lessons learned from the experience of others (including the City of London as the only other Council currently with a form of PPA in place) it was decided that a 'competitive process with negotiation' was the most appropriate way in which to secure the best possible opportunity for the Council. Prior to the formal commencement of procurement activity, a market engagement session was hosted by the Council and EY to make potential bidders aware of the opportunity which the Council was to put to market and its requirements for the PPA it was looking to secure. Over 30 different organisations were on the call, with a further 50 receiving notification of Manchester's intention to advertise the opportunity.

A thorough assessment of the potential financing and structures of the bidders had been undertaken in order to gain a full understanding of the party which the Council would be potentially contracting with and to gain an understanding of the origin of the funding source to develop the asset. The parties that were successful through the Invitation To Tender stage had moved into the negotiation phase and final tender stage. Following conclusion of this negotiation stage, a preferred bidder had now been selected.

Following the conclusion of the mandatory standstill period and subject to Council approval, the Council would formally announce the bidder it would be contracting with on the PPA arrangement in early January 2024. Regular updates on the development of the asset which the PPA would come from would be submitted via the Council's Zero Carbon governance arrangements, with progress reports being presented to the Executive and appropriate Scrutiny Committee(s) on an annual basis as part of the Council's Zero Carbon reporting.

Decision

The Executive note the report.

Exe/23/111 Exclusion of the Public

Decision

The Executive agrees to exclude the public during consideration of the following item which involved consideration of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of particular persons and public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Exe/23/112 Large Scale Renewable Energy Generation - PPA Purchase (Part B)

The Executive considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which provided details around the commercial, financial and legal arrangements in respect of the purchase of a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) as part of the Large-Scale Renewable Energy Generation Project to act as a key contributor to enable the Council to meet the Zero Carbon targets and sought approval to enter into a PPA with the preferred bidder.

Decisions

The Executive:-

- (1) Note the content of the report.
- (2) Approve the entering into of the Power Purchase Agreement the preferred bidder linked to the development of the Bicker Fen Solar Farm.

- (3) Authorise the City Solicitor to enter into and complete on behalf of the Council all the necessary legal documentation giving effect to the above.
- (4) Agree that progress reports will be presented to the Executive and appropriate Scrutiny Committee(s) on an annual basis as part of the Council's Zero Carbon reporting.

Manchester City Council Report for Information

Report to: Executive – 17 January 2024

Subject: Our Manchester Progress Update

Report of: Chief Executive

Summary

The report provides an update on key areas of progress against the Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025 which resets Manchester’s priorities for the next five years to ensure we can still achieve the city’s ambition set out in the Our Manchester Strategy 2016 – 2025

Recommendations

The Executive is requested to note the update provided in the report.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city	
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments	

Our Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The work to reset the Our Manchester Strategy considered all five of the Strategy’s existing themes to ensure the city achieves its aims. The themes are retained within the final reset Strategy, Forward to 2025.

A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

None

Financial Consequences – Capital

None

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

Executive Report – 17th February 2021 - Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This is the latest in an ongoing series of reports highlighting examples of areas where strong progress is being made against key strategic themes identified in the Our Manchester Strategy.

2.0 Adult Early Support Team

- 2.1 A new, multi-agency team called the Adults Early Support Team (AEST) has been established to work alongside the Contact Centre. This Team includes Adults Social Workers, Occupational Health Therapists, Manchester MIND and Adults Early Support Co-Ordinator's.
- 2.2 This team has been established as part of developing the Adults Early Help offer in the city, working alongside Contact Centre colleagues to identify appropriate support for adults in the city. The Team will identify appropriate short-term interventions to enable residents to live well, providing low-level technology or equipment, signposting to information, advice, guidance and community assets, or referring to appropriate services.
- 2.3 The team works to enable more people to independently access place-based resources within their communities and to achieve their own goals without Council intervention. Where residents do need care and support from Adult Social Care (ASC) this response is delivered in a timely, efficient and least restrictive way by promoting choice, resilience and wellbeing.
- 2.4 Working with partners, this team are maximising people's independence, improving their outcomes and reducing social care dependence by meeting needs in alternative ways.
- 2.5 Through the impact of the Team, more calls are being resolved at the front door as more appropriate support is being identified earlier. Around 68% of new calls to the Contact Centre are now resolved through the work of the Adults Early Support Team. In November 2023, this equated to 1183 new referrals being resolved. The number of repeat calls to the Contact Centre is also starting to decrease, which could indicate that the right support, advice and guidance is being provided to avoid multiple calls. Following the launch of the team, positive impacts have also been reported from Integrated Neighbourhood Teams who saw the impact on their duty lines, freeing up capacity for good quality Social Work.

Relates to Our Manchester Strategy themes:

- Progressive and Equitable City

3.0 Visitor accolades

- 3.1 Manchester continues to win accolades as an outstanding place to visit, featuring on two prestigious lists of the best places to visit in 2024.
- 3.2 The city was named at number 12 in the New York Times' 52 Places To Go In 2024 list – the only place in England to feature. Major news venues such as Aviva Studios, the home of Factory International, and Co-op Live were cited as reasons to visit this “music-mad city” as well as smaller established venues such as Band On The Wall and New Century Hall.
- 3.3 Music events such as WOMEX – the Worldwide Music Expo – which the city hosts this October and the Beyond The Music conference and festival were also highlighted.
- 3.4 Manchester also featured in Time Out's 15 Best Places To Visit in 2024 list for destinations in the UK. The publication described Manchester as “a cultural banquet”, again citing Aviva Studios and Co-op Live among the factors making the city a must-visit. Manchester Museum, the Mackie Mayor and National Football Museum were among the other venues referenced.

Relates to Our Manchester Strategy themes:

- Thriving and Sustainable City

4.0 European Capital of Cycling

- 4.1 Manchester has been named as 2024's ACES European Capital of Cycling following a successful bid led by the Council.
- 4.2 It is intended that the accolade will act as a springboard for further investment and participation across the city.
- 4.3 Ahead of the final decision, the Council welcomed a delegation from ACES to Manchester to showcase the city's cycling credentials. From the National Cycling Centre and Manchester playing host to some of the biggest cycling events to the miles and miles of new cycleways being built in the city to encourage active travel, a compelling case was made.
- 4.4 The support of partner organisations including British Cycling, Marketing Manchester, Mcr Active and TfGM, as well as the voluntary and community sector, was also crucial in securing the title.
- 4.5 Work is being undertaken to add events to the calendar and ensure that local community groups and organisations can get involved, how local cycling clubs can grow and how access to cycling for everyone can be improved.

Relates to Our Manchester Strategy themes:

- Progressive and Equitable City
- Liveable and Zero Carbon City
- Connected City

5.0 Holt Town

- 5.1 The Council has shortlisted six multi-disciplinary teams to submit tenders to develop a new Neighbourhood Development Framework for Holt Town.
- 5.2 Teams have until the end of the month to put forward their submissions for an area which has been described as the ‘missing piece of the jigsaw’ between major investment in the city centre and East Manchester. The Council is seeking to create an ambitious mixed-use city centre neighbourhood.
- 5.3 It is anticipated the successful team will be announced in the spring, with work to deliver the proposals commencing immediately once consultation and the necessary planning approvals have been completed.
- 5.4 The shortlisted teams are: Allies and Morrison, Gensler, Macreanor Lavington, Plan-It, Prior and Partners and Studio Egret West.

Relates to Our Manchester Strategy themes:

- Thriving and Sustainable City
- Connected City

6.0 Library On

- 6.1 Manchester Libraries have secured funding to create 3D walkthrough tours of all 22 city libraries.
- 6.2 The £20,250 grant was awarded by the Library On programme, and funded by Arts Council England, to allow the creation of virtual tours of all the venues for the first time.
- 6.3 Viewers are promised an immersive experience, enabling them to explore our libraries’ broad and diverse sections, historical nuances and architecture from the comfort of their own screens.
- 6.4 The Library On programme not only celebrates libraries but works to improve digital access to information and services which in turn aims to increase visits to public libraries by making their offers and services easier to discover and use.

- 6.5 The project is rooted in the need to make Manchester Libraries' 22 sites easier to discover and access, physically and online. It addresses national research, and feedback from service users, that some neurodivergent people, particularly those with autism, are not comfortable visiting locations unless they know exactly what to expect.

Relates to Our Manchester Strategy themes:

- Progressive and Equitable City
- Highly Skilled City

7.0 Festive programme

- 7.1 Manchester is reflecting on another successful programme of events and attractions over the festive period 2023 as the city reinforced its reputation as a place to enjoy the season.
- 7.2 Thousands took to the streets on Sunday 3 December for the city's second ever Christmas Parade, a spectacular involving more than 400 participants. The event was delivered in partnership with Hits Radio.
- 7.3 The Christmas Markets celebrated 25 years since they were first introduced in 1998 in style with 225 stalls over nine sites and record visitor numbers. The markets also won numerous accolades including being named as the best in the UK in research by cinch and the best in Europe by Heald's.
- 7.4 Skate Manchester's ice rink in Cathedral Gardens was another popular returning attraction and by using mains power rather than generators it saved tonnes of carbon emissions.
- 7.5 A New Year's Eve fireworks display took place for the first time since before the Covid pandemic and attracted 10,000 people to Castlefield Bowl to welcome in 2024.

Relates to Our Manchester Strategy themes:

- Thriving and Sustainable City

8.0 Contributing to a Zero-Carbon City

- 8.1 Achieving Manchester's zero carbon target has been reflected throughout the work on the Our Manchester Strategy reset, with sustainability being a key horizontal theme throughout. Forward to 2025 restates Manchester's commitment to achieving our zero carbon ambition by 2038 at the latest.

9.0 Contributing to the Our Manchester Strategy

9.1 The reset of the Our Manchester Strategy will ensure that the city achieves its vision. The five themes have been retained in the reset Strategy, with the new priorities streamlined under the themes.

10.0 Key Policies and Considerations

10.1 There are no particular equal opportunities issues, risk management issues, or legal issues that arise from the recommendations in this report.

11.0 Recommendations

11.1 The Executive is requested to note the update provided in the report.

Manchester City Council Report for Information

Report to:	Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee – 11 January 2024 Executive – 17 January 2024
Subject:	Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2024/25 and Budget
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer

Summary

This report updates on the main announcements from the provisional local government finance settlement 2023/24 announced 18 December 2023. There is a focus on the impact on the Council's budget for 2024/25 to 2026/27 and the next steps in the 2024/25 budget setting process.

Recommendations

The Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider the content of this report and comment on the Provisional Finance Settlement announcements.

The Executive is recommended to:

1. endorse the report
 2. note that officers will identify the £5m of savings needed to close the budget gap.
-

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city	The budget reflects the fact that the Council has declared a climate emergency by making carbon reduction a key consideration in the Council's planning and budget proposals.
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments	Consideration has been given to how the proposed savings could impact on different protected or disadvantaged groups. Where applicable proposals will be subject to completion of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and an Anti Poverty Assessment.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The effective use of resources underpins the Council's activities in support of its strategic priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan which is underpinned by the Our Manchester Strategy.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

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 contents of this report outline the full revenue budget consequences of the provisional

Financial Consequences – Capital

There are no capital consequences arising specifically from this report.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

[Medium Term Financial Strategy and 2023/24 Revenue Budget – Executive – 15 February 2023](#)

[Revenue Budget Update and Corporate Core Budget Proposals 2024/25 -Resources and Governance – 9 November 2023](#)

[Revenue Monitoring to the end of September 2023 – Executive – 15 November 2023](#)

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The finance settlement is the annual determination of funding for local government from central government. The provisional 2024/25 settlement was announced 18 December 2023, following the Autumn Statement announced 22 November 2023 and local government finance policy statement on 12 December 2022. Full details can be found on the [DLUHC website](#). The Final Settlement is due to be announced in early February 2024 but is unlikely to change significantly from the provisional settlement.
- 1.2. The settlement is in the context of another very difficult year for Local Government. In 2023, local authorities have faced unprecedented financial stress. There have been three s114 notices in six months, taking the total to 7 since 2018, a notable increase from the previous five years. While there have been other factors in these Councils, many more have now publicly indicated that they might need to make the same announcement in the next few months. Inflation has averaged 8%, which together with unrelenting demand pressures has compounded challenges, especially in social care and homelessness, when there is limited financial resilience following the cumulative impact of the prior decade's austerity measures.
- 1.3. Disappointingly there has been no new funding for public services announced in the Autumn Statement or Provisional Finance Settlement. The political and financial uncertainty continues into 2024/25 and evidence nationally and locally is that the pressures on social care and homelessness are continuing to grow. The future of funding reform remains uncertain, and it seems unlikely it will happen until at least 2026/27 given a general election is due next year.
- 1.4. The period following this Spending Review is likely to be extremely challenging. Over the medium-term period to 2028/29 the OBR has forecast that the funding outlook for Local Government, as an unprotected service, is likely to be around 2.3% real terms cut.
- 1.5. This report sets out the key elements of the settlement, the impact on the Council's budget and the next steps to achieve a balanced budget for 2024/25. The recommended final budget position for 2024/25 will be reported to the February 2024 Executive meeting following consideration by the relevant scrutiny committees in early February. By then, the key decisions confirming the Collection Fund position for Council Tax and Business Rates base will have been made, final levy amounts will be confirmed by GMCA and the Final Finance Settlement received.

2. Summary of key announcements from the provisional local government finance settlement

- 2.1. The Provisional Settlement covers a single financial year and there were no new funding streams announced. Most details were pre-communicated in previous finance and policy statements. The exception is the scale of the cut to Services Grant at £329m, 84.1% nationally. For Manchester this is a reduction of £6.1m leaving a grant of just £1.1m. Whilst some redistribution of services grant had

been anticipated, it was not expected at this scale. The key announcements are noted below.

- 2.2. **Core Spending Power (CSP)** will increase by £3.9bn (6.5%) across England. Manchester's CSP increase is £41m, (6.8%). It is worth noting that as CSP includes several assumptions, it is unlikely to be an accurate reflection of the actual resources available to local authorities. It assumes:
- All eligible upper tier authorities raise the social care precept to the maximum (2%) permitted;
 - All authorities increase overall council tax by the maximum amount permitted (5% in total for upper tier);
 - Council tax base increases at the same average rate for each authority for the last five years;
 - All councils retain their baseline target level of business rates within Settlement Funding Assessment—in reality, some authorities will be above baseline and some below.
- 2.3. Changes have been made to Business Rates with the introduction of a standard business rating multiplier and a small business rating multiplier. It was announced at the Autumn Statement that the small business rating multiplier will be frozen at 49.9p, and the standard business rating multiplier will increase to 54.6p (+6.7%). For 2024/25 the local government baseline uplift will only reflect the increase generated from the standard multiplier, using the VOA's 2023 rating list as a proxy. For businesses attracting the small multiplier, under indexation grant will be provided to the local authority to compensate for the loss of income arising from not applying a 6.7% CPI increase to the multiplier.
- 2.4. The current budget assumed a CPI rate of 6.1% based on the OBR forecast, therefore this should bring in additional income of c0.823m.
- 2.5. It was also announced that the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief will continue for a further year offering 75% relief for this sector up to a cap of £110k per business. This has a positive impact on the level of bad debt and appeals to be provided for, as these are now based on a reduced level of income. The benefit is forecast at c£3.1m for one year only, as the relief is expected to end after 2024/25.
- 2.6. **Social Care grants** are largely in line with expectations as follows:
- Improved Better Care Fund will remain at 2023/24 national levels at £2,140m, with the Council's share as expected at £31.7m.
 - The Adult Social Care Discharge Grant will increase by £200m nationally to £500m, allocated using the existing IBCF formula. Manchester's receipt is £7.4m, in line with expectations.
 - Market Sustainability increasing to £1,050m, made up of £162m for Fair Cost of Care, £683m for market sustainability, and combining the Workforce Fund element of £205m. Manchester will receive £11.7m, which is £40k higher than forecast.
 - Social Care Grant has increased by £692m to £4,544m nationally. The majority will be allocated using the ASC relative needs formula with £80m of

the increase subject to equalisation for Council Tax. Manchester's allocation is £0.807m higher than budgeted for, at £60.218m. It is assumed these additional allocations will be passported to Adult Social Care to contribute to the growing pressures in the service.

- 2.7. One further year of **New Homes Bonus** grant was confirmed for 2024/25 with the same methodology as 2023/24. The Council's forecast receipt is £4.1m, which is £207k lower than the estimate included in the current MTFP.
- 2.8. **Services Grant** has been cut by 84% which is significantly larger than anticipated. In the December 2022 Policy Statement, ministers assured that core grants would "*continue as they are now*" in 2024/25. By implication, this included the Services Grant. The 5 December 2023 Policy Statement hinted at potential cuts and redistribution to the Services Grant without any detail but the actual reduction was greater than anticipated. The government are holding back 'a small proportion' of the Services Grant as contingency to cover any unexpected costs that may arise between the provisional and final settlement. Manchester's grant has reduced from £7.230m to £1.138m. It is now assumed the remaining grant will end after 2024/25.
- 2.9. **Public health grant** is outside Core Spending Power and is announced separately from the settlement itself. The indicative increase is only 1.36% (£3.527bn in 2023/24 to £3.575bn in 2024/25). For Manchester this is an increase of £751k to £57.8m.
- 2.10. The Funding Guarantee grant introduced in 2023/24 continues in 2024/25 to ensure authorities receive a minimum 3% increase (before council tax decisions). Manchester does not receive this grant, it largely benefits lower tier district councils.
- 2.11. The Government has confirmed the expected **Council Tax referendum** principles for 2024/25 which are set out below. For an upper tier authority, the council tax referendum limit is now 4.99%
- A core referendum principle of up to 3 per cent will apply to shire county councils, shire unitary authorities, metropolitan districts and London boroughs.
 - Social care authorities will be able to set a 2 per cent adult social care precept without a referendum (in addition to the existing basic referendum threshold referred to above).
 - Fire and Rescue Authorities will have a principle of up to 3 per cent.
 - £13 for police authorities and police and crime commissioners including the GLA and the West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester Mayors.
 - The non-police element of the Greater London Authority (GLA) will have a referendum principle of £20.
 - There will be no referendum principles for mayoral combined authorities (MCAs) except where the Mayor exercises police and crime commissioner functions.

- 2.12. The government has assumed in its settlement calculations that all eligible local authorities will take the maximum increase allowed without a referendum. If Council Tax is not increased at this level the revenue stream is permanently lost and has a cumulative compounding impact as the base grows in future years.

3. Implications for the Council's budget

- 3.1. The Council's February 2023 MTFs reflected a balanced budget for 2024/25 and identified a material budget shortfall in 2025/26 and beyond. Simultaneously, there remained some uncertainty about the level of funding for 2024/25 and the potential for additional pressures to emerge during the budget setting process.
- 3.2. The position was refreshed throughout Summer 2023 to reflect the continuation of the business rates 100% pilot and improved Business Rates collection. Demographic assumptions were also updated to reflect the increased pressures including Adult Social Care demand, complexity and cost and a challenging external market for Childrens Social Care.
- 3.3. The updated position was reported to the Resources and Governance committee on 9th November 2023. The Council forecast an initial estimated budget shortfall of £46m in 2024/25, £86m in 2025/26, and £105m by 2026/27. After the application of approved and planned savings, and the use of c.£17m smoothing reserves in each of the three years, this gap reduces to £1.6m in 2024/25, £30m in 2025/26 and £49m by 2026/27.

Table One: Summary Budget position presented to Resources and Governance Scrutiny 9 November

	2023 / 24	2024 / 25	2025 / 26	2026 / 27
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Resources Available:				
Business Rates / Settlement Related Funding	376,527	400,701	415,207	421,805
Council Tax	217,968	228,712	238,279	247,840
Grants and other External Funding	130,494	136,226	109,997	109,997
Use of Reserves	13,714	8,222	9,703	4,922
Total Resources Available	738,703	773,861	773,186	784,564
Resources Required:				
Corporate Costs	116,421	120,681	124,767	123,986
Directorate Costs	638,751	699,761	734,783	765,996
Total Resources Required	755,172	820,442	859,550	889,982
Budget Gap	16,469	46,581	86,364	105,418
Savings approved in current MTFP	(15,396)	(25,568)	(36,170)	(36,170)
Additional Savings		(2,500)	(2,500)	(2,500)
Use of Smoothing Reserves	(1,073)	(16,858)	(17,850)	(17,758)
Gap after use of Smoothing Reserves and savings	0	1,655	29,844	48,990

- 3.4. The impact of the settlement on the Council budget position is a net reduction of c£1.6m next year. This reflects a £0.8m increase to Adult Social Care grants which has to be passported to Adult Social Care. Therefore, the budget impact is a £2.4m worsening of the position rising to £5.3m in 2025/26 as shown in table two.

Table Two: Impact of Settlement announcements on the Council budget assumptions

	Settlement Decrease / (increase) to forecast income		
	2024 / 25 £'000	2025 / 26 £'000	2026 / 27 £'000
New Homes Bonus difference	207		
Services Grant reduction	6,092	6,092	6,092
Business Rates - Impact of a further year of Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant	(3,100)	0	0
Increased inflation on SFA	(823)	(823)	(823)
Social Care Grant increase	(807)	(807)	(807)
ASC Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund	(40)	(40)	(40)
Social Care spend increase	847	847	847
Public Health Grant increase	(751)	(751)	(751)
Public Health Spend increase	751	751	751
Net Worsening of Position	2,376	5,269	5,269

- 3.5. In addition to the settlement announcements Manchester is seeing growing pressures in social care and homelessness and it is unlikely that these will be contained within the budget assumptions. Recently there has been an increase in children's placement numbers and costs, further significant pressures across ASC budgets and some worrying trends in asylum seekers/migrant policy/homelessness. This is in line with national trends and core cities and other GM authorities are all reporting similar issues.
- 3.6. The Local Government Association has highlighted the cost of children's social care (especially specialist placements), homelessness services (particularly temporary accommodation) and home-to-school transport (most notably for pupils with special educational needs) as rising particularly rapidly. Recently published spending data¹ for April to September 2023 shows spending on children's social care services up 16% and homelessness and related services up 26% compared with the same period in 2022, both outpacing budgeted spend nationally.
- 3.7. At period 6 the 2022/23 outturn position was forecast at £3.5m overspend with measures being put in place to reduce this to £2.5m by the end of the financial year. The next monitoring report is being finalised and it is expected the position will worsen. It is likely that the General Fund reserve will need to be increased by at least £1m to maintain the reserve at a reasonable level.
- 3.8. This would increase next years budget gap to c£5m as shown in table three below.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-local-government-finance>

Table Three: Impact of Settlement announcements on the forecast budget gap

	2024 / 25	2025 / 26	2026 / 27
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Position reported to Resources and Governance Nov 2023	1,655	29,844	48,990
Settlement changes	2,374	5,265	5,256
Services Grant end		1,138	1,138
Increase General Fund to reflect worsening overspend	1,000		
Revised Shortfall / (surplus) after settlement	5,029	36,247	55,384

- 3.9. Work is underway to confirm the position and identify further measures to close the budget gap. These will include looking for further cost reductions and mitigations as well as some potential one off sources of income which will support the budget position which are listed below.
- A potential rebate from GMCA relating to waste. Details are still being finalised and it is likely this will be applied across the current financial year and 2024/25.
 - The Collection Fund position will be finalised in January. There may be some further one off income relating to a review of council tax debt and credits.
 - Changes to Council tax premiums are proposed for properties empty for more than one year. A report elsewhere on the agenda provides the detail.
- 3.10. The increasing pressures will mean that the gap in 2025/26 and beyond will widen with the full year effect of the increased numbers of residents requiring care and support this year. Whilst extremely challenging it is important that a realistic and deliverable budget is set. The final budget proposals will be developed in January and reported to scrutiny committees for consideration in February.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1. Due to the changes in the Provisional Finance Settlement and increased pressures in social care and homelessness further work is required to ensure a balanced budget for 2024/25 can be put forward for consideration by the Executive.
- 4.2. The 2024/25 budget will be subject to further scrutiny and formal approval as follows:
- 17 January – update to Executive on the Provisional Finance Settlement and budget position
 - By 31 January - Confirmation of Council Tax and Business Rates Base
 - 6-8 February - Scrutiny Committees consider the final budget proposals (see below)
 - 14 February – Budget Executive
 - 26 February - Resources and Governance Budget Scrutiny.
 - 1 March – Budget Council

- 4.3. The February Scrutiny Committees will receive a short overview of the Council's budget position and the more detailed reports on the areas within their remit as per below:

Date	Meeting	Services Included
6 Feb 24	Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee	Sport, Leisure, Events Libraries Galleries and Culture Compliance and Community Safety Housing Operations including Homelessness Neighbourhood teams
6 Feb 24	Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee	City Centre Regeneration Strategic Development Housing and residential growth Planning, Building Control, and licensing Investment Estate Work and skills Highways
7 Feb 24	Health Scrutiny Committee	Adult Social Care Public Health
7 Feb 24	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee	Children and Education Services
8 Feb 24	Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee	Chief Exec Corporate Services Revenue and Benefits / Customer and Welfare Support Business Units
8 Feb 24	Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee	Waste and Recycling Parks Grounds maintenance

Budget Consultation

- 4.4. There is a statutory requirement to consult with business rates payers. Public consultation on proposed Council Tax levels opened on 31 October and will run until 27 December 2023. The provisional results from the consultation will be reported to Executive in February. The full analysis and results, alongside comments from scrutiny committees, will be reported to the Budget Scrutiny meeting on 26 February to ensure they are fully considered before the final budget is set. None of the budget options set out to date require formal statutory consultation.

Equalities Impact and Anti-Poverty Assessments

- 4.5. Each saving option that was approved last year was supported by a robust business case where consideration was given to how the savings could impact on different protected or disadvantaged groups. Where applicable proposals were subject to completion of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and a Poverty Impact Assessment as part of the detailed planning and

implementation. Work is also underway on the way in which equalities data is collected across the Council, supporting the ability to be better informed on the impact of changes being made to services.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. This paper sets out the impact of the Provisional Settlement and associated impact on the Councils budget position. The Council Tax base and Business Rates base are due to be made in January and the Final Finance Settlement is due in early February. At that point all the financial information to set the budget will be available.
- 5.2. The updated position leaves a potential budget gap of £5m in 2024/25, £36m in 2025/26, increasing to £55m by 2026/27. Further work is underway to balance the 2024/25 budget. As the report sets out, the position is likely to be even more challenging from 2025/26 and there likely to be very difficult decisions for the Council to make. It is important that work to prepare for this starts early in the next financial year.

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**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee – 11 January 2024
Executive - 17 January 2024

Subject: Changes to Council Tax Support Scheme from April 2024

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer

Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide final recommendations for the Council's Council tax Support Scheme from April 2024 for the Executive to consider.

The report proposes changes to the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme in order that the scheme remains fit for purpose in response to cost-of-living challenges and the transition of most working age residents in receipt of welfare benefits onto Universal Credit.

The report follows a period of formal consultation on the proposals that change the scheme for working age residents in receipt of Universal Credit.

Recommendations

The Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. consider and comment upon the contents of the report and the steps being taken to continue to deliver a Council Tax Support Scheme that is cost effective and provides optimum support to low-income households within the available budget.

The Executive is requested to:

1. Note the outcomes of the consultation process and the Equality Impact assessment (EIA) both of which have supported and informed the final recommendations.
2. Approve the following changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme from 1 April 2024:
 - i. Increase the maximum CTS Award from 82.5% to 85% for working-age households.
 - ii. Adjust the UC excess income bands upwards by 2.5% to maintain parity with the 85% maximum award.
 - iii. Extend the maximum backdating period from six-months to 12-months.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city	The service seeks to operate in a way designed to avoid unnecessary travel by looking to provide services online, by phone or in the local area where possible.
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments	Consideration of equality, diversity and inclusion issues for Manchester residents have been taken into account in the development of the proposals. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The service operates policies and procedures developed to support the development of a thriving and sustainable city.
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The service operates policies and procedures developed to support the development and growth of home-grown talent within the service and across the city.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	This report provides proposals on providing support to residents on a low income helping to maintain conditions that make Manchester a progressive and equitable city.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	N/A
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	N/A

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 proposed changes are intended to make the Council Tax Support Scheme more generous for working age households and easier and more cost effective to administer.

The proposed changes are estimated to cost up to £770k.

Financial Consequences – Capital

None

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

Report to RAGOS
Proposed changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme from April 2024
[Changes to Council Tax Support Scheme from April 2024.pdf \(manchester.gov.uk\)](#)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report outlines the background, options and recommendations for delivering a local Council Tax Support Scheme (CTSS) for the Council from 1 April 2024. It also provides details and outcomes of both the consultation exercise and Equality Impact Assessment and any impacts on the final recommendations.
- 1.2 Most of the changes only affect working age claimants in receipt of Council Tax Support. Non-working age claimants (pensioners) are only affected by the proposed changes in point 4.2 where we are proposing to increase the maximum length of time we can backdate Council Tax Support.
- 1.3 While the government requires local authorities to design and administer their own local CTSS for working-age people with no maximum support requirements, councils are required by law to pay up to 100% Council Tax Support (CTS) for pension-age people.

2.0 Impact on residents

- 2.1 The main change proposed will make the Council's CTSS more generous for working-age households. The current CTSS pays up to 82.5% of the Council Tax bill leaving 17.5% to pay. The proposed CTSS would pay up to 85% of the Council Tax bill leaving 15% to pay.
- 2.2 Extending the CTS backdating period for working-age claims from six-months to 12-months allows greater flexibility to support vulnerable residents and reduces avoidable requests for reconsiderations and appeals.

3.0 Background

3.1 Council Tax in Manchester

- 3.1.1 Bills are sent for over 246,000 Council Tax accounts amounting to more than £225 million each year. Of this over one fifth of households receive financial support in the form of Council Tax Support totalling £44.973 million annually (figures at 31 May 2023, including precepting authorities charges). This is split between £28.941m working-age and £16.033m pension-age households.
- 3.1.2 Table 1 shows the property breakdown and benefit levels split across Council Tax bands (snapshot position as at 31 May 2023).

	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Number of properties	136,144	42,415	36,912	19,847	6,694	3,185	1,259	145
Number of these that are empty	1,482	390	312	301	112	61	35	8
Number of working age households in receipt of partial Council Tax Support	3,445	644	337	76	24	6	1	0
Number of working age households in receipt of maximum Council Tax Support	23,975	2,679	1,071	230	61	12	3	0
Working age total	27,420	3,323	1,408	306	85	18	4	0
Number of pension age households in receipt of partial Council Tax Support	3,018	448	319	76	28	8	0	0
Number of pension age households in receipt of full Council Tax Support.	9,144	1,328	668	197	40	12	1	0
Pension age total	12,162	1,776	987	273	68	20	1	0

(Table 1)

3.2 Background to the current scheme

- 3.2.1 The localisation of Council Tax Support Schemes (CTSS) was announced in the 2010 Spending Review and in April 2013 Government transferred administration and responsibility of the Council Tax Benefits (CTB) system from DWP to Local Authorities with the stated aim of giving councils stronger incentives to cut fraud and get people back into work.
- 3.2.2 The CTSS was funded with a 10% reduced budget in 2013/14, with each authority designing and implementing a localised scheme and holding responsibility for any shortfall or surplus on the CTS budget. To achieve savings Manchester designed a CTS scheme which required all working age claimants to contribute to their net Council Tax liability (ranging from 8.5% in 2013/14 to 17.5% in 2018/19).
- 3.2.3 In April 2014 CTS funding was rolled into the Revenue Support Grant (RSG), where it has been assumed CTS has reduced year on year in line with the cuts to Manchester's Settlement Funding Assessments (SFA).

3.2.4 As at 31 May 2023, the notional 2023/24 CTS funding from Government is estimated at £24.159m, while the cost of the scheme is £44.973m, giving rise to a funding gap of £20.814m.

3.2.5 Table 2 below has been produced by the Council and models the loss in funding since 2012/13 due to CTS.

<u>Manchester CTS Scheme - reduced in proportion to SFA</u>	2012/13	2013/14	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24*
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
CTB / CTS Scheme Funding	(42,310)	(37,390)	(22,281)	(22,644)	(22,674)	(22,846)	(24,159)
CTS Transition Grant	-	(997)	-	-	-	-	-
Total Govt funding	(42,310)	(38,387)	(22,281)	(22,644)	(22,674)	(22,846)	(24,159)
<i>SFA reduction applied %</i>			(5.2%)	1.6%	0.1%	0.8%	5.7%
Council Tax foregone	42,310	39,849	38,896	42,617	42,789	42,664	44,973
Net Loss (incl preceptor)	0	1,462	16,615	19,973	20,115	19,818	20,184

(Table 2) *forecast as at 31 May 2023

3.3 Manchester's previous CTS schemes

3.3.1 The schemes for working age residents have allowed for a maximum award based on the available budget and the savings that have had to be made to help the Council deliver a balanced budget.

3.3.2 2013/14 Scheme

The Council received a transitional award and Council Tax Support was based on a maximum of 91.5% of the amount due meaning that all working age claimants had to pay at least 8.5% of their liability.

3.3.3 2014/15 to 2016/17 (3 years)

Council Tax Support was based on a maximum of 85% of the amount due meaning that all working age claimants had to pay at least 15% of their liability.

3.3.4 2017/18 to 2018/19 (2 years)

Council Tax Support was based on a maximum of 82.5% of the amount due meaning that all working age households had to pay at least 17.5% of their liability.

3.3.5 It should be noted that pension age households are protected by government and are entitled to support for up to 100% of their Council Tax liability.

3.4 Manchester's current CTS scheme

3.4.1 2019/20 to present (5 years)

As with the 2017/18 – 2018/19 CTSS Council Tax Support was based on a maximum of 82.5% of the amount due meaning that all working age households have to pay at least 17.5% of their liability.

Manchester's current CTSS for working-age households who are not on Universal Credit continues to be primarily based on the default provisions offered by the government in 2012 and where possible uses the DWP assessment of income and needs, minimising the need for further means-testing by the local authority.

The difference is that from 2019/20 the Council introduced a banded scheme for working-age households who are on Universal Credit (see Table 3).

Current bands and award levels

Income Band	CTS Award
No excess Income	82.5%
Excess income £0.01 to £25.00	70%
Excess income £25.01 to £50.00	45%
Excess income £50.01 to £75.01	30%
Excess income £75.01 to £80.00	12%
Excess income over £80.00	Nil award

(Table 3)

3.4.2 **Reasons for introducing a banded scheme**

The main drivers for and advantages of operating the banded scheme were:

- Avoiding frequent trivial changes in Universal Credit (UC), thereby reducing,
 - The need to reassess entitlement and issue CTS notification letters
 - The volume and cost of rebilling for Council Tax
 - The need to re-profile payments and changes to direct debits and standing orders
 - Impacts on 'current year charge' recovery work
- A new claim for UC is treated as a claim for CTS (provided where the UC claimant has told DWP that they want to claim Council Tax Support)

The banded scheme was also designed with the aim of smoothing the 'cliff edge' for households when moving between income bands or becoming overscale for CTS.

Table 5 at Section 4.1 shows the Council Tax Support Universal Credit banded scheme and the amount of Council Tax left to pay for a property in Band A. The figures show how much a household on UC and eligible for CTS has to pay across the different bands under the current 2023/24 scheme and

how much they would pay if the proposed 2.5% increase in CTS was in operation.

Over the duration of operating the banded scheme around 4,500 fewer bills and adjustments have been applied each year than would have been the case without the scheme. The advantages of reduced administration and reduced rebilling of residents in response to small changes in Universal Credit are seen as positive outcomes. If a household reports a difficulty as a result of movement between bands the Council's Discretionary Council Tax Payment scheme may be used to offer proportionate support.

4.0 Proposed Changes

4.1 The following changes are proposed. These are incorporated in the Draft Council Tax Support Scheme shown at appendix 5.

4.2 Increase the maximum CTS award to 85% for working-age households and increase the UC bands by 2.5% in alignment

4.2.1 Increasing the maximum amount of CTS for working-age households from 82.5% to 85% and increasing the UC bands by 2.5% in alignment offers greater support for many of Manchester's poorest households.

4.2.2 Tables 4a and 4b show the current 2023/24 Council tax charges and the amount left to pay after the maximum 82.5% CTS award is applied; and the amount left to pay if a maximum 85% CTS award was in operation.

Property CTax Band	2023/24 bill (full charge)	Amount to pay after 82.5% CTS award	Amount to pay after 85% CTS award	Reduction in amount to pay in year
Band A	£1,313.00	£229.78	£196.95	£32.83
Band B	£1,531.83	£268.07	£229.77	£38.30
Band C	£1750.67	£306.37	£262.60	£43.77
Band D	£1,969.50	£344.66	£295.43	£49.24
Band E	£2,407.16	£421.25	£361.07	£60.18
Band F	£2,844.82	£497.84	£426.72	£71.12
Band G	£3,282.50	£574.44	£492.38	£82.06
Band H	£3,939.01	£689.33	£590.85	£98.48

(Table 4a)

Property CTax Band	2023/24 bill (single-person charge)	Amount to pay after 82.5% CTS award	Amount to pay after 85% CTS award	Reduction in amount to pay in year
Band A	£984.75	£172.33	£147.71	£24.62
Band B	£1148.87	£201.05	£172.33	£28.72
Band C	£1313.00	£229.78	£196.95	£32.83
Band D	£1477.13	£258.50	£221.57	£36.93
Band E	£1805.37	£315.94	£270.81	£45.13
Band F	£2133.62	£373.38	£320.04	£53.34
Band G	£2461.88	£430.83	£369.28	£61.55
Band H	£2954.26	£517.00	£443.14	£73.86

(Table 4b)

- 4.2.3 Table 5 shows the Council Tax Support Universal Credit banded scheme and the amount of Council tax left to pay for a property in Band A. The figures are for the current scheme and for the proposed 2.5% increase in CTS.

Band of income	Current support	Amount to pay after CTS award	Proposed 2.5% increase in CTS	Amount to pay after CTS award
£0.00 over applicable amount	82.5% of Council Tax	£229.73	85%	£196.95
£0.01 to £25 over	70%	£393.90	72.5%	£361.08
£25.01 to £50 over	45%	£722.15	47.5%	£689.33
£50.01 £75 over	30%	£919.10	32.5%	£886.23
£75.01 to £80 over	12%	£1,155.44	14.5%	£1,122.61
£80.01 over	No Support		No support	

(Table 5)

- 4.2.4 Table 6 shows the cost of increasing CTS to 85% and the UC bands by 2.5% based on individual data on the 2023/24 Council tax levels and the number of claimants as at 1 June 2023. It shows the Council's share of the cost at £699,682 (excluding the Police and Crime Commissioner, GM Fire & Rescue and Mayoral preceptors based on the 2023/24 Council share at 82.17% of the 2023/24 bill).

2023/24 CTS Caseload	No. of cases	Current cost as at 1 June 2023	Revised Cost of CTSS/UB bands +2.5%	Increase in Cost (incl preceptors)	Increase in Cost to Council only
Working Age UC	18,747	£15,800,548	£16,272,625	£472,077	£387,885
Working Age Non-UC	13,808	£12,284,132	£12,663,607	£379,475	£311,798
Pension Age*	15,315	£15,924,840	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total	47,870	£44,009,520	£28,936,232	£851,552	£699,682

(Table 6) *Pension age claimants are already in receipt of 100% CTS

4.2.5 Table 7 shows the cost of increasing the CTSS offer by 2.5% (based on individual system data) with a 4.99% increase (including the social care precept) in Council tax on the Council's share only. This shows a cost of £734,596.

2024/25 at 4.99% increase (MCC share only)	No. of cases	2023/24 costs (MCC only)	2024/24 (+4.99% Ctax increase)	Plus cost of CTSS/UC bands +2.5%	Overall increase from 2023/24	Increase due to +2.5% CTSS offer
Working Age UC	18,747	£12,982,603	£13,630,435	£14,037,675	£1,055,072	£407,240
Working Age Non UC	13,808	£10,093,321	£10,596,978	£10,924,335	£831,013	£327,356
Pension Age	15,315	£13,084,728	£13,737,656	£13,737,656	£652,928	Nil
Total	47,870	£36,160,653	£37,965,069	£38,699,666	£2,539,013	£734,596

(Table 7)

4.2.6 Appendix 1 provides examples of how increasing the maximum level of CTS from 82.5% to 85% may apply in certain scenarios.

4.3 Backdating

4.3.1 The Council's CTSS currently allows backdating of up to six months.

4.3.2 Extending the backdating period for up to one year, where the applicant shows good cause, would allow more Council Tax arrears to be cleared for some residents who have struggled to manage their finances and debts. In 2022/23 1,727 CTS cases were backdated. Of these 162 were pension-age cases and 1,565 were working-age cases. The total cost of backdating last year was £115k. Most cases do not need backdating for the full six months to award the additional eligible period of CTS. On this basis it is unlikely that many cases would require backdating for a full year if we introduced this change.

4.3.3 Extending backdating for CTS cases to 12 months may increase backdating costs by 20%. This would increase the costs for backdating by c£23k

£138k. If we increase CTS awards to 85% and increase Council Tax by 4.99% then the cost for backdating cases may rise by c£35k to approximately £150k.

5.0 Cost of proposed changes

- 5.1 The estimated additional cost to the Council, based on current caseload figures, of moving to a CTS scheme in 2024/25 with a maximum CTS Award of 85% for working-age households and adjusting the UC excess income bands upwards by 2.5% to maintain parity, is £699,682.
- 5.2 After applying the assumed 4.99% increase in Council Tax across the working-age and pension-age caseload indicates a total additional cost to the Council in 2024/25 of £734,596.
- 5.3 Extending the backdating period from six-months to 12-months carries an estimated cost to the Council of £35k in 2024/25, allows greater flexibility to support vulnerable residents and reduces avoidable requests for reconsiderations and appeals.

6.0 Feedback from Scrutiny and Executive

- 6.1 The proposals prior to consultation were considered at the September 2023 meeting of Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee (RAGOS). RAGOS supported taking the proposals to public consultation and recognised that the outcomes would be reported back to Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee and for approval by the Executive and Full Council in January 2024.

7.0 Consultation - major precepting authorities

- 7.1 As required by legislation the Council consulted the precepting authorities for Greater Manchester and received approval to consult on the proposals.

8.0 Consultation Exercise

8.1 Consultation requirements

- 8.1.1 The Council is required to consult on any proposed changes to CTS in accordance with Section 13A of the 1992 Local Government Finance Act (Paragraph 3 of Schedule 1A). This requires the following:

8.1.2 Preparation of a scheme:

- (1) Before making a scheme, the authority must (in the following order) -
 - (a) Consult any major precepting authority which has power to issue a precept to it,
 - (b) Publish a draft scheme in such manner as it thinks fit, and
 - (c) Consult such other persons as it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme.

8.1.3 The consultation started on 2 October 2023 and ended on 12 November 2023.

8.2 Consultation approach and content

8.2.1 Details of the proposed changes were shared with the precepting authorities prior to the public consultation opening. No objections were received.

8.2.2 To ensure that the consultation reached as many benefit claimants and Manchester residents as possible, a wide-ranging consultation and engagement plan was developed. The approach was both digital and offline, ensuring that those most impacted by the proposals had the opportunity to respond. This was developed with the evaluation results of previous consultation exercises in mind.

8.2.3 A comprehensive consultation narrative, explaining the scheme and why it had been proposed and the impact on benefit claimants was used as the basis of both content for the Council website and a paper questionnaire.

8.2.4 The consultation process was delivered by means of an online questionnaire; 30,000 paper forms issued to Manchester households; and 1,300 paper forms made available to members and through libraries and housing offices. Forms and posters were also distributed to Wythenshawe Community Housing Group, One Manchester and Southway and made available in their offices.

8.2.5 A copy of the consultation document is included within the Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation 2023 Final Report at appendix 2 (see list of appendices at the end of the report).

8.3 Consultation Outcome

8.3.1 A report on the consultation outcomes, incorporating the consultation questions, is shown at appendix 2. A table showing the ethnicity responses is included at appendix 3.

8.3.2 A total of 4,737 questionnaires were completed, this includes 2,856 paper questionnaires (60%) and 1,881 online questionnaires (40%).

8.3.3 Asked to confirm whether the respondent or a member of their household was in receipt of CTS 31% of 4,644 respondents answered 'yes'.

8.3.4 In the age groups the headlines are that the 16-24 category is very underrepresented, the 25-34 category somewhat underrepresented, while the 65+ category is overrepresented.

8.3.5 The data for respondents who declared their ethnic origin show that the responses are broadly in line with the demographic make-up of the city:

- 18.33% of respondents to the survey identified as Asian, compared with 20.86% of the Manchester population based on the 2021 census results. (2.53 lower)

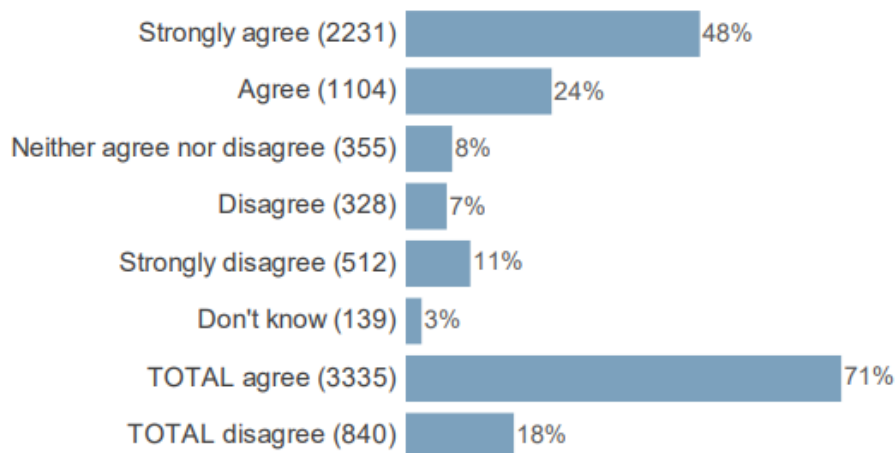
- 11.17% of respondents to the survey identified as Black, compared with 11.94% of the Manchester population based on the 2021 census results. (0.79 lower)
- 3.54% of respondents to the survey identified as Mixed, compared with 5.26% of the Manchester population based on the 2021 census results. (1.72 lower)
- 51.83% of respondents to the survey identified as White, compared with 56.82% of the Manchester population based on the 2021 census results. (4.99 lower)
- 9.45% of respondents to the survey identified as Other, compared with 5.12% of the Manchester population based on the 2021 census results. (4.33 higher)

8.3.6 Summaries of responses to the three main consultation questions are included below. It shows agreement to all the proposals.

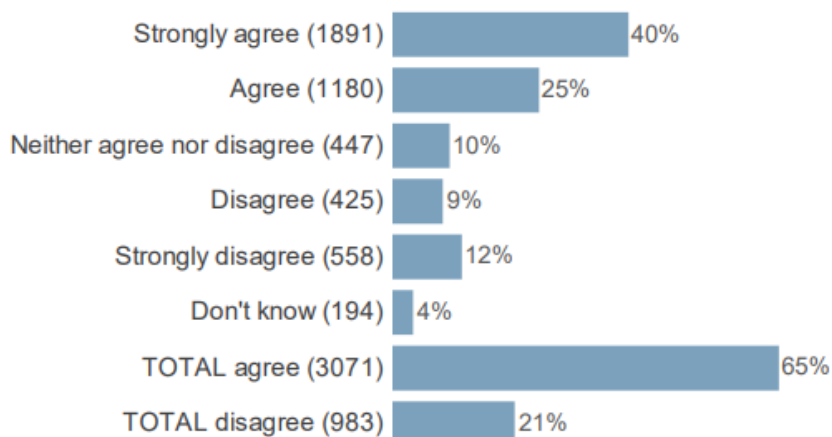
8.3.7 The consultation report includes analysis of subgroup responses including age, disability, sex, and other groups. In addition, 1,158 freeform comments were analysed and grouped into a number of common themes. These responses were considered when drawing our conclusions.

8.3.8 The subgroup responses and freeform comments were generally representative of the headline responses below:

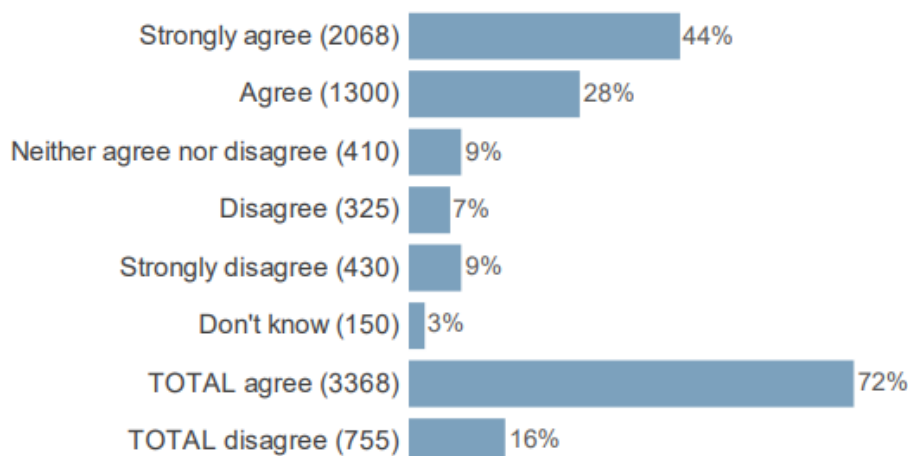
Q1. Do you agree or disagree that we should increase the maximum Council Tax Support from 82.5% to 85% for working-age residents?



Q2. Do you agree or disagree that we should increase the bands of Council Tax Support by 2.5%?



Q3. Do you agree or disagree that we should extend the period of backdating from six months to one year where residents have a good reason for not making a claim sooner?



8.3.9 The Council received a submission from the Royal British Legion, which is incorporated within the Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation 2023 Final Report at appendix 3. The submission offers no comments in support or objection to the proposed changes to the Councils CTS scheme. The other issues raised within the submission are being addressed through the Council's Armed Forces Steering Group.

9.0 Equality Impact Assessment

9.1 As a public body the Council has a number of statutory duties under equalities legislation. These are often referred to as the Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED). The PSED require the Council, through its decision making process, to give due regard to the need:

- to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and

other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act;

- to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

9.2 This involves in particular having due regard, to the need to:

- (a) tackle prejudice; and
- (b) promote understanding

9.3 The nine protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

9.4 The Equality Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people. Particular attention needs to be paid to the needs of disabled people in taking account of this requirement.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

9.5 Compliance with the duties may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under the Act.

9.6 Other vulnerable groups identified by the Council are also included in the EIA analysis:

- People with continuing health conditions
- People with caring responsibilities
- Homeless people
- Ex-Armed Forces personnel and their families
- Children, families and other people living in poverty
- Care-experienced young people and care-leavers

9.7 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed to inform members of the relevant more detailed issues in considering the recommendations in this Report (appendix 4, see list of appendices at the end of the report).

9.8 The EIA on the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25 onwards found that the scheme will not have a disproportionate impact on any of the protected equality groups. The CTS scheme maintains the award of premiums

and discounts certain benefits that recognise the needs of disabled people, those with children and caring responsibilities. The City Treasurer has considered the EIA, the issues raised and the Council's overall financial position.

10.0 Key Policies and Considerations

10.1 Risk Management

10.1.1 There is a risk of increased demand and budget pressure resulting from an increase in households needing assistance or existing claimants' income reducing.

10.1.2 The future demand and impact cannot be determined with any certainty so will be subject to ongoing review in developing and adapting the scheme cognisant of budget restrictions.

10.2 Legal Considerations

10.2 The legal considerations are contained within the body of this report.

11.0 Conclusions

11.1 The consultation supports the Council's approach and aims of amending the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme in order that the scheme remains fit for purpose in response to cost-of-living challenges and the transition of most working age residents in receipt of welfare benefits onto Universal Credit.

11.2 The proposed changes are estimated to cost up to £770k.

12.0 Recommendations

12.1 Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee is requested to consider and comment upon the contents of the report and the steps being taken to continue to deliver a Council Tax Support Scheme that is cost effective and provides optimum support to low-income households within the available budget.

12.2 Executive is requested to:

1. Note the outcomes of the consultation process and the Equality Impact assessment (EIA) both of which have supported and informed the final recommendations.
2. Approve the following changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme from 1 April 2024:
 - i. Increase the maximum CTS Award from 82.5% to 85% for working-age households.

- ii. Adjust the UC excess income bands upwards by 2.5% to maintain parity with the 85% maximum award.
- iii. Extend the maximum backdating period from six-months to 12-months where the resident demonstrates good cause.
- iv. The Council will monitor and review the Council Tax Support Scheme to ensure that it continues to support the Council's policies. The Council Tax Support Scheme may be amended for subsequent years, but should this happen there will be further consultation. If no revised scheme is published, this scheme will continue to apply to subsequent years. However, the figures set out in the scheme in respect of applicable amounts, income and capital disregards and non-dependants' deductions may still be uprated to allow for inflation. Any such uprating will take effect on 1 April each year. If the figures provided in the prescribed requirements change, the Council reserves the right to amend the figures quoted in the scheme without further consultation.

13.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Examples of how much Council Tax a household on CTS pays in 2023/24 and may pay in 2024/25

Appendix 2 - Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation 2023 Final Report

Appendix 3 - Consultation ethnicity responses

Appendix 4 - Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 5 - Draft Council Tax Support Scheme

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Appendix 1: Examples of how much Council Tax a household on CTS pays in 2023/24 and may pay in 2024/25

These examples show how much a household on CTS currently have to pay towards their Council Tax and how much they will have to pay next year assuming an increase in CTS of 2.5% and an increase in their Council Tax bill.

Example 1

Current Situation

Single person living in a Band A property. They are entitled to 25% off their bill because they live on their own. Their only income is Employment and Support Allowance. Their Council Tax bill before Council Tax Support is awarded is £984.75. The Council Tax Support award is £812.42, this leaves them with £172.33 to pay themselves.

Proposed 2.5% CTS increase with a 2.99% Council Tax increase

Their Council Tax bill before Council Tax Support is awarded is £1,014.19. The Council Tax Support award is £862.06, this leaves them with £152.13 to pay themselves.

Proposed 2.5% CTS increase with 4.99% Council Tax increase

Their Council Tax bill before Council Tax Support is awarded is £1,033.89. The Council Tax Support award is £878.8, this leaves them with £155.08 to pay themselves.

Example 2

Current Situation

Couple living in a Band B property. Their only income Universal Credit and Child Benefit. Their Council Tax bill before Council Tax Support is awarded is £1,531.83. The Council Tax Support award is £1,263.76, this leaves them with £268.07 to pay themselves.

Proposed 2.5% CTS increase with a 2.99% Council Tax increase

Their Council Tax bill before Council tax Support is awarded is £1,577.63. The Council Tax Support award is £1,340.99, this leaves them with £236.64 to pay themselves.

Proposed 2.5% CTS increase with 4.99% Council Tax increase

Their Council Tax bill before Council Tax Support is awarded is £1,608.27. The Council Tax Support award is £1,367.03, this leaves them with £241.24 to pay themselves.

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MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL

Council Tax Support
Scheme Consultation
2023

Final Report

December 2023

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Introduction

Background

Manchester City Council operates a Council Tax Support scheme which requires all working age residents to pay a minimum of 17.5% of their council tax bill themselves. Pension age residents receive up to 100% of their bill in Council Tax Support which cannot be changed.

The Council recently delivered a consultation to seek views and feedback on its proposals to increase the maximum amount of Council Tax Support for working age residents, from a maximum of 82.5% to 85%, and to extend the backdating period from six months to 12 months.

Enventure Research was commissioned to conduct independent analysis and reporting of the findings from this consultation.

Methodology

A questionnaire was designed by Manchester City Council which sought residents' views on the proposed changes to the Council Tax Support scheme and included questions to establish respondents' demographics and certain characteristics. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in the **Appendices**.

The consultation was managed and delivered by Manchester City Council. Residents could take part via an online survey or by completing a paper copy of the questionnaire which was mailed to households. All returned paper copies were then processed by Manchester City Council. Prior to being shared with Enventure Research, all data was anonymised by Manchester City Council.

Overall, 4,737 responses were received to the consultation. This includes 1,881 received online (40%) and a 2,856 paper copies (60%).

Interpretation of the findings

This report contains tables and charts. In some instances, the responses may not add up to 100%. There are several reasons why this might happen:

- The question may have allowed each respondent to give more than one answer
- Only the most common responses may be shown in the table or chart
- Individual percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number so the total may come to 99% or 101%
- A response of less than 0.5% will be shown as 0%

Subgroup analysis has been undertaken to explore results provided by subgroups such as whether they currently receive Council Tax Support, age, disability, sex, whether their gender is the same as assigned at birth, whether they have caring responsibilities, whether they have served in the UK Armed Forces, and whether they have contacted a local authority because of homelessness or being at risk of being homeless. This analysis has only been carried out where the sample size is seen to be sufficient for comment, and only those differences that are statistically significant have been commented on within this report.



Survey Findings

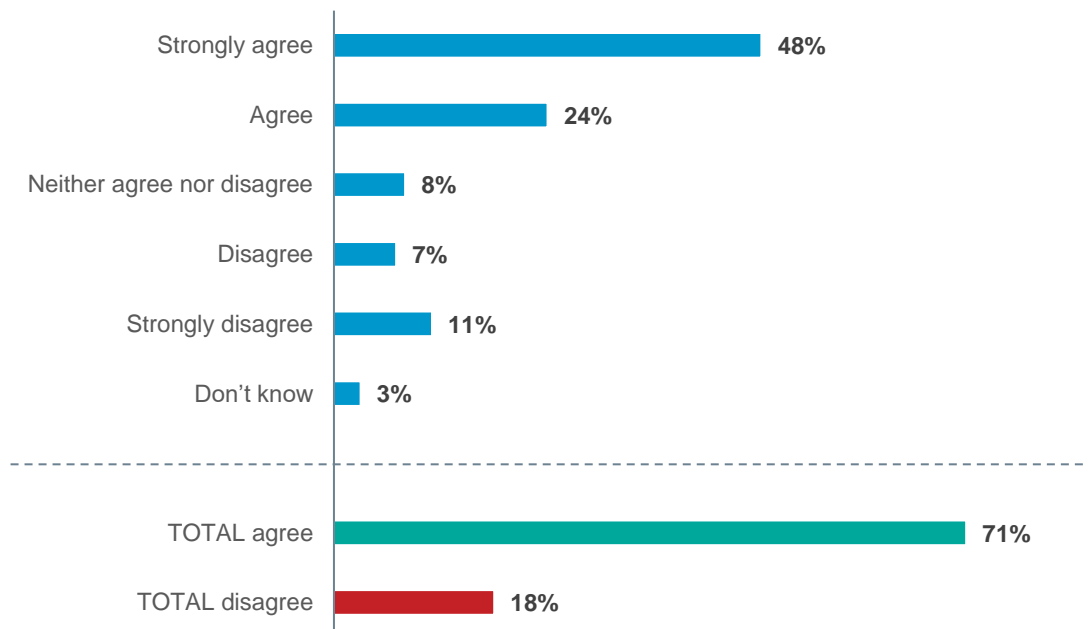
Increase of minimum award

Working age residents in Manchester can currently receive support of up to 82.5% of their council tax bill, which Manchester City Council is proposing to increase up to a maximum of 85% (an increase of 2.5%).

Respondents were first asked if they agreed or disagreed that the Council should increase the maximum Council Tax Support to 85% for working age residents. Seven in ten respondents (71%) agreed with this overall, including 48% who *strongly agreed* and 24% who *agreed*. Almost a fifth of respondents (18%) disagreed overall, including 7% who *disagreed* and 11% who *strongly disagreed*. Small proportions of respondents said they *neither agree nor disagree* (8%) or *don't know* (3%).

Figure 1 – Do you agree or disagree that we should increase the maximum Council Tax Support from 82.5% to 85% for working age residents?

Base: Those who provided a response (4,669)



Subgroup analysis

Subgroups more likely to **agree** (71% overall) include:

- Those who are currently receiving Council Tax Support (83%) vs those who are not (66%)
- Those aged 35-54 (77%) vs those aged 55+ (73%)
- Those who have a disability or long-term health issue (76%) vs those who do not (71%)
- Those whose gender is the same as it was assigned at birth (73%) vs those whose gender is not (58%)
- Those who have not served in the UK Armed Forces (74%) vs those who have (65%)
- Those who have contacted a local authority due to homelessness (82%) vs those who have not (72%)



Subgroup analysis continued

Subgroups more likely to **disagree** (18% overall) include:

- Those who are not currently receiving Council Tax Support (24%) vs those who are (7%)
- Those aged 35-54 (16%) vs those aged 55+ (14%)
- Those who do not have a disability or long-term health issue (19%) vs those who do (13%)
- Male respondents (18%) vs female respondents (14%)
- Those who have served in the UK Armed Forces (22%) vs those who have not (15%)



Banding for Universal Credit cases

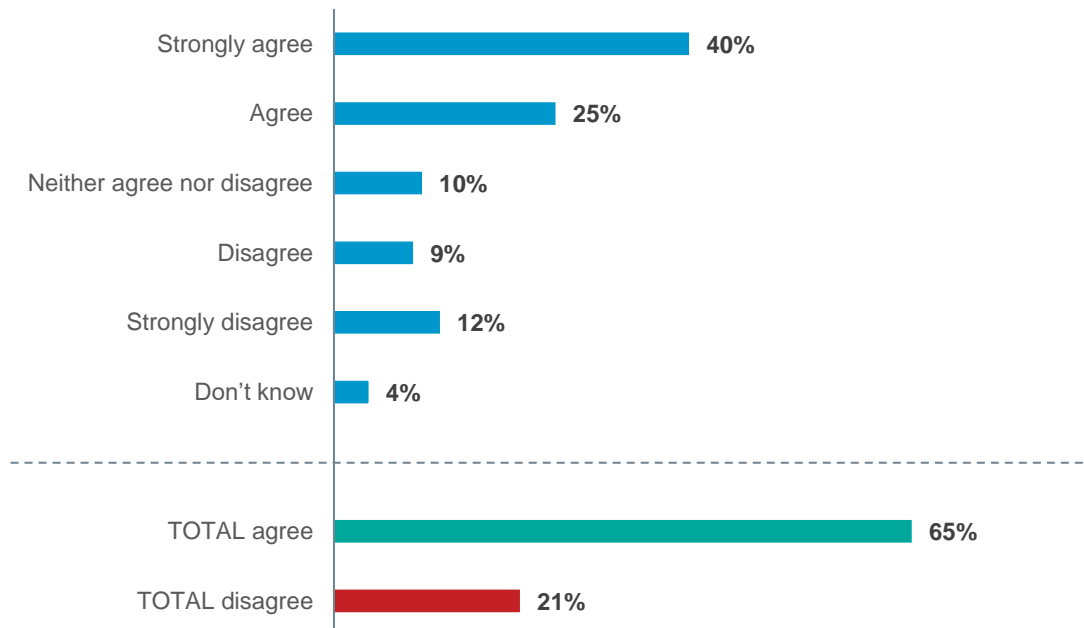
Manchester City Council currently has a banded scheme for residents who are on Universal Credit. The banded scheme means that small changes in Universal Credit do not always change the amount of Council Tax Support. The Council is proposing to increase the bands of support by 2.5% so that residents on Universal Credit also receive an increase in support. The current bands and new proposed bands of Council Tax Support are shown in the table below.

Band of income	Current Council Tax Support	Proposed Council Tax Support for 2024/25
£0.00 over your applicable amount	82.5% of council tax	85%
£0.01 to £25 over	70%	72.5%
£25.01 to £50 over	45%	47.5%
£50.01 to £75 over	30%	32.5%
£75.01 to £80 over	12%	14.5%
£80.01 over	No support	No support

Two thirds of respondents (65%) agreed overall that the Council should increase the bands of Council Tax Support for residents receiving Universal Credit by 2.5%, including 40% who *strongly agreed* and 25% who *agreed*. A fifth disagreed overall (21%), including 9% who *disagreed* and 12% who *strongly disagreed*. Small proportions said they *neither agree nor disagree* (10%) or *don't know* (4%).

Figure 2 – Do you agree or disagree that we should increase the bands of Council Tax Support by 2.5%?

Base: Those who provided a response (4,695)



Subgroup analysis

Subgroups more likely to **agree** (65% overall) include:

- Those who are currently receiving Council Tax Support (77%) vs those who are not (60%)
- Those who have a disability or long-term health issue (69%) vs those who do not (66%)
- Female respondents (69%) vs male respondents (65%)
- Those whose gender is the same as it was assigned at birth (67%) vs those whose gender is not (53%)
- Those who have not served in the UK Armed Forces (68%) vs those who have (61%)
- Those who have contacted a local authority due to homelessness (76%) vs those who have not (66%)

Subgroups more likely to **disagree** (21% overall) include:

- Those who are not currently receiving Council Tax Support (26%) vs those who are (10%)
- Those aged 16-54 (20%) vs those aged 55+ (17%)
- Those who do not have a disability or long-term health issue (22%) vs those who do (16%)
- Male respondents (21%) vs female respondents (17%)
- Those whose gender is not the same as it was assigned at birth (35%) vs those whose gender is (19%)
- Those who indicated that they have caring responsibilities (21%) vs those who did not (18%)
- Those who have served in the UK Armed Forces (23%) vs those who have not (19%)
- Those who have not contacted a local authority due to homelessness (20%) vs those who have (15%)



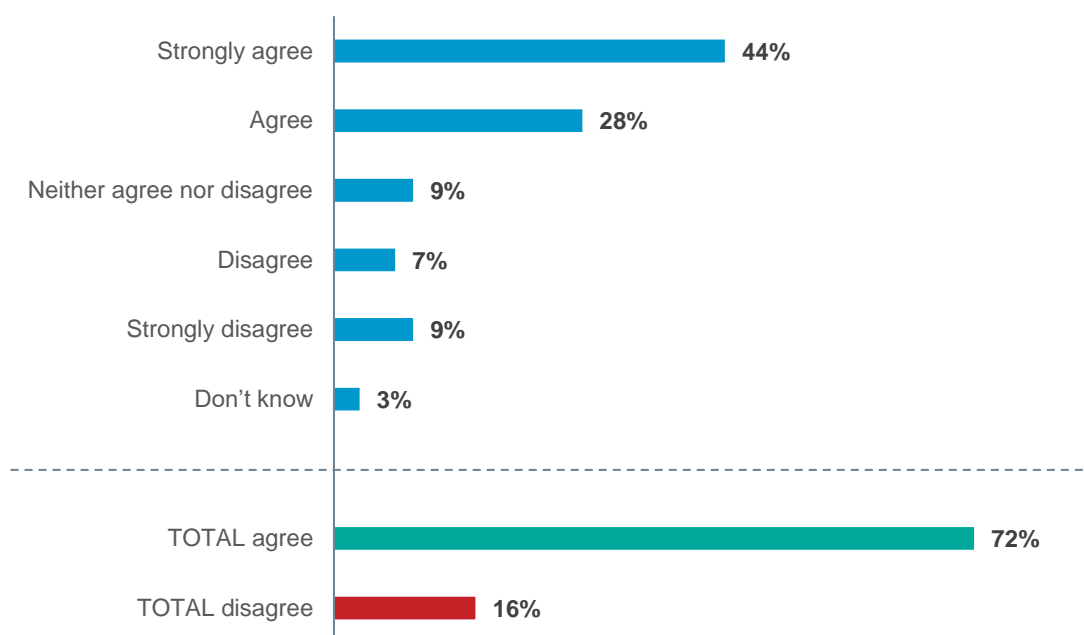
Backdating

Backdating is currently allowed up to six months where the resident has a good reason for not making a claim sooner. Manchester City Council is proposing to extend this period up to one year, and would apply to claims from people who are pension age as well as working age.

Seven in ten respondents (72%) agreed overall that the backdating period should be extended, including 44% who *strongly agreed* and 28% who *agreed*. A much smaller proportion disagreed overall (16%), including 7% who *disagreed* and 9% who *strongly disagreed*. Small proportions said they *neither agree nor disagree* (9%) or *don't know* (3%).

Figure 3 – Do you agree or disagree that we should extend the period of backdating from six months to one year where residents have a good reason for not making a claim sooner?

Base: Those who provided a response (4,683)



Subgroup analysis

Subgroups more likely to **agree** (72% overall) include:

- Those who are currently receiving Council Tax Support (84%) vs those who are not (66%)
- Those who have a disability or long-term health issue (79%) vs those who do not (70%)
- Female respondents (76%) vs male respondents (71%)
- Those who have not served in the UK Armed Forces (75%) vs those who have (67%)
- Those who have contacted a local authority due to homelessness (80%) vs those who have not (73%)

Subgroups more likely to **disagree** (16% overall) include:

- Those who are not currently receiving Council Tax Support (22%) vs those who are (6%)
- Those who do not have a disability or long-term health issue (18%) vs those who do (11%)
- Male respondents (17%) vs female respondents (12%)
- Those who have served in the UK Armed Forces (21%) vs those who have not (13%)



Further comments

Respondents were asked to provide any further views or comments they had about the proposed changes. Their verbatim responses have been thematically coded, grouping similar responses together, and are presented in the table below and overleaf.

The most common theme was that respondents agreed with and supported the proposals, and believed they would have a positive impact (27%). This was followed by 15% who expressed concern about how this additional proposed support would be funded, or felt that the support should not be funded by services being cut or council tax being raised. Another common theme was that the cost of living crisis affects everyone and the belief that everyone should receive support or that it was unfair for tax payers (12%).

Respondents suggested that certain cohorts of residents should receive more financial support, such as residents who work (12%), pension age residents (7%), single person households (4%), disabled and seriously ill residents or their carers (4%), and families with children (1%).

Equal proportions of respondents who provided a comment said they either agreed or disagreed with the backdating period being extended (both at 3%). Reasons for agreeing mostly related to the belief that individuals may have a good reason not to apply such as being unwell, escaping domestic abuse, find the process difficult, or be unaware that they are eligible for support. Reasons for disagreeing mostly related to the opinion that the current six month backdating period is sufficient, and concern that a longer backdating period could be abused and increase costs for the Council.

The full range of themes is shown in **Figure 4**.

Figure 4 – Further views/comments about the proposed changes

Base: Those who provided a response (1,158)

Further views/comments about the proposed changes	Number	%
Agree with/support proposals/would have a positive impact	310	27%
Concern about how additional support will be funded/services should not be cut/council tax should not be increased to fund this support	177	15%
Cost of living crisis affects everyone/everyone should receive support/unfair for tax payers	142	12%
More financial support/discounts needed for residents who work	136	12%
Dissatisfied with MCC/council services/council tax too high	98	8%
More financial support/discounts needed for pension age residents	86	7%
Support should only be provided to those in genuine need/enforce eligibility checks/concern about abuse of welfare system	75	6%
More financial support needed/proposals do not go far enough	58	5%
Insufficient information provided to comment/need more detail on proposals and impact	58	5%
No comment/opinion/not relevant	58	5%
More financial support/discounts needed for single person households	52	4%
Would prefer to see money spent elsewhere/to improve services	50	4%
More financial support/discounts needed for disabled/seriously ill residents and carers	47	4%
MCC does a good job/grateful for support received	44	4%
Proposals will disincentivise finding employment/MCC should encourage residents into employment	43	4%
Agree with backdating period being extended	40	3%
Disagree with backdating period being extended	35	3%
MCC could do more to save money/increase income	35	3%
Council tax should be reduced/abolished	33	3%



Further views/comments about the proposed changes	Number	%
Limited awareness of support available/unsure how to access support/should be promoted more	32	3%
Comment about questionnaire/consultation	30	3%
Disagree with/oppose proposals/would have a negative impact	29	3%
Comment unrelated to consultation questions	27	2%
Complaint about council tax system	24	2%
Current level of support is adequate/fair for those covered by scheme	24	2%
Criteria/eligibility for Council Tax Support could be improved/should be means tested	20	2%
MCC should provide alternatives to Council Tax Support (e.g. advice on money management, food vouchers, extension of payment period)	19	2%
Backdating period should only be extended for exceptional circumstances/reasons should be published	17	1%
More support needed from government/criticism of government	16	1%
More financial support/discounts needed for families with children	14	1%
Every resident should pay council tax/contribute to society	10	1%
Council Tax Support should be automatically provided to residents on Universal Credit/all residents on Universal Credit should receive Council Tax Support	5	0%
Other	17	1%

Below are some example verbatim responses for some of the most common themes.

Agree with/support proposals/would have a positive impact (27%)

People who need support should be supported as much as possible – costs are going up, so help should go up too.

Happy to support the council in supporting disadvantaged people in these difficult times.

I think any increase in the support given to people who need it should be welcomed and can only be a good thing.

I agree with an increase as the support I received still left me struggling to pay my monthly council tax, and family helped me with my food shopping.

I have been receiving CTS for some time now. I care about others and this sounds like a good thing that would help those less fortunate than myself.

Concern about how additional support will be funded/services should not be cut/council tax should not be increased to fund this support (15%)

Where is this funding coming from, you already quote issues with having funding to do all we need to, stop making it harder!

I strongly disagree for any proposal to increase council tax, we are extremely struggling with our lives, please don't make us suffer more.

There's not enough money for funding everything now so how are you going to increase these funds without cutting other services or raising council tax including those of us that work and cannot claim benefit?

Cost of living crisis affects everyone/everyone should receive support/unfair for tax payers (12%)

Cost of living crisis is impacting everyone so I recommend council to reduce tax bill for every household instead of a select group of residents.



There are many people around this city who cannot claim discounts because they are just above the income limits and they are struggling too. It is unfair to raise the burden of higher council tax on these people to fund others and this does nothing to encourage people to better themselves.

My pay and that of partner has not increased by 2.5% this year or the past 3 years, we have to adapt. This should be the same for everyone, working or not. Why not provide 2.5% relief for all council tax payers rather than just a few.

More financial support/discounts needed for residents who work (12%)

Why just people on benefits, what about the people that are just over the threshold, they really struggle, it seems as though we are forgotten and not included in anything.

I think there should be more support for those who don't meet the criteria for Universal Credit but are still on a lower income.

Maybe do things for workers not just people on benefits. Too many hand outs and us workers get nothing.

Subgroup analysis

Those who are **currently receiving Council Tax Support** were more likely to suggest the following when compared with those who are not:

- Agree with/support proposals/would have a positive impact (37% vs 23%)
- More financial support/discounts needed for disabled/seriously ill residents and carers (7% vs 3%)
- MCC does a good job/grateful for support (11% vs 2%)

Those who are **not currently receiving Council Tax Support** were more likely to suggest the following when compared with those who are:

- Concern about how additional support will be funded/services should not be cut/council tax should not be increased to fund this support (19% vs 5%)
- Cost of living crisis affects everyone/everyone needs support/unfair for tax payers (14% vs 8%)
- More financial support/discounts needed for residents who work (14% vs 5%)
- Dissatisfied with MCC/council services/council tax too high (10% vs 4%)
- Insufficient information provided to comment/need more detail on proposals and impact (6% vs 2%)
- Would prefer to see money spent elsewhere/to improve services (5% vs 2%)
- Proposals will disincentivise finding employment/MCC should encourage residents into employment (5% vs 1%)

Younger respondents were more likely to suggest the following when compared with older respondents aged 55+:

- Cost of living crisis affects everyone/everyone needs support/unfair for tax payers (those aged 35-54 at 17% vs 7%)
- More financial support/discounts needed for residents who work (those aged 35-54 at 16% vs 9%)
- Dissatisfied with MCC/council services/council tax too high (those aged 35-54 at 11% vs 5%)
- More financial support needed/proposals do not go far enough (those aged 16-54 at 8% vs 3%)
- Would prefer to see money spent elsewhere/to improve services (those aged 16-34 at 8% vs 2%)
- Criteria/eligibility for Council Tax Support could be improved/should be means tested (those aged 16-54 at 3% vs 1%)



Subgroup analysis continued

Older respondents aged 55+ were more likely to suggest the following when compared with younger respondents:

- More financial support/discounts for pension age residents (14% vs those aged 16-54 at 1%)
- Support should only be provided to those in genuine need/enforce eligibility checks/concern about abuse of welfare system (7% vs those aged 16-34 at 2%)

Those who **have a disability or long-term health issue** were more likely to suggest the following when compared with those who do not:

- More financial support/discounts needed for pension age residents (12% vs 5%)
- More financial support/discounts needed for disabled/seriously ill residents and carers (8% vs 2%)

Female respondents were more likely to suggest the following when compared with male respondents:

- More financial support/discounts needed for residents who work (16% vs 8%)
- More financial support/discounts needed for single person households (6% vs 2%)

There were no significant differences by respondents who indicated that their **gender is not the same as it was assigned at birth**.

Those who indicated that they **have caring responsibilities** were more likely to suggest the following when compared with those who did not:

- Cost of living crisis affects everyone/everyone should receive support/unfair for tax payers (17% vs 9%)
- More financial support/discounts needed for residents who work (16% vs 9%)
- Dissatisfied with MCC/council services/council tax too high (11% vs 7%)
- More financial support/discounts needed for disabled/seriously ill residents and carers (6% vs 3%)

Those who have **served in the UK Armed Forces** were more likely to suggest more financial support/discounts needed for pension age residents (14%) when compared with those who have not (6%).

Those who have **contacted a local authority due to homelessness** were more likely to suggest the following when compared with those who have not:

- Agree with backdating period being extended (7% vs 3%)
- Comment unrelated to consultation questions (6% vs 2%)

Those who **agreed with all three proposals** were more likely to suggest the following when compared with those who disagreed:

- Agree with/support proposals/would have a positive impact (46% vs 2%)
- More financial support needed/proposals do not go far enough (6% vs 1%)
- No comment/opinion/not relevant (5% vs 1%)
- More financial support/discounts needed for disabled/seriously ill residents and carers (5% vs 1%)
- Council does a good job/grateful for support (6% vs 0 respondents)
- Agree with backdating period being extended
- Limited awareness of support available/unsure how to access support/should be promoted more (4% vs 0 respondents)
- Complaint about council tax system (3% vs 0 respondents)



Subgroup analysis continued

Those who **disagreed with all three proposals** were more likely to suggest the following when compared with those who agreed:

- Concern about how additional support will be funded/services should not be cut/council tax should not be increased to fund this support (36% vs 5%)
- Cost of living crisis affects everyone/everyone should receive support/unfair for tax payers (24% vs 8%)
- More financial support/discounts needed for residents who work (15% vs 9%)
- Dissatisfied with MCC/council services/council tax too high (12% vs 6%)
- Support should only be provided to those in genuine need/enforce eligibility checks/concern about abuse of welfare system (13% vs 3%)
- Would prefer to see money spent elsewhere/to improve council services (14% vs 1%)
- Proposals will disincentivise finding employment/MCC should encourage residents into employment (13% vs 0%)
- Disagree with backdating period being extended (4% vs 0%)
- MCC could do more to save money/increase income (6% vs 1%)
- Council tax should be reduced/abolished (5% vs 2%)
- Disagree with/oppose proposals/would have a negative impact (10% vs 1%)
- Current level of support is adequate/fair for those covered by scheme (9% vs 0 respondents)
- MCC should provide alternatives to Council Tax Support (e.g. advice on money management,



Written response from the Royal British Legion

A written response was submitted to Manchester City Council by the Royal British Legion after the consultation had closed. A summary of the feedback relevant to the consultation has been included below:

- When assessing residents for Council Tax Support and other types of support and benefits, Manchester City Council should ask a question to identify whether residents belong to any of the following groups:
 - Former member of HM Armed Forces, Regular and Reserve
 - Spouse or partner of serving or former member of HM Armed Forces
 - Widow(er) of serving or former member of HM Armed Forces
 - Dependent children of serving or former member of HM Armed Forces
 - Recently divorced or separated spouse or partner of serving or former member of HM Armed Forces
- Recommendation for Manchester City Council to ensure relevant staff are trained and aware of the policies and needs specific to the Armed Forces community, as part of the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant
- Recommendation for Manchester City Council to disregard all forms of military compensation as income in assessments for Council Tax Support and other means tested benefits
- No further comments to make, either in support or objection, to other proposed aspects of the new Council Tax Support scheme and the belief that the new proposals will not impact the Armed Forces community disproportionately

The full written response can be found in the **Appendices**.

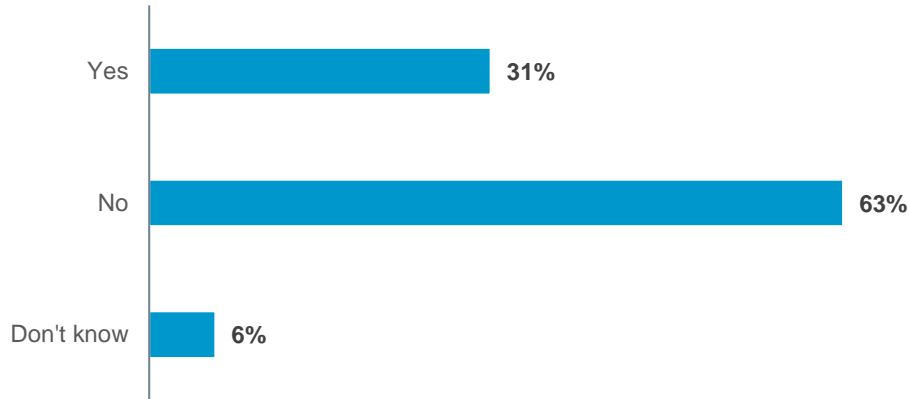


Respondent profile

Figures 5 to 19 show the breakdown of respondent profile based on the demographic and characteristic questions included in the consultation survey. Please note that the findings by area and ethnicity are not included within this report due to data sharing limitations and to preserve respondents' anonymity.

Figure 5 – Do you, or a member of your household, currently receive Council Tax Support?

Base: Those who provided a response (4,644)



Respondents were asked to provide their date of birth but this was not included in the data sent to Enventure Research. To preserve anonymity, Manchester City Council calculated respondents' age which has been displayed in the chart below.

Figure 6 – Age (from date of birth)

Base: Those who provided a response (3,997)

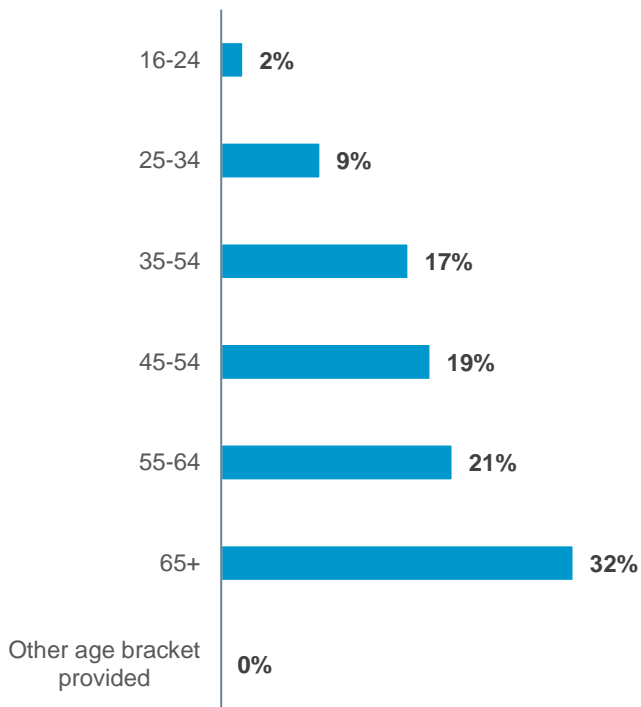
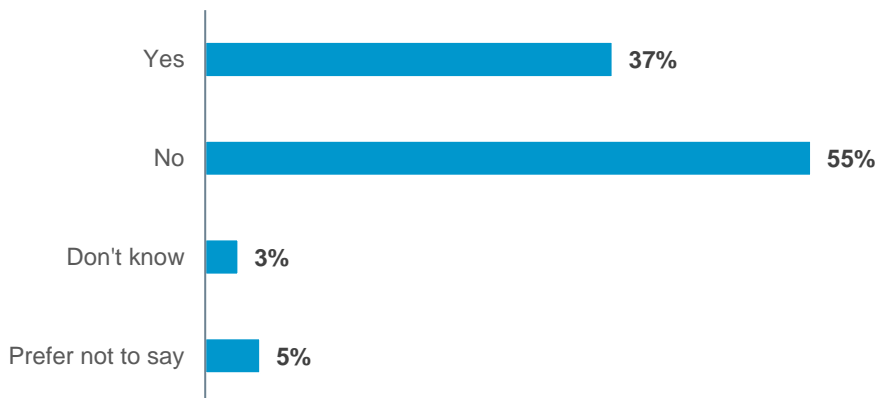
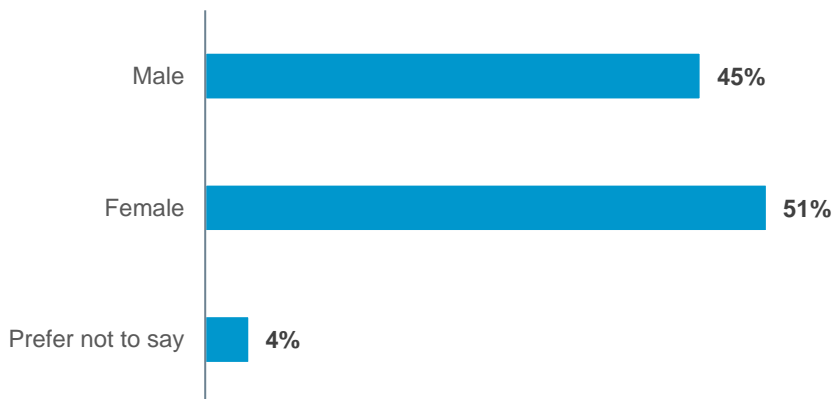


Figure 7 – Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability that has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

Base: Those who provided a response (4,499)

**Figure 8 – What is your sex?**

Base: Those who provided a response (4,512)

**Figure 9 – Is your gender the same as the one you were assigned at birth?**

Base: Those who provided a response (4,486)

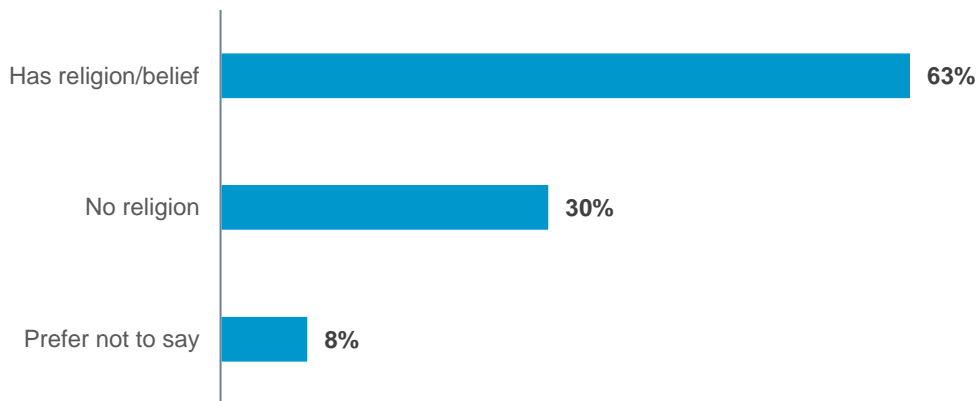


Figure 10 – Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

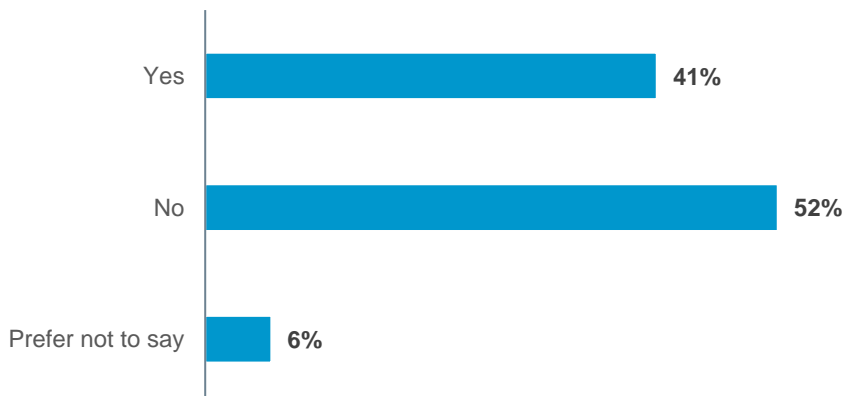
Base: Those who provided a response (4,319)

**Figure 11 – Which of the following best describes your religion or belief?**

Base: Those who provided a response (4,471)

**Figure 12 – Are you currently married or in a civil partnership?**

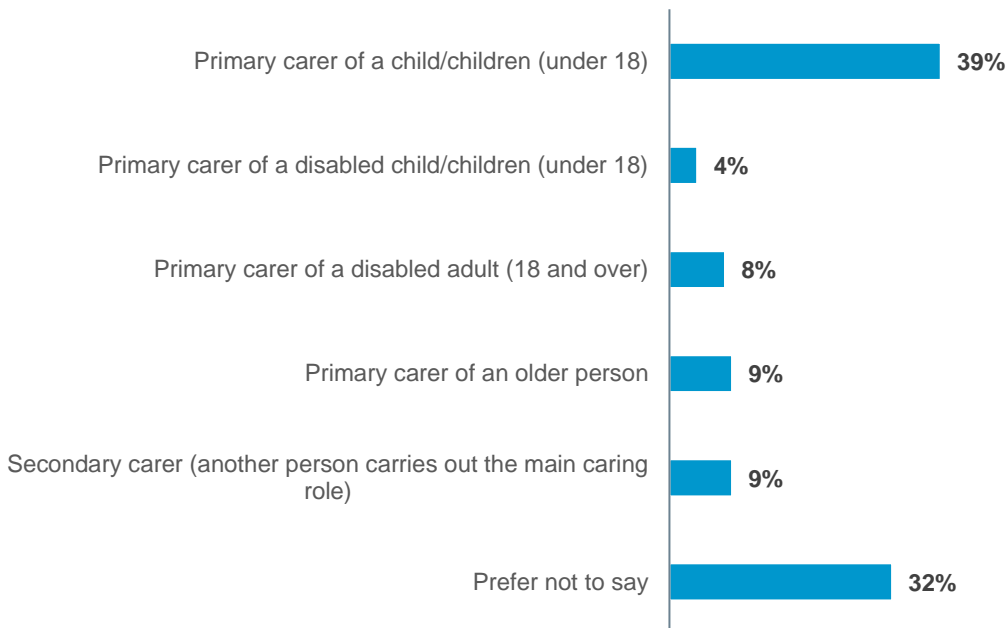
Base: Those who provided a response (4,399)



It should be noted that respondents could only select one response instead of multiple responses when asked whether they have any caring responsibilities.

Figure 13 – Do you have any caring responsibilities?

Base: Those who provided a response (2,212)



All respondents could provide an answer for the question below, even if they had not indicated that they have any caring responsibilities. For this report, the findings have been filtered to only show the responses of those who had previously indicated that they do have any caring responsibilities.

Figure 14 – Is any of the care you provide paid?

Base: Those who said they have caring responsibilities and provided a response (1,466)



Figure 15 – Have you ever been looked after in local authority care as a child?

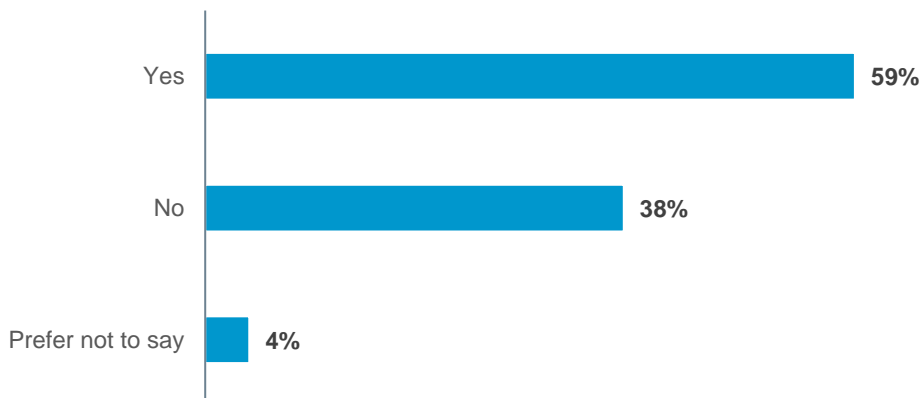
Base: Those who provided a response (4,084)



Respondents could provide an answer for the questions below, even if they had not indicated that they have ever been looked after in local authority care as a child. For this report, the findings for **Figures 16** and **17** have been filtered to only show the responses of those who had previously indicated that they were looked after in local authority care as a child.

Figure 16 – If yes, was this in Manchester?

Base: Those who said they were looked after in local authority care as a child and provided a response (114)

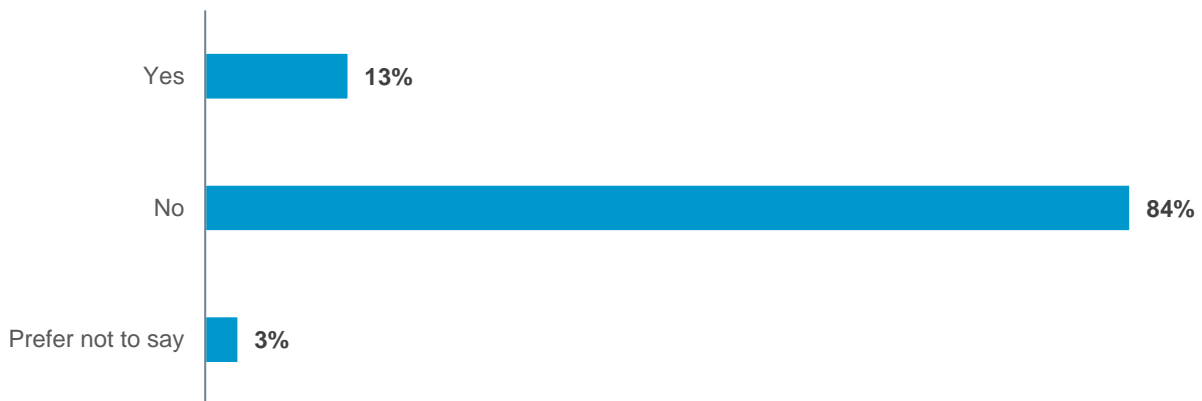
**Figure 17 – Are you still receiving support from Leaving Care or a Looked After team in Manchester?**

Base: Those who said they were looked after in local authority care in Manchester as a child and provided a response (65)



Figure 18 – Have you or a close family member previously served in the UK Armed Forces?

Base: Those who provided a response (4,246)

**Figure 19 – Have you ever contacted a local authority because you were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless?**

Base: Those who provided a response (4,312)



Key Findings

The key findings from the consultation have been summarised below by Enventure Research, an independent research agency:

- **4,737** respondents took part in the consultation, including 1,881 who completed the online survey and a further 2,856 who completed a paper copy of the consultation questionnaire
- 31% of respondents indicated that they or a member of their household were **currently receiving Council Tax Support**
- The **majority of respondents agreed** with all of the Council's proposals in relation to the Council Tax Support scheme
 - 71% agreed that the Council should increase the maximum Council Tax Support to 85% for working age residents, 18% disagreed
 - 65% agreed that the Council should increase the bands of Council Tax Support by 2.5% for residents on Universal Credit, 21% disagreed
 - 72% agreed that the Council should extend the period of backdating from six months to one year where residents have a good reason for not making a claim sooner, 16% disagreed
- Subgroups more likely to **agree** with all three proposals include:
 - Those who are currently receiving Council Tax Support
 - Those who have a disability or long-term health issue
 - Those who have not served in the UK Armed Forces
 - Those who have contacted a local authority due to homelessness
- Subgroups more likely to **disagree** with all three proposals include:
 - Those who are not currently receiving Council Tax Support
 - Those who do not have a disability or long-term health issue
 - Male respondents
 - Those who have served in the UK Armed Forces
- The most common theme amongst those who provided a further comment about the proposals was **agree with/support proposals/would have a positive impact** (27%), followed by **concern about how additional support will be funded/services should not be cut/council tax should not be increased to fund this support** (15%). Both themes were more likely to be suggested by the following subgroups:
 - Those who are currently receiving Council Tax Support
 - Those who agreed with all three proposals
- 12% of further comments related to **cost of living crisis affects everyone/everyone should receive support/unfair for tax payers** and was more likely to be suggested by the following subgroups:
 - Those who are not currently receiving Council Tax Support
 - Those aged 35-54
 - Those who indicated that they have caring responsibilities
 - Those who disagreed with all three proposals
- Another 12% of comments related to the suggestion **more financial support/discounts needed for residents who work** and was more likely to be suggested by the following subgroups:
 - Those who are not currently receiving Council Tax Support
 - Those aged 35-54
 - Female respondents
 - Those who indicated that they have caring responsibilities
 - Those who disagreed with all three proposals



Appendix A

Questionnaire

Council Tax Support Scheme

Have your say on proposed changes



We're proposing some changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme to provide more support for Manchester residents.



We know some residents are struggling due to cost-of-living pressures, and we have introduced a range of measures to help people access food, advice and welfare support. We are proposing to provide further support for some of the poorest households in Manchester as part of the Council's wider response to the challenges facing people in the city.

The Council's present Council Tax Support Scheme pays up to 100% of the council tax bill for pension-age people and up to 82.5% of the council tax bill for working-age people.

We want to increase the level of support we provide for working-age residents to up to 85% of the council tax bill.

We are also looking at extending the backdating period for working and pension-age households to one year.

These proposals would change the Council Tax Support Scheme from 1 April 2024.

We estimate these changes will cost the Council around £770,000.

We'd like your views before we decide

We want your views on proposals for changes to the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme, which helps about a fifth of our residents to pay some of their council tax.

How to have your say

You can have your say on these proposals by completing the consultation survey online at www.manchester.gov.uk/counciltaxsupportchanges or by filling in this paper copy and returning it to us at the Freepost address.

You can also find further information about these proposed changes, including examples of how they could affect those currently receiving support, on the Council's website.

The consultation will close on 12 November 2023.

We'll respect your confidentiality and treat your information in line with data-protection rules. We'll separate any personal details from your answers and store them separately, but we might need to contact you or others if you disclose that someone is at risk of harm.

Consultation questions

Increase of maximum award

Currently, working-age residents can receive support of up to 82.5% of their council tax bill. We want to increase the amount of support that working-age residents can receive. The scheme would provide support up to a maximum of 85% of the council tax bill.

Question 1

Do you agree or disagree that we should increase the maximum Council Tax Support from 82.5% to 85% for working-age residents?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Banding for Universal Credit cases

We currently have a banded scheme for residents who are on Universal Credit. The banded scheme means that small changes in Universal Credit don't always change the amount of Council Tax Support. We want to increase the bands of support by 2.5% so that people on Universal Credit also receive an increase in support.

Below are the current bands of Council Tax Support and the new bands we are proposing.

Band of income	Current Council Tax Support	Proposed Council Tax Support for 2024/25
£0.00 over your applicable amount	82.5% of council tax	85%
£0.01 to £25 over	70%	72.5%
£25.01 to £50 over	45%	47.5%
£50.01 to £75 over	30%	32.5%
£75.01 to £80 over	12%	14.5%
£80.01 over	No support	No support

Question 2

Do you agree or disagree that we should increase the bands of Council Tax Support by 2.5%?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Backdating

We currently allow backdating of up to six months where the resident has a good reason for not making a claim sooner. We would like to extend this so that we can backdate for up to one year. This change would apply to claims from people who are pension age as well as working age.

Question 3

Do you agree or disagree that we should extend the period of backdating from six months to one year where residents have a good reason for not making a claim sooner?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know



Question 4

If you want to give us any views or comments about the proposed changes, please use this space.



What is your postcode?

Do you, or a member of your household, currently receive Council Tax Support?

- Yes
 No
 Don't know

About you

We would like to ask some questions about you. These questions are optional. You do not have to answer them, but in doing so you will be helping Manchester City Council ensure that the views collected through the consultation represent the views of Manchester residents.

All responses will remain confidential.

Question 1

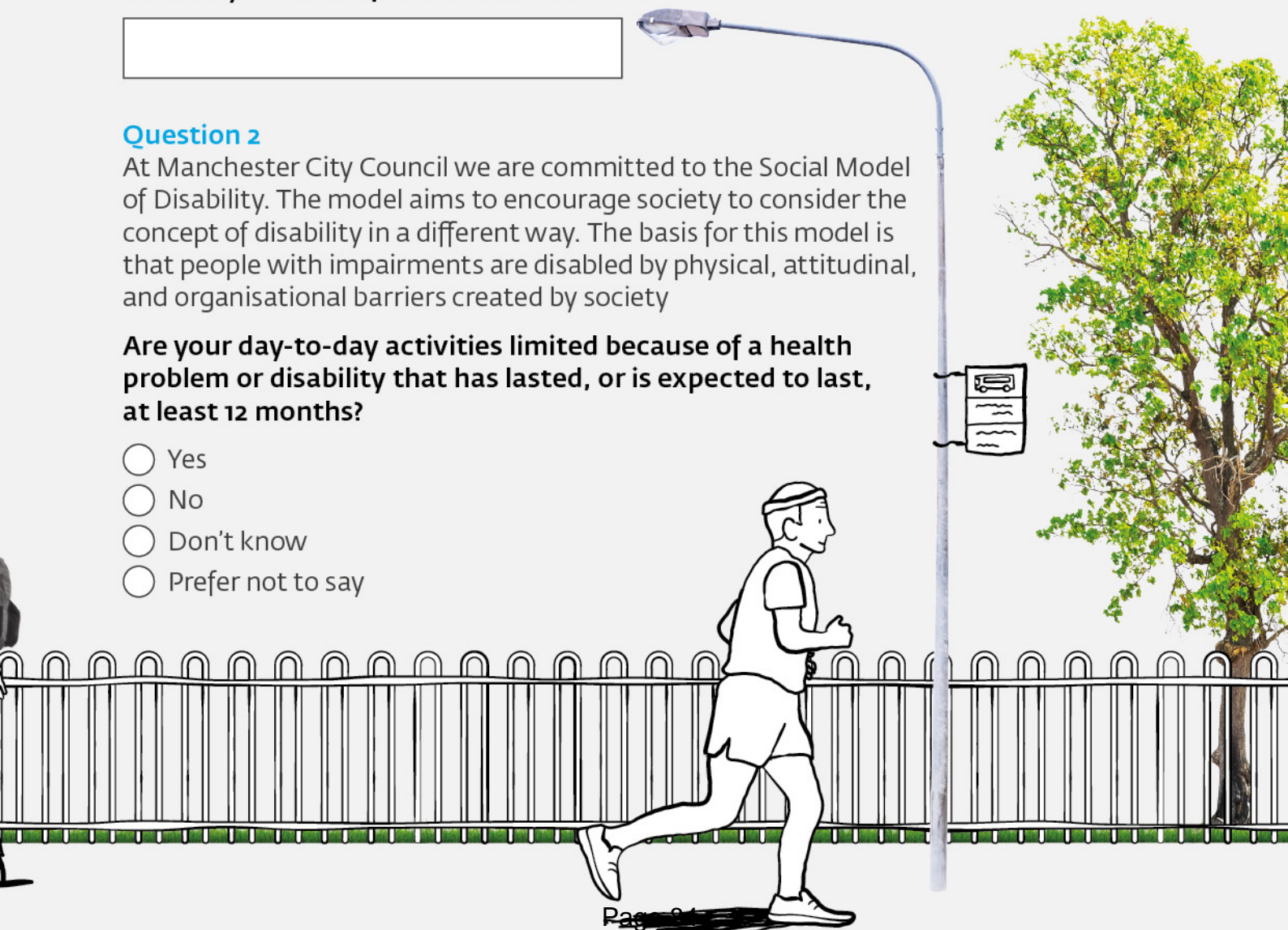
What is your date of birth? DD/MM/YYYY

Question 2

At Manchester City Council we are committed to the Social Model of Disability. The model aims to encourage society to consider the concept of disability in a different way. The basis for this model is that people with impairments are disabled by physical, attitudinal, and organisational barriers created by society

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability that has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

- Yes
 No
 Don't know
 Prefer not to say



Question 3**Which ethnic group do you identify with?****Asian**

- English/Welsh/Scottish
- Northern Irish/British
- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Kashmiri

Black

- English/Welsh/Scottish
- Northern Irish/British
- African
- Caribbean

Mixed

- White and Black British
- White and Black African
- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Asian British
- White and Asian (continent)

Other ethnic group

- (please specify)

White

- English/Welsh/Scottish
- Northern Irish/British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Roma
- Prefer not to say



Question 4**What is your sex?**

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

Question 5

In the Equality Act, gender reassignment means proposing to undergo, undergoing, or having undergone a process to reassign your sex. To be protected from gender reassignment discrimination, you do not need to have undergone any medical treatment or surgery to change from your birth sex to your preferred gender.

Is your gender the same as the one you were assigned at birth?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Question 6**Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?**

- Straight or heterosexual
- Gay or lesbian
- Bisexual
- Pansexual
- Asexual
- Queer
- Other

Question 7**Which of the following best describes your religion or belief?**

- Has religion
 - Christian
 - Buddhist
 - Hindu
 - Jewish
 - Muslim
 - Sikh
 - Other religion
- No religion
- Prefer not to say



Question 8

Are you currently married or in a civil partnership?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Question 9a

Do you have caring responsibilities? If yes, please tick all that apply:

- Primary carer of a child/children (under 18)
- Primary carer of a disabled child/children
- Primary carer of a disabled adult (18 and over)
- Primary carer of older person
- Secondary carer (another person carries out the main caring role)
- Prefer not to say

Question 9b

Is any of the care you provide paid?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Question 10a

Have you ever been looked after in local authority care as a child?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say



Question 10b

If yes, was this in Manchester?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Question 10c

Are you still receiving support from Leaving Care or a Looked After team in Manchester?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Question 11

Have you or a close family member previously served in the UK Armed Forces?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Question 12

Have you ever contacted a local authority because you were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say



Data protection and confidentiality

We comply with all legislation governing the protection of personal information, including the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Any personal information you supply will remain strictly confidential and anonymous and will be held and used in line with the Data Protection Act 2018. We will only use your personal information for the purpose for which it has been given.

Find out more at: www.manchester.gov.uk/privacy

The consultation closes on 12 November 2023

Please return this questionnaire before the closing date to:

Freepost MCC (Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation)
Manchester City Council
PO Box 532
Manchester
M60 2LA

You do not need a stamp.

Appendix B

Written response from
the Royal British Legion



Manchester Council Tax Support Scheme consultation

The Royal British Legion response, November 2023

1. About Us

- 1.1. The Royal British Legion (RBL) is at the heart of a national network that supports our Armed Forces community through thick and thin – ensuring that their unique contribution is never forgotten. We were created as a unifying force for the military charity sector at the end of the First World War, and remain one of the UK's largest membership organisations. The RBL is the largest welfare provider in the Armed Forces charity sector, helping veterans young and old transition into civilian life. We help with employment, financial issues, respite, and recovery, through to lifelong care and independent living. For further information, please visit www.britishlegion.org.uk
- 1.2. The RBL Benefits Debt and Money Advice (BDMA) Service provides free debt and money advice including advice on bankruptcy and debt relief, benefit checks and income maximisation, as well as benefit claims and challenging decisions up to and including the upper tribunal. The service works through England, Wales and Northern Ireland and has 33 advisers across the UK, 13 of which are based in our Contact Centre in Wales.

2. General Comments

- 2.1. The RBL is pleased to have the opportunity to respond to Manchester City Council's call for comments and feedback on its new Council Tax Support Scheme from 1st April 2024.
- 2.2. We note the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, to which Manchester City Council is a signatory¹ that:

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.²

¹ Manchester City Council, [The Armed Forces Community Covenant](#)

² Ministry of Defence, [Armed Forces Covenant](#), (2011)

- 2.3. As a charity providing welfare and support to the Armed Forces community in the UK, we have restricted our answers to the questions and themes where we can provide expertise and insight.
- 2.4. Manchester is home to 858 recipients of Armed Forces pensions or compensation.³
- 2.5. Serving Armed Forces personnel, ex-serving personnel and their families are also resident in Manchester. The 2021 census records 7,728 individuals residing in Manchester as having previously served in any UK Armed Forces. This is made up of 5,114 individuals who have previously served in the UK regular Armed Forces, 2,303 who previously served in the reserve Armed Forces, and 311 who previously served in both the regular and reserve Armed Forces.⁴

3. Identifying the Armed Forces community

- 3.1. The effective provision of appropriate, specialised advice and support to members of the Armed Forces community is reliant on early identification of ex-Service personnel and their families.
- 3.2. The RBL has long called on all public bodies to ‘ask the question’ at the first point of contact with members of the public. We welcome that the public survey for this consultation invites respondents to state any close association to the Armed Forces. ‘Asking the question’ allows identified veterans and family members to be pointed to specialised routes of support and ensures they are given the most appropriate help in a timely manner. **Manchester City Council should ensure that all residents approaching the Council Tax Support Scheme and other benefit services are asked a question that will identify:**
- **Former members of HM Armed Forces, Regular and Reserve**
 - **Spouse or Partner of serving or former members of HM Armed Forces**
 - **Widow(er)s of serving or former members of HM Armed Forces**
 - **Dependent children of serving or former members of HM Armed Forces**
 - **Recently divorced or separated spouses or partners of serving or former members of HM Armed Forces**
- 3.3. In 2017, research highlighted that more needs to be done to upskill frontline welfare staff in local authorities with regards to the Armed Forces Covenant. Over a third of all councils in England, Wales and Scotland have no mechanism in place for briefing staff on the Armed Forces Covenant (39%). Within the Armed Forces community only 4.5% felt that all councils had a good understanding of their needs.⁵ **We recommend that Manchester City Council assesses all intended staff training processes to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of the policies specific to the Armed Forces community and the Council’s commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant.**

³ Ministry of Defence (2023), *Supplementary tables: location of armed forces pension and compensation recipients as at 31 March 2023*, Table 3, available at [Location of armed forces pension and compensation recipients: 2023 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118444/Location_of_armed_forces_pension_and_compensation_recipients_2023_-_GOV.UK_(www.gov.uk).pdf)

⁴ Office for National Statistics, [UK armed forces veteran data, England and Wales: Census 2021](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/armedforcesandarmedforcescommunity/census)

⁵ Shared Intelligence et al, [Our Community - Our Covenant 2nd Edition](https://www.sharedintelligence.co.uk/our-community-our-covenant-2nd-edition/) (2017)

4. Credit their Service Campaign

- 4.1. In July 2023, RBL launched a new campaign called Credit their Service⁶, which calls on the Government to end the unfair treatment of military compensation as income in means tests for welfare benefit, which results in veterans and their families missing out on thousands of pounds each year.
- 4.2. In the summer of 2022, RBL undertook an extensive Freedom of Information (Fol) request exercise of all local authorities in Great Britain to understand how each local authority treated military compensation in their means tested benefits, including Council Tax Support, Housing Benefit, Discretionary Housing Payments and Disabled Facilities Grants. Manchester responded to RBL's Fol request with the following information:

**Answers provided are displayed within the square brackets, i.e., []*

1. Does the Local Authority disregard all payments made under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (2005) as income, when assessing eligibility for:

- a. Housing Benefit [Yes]*
- b. Council Tax Support/ Council Tax Support [Yes]*
- c. Discretionary Housing Payments [No]*
- d. Disabled Facilities Grants (England and Wales only) [No]*

(Please answer YES/NO)

2. Does the Local Authority disregard all payments made under the War Pension scheme, as income, when assessing eligibility for:

- a. Housing Benefit [Yes]*
- b. Council Tax Support/ Council Tax Support [Yes]*
- c. Discretionary Housing Payments [No]*
- d. Disabled Facilities Grants (England and Wales only) [No]*

(Please answer YES/NO)

3. Does the Local Authority disregard a Service Invaliding Pension or Service Attributable Pension, paid under the Armed Forces Pension Scheme, as income, when assessing eligibility for:

- a. Housing Benefit [Yes]*
- b. Council Tax Support/ Council Tax Support [Yes]*
- c. Discretionary Housing Payments [No]*
- d. Disabled Facilities Grants (England and Wales only) [No]*

(Please answer YES/NO)

- 4.3. We welcome that Manchester City Council is already disregarding as income all payments made under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (2005), the War Pension Scheme,

⁶ Royal British Legion, [Credit their Service Campaign](#)

and Service Invaliding (SIP) and Service Attributable Pensions when assessing eligibility for Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit.

- 4.4. RBL recommends that Manchester City Council continues to fully disregard all forms of military compensation as income in assessments for Council Tax Support, and ensure that this is reflected within policy. RBL also recommends that the Council seeks to introduce these same disregards in relation to all other locally administered benefits.**

5. Survey Questions

- 5.1. RBL has no comment to make, either in support or objection, to other proposed aspects of the new Council Tax Support Scheme. We do not consider it will impact our beneficiary group in the Armed Forces community disproportionately to the general population.

6. Summary of Recommendations

- 6.1. Manchester City Council should ensure that all residents approaching the Council Tax Support Scheme and other benefit services are asked a question that will identify:

- Former members of HM Armed Forces, Regular and Reserve
- Spouse or Partner of serving or former members of HM Armed Forces
- Widow(er)s of serving or former members of HM Armed Forces
- Dependent children of serving or former members of HM Armed Forces
- Recently divorced or separated spouses or partners of serving or former members of HM Armed Forces

- 6.2. We recommend that Manchester City Council assesses all intended staff training processes to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of the policies specific to the Armed Forces community and the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant.

- 6.3. RBL recommends that Manchester City Council continues to fully disregard all forms of military compensation as income in assessments for Council Tax Support, and ensure that this is reflected within policy. RBL also recommends that the Council seeks to introduce these same disregards in relation to all other locally administered benefits.







For further information or to discuss, please contact Luke Lancaster, Public Affairs and Campaigns Officer (North) - llancaster@britishlegion.org.uk






November 2023



Appendix 3: Consultation ethnicity responses

Question 3. Which ethnic group do you identify with?				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
Asian				
1	English/Welsh/Scottish		5.54%	247
2	Northern Irish/British		0.61%	27
3	Indian		2.36%	105
4	Pakistani		6.71%	299
5	Bangladeshi		1.14%	51
6	Chinese		1.84%	82
7	Kashmiri		0.13%	6
Black				
8	English/Welsh/Scottish		0.61%	27
9	Northern Irish/British		0.22%	10
10	African		8.17%	364
11	Caribbean		2.18%	97
Mixed				
12	White and Black British		0.76%	34
13	White and Black African		0.76%	34
14	White and Black Caribbean		0.85%	38
15	White and Asian British		0.67%	30
16	White and Asian (continent)		0.49%	22
White				
17	English/Welsh/Scottish		47.68%	2125
18	Northern Irish/British		1.66%	74
19	Irish		2.24%	100
20	Gypsy or Irish Traveller		0.07%	3
21	Roma		0.18%	8
Prefer not to say				
22	Prefer not to say		5.68%	253
Other Ethnic Group				
23	Other (please specify):		9.45%	421

Question 3. Which ethnic group do you identify with?				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
	Asian		18.33%	817
	Black		11.17%	498
	Mixed		3.54%	158
	White		51.83%	2310
	Prefer not to say		5.68%	253
	Other (please specify)		9.45%	421

Census 2021 Ethnicity Breakdown			Response Percent	Response Total
	Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh		20.86%	115,109
	Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African		11.94%	65,893
	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups		5.26%	29,062
	White		56.82%	313,632
	Other ethnic group		5.12%	28,278

Equality Impact Assessment

1. Tell us about your service

My Directorate	Corporate Services
My Service	Revenues and Benefits
My team / section	Business Development Team
The name of the function being analysed	Council Tax Support scheme – proposed changes to the scheme from 1 April 24
Who is completing the assessment?	Amy Brickland
Who is the lead manager for the assessment?	Matthew Hassall

2. Tell us about the activity that you're analysing

Briefly describe the main aims and objectives of your policy, project, service redesign or strategy, including outlining at a high level if it has implications for other areas of the Council's work and priorities.

We know some residents are struggling due to the cost-of-living pressures. We are proposing to provide support for some of the poorest households in Manchester as part of the Council's wider response to the challenges facing people in the city. The Council's present Council Tax Support scheme pays up to 100% of the bill for pension-age people and 82.5% for working-age people. We want to increase the level of support we provide for working-age residents to 85%. We currently have a Council Tax Support banded scheme for households who receive Universal Credit. We want to increase the bands of support by 2.5% so that those on Universal Credit do not lose out on the increase in support. We are also proposing to increase backdating for working and pension-age households to one year. These proposals would change the scheme from 1 April 2024. We estimate the changes would cost between c£700k to c£770k. There are currently 47,702 households in Manchester who receive Council Tax Support, 32,326 of these are working-age households.

TIP: briefly summarise the key points and keep your answer under 500 words.

TIP: try not to duplicate information that's available elsewhere; you can easily use this space to signpost to other sources of background information instead of rewriting them here.

3. Analysing the impact on equality

Will the policy, strategy, project, service redesign being assessed here... (Tick all that apply):

Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by individuals or groups because of their characteristics	yes
Meet the needs of people from protected or disadvantaged groups where these are different from the needs of other people	yes
Promote diversity and encourage people from protected or disadvantaged groups to participate in activities where they are underrepresented	no

Describe how you've reached your conclusion and what evidence it's based on (500 words max).

The increase to the maximum Council Tax Support we pay will be applied to all working-age households who receive Council Tax Support. This will not disadvantage groups or individuals based on their characteristics.

The increase to the length of time we can backdate Council Tax Support for working-age and pension-age households is likely to support individuals who have been unable to make a claim for Council Tax Support earlier. This may include residents who have a continuing health condition or those who may have needed support to make their claim.

Manchester's present scheme is primarily based on the default provisions offered by the government in 2012 and where possible uses the DWP assessment of income and needs, minimising the need for further means-testing by the local authority.

This assessment provides for additional financial support for people with disabilities, caring responsibilities and those responsible for children.

Although Universal Credit does not entirely match the detail of legacy benefits, it does make provision for people with disabilities and caring responsibilities; it makes provision for children; it helps with rent, and it provides work incentives. In 2019 the banded scheme was introduced for those on Universal Credit. At the time it was concluded that it would be appropriate to align Manchester's Council Tax Support scheme with Universal Credit, particularly where it enables the Council to draw on the assessment work carried out by DWP to minimise costs and reduce the need for claimants to provide the Council with the same information and evidence they have already provided to DWP.

A Discretionary Council Tax Payment scheme is available to residents who have anomalous or complex situations which result in them struggling to pay their Council Tax. Support through the scheme is also made available to households who have been hardest hit by the Welfare Reform agenda.

Considering which group/s you have identified the policy, project, strategy or service redesign as being relevant to, complete the table below. Be brief with your answers and only complete them for the group/s relevant to your activity. If you identify any

actions to address impacts, list these in Annex 1 along with responsible officers and timescales for each action.

	1. What is the impact of your proposal on this group? 1) does your proposal remove or minimise disadvantage for each group 2) does it meet needs that are different from other people's 3) does it promote diversity or encourages participation	2. What evidence have you used to reach this assessment? Evidence could include customer profile data, demographic information, research, or engagement and consultation outcomes	3. What actions could be taken to address the impacts? 1) to what extent does this proposal meet our equality duties 2) should or could this be improved
Age (older people)	<p>The increase in the maximum Council Tax Support award from 82.5% to 85% does not affect pension-age households. They already receive support up to 100% of their bill.</p> <p>The increase in the backdating period does not disadvantage this group, it will provide increased support for those who have a good reason for not being able to make a claim sooner.</p>	<p>15,376 pension-age households receive Council Tax Support in Manchester. This is 32% of those who receive Council Tax Support. Data from the 2021 Census showed that 9.2% of those who live in Manchester are aged 65 or over. This data suggests that those who are over pension-age are more likely to be entitled to Council Tax Support than those who are working-age.</p>	<p>Pension-age households will remain entitled to receive Council Tax Support up to 100% of their bill. If they delay making a claim for Council Tax Support we will be able to consider backdating the claim for 12 months rather than the current three month limit.</p> <p>Discretionary Council Tax Payments are also available if a household is experiencing significant hardship and unable to pay their Council Tax bill.</p>

	<p>1. What is the impact of your proposal on this group?</p> <p>1) does your proposal remove or minimise disadvantage for each group 2) does it meet needs that are different from other people's 3) does it promote diversity or encourages participation</p>	<p>2. What evidence have you used to reach this assessment?</p> <p>Evidence could include customer profile data, demographic information, research, or engagement and consultation outcomes</p>	<p>3. What actions could be taken to address the impacts?</p> <p>1) to what extent does this proposal meet our equality duties 2) should or could this be improved</p>
<p>Age (children and young people)</p>	<p>The increase in the maximum Council Tax Support award to 85% will provide increased support for working-age people. The increase in the backdating period does not disadvantage this group, it is likely to be a benefit.</p>	<p>In Manchester there are 12,508 households who receive Council Tax Support and are responsible for a child or young person. Of these, 12,318 are working-age households. 26% of those households who receive Council Tax Support are responsible for a child or young person. Data from the 2021 Census showed that 16.9% of households in Manchester included a child or young person. The data suggests that people who are responsible for a child or young person are more likely to receive Council Tax Support than those who aren't responsible for a child or young person. Therefore, increasing the Council Tax Support award will provide increased support for this group.</p>	<p>Working-age households with children or young people will receive Council Tax Support up to the same maximum level as all working-age households. The Council Tax Support calculation for these families includes an amount in respect of the children who are part of the household although in some cases this is limited to a maximum of two children. Universal Credit and Tax Credits also provide support for children. Discretionary Council Tax Payments are also available if a household is experiencing significant hardship and unable to pay their Council Tax bill.</p>

<p>Disability (including continuing health conditions)</p>	<p>The increase in the maximum Council Tax Support award to 85% will provide increased support for working-age people with disabilities and/or health conditions. The increase in the backdating period is likely to benefit this group as it will allow for backdating where health problems have delayed a resident making a claim.</p>	<p>Council Tax Support data show that of the 32,326 working-age households receiving support, 14,827 receive additional support from the Department for Work and Pensions in respect of a disability or health condition. These include people receiving Personal Independence Payments, Employment and Support Allowance or the Limited Capacity for Working or Limited Capacity for Work Related Activity in their Universal Credit assessment.</p> <p>Data shows that of the 15,376 pension-age Council Tax Support cases, 6,610 of these receive an additional amount of support in their Council Tax Support calculation or their Pension Credit calculation in respect of a disability.</p> <p>In total, 21,986 of the Council Tax Support cases have an indicator showing that either the applicant or partner receives additional benefits due to a disability. This is 46% of the cases receiving Council Tax Support.</p> <p>Data from the 2021 census shows that 34% of households in Manchester contained at least one person with a disability.</p>	<p>Households with a disability will receive Council Tax Support up to the same maximum level as other households. They will be receiving additional financial support for their health condition from the Department for Work and Pensions and in some cases they will also receive extra support in the way their Council Tax Support is calculated. Discretionary Council Tax Payments are also available if a household is experiencing significant hardship and unable to pay their Council Tax bill.</p>
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	1. What is the impact of your proposal on this group? 1) does your proposal remove or minimise disadvantage for each group 2) does it meet needs that are different from other people's 3) does it promote diversity or encourages participation	2. What evidence have you used to reach this assessment? Evidence could include customer profile data, demographic information, research, or engagement and consultation outcomes	3. What actions could be taken to address the impacts? 1) to what extent does this proposal meet our equality duties 2) should or could this be improved
		It therefore appears that those with a disability or health condition are more likely to be in receipt of Council Tax Support than other households.	

	<p>1. What is the impact of your proposal on this group?</p> <p>1) does your proposal remove or minimise disadvantage for each group 2) does it meet needs that are different from other people's 3) does it promote diversity or encourages participation</p>	<p>2. What evidence have you used to reach this assessment?</p> <p>Evidence could include customer profile data, demographic information, research, or engagement and consultation outcomes</p>	<p>3. What actions could be taken to address the impacts?</p> <p>1) to what extent does this proposal meet our equality duties 2) should or could this be improved</p>
<p>Race</p>	<p>The increase in the maximum Council Tax Support award to 85% will provide increased support to working-age people. Pension-age residents already receive support up to 100% of their bill. The increase in the backdating period is likely to provide extra support for those who were unable to apply for support sooner.</p>	<p>We ask residents to provide details of their ethnicity on the Council Tax Support application form. Providing this information is optional. The options residents can select are set by the Department for Work and Pensions. They do not directly correspond to the information collected in the census or other data the council may hold. We have 47,702 live Council Tax Support claims, we hold ethnic information for 36,045 of these.</p> <p>This data shows that 59% of Council Tax Support claims are from White;British residents, 7.4% are from Asian/Asian British: Pakistani residents, 4.6% are from black/black British : African residents, 3.1% are from White: Irish residents. Other ethnicities represented less than 3% of those claiming Council Tax Support.</p>	<p>Households receive Council Tax Support up to the same maximum level regardless of their race. The increase in the backdating period is likely to provide support to residents who may have struggled to make a claim sooner, for example because they needed help to make their claim in another language. If people need help to claim in another language then they are directed for support from Citizens Advice Manchester or to local support groups who can provide assistance. Discretionary Council Tax Payments are also available if a household is experiencing significant hardship and unable to pay their Council Tax bill.</p>

	1. What is the impact of your proposal on this group? 1) does your proposal remove or minimise disadvantage for each group 2) does it meet needs that are different from other people's 3) does it promote diversity or encourages participation	2. What evidence have you used to reach this assessment? Evidence could include customer profile data, demographic information, research, or engagement and consultation outcomes	3. What actions could be taken to address the impacts? 1) to what extent does this proposal meet our equality duties 2) should or could this be improved
Sex	<p>The increase in the maximum Council Tax Support award to 85% will provide increased support to working-age people. Pension-age residents already receive support up to 100% of their bill. The increase in the backdating period is likely to provide extra support for those who were unable to apply for support sooner.</p>	<p>The data shows that of the 47,702 live cases, 40,052 of these are claims from single people. Of these 25,143 (63%) are claims from women and 14,909 (37%) are from men. The census data shows that across Manchester 49.7% of the population are female and 50.3% are male. It therefore appears that woman are more likely than men to receive Council Tax Support and are therefore more likely to benefit from the proposed increases from April 2024.</p>	<p>The current scheme and the proposed scheme provide the same level of support to residents regardless of their gender. This is in line with other Department for Work and Pensions benefits. Any household that is struggling to pay their Council Tax can apply for extra support through the Discretionary Council Tax Payment scheme.</p>

	<p>1. What is the impact of your proposal on this group?</p> <p>1) does your proposal remove or minimise disadvantage for each group 2) does it meet needs that are different from other people's 3) does it promote diversity or encourages participation</p>	<p>2. What evidence have you used to reach this assessment?</p> <p>Evidence could include customer profile data, demographic information, research, or engagement and consultation outcomes</p>	<p>3. What actions could be taken to address the impacts?</p> <p>1) to what extent does this proposal meet our equality duties 2) should or could this be improved</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>The increase in the maximum Council Tax Support award to 85% will provide increased support to working-age people. Pension-age residents already receive support up to 100% of their bill. The increase in the backdating period is likely to provide extra support for those who were unable to apply for support sooner.</p>	<p>We do not hold data about the sexual orientation of those who receive benefits. The census data shows that, in Manchester, 6.6% of the population identify as one of the following; Gay or Lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, queer, or asexual. This compares with national data that shows 3.16% of the population identified as falling into one of these groups.</p>	<p>The current scheme and the proposed scheme provide the same level of support to residents regardless of their sexual orientation. This is in line with other Department for Work and Pensions benefits and support payments. Any household that is struggling to pay their Council Tax can apply for extra support through the Discretionary Council Tax Payment scheme.</p>

	<p>1. What is the impact of your proposal on this group?</p> <p>1) does your proposal remove or minimise disadvantage for each group 2) does it meet needs that are different from other people's 3) does it promote diversity or encourages participation</p>	<p>2. What evidence have you used to reach this assessment?</p> <p>Evidence could include customer profile data, demographic information, research, or engagement and consultation outcomes</p>	<p>3. What actions could be taken to address the impacts?</p> <p>1) to what extent does this proposal meet our equality duties 2) should or could this be improved</p>
<p>Marriage / civil partnership</p>	<p>The increase in the maximum Council Tax Support award to 85% will provide increased support to working-age people. Pension-age residents already receive support up to 100% of their bill. The increase in the backdating period is likely to provide extra support for those who were unable to apply for support sooner.</p>	<p>We do not hold data on how many people are married or in civil partnerships. We do hold data showing how many people claim as a single person and how many are a couple.</p> <p>The data shows that the majority of the Council Tax Support claims we have in payment are for single households rather than couples. We have 7,650 (16%) claims from couples and 40,052 (84%) claims from single people. These figures may reflect that fact that households with two incomes are less likely to qualify for benefits than single households.</p>	<p>The current scheme and the proposed scheme provide the same level of support to residents claiming as a couple, regardless of whether they are married or in a civil partnership. This is in line with other Department for Work and Pensions benefits and support payments. Any household that is struggling to pay their Council Tax can apply for extra support through the Discretionary Council Tax Payment scheme.</p>

	1. What is the impact of your proposal on this group? 1) does your proposal remove or minimise disadvantage for each group 2) does it meet needs that are different from other people's 3) does it promote diversity or encourages participation	2. What evidence have you used to reach this assessment? Evidence could include customer profile data, demographic information, research, or engagement and consultation outcomes	3. What actions could be taken to address the impacts? 1) to what extent does this proposal meet our equality duties 2) should or could this be improved
Pregnancy / maternity	<p>The increase in the maximum Council Tax Support award to 85% will provide increased support to working-age people. Pension-age residents already receive support up to 100% of their bill. The increase in the backdating period is likely to provide extra support for those who were unable to apply for support sooner.</p>	<p>We do not collect information on whether a resident is pregnant. If a resident has a reduction in their income while pregnant, for example because they are unable to work as many hours as usual or because their income drops while on maternity leave, then this would be taken into account when calculating their Council Tax Support entitlement.</p>	<p>The current scheme and the proposed scheme provide the same level of support to residents regardless of whether they are pregnant. This is in line with other Department for Work and Pensions benefits and support payments. Any household that is struggling to pay their Council Tax can apply for extra support through the Discretionary Council Tax Payment scheme.</p>
Gender Reassignment	<p>The increase in the maximum Council Tax Support award to 85% will provide increased support to working-age people. Pension-age residents already receive support up to 100% of their bill. The increase in the backdating period is likely to provide extra support for those who were unable to apply for support sooner.</p>	<p>We do not collect information on whether a resident receiving Council Tax Support has undertaken gender reassignment. Census data for Manchester shows that 1.2% of the population have a different identity was different to their sex registered at birth. This compares with 0.5% of the population nationally.</p>	<p>The current scheme and the proposed scheme provide the same level of support to residents regardless of whether they have undertaken gender reassignment. This is in line with other Department for Work and Pensions benefits and support payments. Any household that is struggling to pay their Council Tax can apply for extra support through the Discretionary Council Tax Payment scheme.</p>

	<p>1. What is the impact of your proposal on this group?</p> <p>1) does your proposal remove or minimise disadvantage for each group 2) does it meet needs that are different from other people's 3) does it promote diversity or encourages participation</p>	<p>2. What evidence have you used to reach this assessment?</p> <p>Evidence could include customer profile data, demographic information, research, or engagement and consultation outcomes</p>	<p>3. What actions could be taken to address the impacts?</p> <p>1) to what extent does this proposal meet our equality duties 2) should or could this be improved</p>
<p>Faith / religion / belief</p>	<p>The increase in the maximum Council Tax Support award to 85% will provide increased support to working-age people. Pension-age residents already receive support up to 100% of their bill. The increase in the backdating period is likely to provide extra support for those who were unable to apply for support sooner.</p>	<p>We do not collect data on the faith/religion/belief of residents who claim Council Tax Support.</p>	<p>The current scheme and the proposed scheme provide the same level of support to residents regardless of their religion. This is in line with other Department for Work and Pensions benefits and support payments. Any household that is struggling to pay their Council Tax can apply for extra support through the Discretionary Council Tax Payment scheme.</p>
<p>Additional Characteristics</p>			

	<p>1. What is the impact of your proposal on this group?</p> <p>1) does your proposal remove or minimise disadvantage for each group 2) does it meet needs that are different from other people's 3) does it promote diversity or encourages participation</p>	<p>2. What evidence have you used to reach this assessment?</p> <p>Evidence could include customer profile data, demographic information, research, or engagement and consultation outcomes</p>	<p>3. What actions could be taken to address the impacts?</p> <p>1) to what extent does this proposal meet our equality duties 2) should or could this be improved</p>
<p>People living in poverty</p>	<p>The increase in the maximum Council Tax Support award to 85% will provide increased support to working-age people. This is likely to support people who are living in poverty and have low incomes as it will mean they have less to pay towards their Council Tax bill. Pension-age residents already receive support up to 100% of their bill. The increase in the backdating period is likely to provide extra support for those who were unable to apply for support sooner. This will allow us to reduce or clear outstanding Council Tax bills which is likely to be a support to those who are living in poverty.</p>	<p>All of those who receive Council Tax Support are on a low income and therefore likely to be classed as living in poverty. These changes will provide extra support for these residents.</p>	<p>Discretionary Council Tax payments are also available to households who are struggling to pay their Council Tax.</p>

	<p>1. What is the impact of your proposal on this group?</p> <p>1) does your proposal remove or minimise disadvantage for each group 2) does it meet needs that are different from other people's 3) does it promote diversity or encourages participation</p>	<p>2. What evidence have you used to reach this assessment?</p> <p>Evidence could include customer profile data, demographic information, research, or engagement and consultation outcomes</p>	<p>3. What actions could be taken to address the impacts?</p> <p>1) to what extent does this proposal meet our equality duties 2) should or could this be improved</p>
<p>Carers</p>	<p>The increase in the maximum Council Tax Support award to 85% will provide increased support to working-age people. Pension-age residents already receive support up to 100% of their bill. The increase in the backdating period is likely to provide extra support for those who were unable to apply for support sooner.</p>	<p>Council Tax Support data shows that 6,702 households receive additional support in their benefit calculation in respect of being a carer and receiving Carers Allowance. This is 14% of the households receiving Council Tax Support. Census data does not provide a direct comparison on those who are carers in Manchester. The census data does show that a total of 22,584 residents in Manchester provide over 20 hours of care each week. This is 4% of residents in Manchester. These figures show that people with caring responsibilities in Manchester are more likely to receive Council Tax Support in Manchester than those who do not.</p>	<p>Households with caring responsibility will receive Council Tax Support up to the same maximum level as other households. They will be receiving additional financial support in the form of Carers Allowance from the Department for Work and Pensions. Discretionary Council Tax Payments are also available if a household is experiencing significant hardship and unable to pay their Council Tax bill.</p>

	<p>1. What is the impact of your proposal on this group?</p> <p>1) does your proposal remove or minimise disadvantage for each group 2) does it meet needs that are different from other people's 3) does it promote diversity or encourages participation</p>	<p>2. What evidence have you used to reach this assessment?</p> <p>Evidence could include customer profile data, demographic information, research, or engagement and consultation outcomes</p>	<p>3. What actions could be taken to address the impacts?</p> <p>1) to what extent does this proposal meet our equality duties 2) should or could this be improved</p>
<p>Homeless people</p>	<p>The changes to Council Tax Support will primarily impact on residents who are liable for Council Tax and therefore who have a home. However, the increase in support will reduce the amount of Council Tax that would otherwise be owed. Council Tax debts are something that homeless residents may struggle with when they are rehomed.</p>	<p>Census data on how many people were homeless is not yet available. Data published by Shelter on 2022 homeless figures showed that in Manchester as at 30 June 2022 there were 7,450 people who were homeless. This included people who were living in temporary accommodation. Their figures showed that Manchester was in the top 30 of local authorities for the number of people who were homeless.</p>	<p>Households with experience of homelessness will receive Council Tax Support up to the same maximum level as other households. Discretionary Council Tax Payments are also available if a household is experiencing significant hardship and unable to pay their Council Tax bill.</p>

	<p>1. What is the impact of your proposal on this group?</p> <p>1) does your proposal remove or minimise disadvantage for each group 2) does it meet needs that are different from other people's 3) does it promote diversity or encourages participation</p>	<p>2. What evidence have you used to reach this assessment?</p> <p>Evidence could include customer profile data, demographic information, research, or engagement and consultation outcomes</p>	<p>3. What actions could be taken to address the impacts?</p> <p>1) to what extent does this proposal meet our equality duties 2) should or could this be improved</p>
<p>Ex-Armed Forces veterans and families</p>	<p>The increase in the maximum Council Tax Support award to 85% will provide increased support to working-age people. Pension-age residents already receive support up to 100% of their bill. The increase in the backdating period is likely to provide extra support for those who were unable to apply for support sooner.</p>	<p>We do not hold data on how many residents claiming Council Tax Support are ex Armed Forces veterans. Census data shows that Manchester has 1.8% of residents aged 16 and over have previously served in the armed forces. This is lower than the national average of 3.8%.</p>	<p>Ex-Armed Forces veterans and family households will receive Council Tax Support up to the same maximum level as other households. Many incomes paid to those who have left the armed forces are disregarded when calculating Council Tax Support and Universal Credit. Discretionary Council Tax Payments are also available if a household is experiencing significant hardship and unable to pay their Council Tax bill.</p>
<p>Care-experienced young people and care-leavers</p>	<p>The increase in the maximum Council Tax Support award to 85% will provide increased support to working-age people. The council provides additional support to care leavers through its discretionary payment scheme. All care leavers received an additional payment through the discretionary scheme to clear their Council Tax bill up to the age of 25. If they live with others then their share of the bill is covered.</p>	<p>In 2022/23 we awarded additional help with Council Tax to 490 care leavers. Up to 1 November 2023 we have awarded additional help with Council Tax to 528 care leavers.</p>	<p>Care Leavers receive additional support through our care leaver scheme. This means that they are not required to pay Council Tax up to the age of 25.</p>

4. Quality Assurance - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team

EDI Team: Name	Barry Young	Date reviewed:	7 December 2023
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5. Head of Service Approval

Your completed analysis needs to be signed off by your Head of Service.

Name:	Matthew Hassall	Date:	12 December 2023
Job title:	Head of Corporate Assessments	Signature:	Matthew Hassall

Manchester City Council

Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2024

effective from 1 April 2024

Introduction

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit and the Local Government Finance Act 2012 made provision for local authorities to devise their own schemes for a Council Tax Support discount to assist people on low incomes to pay their Council Tax.

People over pension age are protected by regulations requiring a local scheme to retain most features of the former Council Tax Benefit scheme. People below pension age are covered by a locally defined scheme that is subject to only limited national prescription.

The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/2885) set out the scheme provisions that local authorities must adopt for people over pension age and additionally prescribe a small number of provisions that local authorities must incorporate into their local scheme for people of working age. These regulations will be maintained across time.

The Council Tax Reductions Schemes (Default Scheme) (England) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/2886) prescribed the scheme that would be a local authority's local scheme if the local authority failed to make a local scheme by 31 January 2013. As such, these regulations will not be maintained beyond that date as any local authority on which the default scheme was imposed will have that as its local scheme and will be responsible for maintaining it.

Both of these regulations were amended for the first year of the scheme by the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/3085) to uprate amounts in line with the general 2013 Social Security uprating. Regulations changing the scheme for subsequent years are set out in the Annexe at the end of this Scheme.

Manchester's scheme for people of working age is based on the government's default scheme subject to the modifications specified below. The Council at its meeting of **31 January 2024** decided to make this scheme, applicable from 1 April 2024. It is a revision of the Council's 2013 and subsequent Council Tax Support Schemes. Through powers it delegated to the City Treasurer it has been further

revised from 1 April 2023 to incorporate updated amounts for applicable amounts, disregards and non-dependant deductions. Note that the 2017, 2018 and 2019 upratings reflected the freeze on basic applicable amounts while amounts for disability and carers were increased in line with inflation and new non-dependant deduction rates and their related income bands equivalent to the prescribed values for people over pension age have been applied.

Part A

Council Tax Support for people of pension age

For a person to whom regulation 3 (a) of the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 applies (a “pensioner”), the classes of person entitled to Council Tax Support under this scheme for any week are classes A, B and C as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 1 of those regulations and the provisions of those regulations, amended as may be from time to time, shall apply,

save that

1. In paragraph 1 of schedule 5 of those regulations (disregard of pensions paid for war disablement and to war widows and war widowers), the amount to be disregarded shall be the whole of that income.
2. The amount of the family premium shall continue to align to the equivalent for people of working age unless the government prescribes a higher amount.
3. In matters not prescribed by the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012, the provisions of the Council Tax Reductions Schemes (Default Scheme) (England) Regulations 2012 as they relate to pensioners shall apply.

Part B

Council Tax Support for people of working age

For a person to whom regulation 3 (b) of the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 applies (a “person who is not a pensioner”), the classes of person entitled to Council Tax Support under this scheme for any week are those prescribed in paragraphs 16 and 17 of the Schedule to the Council Tax Reductions Schemes (Default Scheme) (England) Regulations 2012 (Class D and Class E) and the provisions of

- Parts 1 to 3 and schedules 7 and 8 of the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 as subsequently amended,
- The Council Tax Reductions Schemes (Default Scheme) (England) Regulations 2012, and

- The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2012

shall apply,

save as follows:-

People of Working Age

1. For the avoidance of doubt, a person who is not a pensioner shall be treated as a pensioner if he is one of a couple and the other member of that couple has reached the qualifying age for state pension credit and neither member of the couple is
 - (a) a person on income support, on an income-based jobseeker's allowance or on an income-related employment and support allowance, or
 - (b) a person with an award of universal credit.

Maximum Council Tax Reduction

2. In paragraph 29 (1) of the Default Scheme, for a person who is not a pensioner and who is not in receipt of Universal Credit, the amount of a person's maximum council tax reduction in respect of a day is 85% of the amount A/B where—
 - (a) A is the amount set by the authority as the council tax for the relevant financial year in respect of the dwelling in which he is a resident and for which he is liable, subject to any discount which may be appropriate to that dwelling under the 1992 Act; and
 - (b) B is the number of days in that financial year, less any deductions in respect of non-dependants which fall to be made under paragraph 30 (non-dependant deductions: pensioners and persons who are not pensioners).

Assessment of income and capital

3. In paragraph 20 of schedule 8 of the Default Scheme (disregard of pensions paid for war disablement and to war widows and war widowers), the amount to be disregarded shall be the whole of that income.

Delay in reporting changes

4. Paragraph 107 of the Default Scheme is subject to the proviso that where an applicant (or any person acting on his behalf) fails to notify a relevant change of circumstances in accordance with paragraph 9 of Schedule 8 to the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/2885)(reproduced in paragraph 115 of the Default Scheme) and that change would result in an increase in the amount of a reduction, the amount of the reduction granted shall not be increased for any day before the day on which the authority received notification of that change.

Uprating

5. The Council shall review the amounts specified in this scheme (these being those set in the 2018 scheme) before 1 April 2019 and thereafter annually, having regard in particular, but not exclusively, to
 - (a) the level of funding to be provided by the Secretary for State for Communities and Local Government,
 - (b) figures prescribed in the Default Requirements for pensioners, and
 - (c) comparable figures in the Housing Benefit scheme.

The resulting figures for 2023 are set out in Appendix 1 below.

Alternative maximum council tax reduction

6. Paragraph 18, Part 8 and Schedule 4 of the Default Scheme shall not apply.
7. For the words “classes D to F” in the Default Scheme there shall be substituted the words “classes D and E”.

Family Premium

8. The provisions set out in regulations 2 and 4 of the Housing Benefit (Abolition of the Family Premium and date of claim) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 [SI 1857 of 2015] to exclude the family premium from the applicable amount of a new applicant shall apply to the applicable amount for Council Tax Support from 1 April 2017 for new claims made on or after 1 April 2017 and for existing applicants where a first child is born or a child joins a household that does not include children on or after 1 April 2017.

Applicable amounts for children

9. The provisions set out in The Social Security (Restrictions on Amounts for Children and Qualifying Young Persons) Amendment Regulations 2017 [SI 376 of 2017] to exclude, with exceptions, additional applicable amounts in the Housing Benefit scheme for a third or subsequent child born or joining the household on or after 1 April 2017 shall apply equally in the assessment of the applicable amount for Council Tax Support.

[Note that The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2017 (SI2017/1305) makes corresponding provision for people of pension age to be included in the scheme.]

Temporary absence from home

10. Where a person of working age is absent from Great Britain for more than four weeks, the provisions of the Housing Benefit scheme set out in the Housing Benefit and State Pension Credit (Temporary Absence) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 (S.I.2016 No.624) shall apply also to Council Tax Support.

[Note that The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 (SI2016/1262) makes corresponding provision for people of pension age to be included in the scheme.]

Part C

Provisions common to people of pension age and people of working age

Transitional

1. A person entitled to Council Tax Support in respect of 31 March 2024 or who has made a timely claim for Council Tax Support in respect of 31 March 2024 and whose claim has not yet been determined shall be treated as having made an application for a reduction under this scheme from 1 April 2024.

Technical amendments

2. The Council shall review and amend this scheme as appropriate to reflect changes to legislation referenced in this scheme, changes to the Council Tax scheme itself, decisions of the courts, new sources of income, for example allowances paid under government schemes, and such other matters that appear to require technical amendment to maintain the coherence and intentions of this scheme.

Reviews and appeals

3. Where the provisions of this scheme align with those of the Housing Benefit scheme, the Council will apply the findings of a Lower or Upper Tier Tribunal on Housing Benefit as being applicable to the amount of a reduction under this scheme unless a valuation tribunal determines otherwise.
4. The Council may review and change any decision relating to a reduction to correct an accidental error or to take into account new caselaw relevant to the decision in question but shall be under no obligation to do so in respect of entitlement in any previous financial year.

Application of reductions to account and suspension of changes to reductions and of further reductions

5. The Council will apply a reduction under this scheme to the relevant Council Tax account for the remainder of the relevant financial year, thereby reducing the amount of Council Tax payable. The Council may adjust this amount at any time during or after the relevant year as a result of changes to, or the end of entitlement to, the reduction.
6. The Council may suspend any adjustment to the amount of a reduction or the award of a further reduction if there is doubt about a person's entitlement to or the amount of a reduction but in such a case shall take all reasonable steps to resolve such doubts as soon as practical. The Council may also suspend any

adjustment to the amount, or further award, of a reduction if an applicant does not provide information or evidence that is reasonably required within one month of the request for such information or evidence and may end the reduction from the date the information or evidence was requested if it is not provided within one month of the date of the suspension.

7. Where the Council decides that the amount of a reduction should be reduced, it will usually reduce the amount applied to the account but reserves the right to waive the application of all or part of that reduction in cases of “official error” where the applicant could not be considered to have caused or contributed to the error, had no reason to doubt the amount of the reduction awarded and could not be expected to pay the increased liability for Council Tax quickly without difficulty. Adjustments to a reduction for the remainder of the financial year from the date of the decision to change the amount of a reduction will always be applied.

Additional disregards of income and capital

8. Payments made under section 49 of the Children and Families Act 2014 (personal budgets and direct payments) as defined in paragraph 66 of Schedule 5 (sums to be disregarded in the calculation of income other than earnings) and paragraph 61 of Schedule 6 (capital to be disregarded) of the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 shall be fully disregarded.

Time limit for notifying a change

9. The period of 21 days specified as the period during which an applicant must notify a change likely to affect the amount of a reduction is extended to one month to align with the provisions of the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (Decisions and Appeals) Regulations 2001, Regulations 7(2)(a), (3), 8(3)(5) and Regulation 9.

Effective date of change for CTS as a result of an award or increase of a DWP benefit

10. When the Council has awarded a reduction under this scheme and the claimant, or a member of their family, becomes entitled to a DWP benefit or has an increase in the amount of a DWP benefit from a date after the start of the claim, the provisions of The Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (Decisions and Appeals) Regulations 2001 Regulations 7(2)(i) and 8(14) will apply to the award of CTS as they would to an award of Housing Benefit.

Cases where income equals the applicable amount

11. For the avoidance of doubt, the entitlement of an applicant whose assessed income is the same amount as their applicable amount is to be treated according to the provisions of Class A in the case of a person who is a pensioner or class D for a person who is not a pensioner.

Energy Bills Rebate

12. Where a resident is entitled to and receives an Energy Bills Rebate payment this will be disregarded in determining their entitlement to a reduction under the Council Tax Support Scheme. This is in accordance with The Council Tax (Demand Notices and Reduction Schemes) (England) (Amendment) Regulation 2022, Regulation 16

Backdating

13.(1) Where an applicant makes an application under an authorities scheme which includes (or where the applicant subsequently requests should include) a period before the application is made; and from a day in that period up to the date that the applicant made the application (or subsequently requested that the application should include a past period), the applicant had continuous good cause for failing to make an application (or request that the application should include that period), the application is to be treated as made on the date determined in accordance with sub paragraph 2

(2) That date is the latest of

- a) the first day from which the applicant has good cause
- b) the day one year before the application was made
- c) the day one year before the date when the applicant requested that the application should include a past period

Paragraph 13 is in addition to the provision in The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements)(England) Regulations 2012, Schedule 8, Paragraph 6, which allows backdating for an applicant who is a pensioner of up to three months without the requirement for the applicant to demonstrate good cause.

Part D

Additional provisions in respect of people entitled to Universal Credit

1. A person for whom the Council receives both an electronic notification of a new claim for, and subsequently a related first payment of, Universal Credit from the Department for Work and Pensions shall be deemed to have made a claim for a reduction under this scheme on the first day of entitlement to Universal Credit to which that notification of first payment refers.
2. Where an award of a reduction under this scheme is ended because an associated award of Universal Credit has ended or reduced but that award of Universal Credit is reinstated (whether at the same rate or at a different rate) or increased to a level at which an award of a reduction under this scheme would be appropriate within a period of six months, a new claim for a reduction is required. A new claim in these circumstances shall be treated as made on the date on which entitlement to Universal Credit resumed or was increased or six months before the day on which the claim is actually received, whichever is the later.

2. The amount of an award in respect of a day under this scheme for a person entitled to Universal Credit shall be a percentage of the amount set by the authority as the council tax for the relevant financial year in respect of the dwelling in which he is a resident and for which he is liable, subject to any discount which may be appropriate to that dwelling under the 1992 Act, divided by the number of days in that financial year, less the daily rate of any deductions in respect of non-dependants which fall to be made, and that percentage shall be the percentage specified in the following table according to the band in which their excess income falls.

Excess weekly income greater than	Excess weekly income no more than	% reduction of Council Tax liability
£80.00	-	Nil
£75.00	£80.00	14.5%
£50.00	£75.00	32.5%
£25.00	£50.00	47.5%
£0.00	£25.00	72.5%
-	£0.00	85%

3. Where the Council receives notification from the Department for Work and Pensions of a change to the amount of excess income for Universal Credit and the changed assessment does not result in an alteration to the amount of a reduction under this scheme, the Council is not required to notify the claimant of its recording of that change.

Note : the following figures will be amended for 2024 based on the uprating figures released later in 2023.

Appendix 1

Uprated amounts from 1 April 2023 for people of working age

The amounts set out in the Schedule to the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme)(England) Regulations 2012 as amended by the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements and Default Scheme)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2012, and as uprated in Manchester City Council's Local Council Tax Support Schemes for 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 are further amended as follows:-

Non-dependant deductions

In paragraph 30 (non-dependant deductions) for sub-paragraph 1, substitute "(1) Subject to the following provisions of this paragraph, the non-dependant deductions in respect of a day referred to in paragraph 29 are in respect of a non-dependant aged 18 or over, £4.20 x 1/7" and sub-paragraphs 2 and 4 shall cease to have effect.

- (a) in sub-paragraph (1)(a) for “£12.85” substitute “£.14.15”; .
- (b) in sub-paragraph (1)(b) for “£4.20” substitute “£4.60”; .
- (c) in sub-paragraph (2)(a) for “£224.00” substitute “£236.00”; .
- (d) in sub-paragraph (2)(b) for “£224.00”, “£389.00” and “£8.55” substitute “£236.00”, “£410.00” and “£9.40” respectively; .
- (e) in sub-paragraph (2)(c) for “£389.00”, “£484.00” and “£10.70” substitute “£410.00”, “£511.00” and “£11.80” respectively.

Applicable amounts for persons who are not pensioners

In Schedule 3 (applicable amounts: persons who are not pensioners), the amounts are updated as follows—

- (a) in column (2) of the Table in paragraph 1—
 - (i) in sub-paragraph (1)(a) and (b), for “£77.00” substitute “£84.80.”;
 - (ii) in sub-paragraph (1)(c), for “£61.05” substitute “£67.20”;
 - (iii) in sub-paragraph (2), for “£77.00” substitute “£84.80”;
 - (iv) in sub-paragraph (3), for “£121.05” substitute “£133.30”;
- (b) in column (2) of the Table in paragraph 3, in each place in which it occurs, for “£70.80” substitute “£77.78”;
- (c) in paragraph 4(b), for “£17.85” substitute “£18.53”;
- (d) in the second column of the Table in paragraph 17—
 - (i) in sub-paragraph (1)(a), for “£36.20” substitute “£39.85”;
 - (ii) in sub-paragraph (1)(b), for “£51.60” substitute “£56.80”;
 - (iii) in sub-paragraph (2)(a) and (b)(i), for “£69.40” substitute “£76.40”;
 - (iv) in sub-paragraph (2)(b)(ii), for “£138.80” substitute “£152.80”;
 - (v) in sub-paragraph (3), for “£68.04” substitute “£74.69”;
 - (vi) in sub-paragraph (4), for “£38.85” substitute “£42.75”;
 - (vii) in sub-paragraph (5)(a), for “£27.44” substitute “£30.17”;
 - (viii) in sub-paragraph (5)(b), for “£17.75” substitute “£19.55”;
 - (ix) in sub-paragraph (5)(c), for “£25.35” substitute “£27.90”;
- (e) in paragraph 23, for “£30.60” substitute “£33.70”;
- (f) in paragraph 24, for “£40.60” substitute “£44.70”.

Annexe

Regulations amending prescribed requirements of the scheme after 1 April 2013

from	By	Effects
13 March 2014	The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 (Consequential Provisions) Order 2014 (SI 2014/107)	Recognises the introduction of same sex marriage.
1 April 2014	The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 (SI 2013/3181)	Uprating and minor technical amendments
1 April 2014	The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 (SI 2014/448)	Additional uprating figures
1 April 2014	The Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 (Consequential Modifications and Savings) Order 2014 (SI 2014/513).	Technical updates in respect of pensioners' capital.
1 April 2015	The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2014 (SI 2014/3312)	Uprating; to align provisions in respect of EEA jobseekers with those in the Housing Benefit scheme; and minor technical matters.
1 April 2015	The Care Act 2014 (Consequential Amendments) (Secondary Legislation) Order 2015 (SI 2015/643)	Updates the definition of "blind" and other minor technical amendments.
5 April 2015	<u>The Shared Parental Leave and Statutory Shared Parental Pay (Consequential Amendments to</u>	Updates definitions relating to paternity pay and shared parental pay

	<u>Subordinate Legislation)</u> <u>Order 2014</u> (SI 2014/3255)	
26 May 2015	The Deregulation Act 2015 (Consequential Amendments) Order 2015 (SI 2015/971)	Removes reference to an obsolete body
1 April 2016	The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/2041)	Uprating; to remove the family premium for elderly claimants from 1 May 2016 with transitional protection for existing cases; and minor technical matters.
6 April 2016	The Pensions Act 2014 (Consequential, Supplementary and Incidental Amendments) Order 2015 (SI 2015/1985)	Covers introduction of New State Pension
6 April 2016	The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (Consequential Amendments) (Secondary Legislation) Regulations 2016 (SI2016/211 – W.84)	Updates the definition of “blind” and other minor technical amendments.
1 April 2017	The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 (SI2016/1262)	Uprating; and to apply more restrictive rules on eligibility for elderly claimants who are temporarily absent abroad.
3 April 2017	The Employment and Support Allowance and Universal Credit (Miscellaneous Amendments and Transitional and Savings Provisions) Regulations 2017 (SI2017/204)	Technical changes resulting from the removal of the Work Related Activity Group component from Employment and Support Allowance.
6 April 2017	The Pensions Act 2014 (Consequential, Supplementary and Incidental Amendments) Order 2017 (SI2017/422)	Covers the introduction of bereavement support payments

1 April 2018	The Fire and Rescue Authority (Police and Crime Commissioner) (Application of Local Policing Provisions, Inspection, Powers to Trade and Consequential Amendments) Order 2017 (SI2017/863)	Technical amend to disregard of earnings of fire-fighters
1 April 2018	The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2017 (SI2017/1305)	Uprating and alignment with minor changes in other schemes
2 April 2018	The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (Consequential Amendments to Secondary Legislation) Regulations 2018 (SI2018/48)	Amends definition of care homes in Wales
1 April 2019	The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (SI2018/1346)	Uprating and alignment with minor changes in other schemes
29 April 2019	The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (Consequential Amendments to Secondary Legislation) Regulations 2019 (SI2019/237)	Updates cross reference re Welsh fostering arrangements.
1 April 2020	The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 (SI2020/23)	Uprating, disregard of additional charitable payments and alignment with minor changes in other schemes
1 April 2021	The Council Tax Reduction Schemes	Uprating, introduction of separate personal

	(Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 (SI 2021/29)	allowance for those who reach pension age after 1 April 2021, changes to the Habitual Residence Test. Treatment of UC payments, child migrant trust, victims payments, Grenfell Tower and occasional assistance.
1 April 2022	The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2022	Uprating, disregard if additional types of payments and compensation & treatment of Afghan citizens,
1 April 2022	The Council Tax (Demand Notices and Reduction Schemes) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2022	Disregard of payments made under the Energy Rebate Scheme 2022
1 April 2023	Social Security and Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Amendment) Regulations 2022. SI 2022/449,	Citizens from EEA countries will be subject to the same eligibility requirements as those from non-EEA countries when applying for Council Tax Support.
1 April 2023	The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England)(Amendment)Regulations 2023	Technical changes to the regulations to include the Adult Disability Payment in various sections. This payment is disregarded as income. Inclusion of £350 thank you payments made to those who are "Homes for Ukraine" sponsors as an income that is disregarded as both capital and income. Those arriving from Ukraine in connection with the Russian invasion and other individuals granted leave to enter or remain in the UK outside the Immigration Rules, with recourse to public funds,

		will not need to demonstrate "habitual residence" in order to receive Council Tax Support.

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee – 11 January 2024
Executive – 17 January 2024

Subject: Increasing Council Tax Premiums on empty properties

Report of: Head of Corporate Revenues

Summary

In February 2023 the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee reviewed new powers provided by legislation going through parliament at the time to increase the Council Tax on empty properties:

- Empty, unfurnished properties would pay the 100% long term empty premium after one year instead of two years.
- Empty, furnished properties would pay up to a 100% premium from the date that they became empty.

The [Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023](#) that granted these powers was delayed and eventually passed in October 2023, meaning the Council can now adopt the powers. The increased premium for empty unfurnished properties can be introduced from 1 April 2024. The 100% premium on empty, furnished properties can be introduced from 1 April 2025.

Recommendations

The Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee is requested to consider and comment upon the contents of the report.

The Executive is requested to confirm that the Council will adopt the new powers allowed by the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023 to:

- Charge the long-term empty premium after one year instead of two years from 1 April 2024.
 - Charge a 100% premium on empty furnished properties, subject to any future guidance or regulations from Central Government from 1 April 2025.
-

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city	None
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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments	The recommendations are for changes to existing powers allowed by new legislation. Charging an additional amount of Council Tax comes into effect due to the ownership of an empty property, rather than by membership of any protected or disadvantaged groups.
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Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	n/a
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	n/a
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Increased revenue from empty properties will help the Council fund essential services that local communities depend on.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The changes to Council Tax discounts and will have an impact on the city's property market, as by charging for empty homes and premiums for long term empties it is aimed that properties will be let and occupied more promptly.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	n/a

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

Adopting the recommendations of the report will:

Based on current figures and assuming there are no changes to the numbers of empty properties and the periods they have been empty, the two proposed changes could bring in increased Council Tax revenue as follows:

- Charging the Long-Term Empty premium after one year instead of two – estimated at up to £1.1 million, of which £0.8m would accrue to the City Council (excluding precepts). This figure may reduce as owners are encouraged to bring these properties back on to the market for rent or sale,

but any reduction may be offset by an increase in the New Homes Bonus paid by central government subject to the grant's continuation in the next Parliament's Spending Review.

- Introducing a 100% premium on empty, furnished properties (including second homes). – estimated at up to £7.2 million.

Financial Consequences – Capital

None

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

Report to Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee, 7 February 2023 and Executive, 15 February 2023.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report reminds the Committee of the decision taken in February 2023 to adopt new powers made available in the [Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023](#). These allow the Council to charge up to a 100% premium on top of normal Council Tax in two areas:
- Properties that have been empty and unfurnished for one year (previously this was applied after two years).
 - Properties that are empty and furnished as soon as they become empty (these can be second homes or rental properties between lettings).
- 1.2 The legislation comes into force from 1 April 2024 in respect of charging the Long-Term Empty Premium after one year, but the additional premium cannot be added to the Council Tax on empty, furnished properties until 1 April 2025 due to the required minimum 12 month notice period from the date of Royal Assent, as set out in the act.

2. Background

- 2.1 From April 2013, the Council has been allowed to charge an additional premium on homes that have been empty and unfurnished for more than two years. Initially the premium was 50%, but in 2019, after further legislation, the current regime was introduced where the Council charges a 100% premium after two years, a 200% premium after five years and a 300% premium after ten years.
- 2.2 Also from April 2013, the Council removed the 50% open ended discount on empty, furnished properties, replacing it with a one month, 100% discount to allow landlords time to do necessary repairs between tenancies. This was removed by the Council in 2019, meaning no discount is available to owners of empty, furnished properties.
- 2.3 The focus and rationale behind these changes is to encourage owners to bring properties back into use more quickly to address housing shortages that have been well reported.

3. New powers granted under the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023

- 3.1 The Act allows Councils to charge the long-term empty premium of up to 100% after one year instead of the current two-year timespan, from 1 April 2024. It also allows the Council to charge a premium of up to 100% on empty, furnished properties from April 2025, including second homes. The regulations are included as appendix 1.
- 3.2 Consultation was carried out on these proposals as part of the budget consultation exercise for the 2023 budget:

- 66.3% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the Council should make the additional charge on empty, unfurnished properties. 23.8% disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 50.5% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the Council should make the additional charge on empty, furnished properties. 38.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

4. Financial implications

4.1 Empty and unfurnished properties

4.1.1 In February 2023, there were 733 properties that had been empty and unfurnished for between one and two years. It was estimated that applying the premium after one year instead of two would create additional Council Tax liabilities of £1.3 million. By September 2023, the number of empty properties in this category had reduced to 604 properties reducing the estimated increase in Council Tax liabilities to £1.1 million, of which an estimated £0.8m would be retained by the Council.

4.2 Empty and furnished properties

4.2.1 A further report will be brought to RAGOS and executive prior to introducing the new policy for empty and furnished properties from 1 April 2025.

4.2.2 In February 2023 there were 5,371 properties that were empty and furnished, split almost 50/50 between those empty for more than a year (probably second homes) and those empty for less than a year (probably empty rental properties). By September 2023, the 12 month average number of empty properties in this category had reduced to 5,057 properties producing an estimated increase in Council Tax liabilities of £7.2 million, reflecting the Council's share only. However, this will be significantly reduced because properties owned by Registered Social Landlords will be exempt from this premium.

4.2.3 There will be circumstances where landlords and homeowners are genuinely struggling to sell these properties. While it is likely that Government will publish guidance and/or Regulations that give some dispensation to landlords for empty periods between tenants and to owners genuinely struggling, the Council may also want to consider the safeguards that will need to be in place prior to introducing this premium.

4.2.4 Much of this is not guaranteed income to the Council as collection and recovery difficulties and behavioural change by owners and landlords may erode the figures. Around half of the empty furnished properties appear to be genuine second homes which will attract the new premium generating a more reliable additional income stream of around £3.6 million.

4.3 Safeguards

- 4.3.1 The Council already has the discretion to waive the Long-Term Empty Premium for empty, unfurnished properties where they are being genuinely marketed for sale but that sale is proving difficult due to issues such as cladding. Properties that are empty because they have been found to be unsafe ad occupation is prohibited are currently exempt from Council Tax too.
- 4.3.2 There is also the Discretionary Council Tax Payment scheme which was established when the Long-Term Empty Premium was first introduced. This was designed to (amongst other things) protect residents from unexpected hardship due to the premium by paying something towards their Council Tax.

5. Equality Impact Assessments

- 5.1 The requirements of Section 149 of the Equality Act state that public bodies must have due regard to the need to:
- i. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - ii. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
 - iii. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- 5.2 Those affected by the proposed introduction of higher levels of Council Tax payable on properties that have been empty and unfurnished for more than one year or empty and furnished will be determined by liability for Council Tax either as an owner or a tenant of an empty property.
- 5.3 Liability is not affected by any aspects of someone's personal identity. It may be that one of the protected groups is overrepresented in the group affected, but even if this was the case, there would be no way of knowing as the Council is not allowed to hold information that is not required for the administration and collection of Council Tax. There is no evidence to indicate that any one of the protected groups is over-represented in the cohort.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee is requested to consider and comment upon the contents of the report.
- 6.2 The Executive is requested to confirm that the Council will adopt the new powers allowed by the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023 to:
- Charge the long-term empty premium after one year instead of two years from 1 April 2024
 - Charge a 100% premium on empty furnished properties, subject to any future guidance or regulations from Central Government from 1 April 2025

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Extract from the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023

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Appendix 1 – Extract from the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023

80 Long-term empty dwellings: England

(1) In section 11B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (higher amount for long-term empty dwellings: England)—

- (a) after subsection (1C) insert— “(1D) In exercising its functions under this section a billing authority must have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.”;
- (b) in subsection (8), for “2 years” substitute “1 year”.

(2) The amendments made by subsection (1) have effect for financial years beginning on or after 1 April 2024 (and, in relation to the amendment made by subsection (1)(b), it does not matter whether the period mentioned in section 11B(8) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 begins before this section comes into force).

81 Dwellings occupied periodically: England

(1) The Local Government Finance Act 1992 is amended in accordance with subsections (2) and (3).

(2) After section 11B (higher amount for long-term empty dwellings: England) insert—

“11C Higher amount for dwellings occupied periodically: England

(1) For any financial year, a billing authority in England may by determination provide in relation to its area, or such part of its area as it may specify in the determination, that if on any day the conditions mentioned in subsection (2) are satisfied in respect of a dwelling—

- (a) the discount under section 11(2)(a) does not apply, and
- (b) the amount of council tax payable in respect of that dwelling and that day is increased by such percentage of not more than 100 as it may specify in the determination.

(2) The conditions are—

- (a) there is no resident of the dwelling, and
- (b) the dwelling is substantially furnished.

(3) A billing authority’s first determination under this section must be made at least one year before the beginning of the financial year to which it relates.

(4) In exercising its functions under this section a billing authority must have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

(5) Where a determination under this section has effect in relation to a class of dwellings

- (a) the billing authority may not make a determination under section 11A(3), (4) or (4A) in relation to that class, and

(b) any determination that has been made under section 11A(3), (4) or (4A) ceases to have effect in relation to that class.

(6) A billing authority may make a determination varying or revoking a determination under this section for a financial year, but only before the beginning of the year.

(7) Where a billing authority makes a determination under this section it must publish a notice of the determination in at least one newspaper circulating in the area.

(8) The notice must be published before the end of the period of 21 days beginning with the date of the determination.

(9) The validity of the determination is not affected by a failure to comply with subsection (7) or (8).

11D Section 11C: regulations

(1) The Secretary of State may by regulations prescribe one or more classes of dwelling in relation to which a billing authority may not make a determination under section 11C.

(2) A class of dwellings may be prescribed under subsection (1) by reference to such factors as the Secretary of State thinks fit and may, amongst other factors, be prescribed by reference to—

- (a) the physical characteristics of, or other matters relating to, dwellings;
- (b) the circumstances of, or other matters relating to, any person who is liable to the amount of council tax concerned.

(3) The Secretary of State may by regulations specify a different percentage limit for the limit which is for the time being specified in section 11C(1)(b).

(4) A statutory instrument containing regulations made under subsection (3) may not be made unless a draft of the instrument has been approved by resolution of the House of Commons.”

(3) In consequence of the amendment made by subsection (2)—

- (a) in section 11 (discounts), in subsection (2), after “11B” insert “, 11C”;
- (b) in section 11A (discounts: special provision for England), in subsection (4C), at the end insert “and 11C(5)”;
- (c) in section 13 (reduced amounts), in subsection (3), after “11B” insert “, 11C”;
- (d) in section 66 (judicial review), in subsection (2)(b), after “11B” insert “, 11C”;
- (e) in section 67 (functions to be discharged only by authority), in subsection (2)(a), after “11B” insert “, 11C”;
- (f) in section 113 (orders and regulations), in subsection (3), after “under section” insert “11D(3),”;

(g) in Schedule 2 (administration), in paragraph 4(7), after “: England),” insert “11C(1)(b) (higher amount for dwellings occupied periodically: England),”.

(4) A determination for the purposes of section 11C of the Local Government 10 Finance Act 1992 as inserted by subsection (2) may not relate to a financial year beginning before 1 April 2024 (but this does not affect the requirement for the determination to be made at least one year before the beginning of the financial year to which it relates).

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**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee - 9 January 2024
Executive – 17 January 2024

Subject: Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) Serious Youth Violence

Report of: Strategic Director (Children and Education Services)

Summary

The purpose of this report is to inform Manchester City Council Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee of the findings from the recent JTAI in respect of Serious Youth Violence and next steps.

Between 25th September 2023 and 13th October 2023 Manchester was subject to the first of 6 JTAI to be carried out nationally and which will focus on Serious Youth Violence.

The inspection was led by Ofsted and involved a total of 12 inspectors from CQC (Health and Care), Ofsted (Schools and Social Care), HMPI (Youth Justice) and HMICFRS (Police, Fire and Rescue). In addition, the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) were also engaged as a key partner.

The inspection considered 3 broad areas.

1. **Strategic Partnership responses to serious youth violence** (how well do we work together, understand and respond to issues in Manchester)
2. **Intervention with Individual and groups of children** affected by serious youth violence and criminal exploitation (how do we provide timely, purposeful and impact positively into children and their family's lives)
3. **Intervention in places and spaces** (contextual safeguarding and how we use intelligence to inform activity and disrupt)

The inspection identified the governance arrangements for Serious Violence in the city to be a strength, stating *“Effective and mature partnership arrangements between agencies are supporting a coordinated and comprehensive multi-agency response to serious youth violence. A strong learning culture enables the partnership to identify where improvements are needed and work together to address these. There is a well-understood strategy in place and much purposeful activity which is reducing risks to children... There is an increasingly strong focus on prevention and early intervention to tackle serious youth violence in Manchester. There are a significant number of innovative interventions and projects which are making a positive difference for children.”*

Inspectors described the work of Manchester's Complex Safeguarding Hub as “strong and effective.” The Hub is where police officers, social workers, health

professionals and other experts work alongside each other to identify children at risk of becoming and/or involved with serious violence/criminal exploitation and put intervention measures in place (often working with wider families as well as the individual young person) to prevent harm.

There was also recognition for the work undertaken by and in partnership with Manchester Youth Zone.

Whilst recognising the strength of Manchester's partnerships and 8 areas of strength, the report also identified 6 areas for improvement. These included enhanced multi-agency evaluation of projects to understand better how they work together as part of an overall system and more consistency in information recording and sharing between partners.

A requirement of the inspection is for a multi-agency action plan to be developed in response to the 6 areas identified for improvement.

The full report can be found at appendix 1 and 2 respectively.

Recommendations

The Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Consider the report and the inspection findings outlined therein and explore the strengths and areas for improvement.
2. Consider and comment on the draft multi-agency plan.

The Executive is recommended to:

1. To consider the observations of the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee.
2. To consider and comment on the inspection report findings and draft action plan.

Wards Affected: All

<p>Environmental Impact Assessment -the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments</p>	<p>Manchester's strategic planning and delivery in response to serious violence has engaged young people from a diverse range of communities and identity. Services continue to strive to improve the cultural competence in how we deliver to our children, young people and communities.</p>

	Consequently, whilst progress is evident it will remain a priority area for continued focus.
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Manchester Strategy outcomes	
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Effective support for young people is critical so they are diverted away from involvement with serious violence and risks are mitigated; encouraging them to connect, provide support, contribute and be part of Manchester as a thriving and sustainable City.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Ensuring our young people are given the opportunity to access immediate support enables a timely assessment of need to ensure the right support at the right time is provided.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Building a trusted relationship with young people helps builds their resilience, recover from trauma which is needed to enable their potential to be achieved.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Improving outcomes for young people dispersed across the city helps build and develop communities
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	It is important as a city we are responsive to ensuring our young people have high-quality opportunities and benefit so they can be successful and be an active member and contributor to Manchester City and local communities.

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

N/A

Financial Consequences – Capital

N/A

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

N/A

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On 29th August 2023 Ofsted published the inspection guidance/framework for a JTAI in respect of Serious Youth Violence which would focus on how the police, children's social care, education, youth offending services and relevant health services in local areas work together to address and prevent serious youth violence. The inspectorates will consider interventions with individual and groups of children to see how well agencies help them and reduce the risk of serious youth violence.
- 1.2 The JTAs will also consider multi-agency interventions in places such as parks, streets and shopping malls, where individual or groups of children are at risk, to improve safety for children and for communities.
- 1.3 On 25th October 2023 Manchester was notified it would be subject to a JTAI in respect of Serious Youth Violence, making it the first in the country to be subject to this new inspection framework.
- 1.4 In addition to individual local area reports with Manchester's being published on 30th November 2023, an overview summary of the thematic will be published. It is anticipated this will be during 2024.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The inspection guidance for a JTAI which can be access via the following link <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-targeted-area-inspections-of-the-multi-agency-response-to-serious-youth-violence/joint-targeted-area-inspections-of-the-multi-agency-response-to-serious-youth-violence> outlines the national context, impact for children, families and communities impacted by serious violence and factors that can contribute to prevalence of serious violence.

3.0 Main issues

- 3.1 The overall findings from the JTAI in respect of Serious Youth Violence were positive identifying the following areas of strength within Manchester.
 - Robust multi-agency arrangements with clear accountabilities and a well understood strategy are leading to many children receiving a range of effective responses to address serious youth violence.
 - A significant number of innovative approaches and interventions developed and managed by the partnership are making a positive difference to children's lives.
 - A culture of professional challenge and shared learning is helping to enable improvements in practice and in the impact of services.
 - The views and aspirations of children are generally well understood. Professionals are developing a progressively more accurate, shared

understanding of children's lives and of the effect on them of experiencing serious violence and exploitation.

- A consistently strong approach to building relationships with children is supporting effective interventions to reduce risk.
- Most partner agencies have a good understanding of the range of risks from serious youth violence and criminal exploitation faced by children, and this enables them to offer a range of appropriate support aimed at reducing risks.
- An effective approach is in place for prevention and early intervention, and to support the engagement of schools. There is an increasingly good mentoring offer that is making a positive difference for children.
- The CSH delivers strong multi-agency working that, overall, provides effective expertise, advice, help and intervention for children at significant risk of serious youth violence and exploitation.

3.2 In addition, the following 6 areas were identified as areas for improvement and in response a multi-agency action plan has been developed. The delivery of this will be overseen by the Community Safety and Manchester Safeguarding Partnerships.

- How effectively the arrangements for the monitoring and evaluation of serious youth violence support the partnership in implementing its strategy.
- How well the strong strategic intent to address the disproportionate impact of serious youth violence and criminal exploitation on children from some ethnic backgrounds and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has been translated into positive change for children.
- The specificity and thoroughness of plans, and how effectively they are implemented, reviewed, and developed so that children get the right help at the right time.
- How consistently professionals look beyond the needs of an individual child, for whose safety or welfare there may be concerns, and consider risks to the wider group of children, such as brothers, sisters and peers associated with that child.
- The consistency with which key information is recorded and shared between partners to enable effective decision-making.
- The awareness of professionals about the range of services that are on offer to support the emotional well-being and mental health of children at risk from serious youth violence or criminal exploitation, as well as waiting times to receive therapeutic treatment as part of the core child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS).

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 It is recommended that the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee:

- Consider the report and the inspection findings outlined therein and explore the strengths and areas for improvement.
- Consider and comment on the draft multi-agency plan.

4.2 It is recommended that the Executive:

- Consider the observations of the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee.
- Consider and comment on the inspection report findings and draft action plan.

5.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Manchester's final Joint Targeted Area Inspection Report

Appendix 2 - JTAI Action Plan

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30 November 2023

Paul Marshall, Strategic Director Children and Education Directorate Services,
Manchester City Council
Tom Hinchcliffe, Deputy Place Lead, Manchester Heath and Care Commissioning
Kate Green, Greater Manchester Deputy Mayor
Stephen Watson, QPM, Chief Constable, Greater Manchester Police
Thomas Lang, Youth Justice Head of Service, Manchester City Council
Beate Wagner, Independent Scrutineer, Manchester Safeguarding Partnership

Dear Manchester Local Safeguarding Partnership

Joint targeted area inspection of Manchester

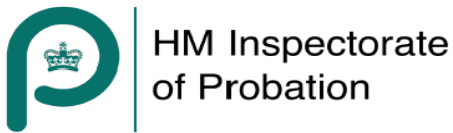
This letter summarises the findings of the joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to serious youth violence in Manchester.

This inspection took place from 9 to 13 October 2023. It was carried out by inspectors from Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP).

Context

The findings in the report evaluate the effectiveness of the multi-agency response to children aged 10 and over who are at risk of or affected by serious youth violence and/or criminal exploitation. Even where the report does not specifically refer to this group of children, all findings relate to this scope.

The inspectorates recognise the complexities for agencies in intervening to address serious youth violence when risk and harm occur outside of the family home. As a consequence, risk assessment and decision-making have a number of complexities and challenges. A multi-agency inspection of this area of practice is more likely to highlight some of the significant challenges to partnerships in improving practice. We anticipate that each of the JTAIs of this area of practice that are being carried out will identify learning for all agencies and will contribute to the debate about what 'good practice' looks like in relation to the multi-agency response to serious youth violence. In a significant proportion of cases seen by inspectors, children had also experienced other forms of abuse, which reflects the complexity of the needs and risks for children.



Headline findings

Effective and mature partnership arrangements between agencies are supporting a coordinated and comprehensive multi-agency response to serious youth violence. A strong learning culture enables the partnership to identify when improvements are needed and to work together to address these. There is a well-understood strategy in place and much purposeful activity that is reducing risks to children. While the strategic intent is well established, in a number of areas, agreed interventions and actions are not fully embedded. For example, the commitment to child-centred policing has not yet been fully realised.

There is an increasingly strong focus on prevention and early intervention to tackle serious youth violence in Manchester. There are a significant number of innovative interventions and projects which are making a positive difference for children. Though individual evaluation processes are in place for these interventions and projects, the partnership recognises that there is no overarching approach to monitoring and evaluation in place to understand how well these initiatives work together as part of a system to tackle serious youth violence.

For children with high levels of risk and need, the complex safeguarding hub (CSH) promotes and supports an effective multi-agency response. There is a really strong commitment to relationship-based practice from professionals across the partnership which is enabling good engagement with children. Areas of practice that need to be improved include developing, reviewing and implementing effective multi-agency plans, accurate recording and information-sharing.

What needs to improve?

- How effectively the arrangements for the monitoring and evaluation of serious youth violence support the partnership in implementing its strategy.
- How well the strong strategic intent to address the disproportionate impact of serious youth violence and criminal exploitation on children from some ethnic backgrounds and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has been translated into positive change for children.
- The specificity and thoroughness of plans, and how effectively they are implemented, reviewed and developed so that children get the right help at the right time.
- How consistently professionals look beyond the needs of an individual child, for whose safety or welfare there may be concerns, and consider risks to the wider group of children, such as brothers, sisters and peers associated with that child.
- The consistency with which key information is recorded and shared between partners to enable effective decision-making.



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- The awareness of professionals about the range of services that are on offer to support the emotional well-being and mental health of children at risk from serious youth violence or criminal exploitation, as well as waiting times to receive therapeutic treatment as part of the core child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS).

Strengths

- Robust multi-agency arrangements with clear accountabilities and a well-understood strategy are leading to many children receiving a range of effective responses to address serious youth violence.
- A significant number of innovative approaches and interventions developed and managed by the partnership are making a positive difference to children's lives.
- A culture of professional challenge and shared learning is helping to enable improvements in practice and in the impact of services.
- The views and aspirations of children are generally well understood. Professionals are developing a progressively more accurate, shared understanding of children's lives and of the effect on them of experiencing serious violence and exploitation.
- A consistently strong approach to building relationships with children is supporting effective interventions to reduce risk.
- Most partner agencies have a good understanding of the range of risks from serious youth violence and criminal exploitation faced by children, and this enables them to offer a range of appropriate support aimed at reducing risks.
- An effective approach is in place for prevention and early intervention, and to support the engagement of schools. There is an increasingly good mentoring offer that is making a positive difference for children.
- The CSH delivers strong multi-agency working that, overall, provides effective expertise, advice, help and intervention for children at significant risk of serious youth violence and exploitation.

Main findings

Strong strategic arrangements are ensuring that partner agencies are clear about their roles and accountabilities, and this is helping the partnership to work effectively. The partnership has a shared commitment and drive for continuous improvement. The priority given to the response to serious youth violence is enabling an ever-improving multi-agency response. There is a culture of learning and challenge, which enables the partnership to identify where improvements are needed and to work together to address these. While strategic intent is strong, a number of developments, interventions and projects are not fully embedded.

The work of partner agencies to tackle serious youth violence within the Manchester local authority area is supported by the Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit.



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Partner agencies recognise the areas and levels of deprivation in Manchester and the consequent challenges. Manchester is the 7th most deprived local authority in England. Twenty per cent of its areas are among the most deprived 5% in England. Forty-six per cent of pupils in Manchester are eligible for pupil premium, compared with 28% for England overall.

The partnership is maintaining a largely stable workforce. Staff report feeling valued and are supported well. This stability is a key factor in how the relationship-based approach is making a positive difference for children. Staff morale is generally high. There is a good training offer, although the take-up of this remains inconsistent.

The partnership has a strong commitment to enabling children to receive a trauma-informed response from frontline staff, and this approach is becoming more embedded in practice. This is evident in the effective approach of professionals in considering and understanding the difficult and complex abuse which is a feature of the lives of many of the children reviewed during the inspection. Across the partnership, there is a general recognition that serious youth violence and child criminal exploitation are safeguarding and child protection issues. Although this underpins the strategic developments, this is not always communicated as consistently and explicitly as it could be to all frontline staff and projects, which means it is not always fully translated into practice.

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has developed a serious violence board that is working collaboratively with Manchester Safeguarding Partnership (MSP) to ensure that there is an effective focus on children affected by serious youth violence.

The partnership is delivering a broad range of effective interventions. This includes an increasing focus on prevention and early intervention. The partnership recognises the challenge of different short-term funding arrangements and are responding to this by working to coordinate the range of projects available to children and their families. For example, Engage is a project that is becoming more embedded and brings together a number of interventions and projects to meet children's needs at an early stage.

Agencies have recognised that they need to further strengthen how effectively they intervene with those children most vulnerable to serious youth violence and exploitation. One of the ways this is going to be addressed is through the commissioning of a programme which will focus on working with children who have been involved with the Youth Justice Service for a prolonged period. In addition, the CSP has increased the number of children who they are working with who are at risk of serious youth violence.

The MSP's focus on serious youth violence and exploitation is well supported through the complex safeguarding subgroup. The MSP has clarity about its role and has acted



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as a 'critical friend' challenging and influencing the work of the CSP, helping to ensure that children are central to the work. For example, the learning and challenge through the MSP enable an improved understanding of the impact of frontline practice and the identification of areas for development.

There is more to do in relation to the partnership's role in monitoring the impact of the work being undertaken about serious youth violence. Although individual projects are evaluated, there is not yet a more overarching approach to evaluation. The partnership has recognised this and is working to improve data and intelligence so there can be a more holistic understanding and more effective monitoring of serious youth violence. The partnership's strong commitment to address the disproportionate impact of child criminal exploitation and serious youth violence on children from some ethnic backgrounds and those with SEND has not yet been realised.

The Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) works collaboratively with, and offers effective support to, the Manchester partnership in improving the response to serious youth violence. The VRU has identified where it can support the partnership to deliver interventions and develop strategy more effectively, including through delivering proactive public awareness campaigns to reduce serious youth violence.

Working with its partners, Greater Manchester police lead a number of initiatives that respond to child criminal exploitation and serious youth violence. The police chair fortnightly partnership meetings, sharing information and intelligence, and deliver a coordinated approach in order to meet children's needs and address risks, while also considering criminal justice approaches, as well as other diversionary outcomes. Partners work well together to understand all aspects of serious youth violence and develop effective local strategies, to avoid the unnecessary criminalisation of children.

The important role of the community and voluntary sector in addressing serious youth violence is well understood in Manchester, and most organisations report feeling valued as partners. They are listened to and are enabled to inform and challenge practice. This means they feel part of a culture that is about 'everyone doing the right thing for the child'.

The partnership's commitment and investment in the community-led initiatives approach is positive. However, the potential of these approaches to support the partnership's strategic aims is not always maximised due to a lack of consistently sufficient governance, and support and training for those who work in these initiatives.



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In Manchester, 61% of children are from ethnic minority groups. The partnership has a good understanding of the diverse needs of the communities in Manchester. Active engagement with communities is helping to ensure that their views and concerns about serious youth violence are progressively well understood. The partnership has taken some important steps to seek the views of children. For example, a self-evaluation process was carried out in a reflective conversation with 26 children who were known to the youth justice service and affected by serious violence. This focused on their experiences of health, education, police and youth justice services. There has also been engagement with children through the annual safeguarding conferences. While such individual initiatives are positive, there is no current ongoing programme of engagement with children to inform practice and strategic development more systematically.

Although not rolled out across all schools or embedded in practice, partners are developing a process to introduce more effective information exchange between the police and education providers in relation to children at risk of serious youth violence. This is a positive initiative, although its impact is necessarily limited at this stage.

When children are referred to the Advice and guidance Service (AGS) as a result of concerns about serious youth violence or exploitation, the social workers contact the CSH for advice and consultation, which is supporting effective decision-making about next steps. Initial safety planning is generally completed well with the parents to address immediate risks to children.

When children meet the criteria for a service from the CSH, they are allocated a worker immediately so that their risks can be assessed promptly. Children benefit from very regular visits from practitioners who see them frequently. For many children, these visits and the interventions undertaken are making a positive difference. However, the full impact of this work is not always evident. The purpose and aims of the work are not always explicit in recording and in sessions with children.

Risk assessments are detailed and thorough and are updated at least every six months or when children's circumstances change. This enables an effective understanding of risks to children. Although children's views are recorded as part of the risk assessment, these are brief and do not always bring alive the child's voice or lived experiences in a collaborative way. This can limit children's investment in the direct work and clarity about their experiences and understanding of risk.

District social workers make appropriate referrals to CSH when children's risks of serious youth violence or criminal exploitation are identified. Just under half the children referred to the CSH are not accepted for allocation and assessment. For those children who do not meet the criteria, clear recommendations are made by the CSH for follow-up work, such as mapping, direct work, and referrals to other services.



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The criteria and rationale for not undertaking a CSH assessment are not always clear and some of the decision-making is inconsistent with children's level of risk. For some children, the follow-up work is not completed by the allocated social worker in the district team. This means some children do not get the support or intervention required to address their risks.

When incidents happen out of hours, the Emergency Duty Service (EDS) responds promptly to assess children's needs and risks, to liaise with other agencies such as police and health practitioners, and to provide any necessary immediate support, before handing over to daytime services. Child protection strategy meetings are held when appropriate with the police and health practitioners to agree immediate safety planning.

For children who are arrested and held in police custody, police contact EDS for a discussion about the need for, and availability of, a suitable specialist placement that meets the criteria set out in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE). Police and local authority staff sometimes disagree about the need for a PACE placement. When local authority staff think a PACE placement is appropriate for a child, police do not always agree. In these situations, the police make the final decision. Children's access to such placements is also limited due to a lack of availability. This means there are a few children who remain in custody overnight inappropriately.

For children with more serious or complex risks of extra-familial harm, including from serious violence and criminal exploitation, district social work teams use the My Safety Plan process to plan interventions and monitor progress. Through three-monthly conferences chaired by child protection chairs, this process ensures that for these children there is close oversight and monitoring of work with them and their progress. Children's plans are also reviewed at monthly multi-agency meetings that are well attended by relevant professionals and families, ensuring robust monitoring. Although My Safety Plans are a positive development, there is not a consistency of understanding about which is the right plan to use: a child in need, child protection or My Safety Plan for children at risk of serious youth violence. This lack of clarity risks not always getting the best benefit from different planning processes.

Children and their families benefit from the tenacity of professionals in building and maintaining relationships. This leads to good engagement with children and their families. When plans and interventions are complex, often involving multiple agencies, professionals work well together, ensuring that children and their families do not need to work with too great a number of different professionals. Instead, children and their families are able to work with those professionals who are best placed to work with them. These professionals have positive relationships and coordinate and deliver services on behalf of the wider partnership. For a small number of children, there is a focus on relationship-building over a long period of time, but there is little evidence of positive change being achieved as quickly as children need.



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Children's plans are not always specific, comprehensive or responsive to changing need, and this limits how effectively they can be used to monitor the completion of agreed actions and the progress that children are making. Good working relationships between agencies, a shared commitment to getting it right for children and generally stable staff groups across all agencies mitigate this weakness in plans. However, this does mean that progress is not always timely for all children. The number of different plans for some individual children does not result in all agencies having a clearly understood set of actions. Children's education, health and care (EHC) plans are not consistently taken into account in the planning and intervention for children who are at risk of serious youth violence and criminal exploitation.

The risks of criminal exploitation and serious youth violence to brothers and sisters and peers associated with the individual child subject to statutory intervention are not always identified. Key information is not consistently recorded or shared between partners for these children. This means that for these children, risks are not always identified as early as they could be. There is also a missed opportunity to fully involve other agencies, such as primary care services.

Health practitioner capacity within the AGS, CSH and school nursing is insufficient. Leaders are aware of the capacity issues, and commissioning meetings are taking place to increase capacity. At the time of the inspection, this means health assessments and the analysis of children's needs are not always completed in a timely manner or by an appropriate health professional, and so the full level of the risk posed to children may not always be sufficiently understood.

Girls are underrepresented in referrals to the CSH, in relation to known levels of need. This underrepresentation is particularly true of girls who are black or of mixed heritage. The partnership is aware of this and has begun work aimed at understanding the causes of this underrepresentation and improving the identification of girls who are at risk.

Youth Justice staff undertake holistic assessments of risk, safety and well-being. Health panels now take place routinely for all children. The meetings are attended by an educational psychologist, the drug and alcohol service and other health professionals. Case planning forums support the timely exchange of information, assisting youth justice staff in their assessment of the risk and vulnerability of children affected by serious youth violence and child criminal exploitation. Staff are tenacious and a creative approach is promoted by the management team and embraced by staff. There is access to mentors from a variety of services, and this is especially valuable in providing ongoing help when a child's intervention ends.

Out of Court Disposal processes allow agencies to work together to identify children who are at risk of, or affected by, serious youth violence, including children who are exploited. Partners work together to intervene at the earliest opportunity to provide the appropriate help to children and, where possible, divert them from the criminal justice system. Children have access to range of targeted interventions to meet their needs and are supported to engage with services.



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The North West Ambulance Service has committed to strategic involvement with the VRU and has been progressive in developing a lead on serious youth violence, while also undertaking joint work with partner agencies. This has shown a positive impact through the work of the Safe Street model, where the ambulance service, police, Metrolink and schools work together to deliver training and awareness work to children about exploring street safety and the impact of serious youth violence.

Children receive a high standard of coordinated care when attending the emergency trauma departments. A multi-agency approach is taken to the immediate management and planning of the next stage of care for children. The trauma centres work closely with the police to manage the safety of children. This is enabling the care and safety of children to be well managed by the agencies.

Children accessing the drug and alcohol service receive good child-centred support from staff who place an emphasis on developing trusted relationships. Risk assessments are comprehensive and include markers for serious youth violence. Links between drug and alcohol services for adults and children are helping to ensure that children needing help due to parental substance misuse are identified and supported.

Children benefit from the Oasis Navigator service, which supports them to process their experience and consider ongoing help to reduce risks of serious youth violence. The service provides sensitive support to families and an effective advocacy approach for children.

Speech and language support is strong, and most schools, including alternative provision, have provided focused training for teaching staff. This is helping to ensure that speech and language needs are identified, and early intervention and targeted support are provided, at an early stage.

CAMHS is offering an increasingly community-based approach, for example through offering emotional health and well-being support to children via its hubs and in schools and alternative education provision. This provides positive help and engagement with children presenting at the lower end of disruptive behaviour. Professionals are not sufficiently clear about the services that are on offer to support children's emotional and mental health. Professionals do not consistently receive updates from CAMHS regarding referrals received, plans for care or outcomes from interventions. As a consequence, children do not always receive the right help at the right time.

Many children at risk of serious youth violence and criminal exploitation who have emerging mental health needs, have social communication needs and/or are neurodiverse wait too long to receive the CAMHS core offer of therapeutic treatment. The impact of this delay is not mitigated by a targeted approach to the needs of children on the waiting list.



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Criminal investigations of serious youth violence and criminal exploitation are well supervised and managed by the police. Investigators appropriately consider the impact of criminalisation in cases involving children and their wider safeguarding needs. Outcomes are appropriate and Crown Prosecution Service advice is sought when relevant to ensure that correct decisions are reached. Police referrals are routinely submitted when children's needs are assessed. These referrals often capture their vulnerabilities well and are shared in a timely way.

The local agencies, in partnership with the VRU, have developed an approach through 'Engage panels' to identifying children at an earlier stage who may be at risk of serious violence but are not involved with statutory services. This is to enable children to get support and intervention at the right time. A wide range of services attend the panels to provide help for these children across the three districts in Manchester. Children can be referred from a number of different agencies. The police make appropriate and timely referrals to the Engage panel. However, when the referral is made by other agencies, it is not always clear from police systems that a child had been referred to Engage or the outcome of the panel. This does not support the police in decision-making for children. Children who are referred to Engage have an offer of help from a range of services.

Schools and other education providers receive good training and guidance related to serious youth violence and to the criminal exploitation of children. This enables school staff to recognise when children might be at risk of serious youth violence. Schools are aware of the range of agencies who can provide help for these children. Schools communicate effectively with these agencies to access this support when necessary.

There are clear procedures for the sharing of important information when children transfer from primary school to secondary school, or to alternative provision. This information is typically used well, for example, to ensure the continuity of support for vulnerable children.

For some children at risk of serious youth violence and criminal exploitation, attendance at school is not given sufficient priority, including at the time of the critical transition point at age 16.

Children at risk of serious youth violence are increasingly provided with mentors in some schools. Those who attend alternative provision receive additional effective support. Education and awareness-raising in relation to knife crime and being safe in their communities have taken place across primary schools.

A good range of innovative projects are being developed in Manchester. For example, Manchester Early Help Service has developed a partnership with an organisation that works in Black and ethnic communities to protect and safeguard children from abuse, modern slavery and exploitation, and to support parents whose



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children are at risk of criminal exploitation and serious youth violence. The development was in response to the overrepresentation of Black and mixed-heritage boys affected by serious youth violence. The service provides early help and parenting support, including one-to-one and group work and awareness-raising. This is having a positive impact for children and their parents.

Practice study: highly effective practice

Professionals from a range of agencies worked well together to understand why a young teenage child, Child A, was routinely carrying a knife. The combination of the information-sharing and assessment and good engagement with Child A by a range of agencies revealed that the child was frightened of some of the older children who lived in their area. Child A felt that they had no one to help keep them safe. The neglect Child A had experienced was a significant factor. The family live in overcrowded conditions and Child A didn't feel that there was space for them at home. After being chased by some older children, Child A became so worried about being in the community that in order to avoid those older children, their attendance at school reduced. Child A said they were carrying a knife to keep safe.

Professionals' shared understanding of this, and of the range of help available to children and families, enabled them to agree what was needed to improve their situation, and they are working together with Child A and their family to improve the child's safety. The relationship the child has developed with workers has helped them to understand that they are valued. Work has started to improve the child's relationship with their mum and is helping her to understand how Child A is feeling and the important role she has in making her child feel loved and safe. Child A has moved to a new education provision. The education provision is providing the child with a safe space to go to every day, and their attendance has improved. Child A's mum is being helped to apply to move to a new house with more space for the family. As Child A is vulnerable to exploitation, work is being done to help the child to recognise risks, and to ensure that support is in place to help to keep them safe. As a result of the carefully planned and coordinated work, this child's life is more stable, they have structure, and they have people to talk to and to support them. Child A is making friends and knows that if they are scared or worried, that there are a range of people to help them. Significantly, Child A has made the decision to no longer carry a knife, and this is keeping them and others safer.



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Practice study: area for improvement

When critical information is not shared, and assessments are completed in isolation, professionals are not able to help children effectively. This was the case for Child B, who was attacked and violently assaulted by a group of other children. Agencies did not know all of the factors that may have led to his assault, and, as a result, they were not in a position to take all the actions they could have to reduce the risk of harm for Child B. There had been minimal communication with primary care and CAMHS by children's services, which meant that not all professionals were aware of the risks and what support was being provided. Opportunities for professionals to understand wider risk and need had been missed. Incidents had been seen in isolation without sufficient consideration of the child's history, their family and community, and so contextual risks were not fully understood. The lack of a comprehensive and dynamic assessment and plan means that the child has not accessed the right help at the right time.

The risks to Child B's sibling of child exploitation and serious youth violence were not identified, shared or acted on fully with all relevant partners. Child B is struggling to access school and their EHC plan is not central to meeting their needs so that they can access education.

Having shared information, professionals are now better able to work together to provide Child B with more effective multi-agency support.



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Places and Spaces: highly effective practice

The Youth Zone's provision in the north of the city delivers a range of effective interventions to children and families. There is good communication and information-sharing between the services, both operationally and strategically, and shared visions and aims. They have a good understanding, and a collective management, of children's risks within the local community and work well together to find ways to increase safety. There is a shared aim to prevent and reduce serious youth violence through engagement with children both in and out of the centre, and by building intelligence to identify potential incidents such as planned fights and county line runners. This leads to preventative action that safeguards children.

Safeguarding is viewed as a collective community responsibility, and awareness-raising takes place across the community, including with transport providers, supermarket security staff and takeaways, as well as across a range of small grassroots charities and groups. The youth zone has a full-time designated safeguarding lead, a risk register and effective behaviour plans for any children considered to present a risk to others within the centre.

The youth centre reaches a broad range of children. The partnership recognises that those children who do not access the service are harder to reach and are more likely to be at greater risk. Outreach support is flexible in terms of the localities it is provided to, and this helps to identify hotspots and respond creatively. However, there is no youth outreach after 8pm at night, which is a recognised gap.

Children's views and feedback help to shape services. Their views are gathered through a variety of activities, such as focus groups, outreach workers, and a youth voice video that has been shared with professionals.

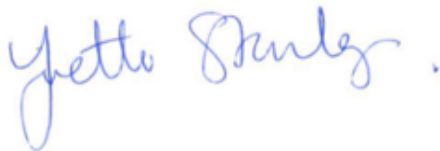
The impact of this is that children report feeling safer in parks and open spaces when the detached youth workers are around and when using public transport at night. Children feel hopeful due to opportunities provided in the youth zone and through social action. They also report feeling respected and supported due to the trauma-informed practice model and the tenacity of youth workers building trusted relationships with children over time.

Next steps

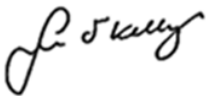
We have determined that Manchester local authority is the principal authority and should prepare a written statement of proposed action responding to the findings outlined in this letter. This should be a multi-agency response involving the individuals and agencies that this report is addressed to. The response should set out the actions for the partnership and, when appropriate, individual agencies. The local safeguarding partners should oversee implementation of the action plan through their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Manchester local authority should send the written statement of action to ProtectionOfChildren@ofsted.gov.uk by 9 March 2024. This statement will inform the lines of enquiry at any future joint or single-agency activity by the inspectorates.

Yours sincerely



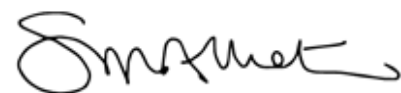
Yvette Stanley
National Director Regulation and Social Care, Ofsted



Dr Sean O'Kelly BSc MB ChB MSc DCH FRCA
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His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services



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His Majesty's Inspector of Probation

Manchester JTAI Serious Violence Action Plan

Glossary of Terms

- CYP – Children and Young People
- EHCP – Education, Health and Care Plan
- MSP – Manchester Safeguarding Partnership
- CSP – Community Safety Partnership
- GMP – Greater Manchester Police
- CAMHS – Child and Mental Health Service
- CSC – Children Social Care
- &I – Learning and Improvement
- VRU – Violence Reduction Unit

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Manchester JTAI Serious Violence Action Plan (November 2023)					
Ref	What needs to improve/ACTION	What will the impact be and how will we know	Evidence of progress	Lead Agency/Officer and Timescale for completion (*end of respective month)	
1. How effectively the arrangements for the monitoring and evaluation of serious violence support the partnership in implementing its strategy.					
1.1	Develop an evaluation framework that includes feedback from young people and scorecard to monitor the	Informed decision making through a dynamic response to serious violence that measures both	Clear performance and assurance arrangements to measure progress against	Sam Stabler - Community Safety Partnership (CSP) via the Multi-Agency	

Appendix 3, Item 8

	progress and impact of the Serious Violence Strategy.	experience and outcomes for children affected.	key milestones and impact of Serious Violence Strategy	Serious Violence Board, and Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit May 2024
1.2	Ensure that evaluation of effectiveness is incorporated within routine interactions with CYP across the Partnership, using engagement mechanisms such as the Youth Participation Framework	The views of CYP (Children and Young People) inform evaluation of contacts/interventions that services have with them which will drive up effectiveness of work to support them in achieving outcomes.	Young people's views/feedback are routinely used alongside performance reporting.	All agencies with the Community Safety Partnership. <i>(Assured by the MSP)</i> April 2024
1.3	Increase use of Youth Participatory models of engagement with young people	The voices of children/young people whose voices are less well heard will be amplified and involved in decision making and are confident self-advocates.	Agencies can provide examples of how a youth participatory approach is embedded in practice.	All agencies with the CSP April 2024
2. How well the strong strategic intent to address the disproportionate impact of serious violence and criminal exploitation on children from some ethnic backgrounds and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has been translated into positive change for children.				
2.1	EHCP are used to inform multi agency child in need, child protection or my safety plan, and clearly identify the vulnerability, education and health need to be addressed in the plan <i>(See also Action 3.1)</i>	Partners will collaborate effectively so that any barriers are removed in order that CYP are supported in attending school and achieving expected outcomes, including progression to Education, Employment or Training at post-16. This includes children with identified SEND needs, those with an EHCP and children who may be affected by disproportionality.	For all children known to Children's social care with issues regarding Serious Violence who have an EHCP, there is evidence that the plan identifies the child's specific need and vulnerability to the risk of serious violence and this is incorporated in the child in need, child protection or my safety plan	Education/Manchester ADQ/Health/CSC May 2024

			Audit conducted by Complex Safeguarding Team	Complex Safeguarding Team/MSP SEG June 2024
Cross Ref Action	See also Action 3.1 (Review practice/operational guidance)			
2.2	Evaluate the current data and audit of 100 children's experiences and develop a regular cycle.	A continually deepening understanding of the experiences of children from global majority communities to continually inform practice and strategic planning.	Initial results will provide a baseline against which progress and impact can be measured.	Community Safety Partnership Feb 2024 and annually thereafter
2.3	Child Centred Policing Strategy and Manchester Plan to have a cross-cutting regard to children's cultural, religious and ethnic identity.	It is expected there will be a reduction in the over-representation of black and mixed heritage within the criminal justice system.	Regular reporting and assurance arrangements via Manchester's governance arrangements (CSP and MSP).	Chris Downey, Superintendent GMP (Dates as in CCPS)
2.4	MSP to commission training for multi agencies partners on culturally competent safeguarding children and adults practice. An expectation of this training will be that partners would implement learning into their own agencies	An increase in knowledge, skills and abilities of staff across the partnership and city.	Impact Survey completed to evaluate effective of training in improving agency practice MSP Section 11 audit includes a standard to demonstrate cultural competency practice	Ruth Speight, Co Chair, MSP Learning & Improvement Group Training commissioned February 2024 Training included on training offer calendar April 2024
3. The specificity and thoroughness of plans, and how effectively they are implemented, reviewed and developed, so that children get the right help at the right time.				
3.1	Childrens services, along with relevant partners, to review practice and operational guidance that	Greater consistency in planning with children and their families including the needs of brothers/sisters and contribution	Routine reporting arrangements within CSC.	Sean McKendrick/Relevant partners from Health, GMP, Education

	supports specificity and thoroughness of plans for children.	of all agencies and decision making using the QAF, sampling and supervision		May 2024
Cross Ref Action	See also Action 2.1 (EHCPs)			
4. How consistently professionals look beyond the needs of an individual child, for whose safety or welfare there may be concerns, and consider risks to the wider group of children, such as brothers, sisters and peers associated with that child				
Cross Ref Action	See Action 3.1 (Review practice/operational guidance)			
5. The consistency with which key information is recorded and shared between partners to enable effective decision-making				
Cross Ref Action	See Action 3.1 (Review practice/operational guidance)			
5.1	<p>All agencies to ensure that their information sharing practices meets the requirements of the MSP Information Sharing Protocol.</p> <p>MSP Information Sharing Agreement is shared across the partnership through the L&I subgroup for discussion at multi agency safeguarding forum and implementation across agencies.</p>	Information is shared appropriately between partners where there are safeguarding concerns and throughout support provided to a child, young person or family	<p>Agencies to take any actions (e.g dissemination of protocol, advice to managers/practitioners) that ensure staff are aware of and comfortable with using the Protocol in practice.</p> <p>MSP Safeguarding Fora minutes to reflect multi agency review of MSP Information Sharing Agreement discussions</p> <p>MSP Section 11 audit to evaluate application of MSP Information Sharing Agreement</p>	<p>MSP (Via Executives and L&I subgroup)</p> <p>February 2024</p> <p>L&I subgroup</p> <p>January 2024</p> <p>Annual Audit (via Safeguarding Executive Group)</p>

				January 2024	
6. The awareness of professionals about the range of services that are on offer to support the emotional well-being and mental health of children at risk from serious violence or criminal exploitation, as well as waiting times to receive therapeutic treatment as part of the core child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)					
6.1	7 Minute Briefing (MB) is produced and shared across Partnership about what is on offer around serious violence	There is increased awareness across the partnership and practitioners and managers have a clearer view of what is out there/available, knowledge and awareness.	7 MB is produced and shared across the partnership	CSP/MSP/VRU February 2024	
6.2	In areas where clarification may increase understanding, communication is produced and shared across the partnership setting out <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAMHS – capacity, clinical pathways and timescales. (Health) (See also Action 6.3) • Engage (GMP) • Thrive (Health) • Risks and services available for girls (CSC) 	Agencies and practitioners working with CYP at risk from serious violence or criminal exploitation and who need support with well-being and mental health have a clear understanding of expectations, referral times and processes, pathways and outcomes.	Health, GMP (and any others identified where clarification would be helpful) produce and disseminate clear, concise guidance which is shared across partnership via the MSP Information Bulletin. Awareness, Impact and understanding will be tested via MSP s11 audit process.	Manchester ADQ/Health, GMP February 2024 MSP annual report 2024/25	
6.3	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) will develop a communication strategy and deliver a communication campaign inc	There is increased awareness across the partnership and practitioners and managers have a clearer view of what is out	Communication strategy developed and delivered	Al Ford Director of CAMHS Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT)	

	timescales for referrals and response, with development Jan – Mar 2024 and delivery from April and ongoing,	there/available, knowledge and awareness.		Strategy developed March 2024 Strategy communicated/delivered from: April 2024
6.4	Develop a pilot project to enable Neurodevelopmental Risk stratification - prioritizing vulnerable groups e.g., young people connected to the Youth Justice system.	Prioritization of vulnerable groups to receive therapeutic treatment as part of the child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)	Neurodevelopmental Risk stratification priorities vulnerable groups	Al Ford Director of CAMHS Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) Pilot developed April 2024 Roll out/Offer Launch, starting: April 2024
6.5	Develop a waiting well (while you wait) offer for children and young people awaiting a CAMHS appointment.	Additional service offer whilst children and young people await CAMHS appointment	Additional support offer is provided whilst children and young people wait for core offer	Al Ford Director of CAMHS Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) April 2024

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Executive – 17 January 2024

Subject: Revision to the Council’s Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 Corporate Policy And Procedures

Report of: City Solicitor

Summary

To seek the approval of the Executive to revisions to the Council’s Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (‘RIPA’) and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (‘IPA’) Corporate Policy and Procedures.

To advise the Executive on the Council’s use of RIPA between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2023.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Approve the revisions to the Council’s Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (‘RIPA’) and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (‘IPA’) Corporate Policy and Procedures.
 - (2) Note the information in paragraph 3.7 of this report regarding the Council’s use of RIPA for the period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2023.
-

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment -the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city	None
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments	Any Equality, Diversity and Inclusion issues have been addressed in the Report.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the Our Manchester Strategy/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Non directly applicable
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Non directly applicable
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Non directly applicable
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Non directly applicable
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Non directly applicable

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

Non directly.

Financial Consequences – Capital

Non directly.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy, please contact one of the contact officers above.

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) Corporate Policy and Procedures dated March 2019.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report asks the Executive to consider and approve the revised Policy and Procedures regarding the use of the powers available to the Council under the RIPA and the IPA. It also informs the Executive about the Council's use of the RIPA powers available to it.
- 1.2 The proposed revisions are to update the Council's existing Corporate Policy and Procedures only. There is no change to the Council's approach to use of the powers available to it under the RIPA and the IPA. However, the existing Policy and Procedures are not fully compliant with current legislative requirements which the revisions are intended to rectify.
- 1.3 The Council only very rarely uses the powers available to it, but it still needs to have a robust and up to date Policy in place which officers can follow should the need arise. If the Council's Policy is not fully compliant with current legislative requirements this may lead to the Council not meeting its statutory obligations, exceeding its powers and placing it at risk of legal challenge with its attendant reputational and financial consequences.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Executive last received a report about the RIPA Corporate Policy and Procedures on 13 March 2019. The current Policy and Procedures state that every year Members through the Executive should be asked to review their content for the period in question and to recommend any changes to that content. Members should also be provided with an annual update on the Council's use of the RIPA powers available to it. The delay in bringing a report to the Executive on this matter initially resulted from the covid pandemic but was then unfortunately due to an oversight. The Executive is advised that steps have been taken to ensure that going forward reports will be received in accordance with the requirement in the Policy and Procedures. The City Solicitor has recently reviewed the current Corporate Policy and Procedures in light of their operation and the date they were last revised.

3.0 Main issues

- 3.1 RIPA and the IPA put a regulatory framework around a range of investigatory powers used by local authorities. This is done to ensure the powers are used lawfully and in a way that is compatible with Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights which governs an individual's right to respect for their private and family life, home and correspondence. Any interference with that right must be necessary, proportionate and in accordance with the law. If these requirements are not met any investigation undertaken that interfered with this right would be unlawful.
- 3.2 RIPA and the IPA legislates for the use by local authorities of covert methods of surveillance and information gathering to assist in the prevention and detection of crime in relation to an authority's core functions. RIPA surveillance can therefore be used for example in relation to fly tipping, food

related offences, benefit fraud, trading standards offences including the sale of counterfeit goods and some test purchases as well as health and safety.

- 3.3 There are three separate investigatory powers available to the Council two under RIPA:
- Covert directed surveillance – which includes covert surveillance in public areas (not including residential premises or private vehicles which is never permissible) which is likely to result in the obtaining of private information.
 - Use of covert human intelligence sources ('CHIS') – this includes undercover officers, public informants and people making test purchases (for example, relevant in trading standards cases).
- And the third under the IPA:
- Obtaining communications data from telecommunications providers – this includes service use or subscriber information (but not the content).
- 3.4 Before the Council may undertake covert surveillance under RIPA, there are various criteria which must be met including only carrying out covert surveillance where the criminal offence under investigation ordinarily carries a term of imprisonment of 6 months or more, its use is authorised internally by a senior officer and the external approval of the application by a Magistrate. For surveillance required under the IPA authorisations involve scrutiny by the National Anti-Fraud Network and are granted by the Office for Communications Data Authorisations a national body who act on behalf of the Council. The information obtained as a result of surveillance operations or acquired from telecommunications providers can be relied on in court proceedings providing RIPA or the IPA is complied with.
- 3.5 The Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office ('the IPCO') is responsible for the inspection of public authorities with regard to compliance with RIPA. Inspections take place periodically and focus on RIPA policies, procedures, and practice. Since the Executive last received a report about the Corporate Policies and Procedures the Council has been subject to two inspections by the IPCO in April 2019 and April 2022 respectively. In both cases no formal recommendations were made by the Inspector who reviewed the Council's use of RIPA.
- 3.6 The Council's Corporate Policy and Procedures were last reviewed in March 2019. The Corporate Policy and Procedures are being further revised to ensure it is up to date with current legislation and compliant with relevant Home Office Codes of Practice. The revised Corporate Policy and Procedures are attached as an Appendix to this Report and the proposed changes are highlighted in bold. The views of the Executive are sought regarding the revisions.
- 3.7 The Home Office Covert Surveillance and Property Interference Code of Practice requires local authorities to involve elected members in strategic oversight of RIPA including setting the relevant Policy and considering reports

on its use by the Council. The Executive is advised that between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2023 the Council has used covert directed surveillance once in 2021. It is confirmed that although the Council's Corporate Policy and Procedures had last been updated in 2019 the powers used in 2021 were in line with the relevant legislation in force at that time. This surveillance related to a Trading Standards investigation into the sale of counterfeit goods at a number of addresses in the Council's area. The operation resulted in valuable evidence being obtained which was subsequently used to obtain closure orders in respect of two of the addresses in question. Closure orders are obtained to close a premises in order to prevent nuisance or disorder occurring.

- 3.8 In January 2022 external refresher training on the use of RIPA and the IPA was arranged for the Council's Authorising Officers/ Approved Rank Officers. The training was also arranged for relevant officers from service areas most likely to use or advise on RIPA or the IPA, in line with the Council's Corporate Policy and Procedures. Further training will be arranged in due course.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 The recommendations are set out at the front of this report.



Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (“RIPA”) and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (“IPA”)

Corporate Policy and Procedures

Document Control

Title	RIPA Corporate Policy and Procedures
Document Type	Policy and Guidance
Author	Ian Mark – Senior Lawyer Democratic Legal Services Team
Owner	Liz Treacy – City Solicitor
Subject	Investigatory Powers
Protective marking	UNCLASSIFIED
Created	22 June 2015
Approved	1 July 2015
Review period	Annually

Revision History

Version Date	Author	Description of Change
1.0 - 27 July 2016	Ian Mark	Revisions/updating to existing clauses and new clause 8 added
2.0 – March 2019	Ian Mark	Revisions/updating following amendments to Home Office Codes of Practice and the disestablishment of OSC and IOCCO
3.0 – January 2024	Ian Mark	Revisions/updating following amendments to legislation in respect of acquisition and disclosure of Communications Data. Minor revisions to records and document handling, and social media use. IPCO note to public authorities about data safeguarding recommendations added as Appendix 1

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1. Abbreviations

CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CSP	Communications Service Provider
Council	Manchester City Council
CHIS	Covert Human Intelligence Sources
DPA	Data Protection Act 2018
ECHR	European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms agreed on 2 November 1950
HRA	Human Rights Act 1998
IPA	Investigatory Powers Act 2016
IPCO	The Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office
NAFN	The National Anti-Fraud Network
OCDA	The Office for Communications Data Authorisations
PFA	Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
RIPA	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
SPoCs	Single Points of Contact for acquisition and disclosure of communications data

Introduction

This Corporate Policy & Procedures **document (the Policy)** is based upon the requirements of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), **the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (IPA)**, the Home Office Codes of Practice on Covert Surveillance and Property Interference, Covert Human Intelligence Sources and Acquisition and Disclosure of Communications Data.

The use of covert surveillance, covert human intelligence sources and the acquisition of service user or subscriber information in relation to communications data is sometimes necessary to ensure effective investigation and enforcement of the law. However, they should be used only rarely and in exceptional circumstances. RIPA requires that public authorities follow a clear authorisation process prior to using these powers. Authorisations granted under Part II of RIPA are subject to all the existing safeguards considered necessary by Parliament to ensure that investigatory powers are exercised compatibly with the ECHR.

Consequences of Failing to Comply with this Policy

Where there is interference with **the right to private and family life, home and correspondence under Article 8 of the ECHR, as incorporated in the Human Rights Act 1998**, and where there is no other source of lawful authority for the interference, the consequences of not following the correct authorisation procedure set out under RIPA (**or IPA**) and this Policy may result in the Council's actions being deemed unlawful by the Courts under Section 6 of the HRA or by the Investigatory Powers Tribunal. **This may open** up the Council to claims for compensation and loss of reputation. Additionally, any information obtained that could be of help in a prosecution will be inadmissible.

All uses of RIPA or obtaining Communications Data should be referred to the Democratic Services Legal Team for preliminary advice at the earliest possible opportunity. The team's contact details can be found at the end of section 3 of this Policy.

2. Background

On 2 October 2000 the Human Rights Act 1998 ("HRA") made it unlawful for a local authority to breach any article of the ECHR.

The ECHR states:

- (a) individuals have the right to respect for their private and family life, home and correspondence (Article 8 ECHR); and
- (b) there shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right unless that interference is:
 - in accordance with the law;
 - necessary; and
 - proportionate

RIPA, which came into force on 25 September 2000, provides a lawful basis for 2 types of investigatory activity to be carried out by local authorities which might otherwise breach the ECHR. The activities are:

- covert directed surveillance;
- covert human intelligence sources ("CHIS").

Since May 2019, the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (IPA) provides a lawful basis for local authorities to acquire communications data which was previously obtained through RIPA.

RIPA and IPA set out procedures that must be followed to ensure the RIPA and obtaining communications data activity is lawful. Where properly authorised under RIPA or IPA the activity will be a justifiable interference with an individual's rights under the ECHR; if the interference is not properly authorised an action for breach of the HRA could be taken against the Council, a complaint of maladministration made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or a complaint made to the Investigatory Powers Tribunal. In addition, if the procedures are not followed any evidence collected may be disallowed by the courts. RIPA and IPA seek to balance the rights of individuals against the public interest in the Council being able to carry out its statutory duties.

What RIPA Does and Does Not Do

RIPA does:

- Require prior authorisation of directed surveillance.
- Prohibit the Council from carrying out intrusive surveillance.
- Require authorisation of the conduct and use of CHIS.
- Require safeguards for the conduct of the use of a CHIS.

RIPA does not:

- Make unlawful conduct which is otherwise lawful.
- Prejudice any existing power to obtain information by any means not involving conduct that may be authorised under RIPA. For example, it does not affect the Council's current powers to obtain information via the DVLA or to obtain information from the Land Registry as to the owner of a property.
- Apply to activities outside the scope of Part II of RIPA, which may nevertheless be governed by other legislation, including the HRA. A public authority will only engage RIPA when in performance of its 'core functions' – i.e. the functions specific to that authority as distinct from all public authorities.
- **Apply where covert surveillance is carried out as part of an immediate response to events where it is not reasonably practical to obtain a RIPA authorisation.**
- **Apply to general observation activities that is unlikely to result in obtaining of any private information about a person or is not directed at particular individuals.**

What IPA Does and Does Not do

IPA does:

- **Permit the Council to obtain specific types of communications records from communications service providers.**
- **Compel disclosure of specific types of communications data from telecom and postal service providers.**

IPA does not:

- **permit the Council to intercept the content of any person's communication, and it is an offence to do so without any other form of lawful authority**
- **permit the Council to obtain internet connection data.**

Further information about the types of communication data the Council can obtain can be found at paragraph 7.2.

3. Policy Statement

The Council is determined to act responsibly and in accordance with the law. To ensure that the Council's RIPA activity is carried out lawfully and subject to the appropriate safeguards against abuse, the Council adopted a Corporate Code of Practice for surveillance ("the Code") on 10 July 2002 which has subsequently been reviewed, amended and renamed the Corporate Policy and Procedures as detailed below.

All staff who are considering undertaking RIPA activity should be aware that where that activity may involve handling confidential information or the use of vulnerable or juvenile persons as sources of information, a higher level of authorisation is required. Please see **paragraph 4.6** (in respect of handling confidential information) and **paragraph 5.2** (in respect of using information sources who are vulnerable or juvenile persons) below.

The Code was revised on:

- 1 August 2003 (following the introduction of the Codes of Practice issued under section 71 of RIPA on covert surveillance and CHIS);
- 5 January 2004 (following the RIPA (Directed Surveillance and CHIS) Order 2003).
- April 2010 (following the introduction of the new Codes of Practice on covert surveillance and CHIS; the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Communications Data) Order 2010; and the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) Order 2010).
- July 2015 (following the significant amendments to RIPA introduced by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012). These changes are discussed in paragraph 4.5 below.

The Code was redrafted following the Office of Surveillance Commissioners' Inspection on 6 April 2004 and again following the Interception of Communications Commissioner's Office inspection on 19 July 2006.

The Code was revised in March 2019 following the amendments to the Home Office Codes of Practice in respect of Covert Surveillance and CHIS, the disestablishment of the Office of the Surveillance Commissioner (OSC) and the Interception of Communications Commissioners Office (ICCO).

The Code was further revised in January 2024 following significant changes to obtaining communications data which had previously been obtained under Part 1 Chapter 2 of RIPA, and since May 2019 is now obtained through IPA 2016. These changes are discussed in paragraph 7 below.

The following documents are available on the Council's intranet (see **paragraph 11.1**):

- Home Office Statutory Codes of Practice on:
 - Covert Surveillance and Property Interference
 - Covert Human Intelligence Sources
 - Communications Data
- Home Office Guidance on Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 – changes to RIPA
- Lists of **RIPA** Authorising Officers and **Communications Data Approved Rank Officers** (posts and names);
- RIPA forms for covert surveillance and CHIS;
- application for RIPA Judicial approval and Order made for Judicial approval;
- the Corporate CCTV Policy;
- Corporate RIPA training

The City Solicitor is the Council's Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) and is responsible for the following roles:

- Appointing **RIPA** Authorising Officers (see **paragraph 9.1(a)**)
- Appointing **Approved Rank Officers for Communications Data** (see **paragraph 9.4**)

- Maintaining a central record of all RIPA and **Communication Data** authorisations
- Arranging training to individuals appointed as Authorising Officers and **Approved Rank Officers**, and
- Carrying out an overall monitoring function as the SRO for the Council's use of RIPA and **IPA** powers.

The Council's RIPA Co-ordinator is based in the Democratic Legal Services Team, Legal Services.

Any officer who is unsure about any RIPA activity **or the acquisition or disclosure of Communications Data** should contact either the City Solicitor or the Democratic Services Legal Team for advice and assistance.

The Democratic Services Legal Team can be contacted at demserv@manchester.gov.uk

4. Types of Surveillance

Surveillance can be overt or covert and includes:

- monitoring, observing or listening to persons, their movements, their conversations or their other activities or communications;
- recording anything monitored, observed or listened to in the course of surveillance; and
- surveillance with or without the assistance of a surveillance device.

4.1 Overt Surveillance

The majority of the Council's surveillance activity will be overt surveillance i.e. will be carried out openly. For example (i) where the Council performs regulatory checks on licensees to ensure they are complying with the terms of any licence granted; (ii) where the Council advises a tenant that their activities will be monitored as a result of neighbour nuisance allegations or (iii) where an officer uses body worn cameras and informs the individual that the camera will be switched on and recording will take place. This type of overt surveillance is normal Council business and is not regulated by RIPA.

4.2 Covert Surveillance

This is where surveillance is carried out in a manner calculated to ensure that the person subject to the surveillance is unaware it is taking place.

Where covert surveillance activities are unlikely to result in obtaining of any private information about a person (because the surveillance although covert is general or low level, and is not directed at particular individuals), no interference with Article 8 rights occurs, and an authorisation under RIPA is not required. RIPA authorisation may be required where the surveillance is repeated for a particular purpose and could amount to systematic surveillance of an individual; if in doubt seek advice from the Democratic Services Legal Team.

Covert surveillance can be intrusive or directed. The Council is not permitted to carry out covert intrusive surveillance. Paragraph 4.3 below explains when covert surveillance is intrusive and therefore not permitted. The Council is permitted to carry out covert directed surveillance subject to strict compliance with RIPA. Paragraph 4.4 below explains when covert surveillance is directed.

4.3 Covert Intrusive Surveillance

Covert intrusive surveillance takes place when covert surveillance is carried out in relation to anything taking place on residential premises or in a private vehicle and which involves the presence of an individual or surveillance device on the premises or in the vehicle, or which uses a device placed outside the premises or vehicle which consistently provides information of the same quality and detail as expected of a device placed inside.

Additionally, the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Extension of Authorisations Provisions: Legal Consultations) Order 2010 states that covert surveillance carried out in relation to anything taking place in certain specified premises is intrusive when they are being used for legal consultation.

4.4 Covert Directed Surveillance

This is surveillance that is:

- covert
- not intrusive;
- for the purposes of a specific investigation or operation;
- likely to obtain private information¹ about a person (whether or not that person was the target of the investigation or operation); and
- not carried out as an immediate response to events or circumstances which could not have been foreseen prior to the surveillance taking place.

4.5 Directed Surveillance Crime Threshold

Following the changes to RIPA introduced by The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) (Amendment) Order 2012 a crime threshold applies to the authorisation of **directed surveillance** by local authorities.

Local Authority Authorising Officers may not authorise directed surveillance unless it is for the purpose of preventing or detecting a criminal offence AND meets the following:

- The criminal offence is punishable by a maximum term of at least 6 months imprisonment, or
- Would constitute an offence under sections 146, 147, or 147A of the Licensing Act 2003 or section 7 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1993 (offences

¹ Private information includes any information relating to a person's private or family life, home and correspondence (whether at home, in a public place or in the workplace).

involving sale of tobacco and alcohol to underage children) regardless of length of prison term.

The **RIPA** Crime threshold **only** applies to Directed Surveillance, not to CHIS or Communications Data.

The Home Office Code of Practice for covert surveillance can be found on the Home Office website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covert-surveillance-and-covert-human-intelligence-sources-codes-of-practice>.

Where covert surveillance is required but does not meet the RIPA crime threshold, a non-RIPA directed surveillance application may be made. For further details about surveillance outside of RIPA, please see the non-RIPA policy on the intranet.

4.6 Confidential Information

A higher level of authorisation to apply to the Magistrates Court is required in relation to RIPA activity when the subject of the investigation might reasonably expect a high degree of privacy, or where "confidential information" might be obtained. For the purpose of RIPA this includes:

- communications subject to legal privilege²;
- communications between a member of parliament and another person on constituency matters;
- confidential personal information³; and
- confidential journalistic material⁴

The Authorising Officer and the person carrying out the surveillance must understand that such information is confidential and is subject to a stringent authorisation procedure. Authorisation can only be granted by the Chief Executive or in their absence by an officer acting as Head of Paid Service.

² Legal privilege is defined in section 98 of the Police Act 1997 as:

- communications between a professional legal adviser and his client, or any person representing his client which are made in connection with the giving of legal advice to the client.
- communications between a professional legal adviser and his client or any person representing his client, or between a professional legal adviser or his client or any such representative and any other person which are made in connection with or in contemplation of legal proceedings and for the purposes of such proceedings.
- items enclosed with or referred to in communications of the kind mentioned above and made in connection with the giving of legal advice, or in connection with or in contemplation of legal proceedings and for the purposes of such proceedings.

Communications and items are not matters subject to legal privilege when they are in the possession of a person who is not entitled to possession of them, and communications and items held, or oral communications made, with the intention of furthering a criminal purpose are not matters subject to legal privilege.

If advice is required on this point, officers should contact the City Solicitor or the Democratic Services Legal Team.

³ Confidential personal information is described at paragraph 9.29 of the Home Office Covert Surveillance and Property Interference Revised Code of Practice.

⁴ Confidential journalistic material is described at paragraph 9.38 of the Home Office Covert Surveillance and Property Interference Revised Code of Practice.

Any officer contemplating RIPA activity where the above circumstances may apply must seek advice from the City Solicitor or the Democratic Services Legal Team prior to making any application.

5. Covert Human Intelligence Sources (“CHIS”)

5.1 CHIS

The Council is permitted to use CHIS subject to strict compliance with RIPA.

A CHIS is a person who establishes or maintains a personal or other relationship with a person for the purpose of facilitating:

- (a) covertly using the relationship to obtain information or provide access to information to another person, or
- (b) covertly disclosing information obtained by the use of the relationship or as a consequence of the existence of such a relationship.

A RIPA authorisation and order from a magistrate is required for the above activity and should be obtained whether the CHIS is a Council officer or another person who is asked to be a CHIS on the Council’s behalf. Authorisation for CHIS can only be granted if it is for the purposes of “preventing or detecting crime or of preventing disorder.”

Members of the public who volunteer information to the Council and those engaged by the Council to carry out test purchases in the ordinary course of business (i.e. they do not develop a relationship with the shop attendant and do not use covert recording devices) are not CHIS and do not require RIPA authorisation.

However, by virtue of section 26(8) (c) of RIPA, there may be instances where an individual, *who* covertly discloses information though not tasked to do so may nevertheless be a CHIS. The important question is how did the member of the public acquire the information which they volunteer. If they acquired it in the course of, or as a result of the existence of, a personal or other relationship, they are likely to fall within the definition of a CHIS. If the Council then makes use of the information, and the informant is thereby put at risk, the Council may be in breach of its duty of care owed to the individual. It is recommended that legal advice is sought in any such circumstances.

The Home Office Code of Practice on Covert Human Intelligence Sources can be found on the Home Office website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covert-human-intelligence-sources-code-of-practice-2022>

5.2 Vulnerable Individuals / Juvenile CHIS

Additional requirements apply to the use of a vulnerable individual⁵ or a person under the age of 18 as a CHIS. In both cases authorisation for an application to the Magistrates Court can only be granted by the Chief Executive or in their absence by an officer acting as Head of Paid Service. Any officer contemplating the use of a juvenile or a vulnerable person as a CHIS must seek advice from the City Solicitor or the Democratic Services Legal Team prior to making the application.

The use or conduct of a CHIS under 16 years of age must not be authorised to give information against their parents or any person who has parental responsibility for them.

In other cases, authorisations should not be granted unless the special provisions contained in The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Juveniles) Order 2000 are satisfied. This sets out rules about parental consent, meetings, risk assessments and the duration of the authorisation.

6. CCTV

The installation and use of unconcealed CCTV cameras for the purpose of generally observing activity in a particular area is not surveillance requiring RIPA authorisation. However, there are specific provisions regulating the use of CCTV cameras in public places and buildings and the Council has drawn up a Corporate CCTV Policy which officers must comply with and which can be found on both the Council's intranet **and website**:

https://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/7424/cctv_code_of_practice

However, if CCTV cameras are being used in such a way that the definition of covert directed surveillance is satisfied, **and the activity under investigation meets the RIPA crime threshold**, a RIPA authorisation should be obtained.

For instance, the use of town centre CCTV systems to identify those responsible for a criminal act immediately after it happens will not require RIPA authorisation. However, the use of the same CCTV system to conduct planned surveillance of an individual and record their movements is likely to require authorisation.

Protocols should be agreed with any external agencies requesting use of the Council's CCTV system. The protocols should ensure that the Council is satisfied that authorisations have been validly granted prior to agreeing that the CCTV system may be used for directed surveillance.

7. Acquisition and Disclosure of Communications Data

7.1 Communication Service Providers ("CSPs")

⁵ A vulnerable individual is a person who by reason of mental disorder or vulnerability, other disability, age or illness, is or may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

CSPs are organisations that are involved in the provision, delivery and maintenance of communications such as postal, telecommunication and internet service providers but also, for example, hotel or library staff involved in providing and maintaining e-mail access to customers. The Council must obtain communications data from CSPs in strict compliance with IPA.

7.2 Types of Communications Data

Sections 261 and 262 IPA 2016 provide the definitions of communications data, telecommunications, postal services and systems.

Communications data is the ‘who’, ‘where’, ‘when’ and ‘how’ of a communication such as a letter, phone call or e-mail but not the content, not what was said or written. The Council is not able to authorise the interception or acquisition of the content of communications.

Postal Data is anything comprised in or attached to a communication for the purpose of a postal service, for example addresses or markings of the sender or the recipient either in writing or through online tracking.

Telecommunications data are all communications data held by a telecommunications operator or obtainable from a telecommunications system.

Previously under RIPA the categories of telecommunication data were “traffic data”, “service user data” and “subscriber data”. These have been replaced under IPA with two types of telecommunication data:

Entity Data- this is data about entities or links between individuals and devices. Entities can be individuals, groups and objects such as mobile phones, tablets or other communication devices.

Entity data broadly replaces “subscriber data” under RIPA, and may include:
names and addresses of subscribers, email or telephone account holders as well as payments made;
make and model of the device used;
the connection, disconnection and reconnection of services an individual has subscribed to or may have subscribed to.

Entity data describes or identifies how individuals are linked to devices but does not include information about individual events.

Events Data- this is more intrusive; it identifies or describes events which consist of one or more entities, such as individuals engaging in an activity at a specific point (or specific points) in time.

Events data may include:
call records;
location of a mobile phone;

information which identifies the sender or recipient from data held in the communication;
 timing and duration of a call.

Events data does not include non-communication events such as a change in address or telephone number.

A basic example of the difference between entity and events data is where a subscriber check is required, such as requiring information about who is the subscriber for mobile number 07999123456. This would be entity data but if further information is required about the date/time a phone call was made, location or the duration, this would be classed as events data. Obtaining events data requires a higher threshold than for entity data. Further information about this can be found at paragraph 7.3

The Communications Data Code of Practice contains a non-exhaustive list of examples of events data or entity data. If an applicant is unsure of the category of data they are seeking (entity or events data), or other information relating to telecommunications or postal systems covered under IPA, the applicant should discuss this with their Single Point of Contact (SPoC) or contact the Democratic Services Legal Team for advice.

The Council is not permitted to make an application that requires the processing or disclosure of internet connection records for any purpose.

The Council is not able to intercept or obtain the content of communications in any circumstances, for example the details contained within an email, text message or voicemail.

7.3 Legal basis for Communications Data Authorisation and Notices

IPA provides for acquisition and disclosure of communications data by local authorities only for the prevention and detection of crime or disorder as set out in s73 and s60A IPA 2016. As such the Council is unable to access communications data for investigations that are not for the purpose of prevention and detection of crime, for example for civil action or internal employee disciplinary matters.

Obtaining events data must, in addition, be for serious crime defined in section 86(2A) IPA 2016 as:

- An offence for which an adult is capable of being sentenced to one year or more in prison;
- Any offence involving violence, resulting in a substantial financial gain or involving conduct by a large group of persons in pursuit of a common goal;
- Any offence committed by a body corporate, or;
- Any offence which involves, as an integral part of it the sending of a communication or a breach of privacy.

Care should be taken that the appropriate lawful requirements for the purpose of the investigation are met and the correct authorisation procedure is followed before obtaining the data from communication service providers. Advice should be sought from the Democratic Services Legal Team if in doubt.

Acquisition and disclosure of communications data is also overseen by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO).

The details of the procedure for obtaining communications data can be found at paragraph 9.4.

Under section 11 IPA 2016, it is an offence for a person in a public authority knowingly or recklessly to obtain communications data from a telecommunications operator or postal operator without lawful authority.

The [Home Office Acquisition and Disclosure of Communications Data Code of Practice](#) can be found on the Home Office website and on the intranet.

8. Use of Social Media / Internet

The internet may be utilised to obtain information including viewing specific user profiles on Social Networking Sites ('SNS') or searching SNS to try to find profiles that contain useful information. Used correctly, research of SNS might provide invaluable evidence or at least useful intelligence.

Some activity on SNS might however constitute Directed Surveillance or require CHIS authorisation, some may not. Similarly, some research might be likely to result in the obtaining of private information, some may not. Activity that does not meet the threshold for RIPA authorisation but might be likely to result in obtaining private information will still require consideration of Human Rights issues such as balancing the protection of rights with the breach of privacy, necessity and proportionality, **as well as compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 where personal information is likely to be accessed or obtained. Where the RIPA crime threshold is not met, a non RIPA authorisation may still be required. Details of the non RIPA procedure can be found on the intranet.**

It is important to note that images of persons are private information, and also for officers to be aware that it is possible they might obtain private information about other individuals not just the specific user on the profiles which are viewed, captured or recorded. These individuals might not even be aware this private information has been made public by the profile/account holder.

Whilst it is the responsibility of an individual to set privacy settings to protect unsolicited access to private information, and even though data may be deemed published and no longer under the control of the author, it is unwise to regard it as 'open source' or publicly available; the author has a reasonable expectation of privacy if access controls are applied.

Where privacy settings are available but not applied the data may be considered open source and an authorisation is not usually required. **However, in some**

circumstances where data is considered open source, privacy expectations may still nevertheless apply, and authorisation should be sought. This is because as stated in the Home Office Covert Surveillance and Property Interference Code of Practice the *intention* of the subject in making the data public was not for it to be used covertly for an investigatory purpose. In deciding whether online surveillance should be regarded as covert, *consideration should be given to the likelihood of the subject knowing that surveillance could be taking place.*

If reasonable steps are taken to inform the public or the subjects that surveillance could take place (where appropriate), the surveillance may be deemed as overt, for which authorisation may not be required.

If it is necessary and proportionate for an officer to breach access controls covertly, the minimum requirement is an authorisation for directed surveillance. An authorisation for the use and conduct of a CHIS is necessary if a relationship is established or maintained by an officer of **the Council** or by a person acting on **the Council's** behalf (i.e., the activity is more than mere reading of the site's content). This could occur if an officer covertly asks to become a 'friend' of someone on a SNS. It is not unlawful for **an officer of the Council** to set up a false identity, but it is inadvisable for **that officer** to do so for a covert purpose without an authorisation.

Use of an established overt presence of **the Council** on the SNS website to look at publicly available information on the profile is possible and viable if the Council already has an established presence on the SNS which is used to publicly and overtly make the presence of the Council known, however this does not mean that information freely displayed on a profile is "fair game". The first visit to an SNS profile which might be displaying lots of private information could be regarded as a 'drive by' however any subsequent visits, particularly on a regular basis are likely to require authorisation for directed surveillance if the Council is likely to obtain private information, and this would be obvious as a result of the initial visit.

The following factors should be taken into account when considering using social media sites as part of an investigation:

- whether the investigation/research is directed towards an individual or organisation;**
- whether it is likely to result in obtaining private information about a person or group of people;**
- whether it is likely to involve visiting other internet sites to build up an intelligence picture or profile;**
- whether the information obtained will be recorded or retained and consideration of the appropriate safeguards;**
- whether the information is likely to provide an observer with a platform of lifestyle;**
- whether the information is being combined with other sources of information which amounts to information relating to a person's private life;**
- whether the investigation or research is part of an ongoing piece of work involving repeated viewing of the subject;**

-whether it is likely to involve identifying and recording information about third parties, such as family or friends of the subject, that may include private information and therefore risk collateral intrusion into the privacy of others.

9. Authorisation Procedures

9.1 Authorising Officers for directed surveillance and CHIS

Authorising Officers are responsible for assessing and authorising covert directed surveillance and the use of a CHIS.

It is the responsibility of Authorising Officers to ensure that when applying for judicial authorisation the principles of necessity and proportionality (see **paragraph 9.2** below) are adequately considered and evidenced; and that reviews and cancellations of authorisations are carried out as required under this Policy (see **paragraphs 9.8- 9.10** below).

Lists of Authorising Officers and **Approved Rank Officers** are available on the Council's intranet. Any requests for amendments to the lists must be made in writing and sent to the City Solicitor.

Schedule 1 of the **Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) Order (2010)** prescribes the rank or position of Authorising Officers for the purposes of Section 30(1) of RIPA (covert surveillance and CHIS). For Local Authorities they prescribe a "Director, Head of Service, Service Manager or equivalent". The term Director is not defined within legislation but in Manchester City Council it has been determined that it would normally equate to second or third tier management unless otherwise determined by the City Solicitor.

The City Solicitor designates which officers can be Authorising Officers. Only these officers can authorise directed surveillance and the use of CHIS. All authorisations must follow the procedures set out in the Policy. Authorising Officers are responsible for ensuring that they have received RIPA training prior to authorising RIPA activity. When applying for or authorising RIPA activity under the Policy, officers must also take into account the corporate training and any other guidance issued from time to time by the City Solicitor.

9.2 Authorisation of RIPA Covert Directed Surveillance and Use of a CHIS.

RIPA activity applies to covert directed surveillance and use of CHIS whether by Council employees or external agencies engaged by the Council. Council officers wishing to undertake directed surveillance or use of a CHIS must complete the relevant application form (see para 9.6) and forward it to the relevant Authorising Officer.

All uses of RIPA should be referred to the Democratic Services Legal Team for preliminary advice.

RIPA Directed Surveillance and use of a CHIS can only be authorised if the authorising officer is satisfied that the activity is: -

(a) **in accordance with the law** i.e. it must be in relation to matters that are statutory or administrative functions of the Council.

(b) **necessary** for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or preventing disorder. This is the only ground available to the Council for authorising RIPA activity and there is a crime threshold for directed surveillance as described in paragraph 4.5 above; and

(c) **proportionate** to what it seeks to achieve. This involves balancing the seriousness of the intrusion into the privacy of the subject of the operation (or any other person as may be affected) against the need for the activity in investigative operational terms. Any conduct that is excessive as to the interference and the aim of the conduct or is in any way arbitrary will not be proportionate. Serious consideration must be given to identifying the least intrusive method of obtaining the information required.

Applicant officers should ask the following types of questions to help determine whether the use of RIPA is necessary and proportionate:

- why it is believed the proposed conduct and use is necessary for the prevention of crime or the prevention of disorder (as appropriate)
- how the activity to be authorised is expected to bring a benefit to the investigation
- how and why the proposed conduct and use is proportionate to the intelligence dividend it hopes to achieve, having regard to the gravity and extent of the activity under investigation
- how and why the methods to be adopted will cause the least possible intrusion to the subject/s i.e. interfere with their rights under the ECHR
- what other reasonable methods of obtaining information have been considered and why they have been discounted

Authorising Officers should not be responsible for authorising their own activities i.e. those operations/investigations in which they are directly involved. However, it is recognised that in exceptional circumstances this may sometimes be unavoidable.

Particular consideration should be given to collateral intrusion on or interference with the privacy of persons who are not the subject(s) of the investigation. Collateral intrusion occurs when an officer undertaking covert surveillance on a subject observes or gains information relating to a person who is not the subject of the investigation. An application for an authorisation must include an assessment of the risk of any collateral intrusion or interference and measures must be taken to avoid or minimise it. This must be taken into account by the Authorising Officer, particularly when considering the proportionality of the surveillance.

Particular care must be taken in cases where confidential information is involved e.g. matters subject to legal privilege; confidential personal information; confidential journalistic material; confidential medical information; and matters relating to religious leaders and their followers. In cases where it is likely that confidential information will be acquired, officers must specifically refer this to the City Solicitor or the Democratic Services Legal Team for advice.

The activity must be authorised before it takes place.

At the time of authorisation, the Authorising Officer must set a date for review of the authorisation and review it on that date (see 9.8).

A copy of the completed Home Office application and authorisation form must be forwarded to the Democratic Services Legal Team within one week of the authorisation by e-mail as a scanned document. The Democratic Services Legal Team will maintain a central register of the Council's RIPA activity and a unique reference number will be allocated to each application.

Approval by Magistrates Court

Following changes under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, there is an additional stage in the process for **RIPA Directed Surveillance and CHIS** investigatory activities. After the Authorisation form has been countersigned by the Authorising Officer, the Council is required to obtain judicial approval for either the authorisation or a renewal of an authorisation.

The magistrate will have to decide whether the council's application to grant or renew an authorisation to use RIPA should be approved and it will not come into effect unless and until it is approved by the Magistrates Court.

A separate application should be completed when the Council is requesting judicial approval for the use of more than one of the RIPA surveillance techniques (i.e. Directed Surveillance and CHIS) at the same time.

In cases where there is collaborative working with another agency, for example, the Police, as part of a single investigation or operation, only one authorisation from one organisation is required. This should be made by the lead authority of that particular investigation. Duplication of authorisation does not affect the lawfulness of the investigation or operation but could create an unnecessary administrative burden. Where the Council is not the lead authority, Council officers should satisfy themselves that authorisation has been obtained, and what activity has been authorised.

It should be noted that only the initial authorisation and any renewal of the authorisation require magistrates' approval.

There is no requirement for officers presenting authorisations to the Magistrates Court to be legally qualified, but they do need to be authorised by the City Solicitor to represent the Council in court.

The Role of the Magistrates Court

The role of the Magistrates Court is set out in section 32A RIPA (for directed surveillance and CHIS).

These sections provide that the authorisation, shall not take effect until the Magistrates Court has made an order approving such authorisation or notice. The matters on which the Magistrates Court needs to be satisfied before giving judicial approval are that:

- There were reasonable grounds for the local authority to believe that the authorisation or notice was necessary and proportionate;
- In the case of a CHIS authorisation, that there were reasonable grounds for the local authority to believe that:
 - arrangements exist for the safety and welfare of the source that satisfy section 29(5) RIPA;
 - the requirements imposed by Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Juveniles) Order 2000 were satisfied;
- The local authority application has been authorised by an Authorising Officer;
- The grant of the authorisation was not in breach of any restriction imposed by virtue of an order made under the following sections of RIPA:
 - 29(7)(a) (for CHIS),
 - 30(3) (for directed surveillance and CHIS)

The procedure for applying for directed surveillance or use of a CHIS is:

Applicant officer obtains preliminary legal advice from the Democratic Services Legal Team

Applicant officer completes an application

Authorisation is sought from the Authorising Officer

Applicant officer/legal representative creates court pack and applicant officer proceeds to court

Applicant officer organises the directed surveillance or use of a CHIS to take place

Applicant officer sends copy Magistrates Court order to the Democratic Services Legal Team

9.3 Additional Requirements for Authorisation of a CHIS

A CHIS must only be authorised if the following arrangements are in place:

- there is a Council officer with day to day responsibility for dealing with the CHIS (CHIS handler) and a senior Council officer with oversight of the use made of the CHIS (CHIS controller);
- a risk assessment has been undertaken to take account of the security and welfare of the CHIS;
- a Council officer is responsible for maintaining a record of the use made of the CHIS;
- any adverse impact on community confidence or safety regarding the use of a CHIS has been considered taking account of any particular sensitivities in the local community where the CHIS is operating; and

- records containing the identity of the CHIS will be maintained in such a way as to preserve the confidentiality or prevent disclosure of the identity of the CHIS

A record of decision for CHIS must be completed which covers the requirements that should be in place for handling a CHIS including juvenile and vulnerable CHIS. Guidance and a checklist of the information to include when completing a CHIS decision record can be found under the RIPA pages of the intranet.

9.4 Requirements for Authorisation of Acquisition and Disclosure of Communications Data

The rules on the granting of authorisations for the acquisition of communications data are different from directed surveillance and CHIS authorisations and involve three roles within the Council. The roles are:

- Applicant Officer
- **Approved Rank Officer**
- Senior Responsible Officer

The two external roles are;

- **Single Point of Contact (SPoC) at the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN)**
- **Authorising Officer in the Office of Communications Data Authorisations (OCDA)**

Applicant

This is the officer involved in conducting an investigation or operation who makes an application in writing for the acquisition of communications data. Any officer can make an application providing they are authorised to do so.

Approved Rank Officer

This is the MCC officer who is aware that the application is being made by the applicant, and is able to verify to the SPoC at NAFN that the acquisition of communications data is necessary and proportionate for the purpose it is required for before it is authorised externally by OCDA .

Senior Responsible Officer

The Home Office Communications Data code of practice requires that local authorities must ensure that someone of at least the rank of the senior responsible officer (SRO) has overall oversight for obtaining Communications Data and must inform NAFN of nominated officers. Further information can be found at para 13 of this policy

Single Point of Contact (SPoC)

The accredited SPoCs at NAFN scrutinise the applications **objectively** and provide advice to applicant officers and **Approved Rank Officers** ensuring the Council acts in an informed and lawful manner. **If no further work is required by the Council in**

respect of the application, the SPoC will refer the application to OCDA on the Council's behalf.

SPoC's have received training specifically to facilitate lawful acquisition of communications data and effective co-operation between the Council, OCDA and the communication service providers.

Authorising Officer at Office of Communications Data Authorisations (OCDA)

Communications Data applications no longer require judicial approval as is required for directed surveillance under RIPA. The Authorising Officer at OCDA scrutinises the application independently and either approves or rejects the application setting out the justification for the decision, taking into account the lawfulness of the conduct, and that the appropriate standards and safeguards have been addressed. The Council is not permitted to contact OCDA directly, all correspondence must be through the SPoC at NAFN.

The procedure for applying for acquisition of communications data:

The procedure is as follows:

Applicant obtains preliminary legal advice from Democratic Services Legal Team

Applicant officer creates an application using the Cycomms Web Viewer on the NAFN website

SPoC Officer at NAFN triages and accepts the application into the Cyclops system

SPoC Officer uses Cyclops to update the application details and completes the SPoC report. **As part of this, SPoC checks that the Council is lawfully permitted to obtain Communications Data for the purpose it is required for, determines the conduct such as the type of data needed to achieve the Council's purpose. Where the application is for Events Data, that the legal threshold is met and, in all cases, the conduct is justified based on the seriousness of the offence, the risk of unintended results, the risk of excessive data being obtained, including collateral intrusion, including whether other considerations or recommendations are required. The SPoC liaises with applicant officer and Approved Rank Officer if further work is required.**

SPoC sends the application to the Office of Communications Data (OCDA) for external approval on behalf of the Council.

If SPoC receives authorisation from OCDA, SPoC sends request to Communications Service Provider (CSP)

SPoC receives results back from CSP and returns results to Applicant

Applicant accesses the Web Viewer and downloads results

Applicant sends details of the investigation, type of data required, whether the application was approved by OCDA and the date for this to the Democratic Services Legal Team who will update the Central Record.

If the application is refused by OCDA, the Council can either:

- decide not to proceed with the application;
- resubmit the application with revisions including the justifications for doing so
- challenge the decision made by OCDA if this is agreed by the SRO. Further guidance from OCDA can be provided.

Completing a Communication Data application form

An application to acquire communications data must:

- state the type of data required e.g., entity or events data; describe the communications data required e.g., the subscriber details linked to a telephone number, email address etc;
 - the timescales or specific date or period of the data that it is required. If the data will or may be generated in the future, the future period is restricted to no more than one month from the date on which the authorisation is granted;
 - specify the purpose for which the data is required and set out the legislation under which the operation or investigation is being conducted. This must be a statutory function of the Council for the prevention or detection of crime or preventing disorder (or for events data, this must meet the threshold for serious crime, see para 7.3).
- ;
- include a unique reference number;
 - include the name and the office, rank or position held by the person making and verifying the application;
 - describe whether the communications data relates to a victim, a witness, a complainant, a suspect, next of kin, vulnerable person or other person relevant to the investigation or operation;
 - include the operation name (if applicable) to which the application relates;
 - explain why the acquisition of that data is considered necessary and proportionate in the circumstances based on the link between the investigation, the subject or other individuals and, and why the specific communication data is required, what other lawful, reasonable or least intrusive methods were considered and why these were rejected;
 - present the case for the authorisation in a fair and balanced way taking into account the size and scope of the investigation. In particular, all reasonable efforts should be made to take account of information which supports or weakens the case for the authorisation;
 - consider and, where appropriate, describe any risk of meaningful collateral intrusion. the extent to which the privacy rights of any individual not under investigation may be infringed and why that intrusion is justified in the circumstances. For example, where access is for 'outgoing calls' from a 'home

telephone' collateral intrusion may be applicable to calls made by family members who are outside the scope of the investigation. The applicant therefore needs to consider what the impact is on third parties and try to minimise it;

- consider and, where appropriate, describe any possible unintended consequences of the application; and
- where data is being sought from a telecommunications operator or postal operator, specify whether the telecommunications operator or postal operator may inform the subject/individual(s) of the fact that an application has been made for their data.

9.5 Urgent Authorisations

By virtue of the fact that an authorisation under RIPA is not approved until signed off by a Magistrates Court, urgent oral authorisations are no longer available. **Urgent oral authorisations are also not available for Communications Data.**

9.6 Application Forms

Only the RIPA Forms listed below can be used by officers applying for RIPA authorisation.

(a) Directed Surveillance (external site)

[Application for Authority for Directed Surveillance](#)
[Application for Judicial Approval for Directed Surveillance](#)
[Review of Directed Surveillance Authority](#)
[Cancellation of Directed Surveillance](#)
[Renewal of Directed Surveillance Authority](#)

(b) CHIS

[Application for Authority for Conduct and Use of a CHIS](#)
[Review of Conduct and Use of a CHIS](#)
[Cancellation of Conduct and Use of a CHIS](#)
[Renewal of Conduct and Use of a CHIS](#)

9.7 Duration of the Authorisation

Authorisation/notice durations are:

- for covert directed surveillance the authorisation remains valid for 3 months after the date of authorisation
- for a CHIS the authorisation remains valid for 12 months after the date of authorisation (or 4 months if a juvenile CHIS is used).
- a communications data notice remains valid for a maximum of 1 month. **All authorisations and notices are expected to specify dates and times for the acquisition or disclosure of the information.**

Authorisations should not be permitted to expire; they must be either renewed or cancelled when the activity authorised has been completed or is no longer necessary

or proportionate in achieving the aim for which it was originally authorised. This is a statutory requirement which means that **all** authorisations must be reviewed to decide whether to cancel or renew them.

9.8 Review of Authorisations

As referred to at **paragraph 9.2** Authorising Officers must make arrangements to periodically review any authorised RIPA activity.

Officers carrying out RIPA/IPA activity, or external agencies engaged by the Council to carry out RIPA/IPA activity, must periodically review it and report back to the Authorising Officer/**Approved Rank Officer** if there is any doubt as to whether it should continue. For Juvenile CHIS, the relevant Code of Practice stipulates that the authorisation should be reviewed on a monthly basis.

All reviews should be recorded on the appropriate Home Office form (see **paragraph 9.6**).

A copy of the Council's notice of review of an authorisation must be sent to the Democratic Services Legal Team within one week of the review to enable the central record on RIPA to be **updated**.

9.9 Renewal of Authorisations

If the Authorising Officer considers it necessary for an authorisation to continue **a renewal may be sought** for a further period, beginning with the day when the authorisation would have expired but for the renewal. The **Authorising Officer** must consider the matter again taking into account the content and value of the investigation and the information so far obtained.

Renewed authorisations will normally be for a period of up to 3 months for covert directed surveillance, 12 months in the case of CHIS, 4 months in the case of juvenile CHIS and 1 month in the case of a communications data authorisation. Authorisations may be renewed more than once, provided they are considered again and continue to meet the criteria for authorisation.

Applications for the renewal of an authorisation for covert directed surveillance or CHIS authorisation must be made on the appropriate form (see **paragraph 9.6**) **and added as** an addendum to the application form which granted the initial authorisation.

All RIPA renewals will require an order of the Magistrates Court in accordance with the requirements in paragraph 9.2.

A copy of the Council's notice of renewal of an authorisation must be sent to the Democratic Services Legal Team within one week of the renewal together with a copy of the Magistrates Court order renewing the authorisation to enable the central record on RIPA to be updated.

For communications data, renewals must be made via the NAFN SPoC and authorised by OCDA. The reasoning for seeking renewal of a communications data authorisation should be set out by the applicant in an addendum to the application form which granted the initial authorisation

9.10 Cancellation of Authorisations

The person who applied for or last renewed the authorisation must cancel it when they are satisfied that the covert directed surveillance, CHIS or communications data authorisation or notice no longer meets the criteria for authorisation **such as when it is no longer necessary for the statutory purpose or the activity is no longer deemed to be proportionate.** For covert directed surveillance and CHIS cancellations must be made on the appropriate Home Office form (see paragraph 9.6).

Where necessary and practicable, the safety and welfare of the CHIS should continue to be taken into account after the authorisation has been cancelled, and all welfare matters addressed.

A copy of the Council's notice of cancellation of an authorisation must be sent the Democratic Services Legal Team within one week of the cancellation to enable the central record on RIPA to be updated.

For Communications Data, the NAFN SPoC must be made aware of the cancellation who will cease the authorised activity, ensure any notices are cancelled and inform the Communication Service Provider.

9.11 What happens if the surveillance has unexpected results?

Those carrying out the covert surveillance should inform the Authorising Officer if the investigation unexpectedly interferes with the privacy of individuals who are not the original subjects of the investigation or covered by the authorisation. In some cases, the original authorisation may not be sufficient to cover the activity required or information likely to be gathered and, in such cases, consideration should be given as to whether a separate authorisation is required.

9.12 Errors

Proper application of the RIPA provisions, and robust technical systems, should reduce the scope for making errors. A senior officer within a public authority is required to undertake a regular review of errors and a written record must be made of each review. For the Council, this will be the City Solicitor.

An error may be reported if it is a "relevant error". Under section 231(9) of the Investigatory Powers Act 2016, a relevant error is an error by a public authority in complying with any requirements that are imposed on it by an enactment, such as RIPA, which is subject to review by a Judicial Commissioner.

Examples of a relevant error include where surveillance or CHIS activity has taken place without lawful authorisation, and/or without adherence to the safeguards set out within the relevant statutory provisions or the relevant Home Office Code of Practice.

Where a relevant error has been identified, the Council should notify the Investigatory Powers Commissioner (IPCO) as soon as reasonably practical, and no later than 10 working days (unless otherwise agreed by IPCO). The process for informing the IPCO is set out in the relevant Home Office Codes of Practice, which can be found on the intranet.

10. Records and Documentation

10.1 Departmental Records

Applications, renewals, cancellations, reviews and copies of notices must be retained by the Council in written or electronic form, and physically attached or cross-referenced where they are associated with each other. These records will be confidential and should be retained for a period of at least five years from the ending of the authorisation and destroyed in accordance with the Council's Retention and Disposal Policy. Where it is believed that the records could be relevant to pending or future court proceedings, they should be retained and then destroyed five years after last use.

In relation to communications data, records must also be held centrally by the SPoC. These records must be available for inspection by the IPCO and retained to allow the Investigatory Powers Tribunal to carry out its functions.

10.2 Central Record of Authorisations, Renewals, Reviews and Cancellations

A central record of directed surveillance, CHIS and access to communications data authorisations is maintained by:

The City Solicitor
City Solicitor's Division
PO Box 532,
Albert Square
Manchester
M60 2LA

The central record is maintained in accordance with the requirements set out in the Home Office Codes of Practice. In order to keep the central record up to date Authorising Officers/applicant officers must, in addition to sending through the Home Office application, authorisation form, Magistrates Court order **or OCDA decision documents** within one week of the authorisation being approved by the Magistrates Court (see **paragraph 9.2) or OCDA**, send notification (by e-mail) of every renewal, cancellation and review on the Council's notification forms (see **paragraphs 9.8 – 9.10**).

Using the information on the central record the Democratic Services Team will:

- remind Authorising Officers/ applicant officers in advance of the expiry of authorisations;
- remind Authorising Officers of the need to ensure surveillance does not continue beyond the authorised period;
- remind authorising officers/applicant officers to regularly review current authorisations;

10.3 Safeguarding and the Use of Material.

All material obtained through the use of directed surveillance, CHIS or acquisition of communications data records containing personal data must be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and the Council's Data Protection Policy.

The data protection principles under the DPA includes that personal data should only be processed if it is lawful to do so, that the data are adequate, relevant and not excessive for the purpose it was collected.

A personal data breach can be broadly defined as a security incident that has affected the confidentiality, integrity or availability of personal data Care must also be taken that personal data collected as part of an investigation is held in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage. A personal data breach may need to be reported to the Information Commissioner's Office within 72 hours of officers becoming aware of the breach.

To mitigate against risk of personal data being compromised, all records and materials should be stored securely; clearly labelled; classified where appropriate as OFFICIAL or SENSITIVE to demonstrate the degree of sensitivity of the information; the appropriate retention period should be recorded at the outset and reviewed. Access to material obtained should be limited to those officers that have a legitimate reason for storing or accessing the records, with appropriate access controls in place. The data should not be stored for any longer than is necessary for any authorised purpose, and thereafter securely destroyed. This applies to all copies, extracts and summaries of the material obtained.

Where an authorisation results in excessive data having been acquired, the data should only be retained where it's appropriate and lawful to do so. The data must be reviewed to determine whether there is an intention to use it, and the reasons for requiring it, including whether retention of the data is necessary and proportionate. Contact the Democratic Services Legal Team if advice is required.

IPCO has produced recommendations in respect of safeguarding data (6 Data Assurance steps) that the Council is required to demonstrate compliance with. The recommendations can be found at Appendix 1 of this Policy.

Where the product of surveillance could be relevant to pending or future criminal or civil proceedings, it should be retained in accordance with established disclosure requirements for a suitable further period, commensurate to any subsequent review.

Particular attention is drawn to the requirements of the Code of Practice issued under the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996. This requires that material which is obtained in the course of a criminal investigation and which may be relevant to the investigation must be recorded and retained.

There is nothing in RIPA which prevents material obtained from properly authorised surveillance from being used in other investigations. The Council will ensure that adequate arrangements are in place for the handling and storage of material obtained through the use of covert surveillance to facilitate its use in other investigations.

In addition to the data protection considerations above, material obtained must be used, stored and destroyed in compliance with any other legal requirements, including confidentiality. Information Security guidance is available on the intranet at the Protecting Information pages.

11. Training & Advice and Departmental policies, procedures and codes of conduct

11.1 Training & Advice

The City Solicitor will arrange regular training on RIPA **and the acquisition of Communications Data**. All Authorising Officers, applicant officers, **Approved Rank Officers** and investigating officers should attend at least one session every two years and further sessions as and when required. **Any training required outside of the corporate training arranged by the City Solicitor should be organised by the relevant teams. The Democratic Services Legal Team will sign post officers to the relevant training providers.**

The following resources are available on the intranet:

- the Corporate Policy and Procedures;
- Home Office Codes of Practice on covert surveillance and CHIS;
- Home Office Code on **communications data**;
- lists of Authorising Officers and **Approved Rank Officers** (posts and names);
- forms for covert surveillance and CHIS **applications, reviews, cancellations and renewals**;
- the corporate CCTV policy;
- corporate RIPA training;

If officers have any concerns, they should seek advice on RIPA **or the IPA** from the City Solicitor or the Democratic Services Legal Team demserv@manchester.gov.uk

11.2 Departmental policies, procedures and codes of conduct

Where in practice, departments have any policy, procedures or codes of practice in relation to RIPA **or the disclosure or acquisition of communications data** that are different from or in addition to this Code, they must immediately seek advice from the City Solicitor or the Democratic Services Legal Team.

12. Complaints

Any person who believes they have been adversely affected by surveillance activity undertaken by or on behalf of the Council may complain to the City Solicitor (as **Senior Responsible Officer**) who will investigate the complaint.

They may also complain to the Investigatory Powers Tribunal at:

Investigatory Powers Tribunal
PO Box 33220
London
SW1H 9ZQ

13. Monitoring of Authorisations

The City Solicitor is the Senior Responsible Officer in relation to activity under RIPA **and IPA** and is responsible for:

- the integrity of the process in place to authorise directed surveillance, the use of a CHIS and the acquisition and disclosure of communications data
- compliance with Part II of RIPA, **Part 3 of IPA**, the relevant Home Office Codes of Practice and this Policy
- engagement with the Commissioner or Inspectors of the IPCO when they conduct inspections, and
- where necessary, overseeing the implementation of any post-inspection plans recommended or approved by **the** Commissioner

The City Solicitor is also required by law to ensure that the Council does not act unlawfully and will undertake audits of files to ensure that surveillance or other investigatory activity permitted by the Council under RIPA **or IPA** is being complied with and will provide feedback to the Authorising Officers/Approved Rank Officers where deficiencies in the process are noted.

To facilitate the City Solicitor's role as the Senior Responsible Officer, the Democratic Services Legal Team will provide a periodic update on use of RIPA powers by the Council.

The City Solicitor will invite members every year through the Executive to review the Council's RIPA Policy for that period and to recommend any changes to the Council's policy or procedures and will also provide members with an annual update on use.

The IPCO has a duty to keep under review the exercise and performance of the Council's use of covert directed surveillance, CHIS, and the exercise and performance of the Council's use of its acquisition and disclosure of communications data powers. The IPCO will periodically inspect the Council and may carry out spot checks unannounced.

Appendix 1: IPCO 6 Data Assurance steps

The Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office recommends that authorities take the following actions to help assist with demonstrating compliance and adherence to obligations regarding the safeguard any data that has already been obtained or that may be obtained under RIPA or IPA:

- 1) Review the safeguarding obligations in the relevant Home Office Code of Practice for directed surveillance, CHIS, and Communications Data.**
- 2) Ensure that internal safeguarding policies for retaining, reviewing and disposing of any relevant data are accurate and up to date.**
- 3) Ensure that the authorising officer/approved rank officer has a full understanding of any data pathways used for RIPA/IPA, such as where the data is stored, who has access and why, how the data is protected from unauthorised access.**
- 4) Ensure that all data obtained under IPA and RIPA is clearly labelled and stored securely with a known retention policy.**
- 5) Review the wording of safeguards in any applications to obtain data under IPA and RIPA and ensure that they accurately reflect the internal retention and disposal processes.**
- 6) Review whether data obtained under previous authorisations is being retained for longer than is necessary and, if appropriate, consider disposing of retained data. If the data is still required, it must be lawful, necessary and proportionate.**

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**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Executive – 17 January 2024

Subject: Proposal for the Next Phase of Selective Licensing

Report of: Strategic Director Growth and Development and Strategic Director Neighbourhoods

Summary

The Housing Act 2004 gives Local Authorities the power to introduce the licensing of private rented homes within a designated area, with the aim of improving the management and condition of these properties.

Officers have used local data and intelligence and lessons learnt from previous selective licensing phases to identify 9 potential areas across 6 wards that are experiencing issues which meet the criteria to justify a SL designation in the area. Officers are therefore seeking approval to undertake a consultation exercise to establish whether the declaration of a selective licensing scheme, is required within these identified areas.

Recommendations

The Executive is requested to:

- (1) Approve a public consultation with residents, private landlords, businesses and other stakeholders (as set out in Section 7 of this report) to designate selective licensing schemes within the 9 geographical areas, across 6 wards, detailed in Maps 1 to 9 (Appendix 1) and listed in Section 6 of this report.
 - (2) Subject to the outcome of the consultation, delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Development, to approve the designation of up to 9 of the selective licensing areas identified in the report.
-

Wards Affected: Cheetham; Crumpsall; Harpurhey; Longsight; Miles Platting and Newton Heath; Moss Side;

Environmental Impact Assessment -the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city	Selective Licensing provides an opportunity to target resources on identifying and tackling energy efficiency within rented properties, The Energy Performance ratings are required as part of the SL application process and properties found to be without an EPC or a rating below E are then subject to enforcement.
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the	A refreshed Equality Impact Assessment has been drafted specifically for Phase 4 of the roll

issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments	out Selective Licensing. This has been signed off by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team and indicates predominately positive outcomes on protected or disadvantaged group. It also sets out actions to address any potential adverse impacts.
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Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the Our Manchester Strategy/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Good quality and well managed private rented homes will contribute to the sustainability of neighbourhoods, ensuring residents have a settled and stable platform to contribute and thrive.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Improving the private rented housing offer helps to attract and retain talent.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Increasing the supply of good quality homes for private rent will provide the opportunity for Manchester residents to access quality accommodation in neighbourhoods where people are happier to settle for longer.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The right mix of quality energy efficient housing is needed to support growth and ensure that our growing population can live and work in the city and enjoy a good quality of life.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Improved private rental accommodation standards, plays a part within a well-connected city and its neighbourhoods. It seeks to create neighbourhoods where residents will choose to live, and their housing needs and aspirations are met

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

An initial budget for the consultation process will be required; this is expected to be approx. £110,000. We have received £50,000 from GMCA towards these costs. If after public consultation the Council decides to proceed with Selective Licensing these costs can be fully funded via the license fee.

Financial Consequences – Capital

There are no direct capital consequences to the Council arising from this report

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

- Selective Licensing Pilot - Public Consultation - Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee, 21st June 2016 and Executive, 29th June 2016
- Selective Licensing - Outcome of Public Consultation - Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee, 6th December 2016
- Review of Selective Licensing Pilot areas - Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee, 4th March 2020
- Extension to Selective Licensing Schemes - Public Consultation - Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee, 2nd September 2020 & Executive, 9th September 2020
- Selective Licensing – Results of Public Consultation (2022) - Economy Scrutiny Committee, 9th March 2023
- Proposal for the Next Phase of Selective Licensing - Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee – 5 December 2023

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Housing Act 2004 gives Local Authorities the power to introduce the licensing of private rented homes within a designated area, with the aim of improving the management and condition of these properties.
- 1.2 Officers have used local data and intelligence and lessons learnt from previous selective licensing phases to identify 9 potential areas across 6 wards that are experiencing issues which meet the criteria to justify a SL designation in the area. Officers are therefore seeking approval to undertake a consultation exercise to establish whether the declaration of a selective licensing scheme, is required within these identified areas.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 One of the main themes of the Private Rented Sector Strategy 2020 - 2025 is to improve property and management conditions in the private rented sector with a particular focus on the poorest quality properties. The Housing Strategy 2022 - 2032 reaffirms our commitment to improving the safety, quality and management of private rented sector homes, our largest tenure type and where most of our citizens live.
- 2.2 Selective licensing is a useful tool to apply targeted interventions in the most challenging areas of the city as it can be used to address poor property conditions, high levels of antisocial behaviour, crime and deprivation.

2.3 Selective Licensing Pilot Schemes – Phase 1

- 2.3.1 Following a consultation exercise from the 19th of August to the 31st of October 2016, Manchester City Council (MCC) introduced four pilot Selective Licensing (SL) areas, encompassing approximately 2,000 private rented properties:
- Crumpsall (372 PRS Properties) – 13th March 2017 to 12th March 2022
 - Moss Side (978 PRS Properties) – 8th Jan 2018 to 7th Jan 2023
 - Moston (348 PRS Properties) – 23rd Apr 2018 to 22nd Apr 2023
 - Old Moat (188 PRS Properties) – 23rd Apr 2018 to 22nd Apr 2023
- 2.3.2 All of these schemes have now finished and the success of the designations in terms of improving the quality and management of the private rented homes within the SL areas, as well as the impact on the wider neighbourhood, has been evaluated.

2.4 Selective Licensing – Rolling Programme (Phases 2 & 3)

- 2.4.1 Building on the emerging learning from the pilot schemes via their midpoint evaluation in March 2020, the Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee considered 12 areas in September 2020 to form the next phases of the rollout of SL across Manchester. The areas which were put forward for the introduction of SL in this report were originally identified via a “hotspot”

mapping exercise at the time - looking at levels of deprivation, anti-social behaviour, crime and service requests relating to housing and environmental issues.

2.4.2 Views were then sought from local Neighbourhood & Enforcement Teams on boundaries for potential selective licensing areas within these 'hotspot' areas based on their local knowledge of the issues within each area. Views from Members on the proposed areas / boundaries were then sought via a series of panel sessions.

2.4.3 The evidence base described above was first presented in a report to the Executive in September 2020, which subsequently approved officers to begin the process of rolling out SL schemes within 12 geographical areas which were identified via this exercise. The first four of these were designated in 2022 following a report to Economy Scrutiny in December 2021 (*Phase 2*):

- The Ladders – Gorton and Abbey Hey – 773 PRS properties
- Hyde Road – Gorton and Abbey Hey – 94 PRS properties
- Trinity – Harpurhey – 430 PRS properties
- Ben Street area – Clayton and Openshaw – 105 PRS properties

2.4.4 In June 2022 the Economy Scrutiny Committee reviewed updated local statistics which confirmed that the following proposed areas continue to meet the necessary criteria for selective licensing and approved an outline consultation plan. These areas were subsequently consulted upon in November / December 2022 (*Phase 3*):

- Moss Side: Claremont Road / Great Western St – 346 PRS properties
- Levenshulme: Matthews Lane – 264 PRS properties
- Longsight: The Royals – 138 PRS properties
- Rusholme: Birch Lane – 129 PRS properties
- Rusholme: Laindon/Dickenson – 83 PRS properties
- Cheetham: Heywood Street - 251 PRS
- Cheetham: Flats above shops Cheetham Hill Road - 86 PRS properties
- Cheetham: Esmond/Avondale – 87 PRS properties

2.4.5 Five of those areas were designated in May 2023, whilst it was agreed that the three Cheetham areas would be brought forward as part of a future phase of the roll out of SL, subject to an additional round of public consultation at the time.

2.5 Areas for consideration as part of Phase 4 of the Selective Licensing rolling programme

2.5.1 In addition to the above the Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee report in 2020 also identified 8 additional SL areas and committed the city to considering them following the designation of the 12 schemes listed above. These proposed areas included:

- Heathcote / Sanby Road - Longsight
- Enver Road - Crumpsall
- Whiteway Street - Harpurhey
- Clarendon Road - Whalley Range
- Leng Road / Melrose Street - Newton Heath
- Flats above shops Stockport Road - Ardwick, Rusholme, Longsight and Levenshulme
- Northmoor Road – Longsight
- Chorlton District Centre – Chorlton

3.0 Process for identifying areas which would benefit from Selective Licensing

3.1 A Local Authority may introduce selective licensing in areas where there's one or more of these issues:

- Low housing demand (or is likely to become such an area) - the outcome of the scheme will contribute to the improvement of the social or economic condition of that particular area.
- A significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behaviour – the outcome of the scheme should be a reduction in, or elimination, of anti-social behaviour (caused by tenants in the private sector) in the designated area.
- Poor property conditions - the outcome of the designation should be a general improvement of property conditions in the designated area within the lifetime of the designation.
- High levels of migration - the outcome of the designation should be to preserve or improve the economic or social conditions of the area during the lifetime of the designation and ensure that a proper standard of management of privately rented property is maintained and that properties do not become overcrowded
- High level of deprivation - the outcome of the designation should be (together with other measures) a reduction of the problems with housing in the private rented sector contributing to the high level of deprivation.
- High levels of crime - the outcome of the designation (together with the other measures) should lead to a reduction in crime in the area.

3.2 Hot-spotting data exercise

3.2.1 Before identifying any areas for selective licensing a new 'hotspot' mapping exercise has been undertaken looking at levels of anti-social behaviour and service requests relating to housing and environmental issues such as flytipping, as well as levels of deprivation across the City. This data was overlaid to identify areas where challenges linked to the criteria set out above were likely to be concentrated and overlaid on to data showing where the highest concentration of privately rented homes are located using data from the 2021 Census and DWP data on Housing Benefit.

- 3.2.2 To assist in prioritising the list, each area was ranked and scored on a matrix according to the levels of anti-social behaviour, environmental complaints and the concentration of private rented homes. The highest ranked areas were further tested with staff working in the local neighbourhood teams to bring their experience of the issues local residents have raised and their daily experience of working and engaging with local people in each mapped area (see Section 4).
- 3.2.3 Following the hot-spotting and ranking data exercise, and in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Development, the following areas have been proposed for Phase 4 of the roll out of Selective Licensing in Manchester (see Appendix 1 for maps):
- Whiteway Street – Harpurhey
 - Leng Road / Melrose Street / Droylsden Road and Scotland Street – Miles Platting & Newton Heath
 - Viscount Street and Heald Grove - Moss Side
 - Enver Road – Crumpsall
 - Heathcote / Sanby Road – Longsight
 - Northmoor Road – Longsight
 - Flats above shops and Esmond / Avondale – Cheetham (two of the three areas previously considered as part of phase 3)
- 3.2.4 It is relevant to note that it was agreed that the Council would bring forward all three of the Cheetham areas consulted on as part of phase 3 of SL, in a future phase of the roll out in the city (see section 2.2). However, following the latest data exercise it was highlighted that the Heywood St / Cheetham Hill Road area had a relatively low proportion of PRS homes and was ranked at the bottom of the areas that were being considered following the hot-spotting process. On this basis it has been removed from consideration for phase 4 of SL, however the area (or a similar area in the location) may be considered in the future. Similarly, the Clarendon Road (Whalley Range) and Chorlton District Centre (Chorlton) areas, previously proposed in 2020, were removed from consideration for this round of SL following the refreshed data and ranking exercise.

4.0 Neighbourhood and Enforcement Teams Engagement

- 4.1 In addition to the data exercise, it was critical to get input from the relevant Neighbourhood Teams and others to make the most of the available local knowledge of the areas and the specific issues in each location. This took place via a series of interactive sessions where the specific boundaries of the proposed SL areas were altered to better respond to the challenges and opportunities in the area, whilst hopefully minimising the risk of introducing complex challenges into the SL area, which the legislation is not designed to intervene in.
- 4.2 In addition to evidencing that the proposed SL areas meet the criteria for introducing licensing it is also necessary to demonstrate that other alternative means of addressing those issues have not been sufficient in dealing with

them to date. With that in mind the relevant Neighbourhoods and Enforcement Teams have also been engaged to understand the nature, scale and success of historic targeted interventions in all of the proposed areas over recent years (set out below).

4.3 Crumpsall

4.3.1 Feedback from the North Neighbourhood Team was that the area was correct and somewhere that they wanted to target based on their experience of issues raised by local residents and the wider area. Officers pointed to a significant amount of historic and ongoing intervention in the area already including:

- Two Active Streets events held within the boundary for this location.
- A reset of passageways to clear fly-tipping and buildup of waste
- Repeated resident engagement with information - how to manage waste / recycling
- Bin audits

4.3.2 Most recently an engagement event has been undertaken with local residents who want to see the alleyways of Wellington Road, Hallworth Road and Duchess Road (within the proposed SL area) cleaned and positively used, rather than being beset by fly-tipping. Flyers were recently posted to all surrounding houses and through door knocking resident meetings have been organised for those who want to get involved and bring forward ideas. An event was held on Duchess Road on Sunday the 29th October where officers and Biffa spoke to residents who wanted to get involved in the alley-greening – with seed packs for flowers, fruit and veg handed out.

4.4 Cheetham

4.4.1 Feedback from Neighbourhood officers proposed a relatively sizeable increase to the boundaries of the Esmond / Avondale and Flats Above Shops on Cheetham Hill Road areas previously consulted on during phase 3 of the roll out of Selective Licensing. This was justified on the basis that the streets now incorporated into the proposed SL area also have significant numbers of PRS homes and are subject to the same ongoing neighbourhood management issues (see Appendix 2).

4.4.2 There have been significant and ongoing interventions targeted in the proposed Cheetham SL areas for many years. This includes:

- In the Esmond / Avondale / Shirley / Beckenham Road and Cheetham Hill Road areas of Cheetham a day of action was organised on the 15th of July 2019 to address poor waste management. Representatives from MCC North Neighbourhood Team, North Compliance Team, Biffa, 3GS, local Councillors and Greater Manchester Police attended. Over 400 residents were contacted, and commercial waste contracts and business premises were also visited.
- In addition to this, between April 2021 and August 2022 367 investigations were undertaken by Biffa in the Cheetham ward – c.10% of which were on

streets in the proposed SL areas. These investigations involved visiting fly tip hot spots, checking through discarded waste for evidence, such as letters, indicating where the waste may have come from, and serving Fixed Penalty Notices on those found to be responsible. The aim of the initiative was to try and change the behaviour of fly tippers through enforcement.

- Neighbourhood officers identified at least 9 passageways within the area which are a regular source of complaints and for which additional cleansing by Redgates (Waste Management and Recycling Contractor) is requested. The Avondale/Esmond Road passageways are subject to joint work between the Neighbourhood team and Compliance team due to lots of fly tipping and issues with the businesses that back onto this passageway. A recent letter drop took place on 2 - 32 Shirley Rd following complaints about fly-tipping and litter which Compliance picked up.
- An Active Streets event was held in August 2023 on Esmond Road, attended by Biffa and GMP. During this a litter pick was held, a large industrial skip made available for the day for residents to use and Biffa ran educational sessions with children about recycling.
- Woodlands Road, Woodland St, Greenhill Rd, Esmond Rd, Ansdell St, Avondale St, Shirley Rd are all included in the 'Hotspot' areas targeted by Biffa for proactive monitoring, these are all determined by repeat waste related issues.

4.5 Harpurhey

4.5.1 Feedback from the North Neighbourhood team was that the area considered by the Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny in 2020 remains the right area. Given that the proposed area is surrounded by large numbers of socially rented properties the boundary is sensible as it focuses the scheme on an area with a high concentration of PRS properties.

4.5.2 The North Neighbourhood Team have been proactive in this area, as it has been identified as having some of the highest numbers of reports for bin collection issues, fly-tipping and street cleansing in the M9 postcode area. To respond to these issues, officers have carried out numerous letter drops and engagement exercises, advising residents how to dispose of their waste correctly and how to report issues to Manchester City Council.

4.5.3 The alleyway between Clevedon and Windsor has been the focus of this activity, due to the number of complaints and reports received. A project has recently launched, which will see an Intensive Neighbourhood Management Pilot for 12 weeks, from the start of November, with a focus on alleyways. Teams will be coming together from Neighbourhoods, Compliance, Waste and Recycling to carry out intensive engagement, education and enforcement, the outcomes of which will be closely monitored.

4.6 Longsight

4.6.1 The Central Neighbourhood Team confirmed that both areas proposed for the Longsight ward were appropriate for SL based on their experience of issues raised by local residents and the wider area. There has been significant

historic and ongoing interventions by neighbourhood officers in these areas, as set out below.

4.6.2 Northmoor Road area:

A multi-agency group came together in 2019 to try and address issues around anti-social behaviour, fly tipping/waste management & property conditions in the Northmoor Road area. Led by MCC Central Neighbourhood Team, key partners included:

- Registered providers (Great Places & One Manchester)
- Greater Manchester Police
- Network Rail (as landowners)
- Stanley Grove Primary School
- MCC Waste & Recycling & Compliance,
- MCC Homelessness & ASBAT
- Northmoor Together (Tenants & residents group)

Since then, interventions in the Northmoor Road area have included:

- Investment in target hardening (fly-tipping prevention)
- Implementing a new, hybrid refuse collection service for this area
- Increased maintenance by Network Rail (enhance safety & deter pests)
- A welcome pack for new residents (knowing how to report, who is who in the area)
- Door knocking & drop ins where residents can raise/look to resolve issues & get involved
- Regular residents meetings (Northmoor Together)
- Funding to support residents improve their area
- Funding/provision of movement activated lights for alleys
- Partnership action days

4.6.3 Heathcote / Sanby Road area:

Focused activity started in this area in 2016, with an emphasis on social & environmental issues. A multi-agency partnership has subsequently led a number of engagement and partnership action days in the Heathcote / Sanby Road area involving MCC departments, One Manchester and GMP.

4.7 Miles Platting & Newton Heath

4.7.1 Neighbourhood officers agreed that both areas proposed for the Miles Platting & Newton Heath ward were appropriate and suggested slightly expanding the proposed Leng Road / Melrose Street / Droylsden Road area to include Regent Street and Church Avenue which are subject to similar neighbourhood management issues.

4.7.2 Leng Road / Melrose Street / Droylsden Road area:

The North Neighbourhood Team identified parts of the Leng Road / Melrose Street / Droylsden Road as having the highest number of reports for bin collection issues, fly-tipping, street cleansing in the M40 postcode. In response to this there have been multiple action days held in the area focusing on behaviour change and best practice when it comes to waste management. Officers report that, whilst this initially has an impact, the issues return after a period of time.

There have also been 3 partnership interventions coordinated by the Anti-Social Behaviour Team in the area since 2018. These have been in response to local community concerns in relation to ASB and involved door knocking, speaking to residents and coordinating actions with other agencies.

4.7.3 Scotland Street area:

The Scotland Street area suffers from comparable waste management issues to those in Leng Road / Melrose Street / Droylsden Road. As such, it is about to be included in a twelve-week intensive alleyway programme which has been delivered via Redgate (Waste Management and Recycling Contractor) to target North Manchester's main hotspot areas for waste issues. This will lead to an enhanced cleansing schedule provided by Redgate and an intensive neighbourhood management approach will be trialled in the area.

4.8 **Moss Side**

4.8.1 The Central Neighbourhood Team confirmed that both areas proposed for the Moss Side ward were appropriate for SL based on their experience of issues raised by local residents and the wider area. There has been significant historic and ongoing interventions by neighbourhood officers in these areas, as set out below.

4.8.2 Viscount Street area:

- Safer Streets 2 was a Home Office funded project that was introduced in 2022 in this area to try to reduce crime rates. It involved improving the security of private rented properties to reduce burglary rates and also funded interventions in the ward to respond to antisocial behaviour including fly-tipping and drug taking.
- The Central Neighbourhoods Team carried out an intense piece of work earlier this year to try to reduce the negative impact of waste mismanagement in the proposed area. Officers visited the area 2-3 times a week, door knocking, leafleting, speaking to visitors and residents about managing waste and how to report fly tipping in order to resolve issues quickly. However, neighbourhood officers report that the impact was limited and that issues in the area have been exacerbated by landlords not ensuring residents have the bins they need when they move into properties.

4.8.3 Heald Grove:

- This area has been subject to intensive door knocking and leafleting to communicate with residents about waste management. Officers often find that resident had moved into properties without the correct bins provided.
- However, residents report little has changed and officers feel that it needs landlords to support efforts.
- The alleyway in Heald Grove has been added to Biffa's 13-week cleanse schedule as fly tipping is problematic in this area. Residents report that the transient nature of a proportion of the residents here contributes to issues with fly tipping and litter as they don't take as much care about the area.

4.9 Summary

- 4.9.1 Unfortunately, despite these and other targeted efforts to address the issues faced in the proposed areas, the evidence indicates that significant progress has not been made in dealing with the problems that have led to the areas being considered for SL (see Appendix 2). For example, those latest local statistics demonstrate that all of the proposed areas are still experiencing higher than average levels of rubbish and fly-tipping for their wards (between 42 and 177 requests per 100 households in the last year).
- 4.9.2 All the proposed areas therefore meet a range of the criteria required for designation as a SL area (see Appendix 2), but also other alternative means of addressing those issues have not been sufficient in dealing with them to date. Given the lack of practical or beneficial alternatives, SL therefore represents a justifiable tool for the Council to use in responding to issues with neighbourhood and property management, in conjunction with a range of other actions that are currently being undertaken or are planned.

5.0 Local Member Engagement

- 5.1 Having reviewed the identified areas with Neighbourhood teams, information and maps were shared with local Members, with a more detailed briefing session arranged on request. Views from local Members on the proposed areas / boundaries have been incorporated into the process going forward. As with all previous SL schemes, Local Member involvement in promoting the schemes and support during the consultation will be key. Ongoing dialogue with Local Ward Members will therefore be maintained at all key junctions throughout the process leading up to consultation, potential designation and during the implementation of the proposed schemes.

6.0 Proposed Phase 4 Selective Licensing Areas - Criteria

- 6.1 All the 7 areas are identified on the attached maps (see Appendix 1). After data analysis (see Appendix 2 for local statistics) and discussion with local neighbourhood teams and ward members, the following qualifying criteria are considered to have been met within each area and it is on the following basis that the case for a SL designation should be made:

6.2 Whiteway Street – Harpurhey

- Approx 129 PRS properties (75% of homes)
- Anti-social behaviour - linked to environmental and waste management
- Poor property conditions

6.3 Leng Road / Melrose Street / Droylsden Road and Scotland Street – Miles Platting & Newton Heath

- Approx 367 PRS properties (52% of homes)
- Anti-social behaviour - linked to environmental and waste management
- Poor property conditions

6.4 Viscount Street and Heald Grove - Moss Side

- Approx 139 PRS properties (63% of homes)
- Anti-social behaviour - linked to environmental and waste management
- Poor property conditions

6.5 Enver Road – Crumpsall

- Approx 151 PRS properties (56% of homes)
- Anti-social behaviour - linked to environmental and waste management
- Poor property conditions

6.6 Heathcote / Sanby Road – Longsight

- Approx 192 PRS properties (83% of homes)
- Anti-social behaviour - linked to environmental and waste management
- Poor property conditions

6.7 Northmoor Road – Longsight

- Approx 471 PRS properties (48% of homes)
- Anti-social behaviour - linked to environmental and waste management
- Poor property conditions

6.8 Flats above shops and Esmond / Avondale

- Approx 423 PRS properties (57% of homes)
- Anti-social behaviour - linked to environmental and waste management
- Poor property conditions

7.0 Introducing Phase 4 of Selective Licensing - Consultation Plan

- 7.1 Consultation is a legal requirement and must take place before designating any of the proposed phase 4 areas for SL. It should include residents, tenants, landlords and managing agents, members of the community who live in or operate businesses or services in the designated area and residents and businesses in the surrounding area who will be affected. The consultation period must be for a minimum of 10 weeks and any representations made

must be considered. The costs of consultation can be recouped from licence fees, however, if the outcome of a consultation led to not declaring a SL scheme, this cost would have to be borne by the council.

- 7.2 One of the consultation methods will be contacting residents, landlords, letting agents and businesses across the 8 areas directly via letter. The letter will explain what SL is, how it could improve the neighbourhood, how it would operate and how they may be affected. The letter will also direct them to an online consultation page to complete an online form to obtain their views. The webpage will contain information regarding selective licensing and the process the council will need to undertake to operate such a scheme.
- 7.3 Another method of consulting with the wider community, used for the current SL schemes, will be drop in events held in local libraries and community centres, advertised in the local press and local public buildings. We will also consult the national landlord associations who support and advocate for a number of private rented sector landlords across the country.
- 7.4 Following the closure of the consultation period the responses will be evaluated and published on the Council's website, the responses will be considered and will inform officer recommendations to Executive Members before making a final decision as to whether to proceed with selective licensing.

7.5 Proposed Resources and Timeline for Next Phase

- 7.5.1 Significant resources, not all of which can be funded from the selective licensing fee, are needed to successfully deliver the selective licensing programme. These resources will be drawn from Strategic Housing, Policy Performance and Reform, Housing Compliance and Enforcement and the Neighbourhood Teams.
- 7.5.2 The proposed timeline for bringing on the next phase of selective licensing is set out below:
- December 2023 and January 2024 – Phase 4 sites agreed at Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny, approval to consult granted by Executive.
 - January to May 2024 – Selective Licensing project team convened to coordinate preparation for the consultation (arranging drop-in sessions, comms, web work etc.)
 - May – July 2024 – Formal Consultation (10 weeks)
 - July – September 2024 – Evaluation of Consultation responses, publication of results on website, formal responses to consultation representations etc.
 - September 2024 - Report to Economy Scrutiny on the outcome of the consultation.
 - October 2024 – December 2024 – 3-month designation period then formal designation.

8.0 Recommendations

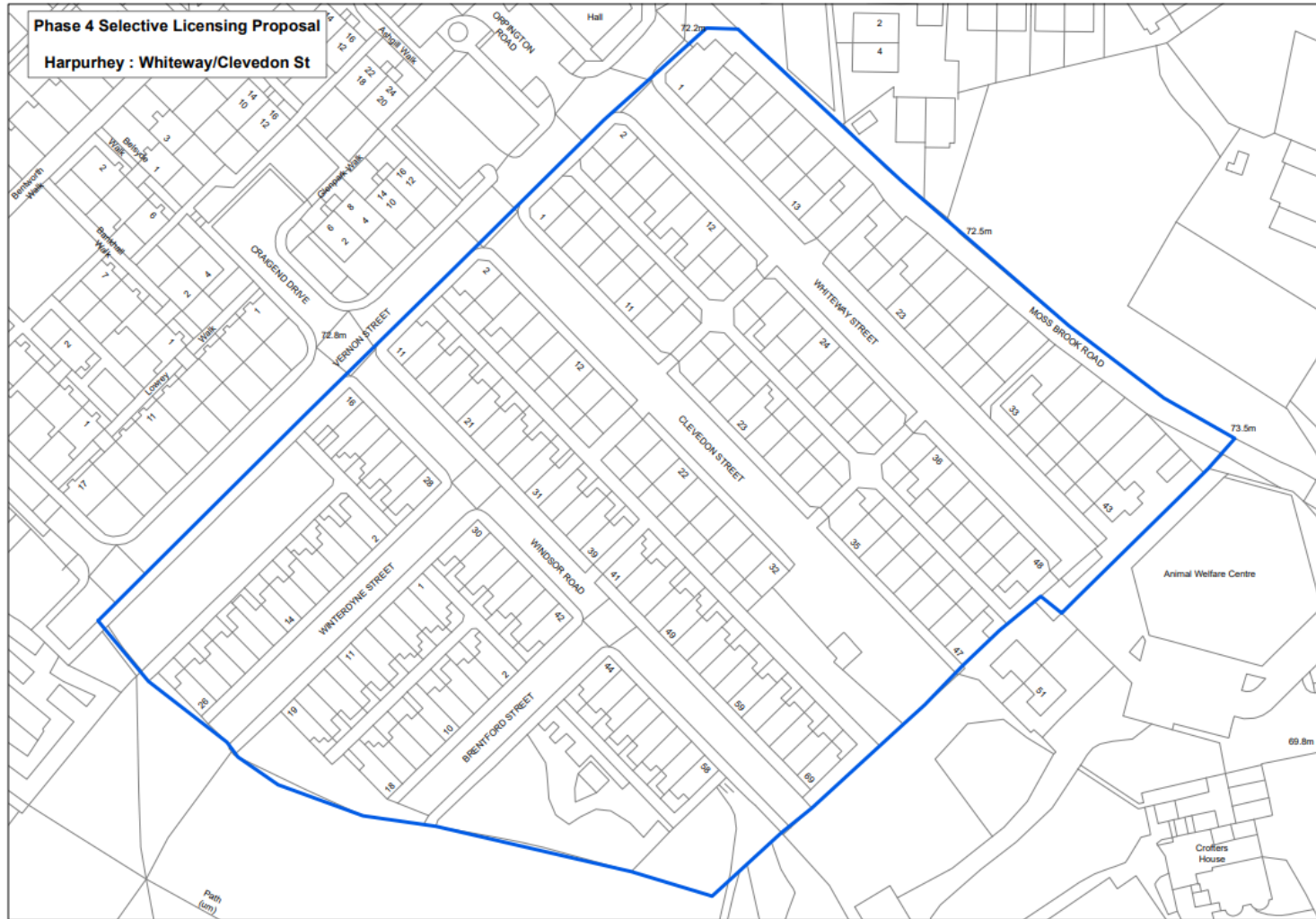
8.1 The Executive is requested to:

- (1) Approve a public consultation with residents, private landlords, businesses and other stakeholders (as set out in Section 7 of this report) to designate selective licensing schemes within the 9 geographical areas, across 6 wards, detailed in Maps 1 to 9 (Appendix 1) and listed in Section 6 of this report.
- (2) Subject to the outcome of the consultation, delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Development, to approve the designation of up to 9 of the selective licensing areas identified in the report.

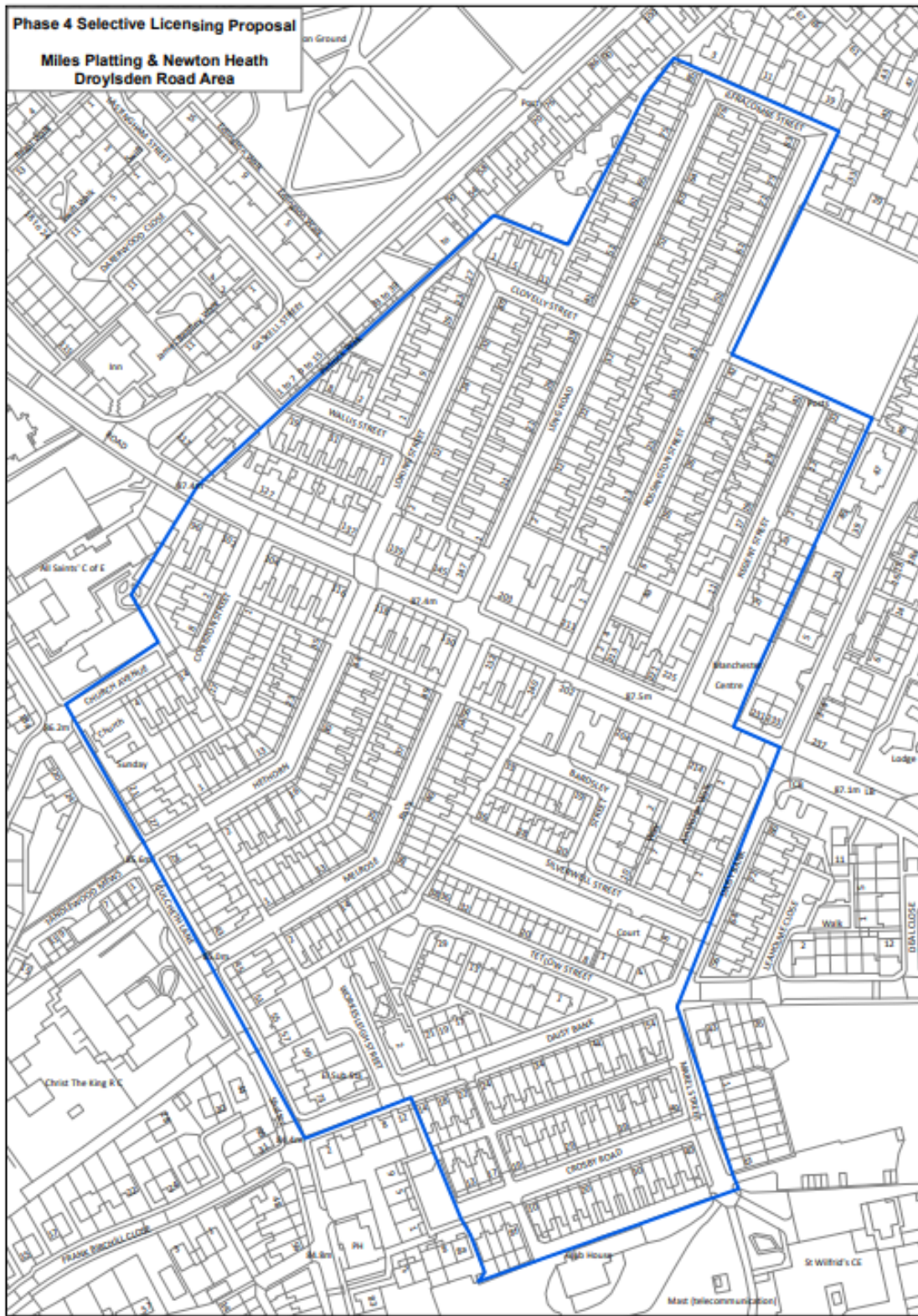
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Appendix 1 – Proposed phase 4 Selective Licensing Areas:

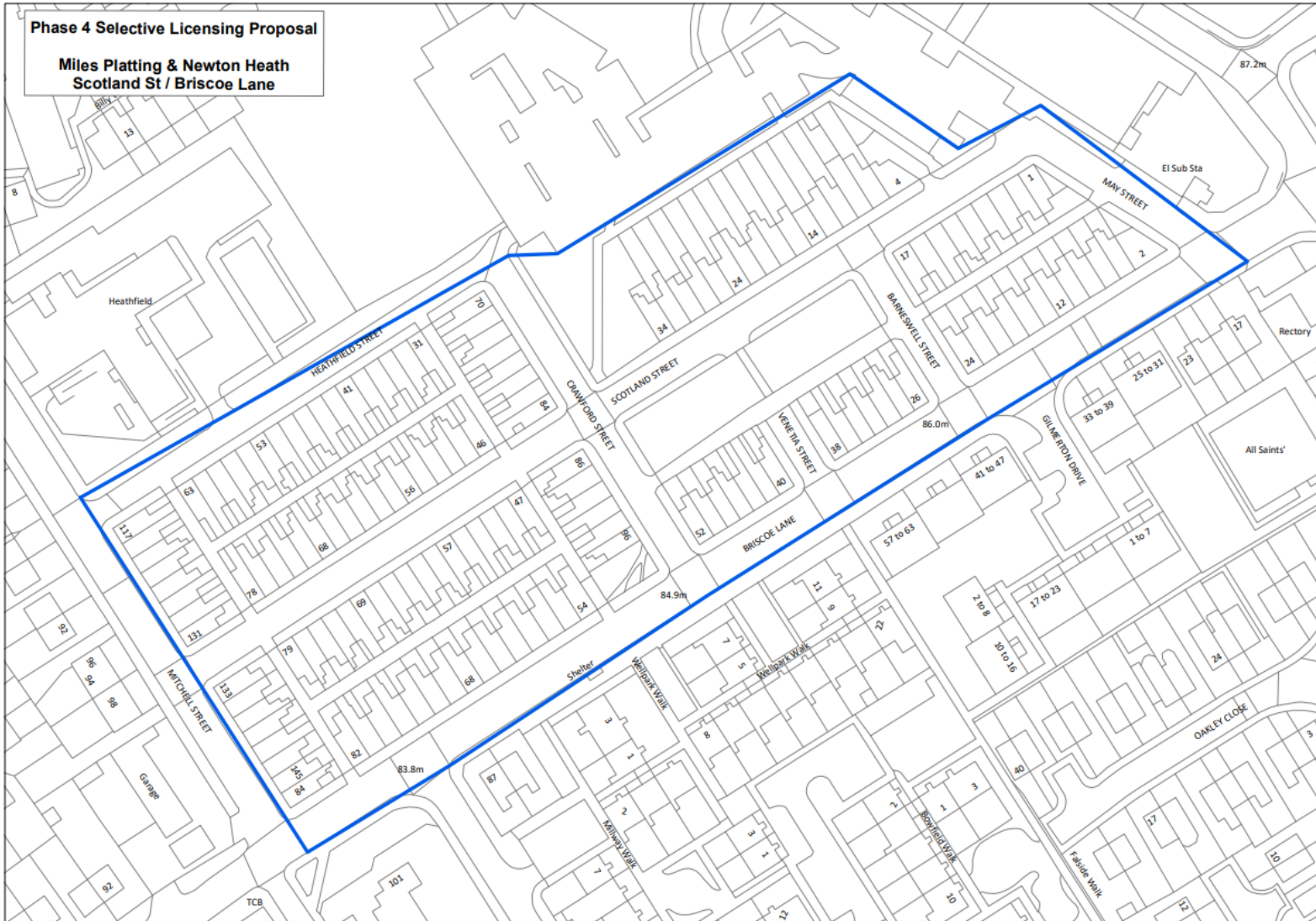
Map 1 - Whiteway Street – Harpurhey



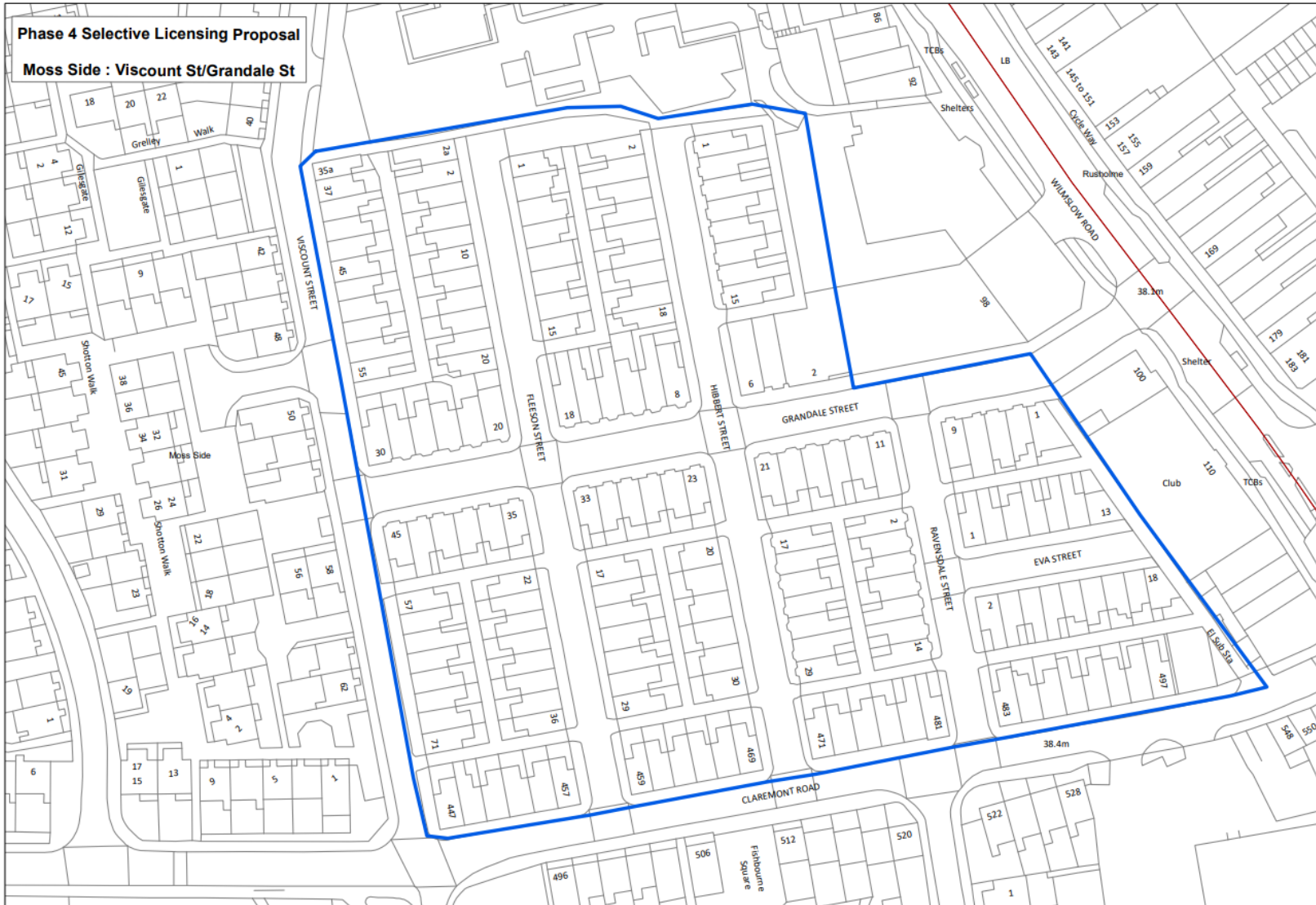
Map 2 - Leng Road / Melrose Street / Droylsden Road- Miles Platting & Newton Heath



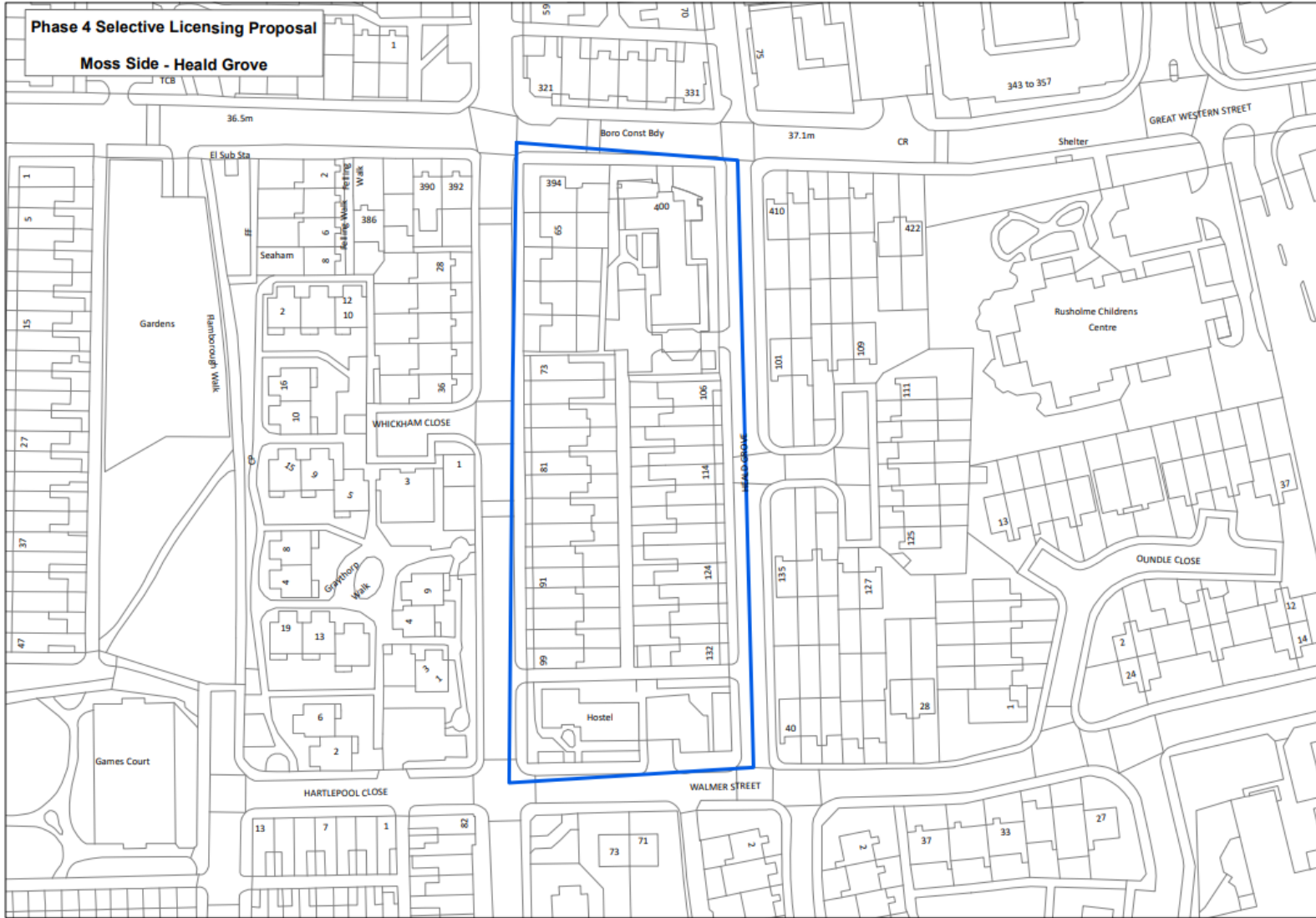
Map 3 - Scotland Street – Miles Platting & Newton Heath



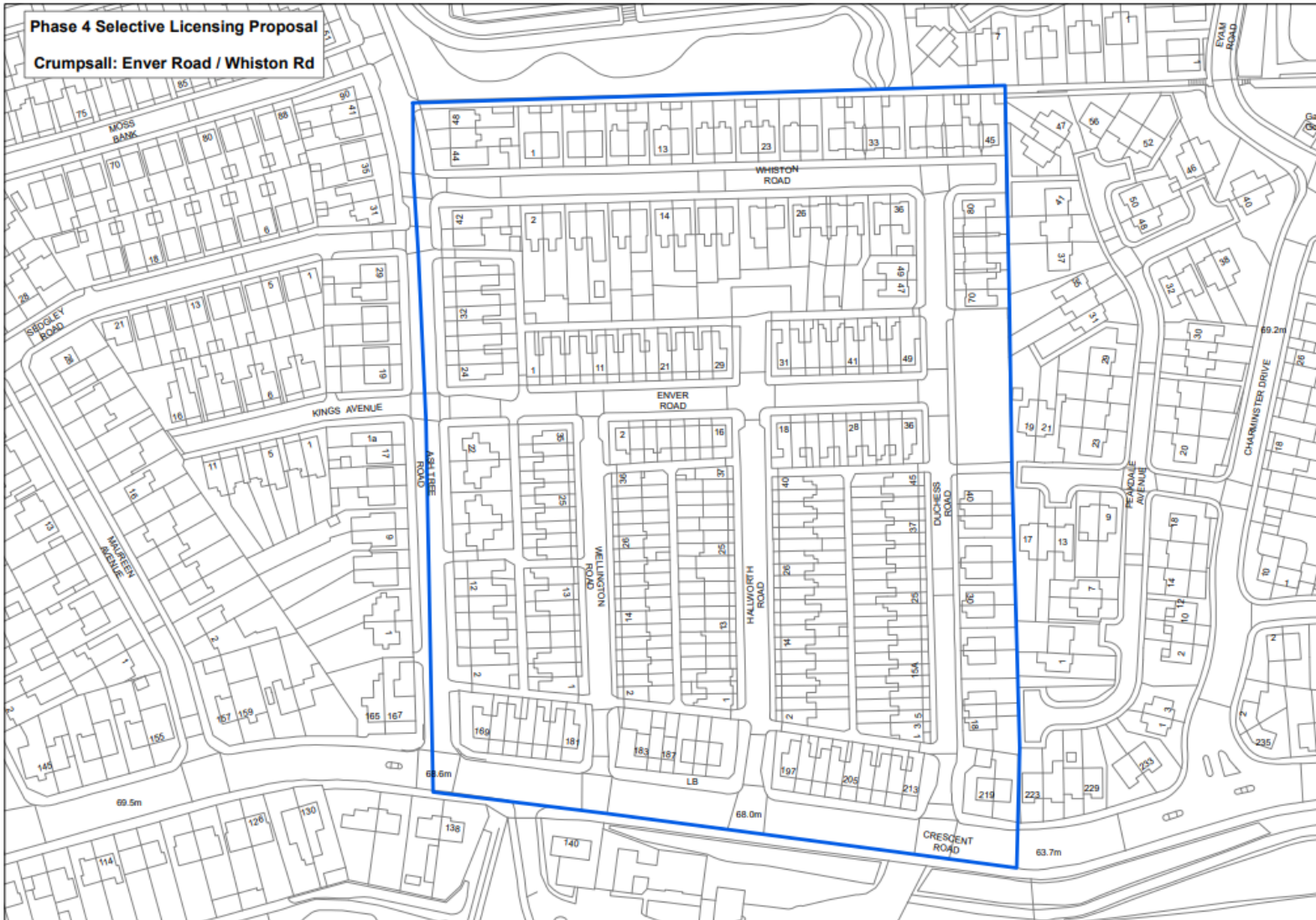
Map 4 - Viscount Street - Moss Side



Map 5 - Heald Grove - Moss Side



Map 6 - Enver Road – Crumpsall

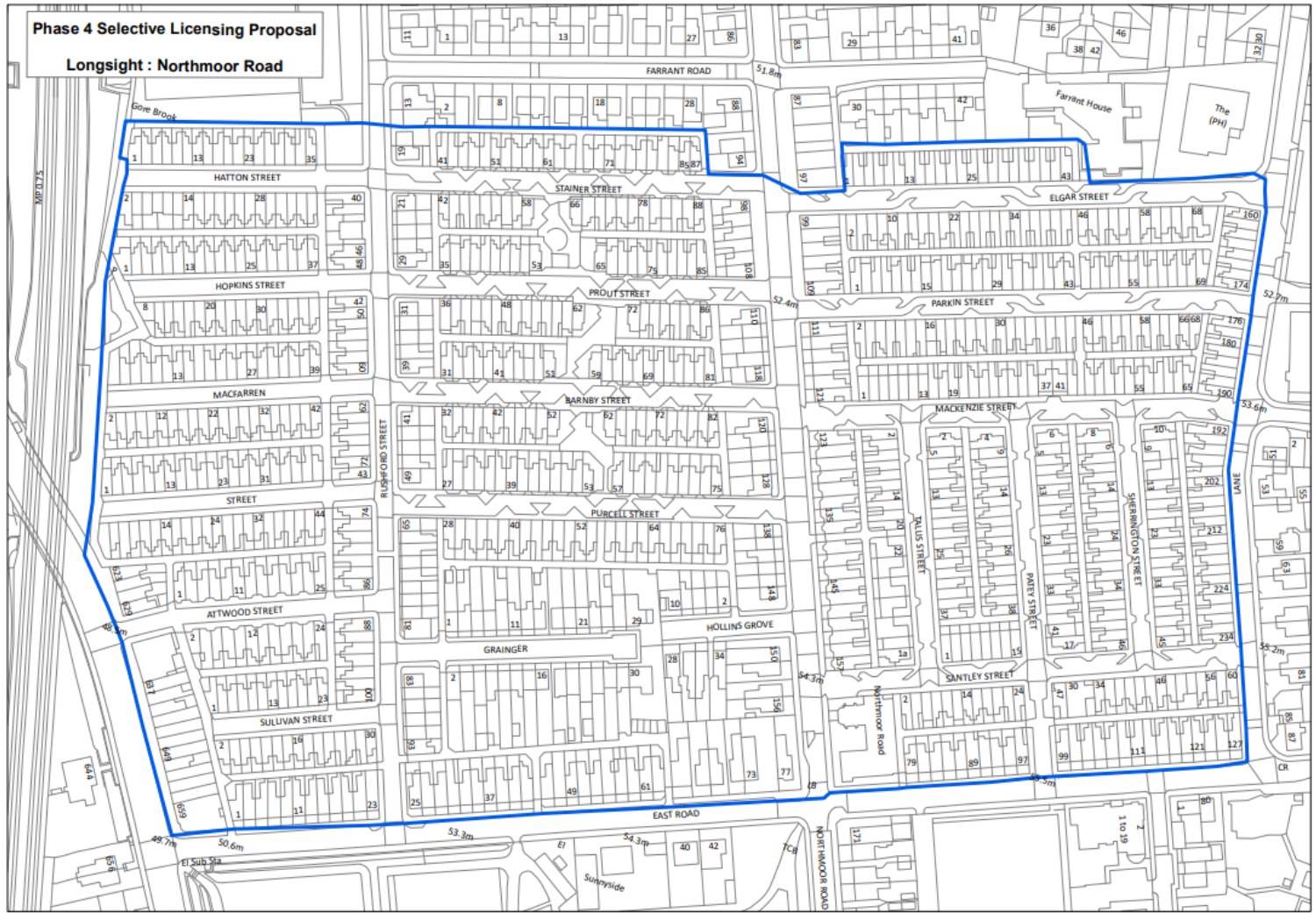


Map 7 - Heathcote / Sanby Road – Longsight



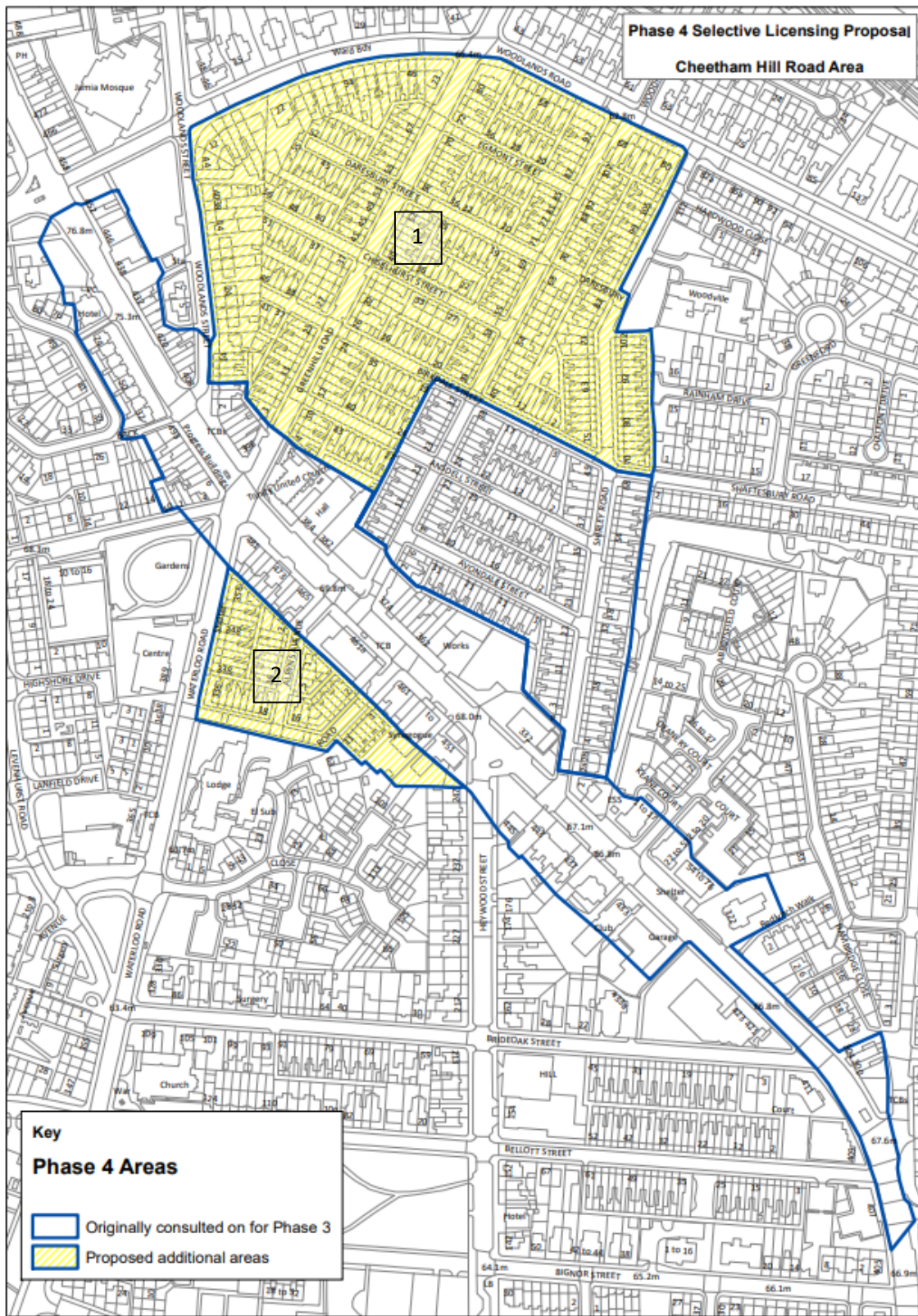
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Map 8 - Northmoor Road – Longsight



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Map 9 - Flats above shops and Esmond / Avondale



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Appendix 2 – Local Intelligence for Proposed Phase 4 Selective Licensing Areas:

Measure:	Harpurhey Whiteway Clevedon St	Crumpsall: Enver Rd/Welling ton Rd	MPNH: Droylsden Road	MPNH: Scotland St / Briscoe Lane	Moss Side - Viscount	Moss Side - Heald Grove	Longsight: Heathcoate Sanby Rd	Longsight: Northmoor Road	Cheetham - Esmond / Avondale	Flats Over Shops: Cheetham Hill Rd	Cheetham Extension 1	Cheetham Extension 2
Dwelling Stock (July 2020)	173	269	555	145	168	52	230	989	162	149	382	43
Empty Homes	7	15	23	9	21	3	11	49	12	18	20	2
Long Term Empty	0	3	2	0	1	0	2	10	2	5	5	0
Occupied Homes	166	251	530	136	146	49	217	930	148	126	357	41
Temporary Accom	27	<5	18	31	0	<5	24	19	0	<5	0	0
HMO (From Flare)	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Estimate (- HMO & TA where TA is above 5)	102	151	250	67	114	23	168	452	96	108	190	29
Tenure Estimates												
MCC Private Rented Estimates (2023)	74.57%	56.13%	48.47%	67.59%	69.05%	44.23%	83.48%	47.62%	59.26%	72.00%	49.74%	67.44%
MCC Private Rent Estimate (Households) 2023	129	151	269	98	116	23	192	471	96	108	190	29
% of Households which are Private Rented in receipt of Universal Credit or Housing Benefit toward housing costs 1	22%	45%	40%	31%	33%	46%	29%	47%	53%	33%	51%	37%
Estimated Number of Private Rented Households on HB/UC *(in closest fit LSOA grouping)	28	67	108	30	38	10	56	219	51	36	97	11
% of City's Private Rented Sector within the licensing area 2	0.13%	0.15%	0.27%	0.10%	0.12%	0.02%	0.19%	0.47%	0.10%	0.11%	0.19%	0.03%
Deprivation, Crime, ASB and Service Demand												
Weighted IMD Score 2019 (High Score = More Deprived)	77.77	44.47	0.00	72.06	46.12	60.21	55.99	0.00	33.23	45.50	0.00	0.00
P3: Number of ASB Incidents per 100 households (most recent 12 months) 3												
P4: Number of ASB incidents (collation of fly posting, graffiti, domestic noise and barking dog CRM incidents)	5.2	6.3	5.8	2.8	0.6	5.8	3.9	0.9	1.2	10.1	0.8	2.3
Requests for Service per 100 households: Housing Related 4 (Aug 22-23)	6.9	3.3	5.4	4.8	1.2	1.9	5.2	1.9	1.2	3.4	0.5	2.3
Requests for Service per 100 households: Fly Tipping 4 (Aug 22-23)	50.3	48.3	54.1	62.1	177.4	42.3	36.1	47.0	56.8	16.8	31.7	62.8
Requests for Service per 100 households: Street Cleaning (Aug 22-23)	19.1	8.9	6.5	4.1	16.7	9.6	0.4	3.2	8.6	7.4	5.2	7.0

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**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Executive – 17 January 2024

Subject: Former Central Retail Park Update and Land Disposal (Part A)

Report of: Strategic Director – Growth & Development

Summary

This report provides the Executive with an update on progress for the redevelopment of the Former Central Retail Park site. The report informs Members of proposals to dispose of approximately half of the site for redevelopment by the Government Property Agency (GPA). The report on Part B of the agenda outlines the confidential commercial terms of this transaction.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- (1) Note the progress made on bringing forward Phase 1 of the Former Central Retail Park development.
 - (2) Note the terms of the arrangements for the disposal of the Phase 1 site to the Government Property Agency for the redevelopment of this part of the site.
-

Wards Affected: Piccadilly, Ancoats and Beswick

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city	The updated and approved Former Central Retail Park Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) has responded to the Council's aim of achieving zero-carbon targets through plans for the creation of a highly sustainable office campus, together with green space and leisure uses, complementing surrounding developments. The revised SRF has improved connectivity, increased green space (including a new public park at the centre of the site) and biodiversity, and will aim to achieve the highest standards of sustainable design. The revised SRF also aligns with the city's active travel aspirations, to provide attractive and safe walking and cycling routes for visitors and residents.
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector	The Former Central Retail Park will provide a range of job, skills and leisure opportunities available to all local residents from across the city. Enhanced connections will be provided to surrounding communities, to enable them to take advantage of

Equality Duty and broader equality commitments	<p>the opportunities offered on the site and in the wider area beyond.</p> <p>Consistent with the principles adopted in the latest SRF, the proposals will provide significant new public realm, accessible to all, providing wellbeing opportunities to all residents, workers and visitors. In addition, there is a commitment to ensure that design standards throughout the development will comply with the highest standards of accessibility.</p>
--	--

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	<p>The proposals contained within the revised Former Central Retail Park SRF will bring forward commercially-led development that will contribute to the creation of jobs within the area, diversifying the economy and activating large key sites connecting to the wider city centre.</p> <p>The proposals will be a catalyst for regional investment through supporting infrastructure, innovation, and people, providing a significant boost to the future economic growth for the local area and the region.</p>
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	<p>The proposals contained within the revised Former Central Retail Park SRF will provide additional commercial space to meet demand from existing and newly established businesses, thus creating and sustaining employment opportunities within this area of the city centre. The proposals will deliver a range of new high quality employment opportunities through the design, construction, and occupation of the scheme, for local residents including through apprenticeships and training opportunities. The GPA Campus will have a focus on jobs in the fast growing digital sector, linking to related courses taught in schools and higher education establishments across Manchester, helping to make them accessible to local people.</p>
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	<p>The proposals contained within the revised Former Central Retail Park SRF could create a business hub that is a vibrant and attractive destination for all business sizes, thereby helping to also meet existing office demand from local businesses and allowing them to grow. The scheme will attract substantial financial investment which will deliver</p>

	positive socio-economic changes for Ancoats and New Islington and Manchester as a whole, providing opportunities for people and local businesses. With several thousand workers based in the new offices, the development will support local businesses through increased expenditure in the local economy.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The revised SRF responds to the Council's commitment to deliver zero carbon growth and sets out the intention of creating a sustainable neighbourhood with strong connections to public transport infrastructure. Enhanced active travel routes, increased green space and biodiversity, and improved public realm will be part of these measures.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The revised SRF proposes to deliver extensive new public realm, with new attractive and safe walking and cycling routes, connecting to the surrounding area.

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

Equal Opportunities Policy
Risk Management
Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

There are no direct revenue implications for the City Council arising from this report.

Financial Consequences – Capital

The disposal will result in a significant capital receipt payable to the Council upon completion of the sale.

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Background documents:

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy, please contact one of the officers above.

- Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework, report to Executive 29 October 2014;
- Refresh of the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework, report to Executive 14 December 2016;
- Central Retail Park, Executive, 13th September 2017;
- Eastlands Regeneration Framework, Executive, 24th July 2019
- Draft Central Retail Park Development Framework – February 2020
- Refresh of the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework – Poland Street Zone, report to Executive 3 July 2020
- Refresh of the Ancoats and New Islington Neighbourhood Development Framework, report to Executive 12 February 2020
- Former Central Retail Park – Updated SRF, report to Executive 14 December 2022
- Former Central Retail Park – Updated Strategic Regeneration Framework, report to Executive 22 March 2023
- Former Central Retail Park Strategic Regeneration Framework, March 2023

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On 22 March 2023, the Executive approved a revised Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) for the former Central Retail Park (FCRP) on Great Ancoats Street, following a public consultation exercise. This report provides Members with an update on progress made following the approval of the SRF and sets out high level details of the proposed arrangements for the disposal of half of the site, for the delivery of the first phase of redevelopment.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The FCRP is a 10.5-acre site located to the north-east of the city centre, bounded by Great Ancoats Street, Old Mill Street, Hugh Oldham Way, and the Rochdale Canal. The redevelopment of the site is a long-standing strategic priority for the city, having been acquired by the Council in 2017, following a report to the Executive, with the intention of bringing forward a highly sustainable, commercially-led district, to meet the growing space requirements for new and existing businesses. As set out in the report in 2017, the Council is committed to securing a return on its investment both financially, and, in the longer term in accordance with the Council's wider economic and regeneration objectives for this area. In achieving this objective, the Council is now looking to dispose of 5 acres for best consideration, in accordance with section 123 LGA 1972, as set out within this report and the Part B report, also on this agenda.
- 2.2 In line with the objectives for its purchase, the FCRP is a key strategic employment site, with the potential to provide significant jobs and economic growth to benefit the residents of the city. The overall vision within the updated Former Central Retail Park SRF, approved in March 2023, is to create a high-quality, sustainable office district, with a significant amount of attractive public realm at its centre, connected to the wider community. The proposed public realm would incorporate green space and planting, providing a safe environment that promotes well-being for local residents, new office employees, and visitors. It will also contribute to the city's green space network through its interface with Cotton Field Park and the enhanced green spaces within the Ancoats Public Realm Strategy, in particular Ancoats Green and the public realm surrounding this. The updated SRF also responds to a requirement from the GPA to create a digitally focused office campus, the "Manchester Digital Campus", for various Civil Service departments, housing several thousand jobs.

3.0 Progress on development of FCRP

- 3.1 Since the publication of the SRF, the Council has been negotiating with GPA to secure the first phase of development on the FCRP site. An agreement has now been reached to secure the delivery of the first phase, a "Manchester Digital Campus" (please see the plan at Appendix 1 showing the phases), consistent with the principles set out in the agreed SRF. This agreement shows a significant commitment to, and confidence in, the city, and is a big step towards achieving the objectives of the SRF to support regeneration and economic growth by securing regional investment; creating new high quality employment opportunities; providing new offices; and creating pedestrian connections.

- 3.2 The development of the first phase would be for circa 5 acres and has the potential to accommodate up to 7,000 full time jobs, with a significant proportion being recruited locally in Manchester. Complementary ground floor commercial and amenity uses (e.g. shops and cafes) and surrounding public realm would also be provided.
- 3.3 The delivery of the first phase would provide the catalyst to deliver the overall SRF, which will lead to significant socio-economic benefits, in line with the Council's objectives, in particular those included within the Manchester Economic Strategy. These benefits include:
- **New employment opportunities** - The proposal will deliver a range of new employment opportunities through the design, construction, and occupation of the development, providing significant opportunities for local residents including apprenticeships and training opportunities.
 - **Variety of high quality office spaces** - The proposals across the whole SRF area will make a significant contribution to the Council's policy to deliver over 20 million sq. ft (circa 1.85m sq.m) of new office floorspace by 2037. This will strengthen the city's economy, further enable its growth agenda, and help to meet existing office demand from local businesses, allowing them to grow.
 - **High quality new public realm and improved connectivity** – central to the SRF proposals is the delivery of extensive new public realm, including a new public park, and new attractive and safe routes connecting the site to the rest of New Islington and East Manchester and to the rest of the city centre.
 - **New retail and leisure facilities** – A range of new independent and national retail and leisure facilities will be promoted to serve both local residents and the office workers, proving a new and exciting offer and associated employment opportunities.
 - **Investment** - The scheme will attract substantial financial investment which will deliver positive socio-economic changes for Ancoats, New Islington and Greater Manchester as a whole, providing opportunities for people and local businesses.
 - **Regional investment** - Securing investment from the GPA would be a significant boost to the future economic growth for the local area and the region.
- 3.4 Alongside this, the Council has recently appointed a design team for the new park, demonstrating the commitment to deliver this major new local green space as soon

as it is practical to do so. Concept designs for the park are currently being developed and will be subject to consultation at an appropriate stage.

- 3.5 It is anticipated that a planning application will be submitted for the redevelopment of the phase 1 site during the summer of 2024, and that the Council will aim to bring forward a planning application for the park in parallel. Further work needs to be carried out to determine the most appropriate phasing options for the park and phase 2 of the development, to ensure they can be delivered safely and with minimum disruption and cost. The Council is also starting to consider options and timings for procuring a development partner for the phase 2 land.

4.0 Land Purchase Agreement with GPA

- 4.1 The key terms of the agreement with GPA for the sale of the phase 1 land for redevelopment are outlined in the Part B report included with this agenda.
- 4.2 The agreement is for the disposal of the Council's freehold interest to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities for circa 5 acres of the site, subject to the granting of planning permission, for the delivery of over 800,000 sq ft of new build Grade A office buildings for occupation by Government departments and wider public sector bodies. This will enable the creation of up to 7,000 jobs. The value of the disposal has been independently assessed and verified for both parties.
- 4.3 Provisions are included in the terms for the sale to account for the development not commencing, or being partially completed, including arrangements for the Council to re-acquire the site if appropriate, to maintain control of its future development.
- 4.4 It also sets out the permitted uses of the site, the expected environmental standards and compliance with social value policies.

5.0 Conclusions

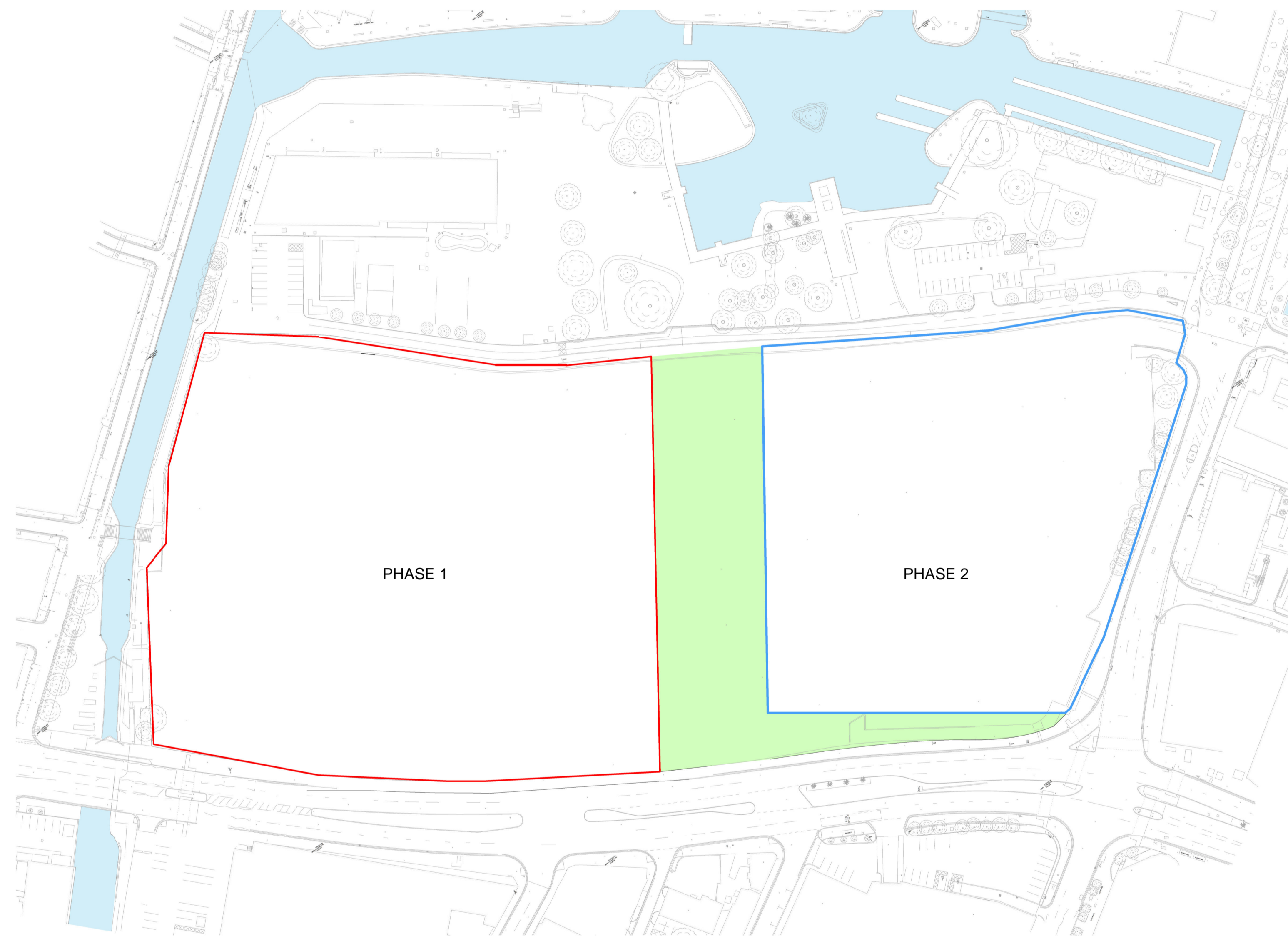
- 5.1 The updated Former Central Retail Park SRF is part of a wider set of plans for the development of Ancoats, including the delivery of significantly upgraded and extended green space at Ancoats Green. The SRF vision is to create a high-quality, sustainable office district with an attractive public realm at its centre, delivering significant socio-economic benefit to the city and the local community. The GPA proposals for the Manchester Digital Campus are consistent with the adopted SRF principles and will be instrumental in delivering the Council's objectives.
- 5.2 The important progress made to date in securing an agreement with the GPA for the development of phase 1 of the site will provide significant new job opportunities and new facilities for local people. It provides investment and confidence in the city, contributing to its continued growth. Work has also recently commenced on the design for the new park, as a central component of the overall redevelopment of the site.

6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives a local authority the power to dispose of land in any manner they wish. The only constraint is that the disposal must be for the best consideration reasonably obtainable (unless the Secretary of State consents to the disposal). In accordance with section 123, the only considerations which can be taken into account are those of commercial or monetary value to the Council.

7.0 Recommendations

- 7.1 The recommendations are set out at the front of this report.



1 : 1000
Indicative Site Boundary Plan

P1	05/01/2024	DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION	DA	NB	NB
Rev.	Date	Description	By	Chk'd	App'd
Drawing Suitability					Status

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**Government
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Agency**

Project Title
GPA MANCHESTER DIGITAL CAMPUS

Drawing Title
FCRP SITE PLAN

Scale	Designed	Drawn	Checked	Authorised
1 : 1000	AG	DA	NB	NB
Original Size	Date	Date	Date	Date
A1	JAN 24	JAN 24	JAN 24	JAN 24
Drawing Number	MSIP-ATK-XX-00-DR-A-001006			Revision
				P1

72914925 - Appendix 1 Item 11

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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