



## **Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee**

Date: Tuesday, 8 October 2024

Time: 2.00 pm

Venue: Council Antechamber, Level 2, Town Hall Extension

This is a **Supplementary Agenda** containing additional information about the business of the meeting that was not available when the agenda was published

### **Access to the Council 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.**

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## **Membership of the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee**

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**Councillors** - Hitchen (Chair), Azra Ali, Appleby, L Bell, Dar, Doswell, Good, Iqbal, Ludford, Ogunbambo, Rawson, Sheikh, Whiston and Wright

## Supplementary Agenda

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5. **Making Manchester Fairer – Communities and Power and Tackling Systemic and Structural Racism and Discrimination** 3 - 14  
Report of the Director of Communities and the Joint Director of Equality, Inclusion and Engagement.

This report will update on the progress made on the themes 'communities and power' and 'systemic and structural racism' of the Making Manchester Fairer strategy which launched in October 2022.

6. **Building Stronger Communities Together Strategy 2023-26 Action Plans** 15 - 30  
Report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods).

This report provides an update on progress on the Building Stronger Communities Together Strategy 2023-26 for Manchester City Council.

## Further Information

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

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This supplementary agenda was issued on **Tuesday, 1 October 2024** by the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit, Manchester City Council, Level 2, Town Hall Extension (Library Walk Elevation), Manchester M60 2LA

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee - 8 October 2024

**Subject:** Making Manchester Fairer – Communities and Power and Tackling Systemic and Structural Racism and Discrimination

**Report of:** Director of Communities and Joint Director of Equality, Inclusion and Engagement

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**Summary**

This report will update on the progress made on the themes 'communities and power' and 'systemic and structural racism' of the Making Manchester Fairer strategy which launched in October 2022.

**Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Consider and comment on the information contained in this report
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**Wards Affected:** (All Wards)

<b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city	The Homes and Housing theme of the Making Manchester Fairer strategy aims to take action on improving housing and to create safe, warm and affordable homes.
<b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments	The systemic and structural racism and discrimination theme aims to gain an understanding how race inequity operates within a system and how these impacts on health outcomes. If participants can understand the population of Manchester, this will help to make appropriate informed decisions. The programmes have been designed to create a more inclusive work practice and services. The programmes provide participants with the safe space to collaborate on planning and improving delivery.

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	<p>There is a recognition that Covid-19 has had a disproportionate impact on certain communities in our city. In delivering Making Manchester Fairer we will address the health inequalities that have been exacerbated by the Pandemic and the Cost of Living Crisis.</p> <p>The plan, sets out how we will build on the strengths of Manchester as a city and the amount of work that is already taking place to improve lives for residents, reflecting the OMS outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Progressive and Equitable City : We will strive to create a truly equal and inclusive city, where everyone can thrive at all stages of their life, and quickly and easily reach support to get back on track when needed.</li> <li>• A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success</li> <li>• A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work</li> </ul>
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

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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.

Making Manchester Fairer, Tackling Health Inequalities in Manchester 2022- 2027 – Health Scrutiny Committee, 12 October 2022

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The Making Manchester Fairer (MMF) action plan is Manchester City Council's five-year action plan aimed at reducing health inequalities in Manchester by addressing the social determinants of health. It is a bold, ambitious plan that aims to close the gap in healthy life expectancy and tackle health inequalities, and to pave the way for a fairer and more inclusive city that is representative of its communities. The plan focusses on the eight key themes of:

- Early years; children and young people;
- Poverty, income, and debt;
- Work and employment;
- Prevention of ill health and preventable deaths;
- Homes and housing,
- Places, transport, and climate change;
- Systemic and structural racism and discrimination
- Communities and power

This paper will focus on the themes of; **Communities and Power** and **Tackling Systemic and Structural Racism and Discrimination**.

1.2 Whatever place we happen to live in, the communities we belong to support and nurture our health. Connected communities, where people feel valued and involved in decisions that affect them and have a greater sense of control over their daily lives, are good for health and wellbeing and improving health equity.

1.3 Communities may be groups of people living in the same place or people that share a common identity or experience. Creating the conditions for individuals and communities to be empowered is essential for a long-term approach to addressing inequalities.

1.4 Systemic discrimination and racism leads to poor health in a number of ways. Communities that experience racial inequality, and other marginalised groups, are also more likely to experience socioeconomic disadvantage. Some communities are also less likely to have access to a range of services and opportunities because of structural and systemic discrimination. This in turn impacts on areas such as employment, housing, education etc.

1.5 Experiences of racism and discrimination (individual, institutional and systemic) can also be a psychosocial stressor which builds over time with long-term impacts on health and wellbeing – for example, everyday discrimination has been linked to heart disease, infant mortality, mental illness, substance misuse and life expectancy.

1.6 The actions outlined in the plan in relation to these themes aims to support communities to thrive both through the way we work and engage with communities but also to ensure that the way we deliver services and work with communities is free of prejudice and discrimination. A multi-faceted approach will be important and will need to be supported by a number of enablers that

will help inform and support the changes that are required to reduce the inequality gap within the city. Enablers that will be important include data and insight, a skilled and knowledgeable workforce and robust communication and engagement.

## 2. A changing city

2.1 Manchester has seen significant population growth over the last 20 years. The 2021 Census estimated that the resident population for Manchester on Census day was 552,000 and tells us that the proportion of usual residents identifying as being from an ethnic group other than white British has increased from 40.7% in 2011 to 51.3% in 2021. The proportion identifying themselves as being from an Asian ethnic group has increased from 17.1% to 20.9% and those identifying themselves as being from a Black ethnic group has increased from 8.6% to 11.9%. At the next level of specificity, the largest absolute increases between the 2011 and 2021 Census were in the Census categories of people from Pakistani communities (increase of 22,971), and all African communities (increase of 22,140).

2.2 The population varies widely across Manchester's neighbourhoods. The wards with the highest proportions of Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority populations are Longsight (77%), Moss Side (75.8%), and Cheetham (73.3%). The wards with the lowest proportions are Woodhouse Park (18.5%), Brooklands (19.2%) and Didsbury West (19.3%). The school Census further demonstrates this rate of change among younger age groups in the city:

- In 2023, 62% of primary school pupils were of ethnicities other than 'white', compared to 58% in 2018
- 63% of secondary school pupils were of ethnicities other than 'white' in 2023, compared to 55% in 2018

2.3 The proportion of people identifying themselves as Christian decreased from 48.7% to 36.2% and those identifying as Muslim has increased from 15.8% to 22.3%. The proportion identifying themselves as having 'no religion' rose from 24.7% to 32.4%

Note: The 2021 Census was undertaken during the COVID pandemic so may not be a full count of people usually resident in Manchester. The Council's in-house modelling estimates suggest that as many as 33,000 residents may be missing from the Census data.

2.4 Manchester is the only city outside London to have residents in each of the 90 listed ethnic groups in the census with over 200 languages spoken here. The city also has a much younger population than other major towns and cities with nearly 50% of the population under 25 and around 40% of these are likely to be multilingual.

2.5 Our changing population needs to be embedded in how we commission and deliver services across the organisation and with partners. We also need to

develop the skills, knowledge, and expertise of our workforce to engage and involve residents from all communities as well as implementing anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practices both on a systemic and individual level.

### 3. Communities and Power

- 3.1 It is well recognised that connected communities that feel empowered to act, participate and influence decisions contributes to their health and wellbeing. This workstream brings together key stakeholders from within and outside of the organisation; we know that a system wide approach is required to have true impact in this area. There are a number of core actions that have been highlighted in the plan; these aim to bring together activities that are already underway alongside new pieces of work that will help strengthen our approach to engaging, working with and involving communities across the city. Key work areas include:-

#### **Community Engagement Maturity Assessment**

- 3.2 High quality community and resident engagement is an important part of delivering the Making Manchester Fairer action plan and vital to our success as a Council and City. Our commitment is to continually *“evaluate how effective our ways of working in neighbourhoods are at achieving this, analyse for gaps and strengthen the approach to achieve our overall objectives”*.
- 3.3 As part of building our understanding of our effectiveness and what the organisation may need to consider in terms of engaging with communities, an assessment of the maturity of community engagement within the city has taken place. Through the work of the Council and its partners, there is continual interaction with different residents, communities and groups across the city. The type of interaction can vary as can the quality and approach to engagement. This assessment seeks to highlight the strengths and weaknesses to the city’s approach to engagement . This will allow us to create a framework that will support the building of community power activity in the city. The ambition is that this framework is embedded across the organisation and wider Manchester system meaning that each service understands what good engagement looks like and will be able to draw on the right tools and support to achieve this. This will support our role in promoting community power and collaboration.

The assessment took place earlier this year and involved a number of different inputs. This included

- Desktop research, including review of strategies and action plans.
- Focus groups and observations. This included teams within the council including teams across neighbourhoods, city policy and corporate functions as well as external partner organisations. Examples include housing providers, VCSE organisations, young people and Health



The analysis revealed that community power features prominently in city plans and strategies and that the council is committed to a wide range of activities to support the strengthening of community power.

This analysis was then used to feed into a design session to determine a set of quality standards that will help strengthen and guide our work in the area over the next period.

However, whilst this recognition of intent is acknowledged, the analysis revealed there is more to do with each of the standards to ensure we are fully achieving each one.

The draft quality standards are:-

- **Vision & Strategy:** we understand why and how we are building community power in Manchester.
  - **Participation:** we ensure citizens and communities have the power to shape the places and services they care about.
  - **Leadership:** we are champions for community power.
  - **Culture & Mindset:** we are people-oriented, pragmatic, open and collaborative.
  - **Partnerships:** we build deep connections and work in collaboration with communities.
  - **Resources:** we invest time and money promoting community power.
  - **Data & Insights:** we gather and share knowledge to increase the power of citizens and communities.
  - **Skills & Learning:** we are confident and building our capacity in community power.
  - **Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, & Anti Racism:** we reflect our diverse communities and uplift the voices of those seldom heard.
- 3.4 The assessment outlines how well established our work is for each of these standards, from which an action plan and appropriate governance arrangements is being established.
- 3.5 The premise of Making Manchester Fairer is to make change across the wider Manchester system. This work has involved and included colleagues not only from within the Council but also VCSE organisations and partner organisations such as housing providers.
- 3.6 To test out whether these standards are right and fit for purpose four Community Power Pioneers have been established to work through and develop a way of working that uses the quality standards to strengthen and develop their approaches to engaging and developing community power with residents in the city. This includes two MCC services (Neighbourhood Teams and HR), a partner organisation (Mosscafe St Vincent) and a place (Cheetham). This work is at an early stage but the purpose of this will be to catalyse action that strengthens community power in the long term. Doing this through different lenses will help not only strengthen our approach but also allow us to work through gaps in our approach.

- 3.7 Over the coming months we will
- Develop a toolkit to promote best practice in terms of building community power
  - Develop a programme of activity that takes the learning from the Community Power Pioneers that helps embed the standards across the Manchester system
  - Ensure connections to other opportunities such as the development of the Our Manchester Strategy where residents have told the Council that they have a desire to be more engaged and involved.

### **Building Stronger Communities Together Strategy**

- 3.8 This three-year strategy is Manchester's first social cohesion strategy and an important piece of work to ensure we continue to build cohesion in the city. Over the last three years, and indeed in recent weeks, we have seen several challenges, both locally and nationally that have tested our understanding of and approach to building integrated and cohesive communities. At a time of economic crisis and global instability, we need more than ever to invest in strengthening our communities and social relationships particularly across difference.
- 3.9 Social cohesion is about developing neighbourhoods, workplaces, institutions and social spaces where difference is welcomed and celebrated and where empathy and curiosity about people 'not like me' is encouraged and embedded. When this happens, we can move beyond narratives of 'us' and 'them' towards ideas of kindness, trust, good relations between different groups and communities, and a sense of belonging for all.
- 3.10 The strategy focuses on people and relationships and how these can help to build and harness the skills and abilities of residents and utilise the assets in neighbourhoods to foster greater contact and participation within and between communities and local services, building trust and a sense of belonging to local areas and the city. This work supports the development of community power within the city.
- 3.11 The strategy has three priority themes, which were identified during a consultation that took place in 2023:
- **Relationships** is focused on bridging and bonding between communities. Relationships are not just about mixing with people who are like us and those we would normally mix with. They are also and importantly about speaking with our neighbours and people who are from different backgrounds.
  - **Participation** is about bringing people together to get involved in meaningful activities, for a shared purpose and engage in decisions about things that affect their lives.
  - **Belonging** is about being part of something bigger than just yourself, along with a feeling of acceptance and support that can help fend off loneliness and help to make you feel more connected to those around you.

- 3.12 First year delivery plans are now being delivered within three areas across the city. A full update on this work is presented in a separate report at this committee meeting.

### **Winning Hearts and Minds: Community-Led Initiatives**

- 3.13 Winning Hearts and Minds (WHM) continues to drive work on Community Led Initiatives to improve health and wellbeing in communities facing the greatest disadvantage in North Manchester. Recent work has seen the development of an impact framework in partnership with the University of Manchester, reflecting how the WHM approach is tackling the wider social determinants of health in these communities. The real strength of the approach lies in the Fieldworkers' relationships and trust within communities, positioning them to connect people and enable things to happen quickly and meaningfully.
- 3.14 WHM work with a range of groups and individuals to deliver activity within neighbourhoods in North Manchester that is people focused, often taking a co-design approach and collaborating with experts by experience to deliver initiatives or shape services that will improve health outcomes in the area.

### **Community Development**

- 3.15 In January 2023 a team of Neighbourhood Community Development Officers (NCDOs), transferred from GMMH (NHS) into Manchester City Council, bringing with them engagement skills, community connections and resident relationships across the neighbourhoods of Manchester. This group of staff are now firmly embedded within the neighbourhood teams, strengthening the capacity and capability to engage and develop communities across the city. The team very much takes a resident led approach; encouraging conversations that enable residents to influence decisions that affect their lives. This also helps uncover what their interests and aspirations are, so officers can support them in developing new local projects.
- 3.16 A review of how community development can support our work at the neighbourhood level is nearing completion. The review has focused on what is needed for the future, tackling the social determinants of health, recognising the gaps in health outcomes across the city, along with a changing demographic. It will be important to focus resources where most needed and use the principles of proportionate universalism as we move forward. The team will also work to a core set of national standards for community development practice
- 3.17 The practice of community development is a core element of Making Manchester Fairer, not only in terms of how this supports engagement and understanding of communities, but also in relation to how it supports communities to come together and organise effectively so that they can collectively achieve their aims and exert influence on decisions that affect them.

#### 4. Tackling Systemic and Structural Racism and Discrimination

- 4.1 Structural racism and institutional barriers are some of the most detrimental determinants of health, yet evidence linking racism to health disparities mostly focuses on the role of discrimination experienced by individuals—or interpersonal racism. While the focus on interpersonal racism is important and necessary, structural racism and its relationship to health inequities needed greater attention. One intervention to address this has been through the delivery of a comprehensive programme on Race and Health Equity to enable our workforce to be better informed, equipped, and confident to implement the right solutions that will improve outcomes for communities experiencing racial inequality and discrimination.
- 4.2 A comprehensive education programme on tackling structural racism and discrimination was commissioned with the aim of enabling our workforce from across the Manchester system to be better informed, equipped, and confident to implement the right solutions that will improve outcomes for communities experiencing racial inequality and discrimination.
- 4.3 The Race and Health Equity Education programme for 2023/24 ended with the final session in July 2024. Approximately 60 participants from MCC and partnership organisations such as Housing, Health and Greater Manchester police successfully completed the programme. From the outset we had clear learning outcomes defined as part of the programme which included;
- Understanding how racial inequity operates at different levels within a system and the impact that has on health outcomes- Racism is a public health issue
  - A better understanding of Manchester’s population and its demographics with the ability to use data and insight effectively to make informed decisions
  - An understanding of the importance of involving communities in co-designing and co-creating solutions to inform actions to reduce inequalities
  - The development of knowledge, skills, resources, tools, and confidence to create more inclusive practices and approaches to services giving participants the time, space, encouragement, and permission to collaborate on planning and improving delivery
- 4.4 The programme was delivered over a 9-month period spread across 3 modules. During the first module participants were invited to discuss and explore the historical context and social construct of race, definitions, terms, language, and how past and current thinking inform and govern how structures and institutions are set up. Building on the initial foundations, participants were then invited to share their experiences, reflections, learning and any actions following session.
- 4.5 For the second module participants explored key concepts such as ‘race’, ‘racism’, ‘discrimination’, ‘health’, ‘inequalities’, ‘equity’, and their often-contested nature. In this session, participants adopted a life-course approach to exploring the social determinants of health, thus placing health outcomes in

a wider socio-economic context. Drawing on local lived experiences and examples of inequalities in access to healthcare, experiences, and outcomes; participants were able to develop and deepen their understanding of the relationship between protected characteristics, intersectional identities, service delivery and health outcomes.

- 4.6 For the final module the focus was on the role of commissioning in tackling health inequalities experienced by marginalised communities and identifying the knowledge, skills, and experiences required to deliver equitable care in a multi-cultural context. Cultural competence, empathy; empowering diverse teams & working inclusively with communities was also discussed. The topics were explored through facilitated discussions, prompts, case studies and involving community members with lived experience of health inequalities.
- 4.7 The evaluation of the programme is underway with two external evaluation exploration hubs set to take place over the autumn. Initial data from the internal evaluation through the self-assessment process would suggest that there has been a shift in confidence to challenge personal assumptions, understanding of allyship, confidence in holding difficult conversations on issues of race and health equity.
- 4.8 In addition to the education programme outlined above participants were also able to access a limited number of masterclasses that provided insight into a range of topics with a focus on the most persistent and pervasive issues marginalised communities face.
- 4.9 Discussions are underway regarding programme accreditation to provide the programme with academic recognition and continuing professional development opportunities for current and future participants.

## **5. Community Health Equity Manchester (CHEM)**

- 5.1 The main purpose of CHEM is to;
- Build trust between communities and statutory organisations.
  - Share and amplify community voice and to provide insight.
  - Be led by the data.
  - Work in Collaboration and Partnership.

Sounding Boards/Engagement Groups are established to discuss ideas and proposed activities to deliver CHEM's objectives, and act as "critical friends" to the Strategic CHEM Group. The main functions of the Sounding Boards/Engagement Groups are to;

- Bring together a group of people that can act as a voice for their communities
- Give the communities they represent a voice in the development and delivery of system priorities and programmes of work.
- Identify and share what the priority issues and concerns are for the communities they represent/identify with.

- Share their views on how statutory sector initiatives and activities might inadvertently impact adversely on different communities and provide potential solutions.

An external review of CHEM was undertaken, and a report published in September last year. Some of the key achievements of the programme are highlighted below;

- Increasing the relevance and reach of public health messaging about Covid and, in doing so, supporting at-risk communities to stay safe during the pandemic.
- Increasing the level of trust between communities, the Council, Health and VCSE organisations by utilising people in communities who had the trust and credibility to overcome historic scepticism of some communities towards local government and healthcare providers.
- A fundamental shift in the way in which Manchester's public health team and communications team engage with communities. The role of communities in helping to design solutions that are bespoke to their specific needs is now seen as business-as-usual, with the Sounding Boards routinely engaged to support the creation and distribution of messages and inform service delivery.
- CHEM has shared some of this learning to other partners and stakeholders within Manchester and beyond. For example, a lot of community intelligence continues to be fed into the Manchester vaccination programmes, which informed where and when vaccines services should be offered.

## **6. Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to consider and comment on the information contained in this report.

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee - 8 October 2024

**Subject:** Update on the Building Stronger Communities Together Strategy 2023 - 26

**Report of:** Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)

### Summary

This report provides an update on progress on the Building Stronger Communities Together Strategy 2023-26 for Manchester City Council.

### Recommendations

The Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Note progress on the delivery of the Building Stronger Communities Together Strategy and place-based activities along with the work that has supported community recovery post the incidents and events over the summer.
2. Commit to attending the BSCT and social cohesion learning and development sessions for elected members and encourage elected members outside of the membership of this committee to also attend.

**Wards Affected:** All

<b>Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city</b>	None
<b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments</b>	The Building Stronger Communities Together strategy aims to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The impact of this strategy on protected groups has been considered through an Equality Impact Assessment
<b>Manchester Strategy Outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and	The wider work through the Our Manchester strategy delivery plans will link the priorities from this strategy focused on people and building

distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	social cohesion to supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The strategy aims to build social cohesion through recognising the importance of and harnessing the talents and skills of our local communities; attracting talent and diversity and so contributing to the city's economic success
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The strategy aims to build social cohesion through recognising the importance of and harnessing the talents and skills of our local communities; increasing participation and unlocking the potential of our communities.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	This report and the strategy highlights how the work to build stronger communities contributes towards this outcome by ensuring our diverse neighbourhoods and communities are welcoming and cohesive and therefore a destination of choice for people to live, visit and work.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Building social cohesion across the city will help to connect people with one another and local services. The work through the strategy to promote inclusion will create equal access to the growth, opportunities and resources regardless of background.

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

[Building Stronger Communities Together strategy | Building Stronger Communities Together strategy | Manchester City Council](#)

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Building Stronger Communities Together (BSCT) strategy for 2023-2026 was launched on 29 May 2024. The strategy aims to strengthen social cohesion by focussing on people and three key priorities identified through consultation. The first priority is about building a better understanding about and response to the complex nature of relationships and levels of trust between and within individuals, groups and communities, but also between individuals, groups, communities and public institutions. The second priority aims to increase participation, so there are real and meaningful opportunities for communities to get organised and come together to make a difference in their neighbourhoods. The third priority focuses on our local sense of belonging, so what makes people proud and feel part of the neighbourhoods they live in and the city.
- 1.2 The strategy is the first of its kind in the city and recognises the importance of strengthening and bringing existing programmes of work together but also co-designing with communities and prioritising the things they tell us will help to build stronger communities where people get on well together, get involved in making a difference and feel a sense of belonging and trust.
- 1.3 A report setting out the outcomes of the consultation programme, which led to the development of the Building Stronger Communities Together strategy and its key priorities was submitted to the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee in October 2023. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on progress against the strategy and the work that has taken place in response to the events and disorder across parts of the country over the summer.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Building Stronger Communities Together strategy focuses on social cohesion, which put simply is about how well people from different backgrounds meet, mix and get along together. It also relates to levels of trust both between different groups and communities and, between individual, groups and communities, and the institutions and services that serve them.
- 2.2 The work of social cohesion is about developing neighbourhoods, workplaces, institutions and social spaces where difference is welcomed and celebrated and where empathy and curiosity about people 'not like me' is encouraged and embedded. When this happens, we can move beyond narratives of 'us' and 'them' towards ideas of kindness, trust, good relations between different groups and communities, and a sense of belonging for all.
- 2.3 Based on the outcomes of consultation the strategy established three key priorities:



### Relationships

'It's about all of us' – getting to know one another and bridging difference between communities. More people doing things to help them and others to belong to their community; those who are newly arrived as well as those who have always lived here, engaging, being trusted and trusting others around them, including those from different social and ethnic backgrounds.



### Participation

'We get involved to make a difference' - helping all communities to feel empowered to act to improve their neighbourhood and address shared challenges together building on the strengths and advantages of Manchester's rich diversity, cultures and histories



### Belonging

'Making an effort' to make ourselves and the people around us a part of our local neighbourhood and the city; valuing diversity and difference, celebrating what we have in common. Being proud of the places we live. Knowing that all together we belong to Manchester. Whether a new arrival to the city or someone whose family goes back generations we celebrate what we have in common, the ties that bind us together, shared values of welcoming and inclusivity.

- 2.4 In addition to the priorities, the way we live and how we view and interact with others, especially those we do not know or those who do not look like us or think the same things we do, is a good starting point. So, to help us to do this, we have used community feedback to come up with some basic BSCT behaviours and principles, which will help to bring the priorities into action by everyone:
1. Being welcoming to others;
  2. Being open to, and comfortable with, making new connections and relationships;
  3. Respecting our differences and valuing what we have in common;
  4. Being willing to listen to others' views, including those that are not the same as our own;
  5. Embracing all, irrespective of age, race, gender, religion or belief, disability, or sexual orientation;
  6. Speaking up against discrimination and intolerance and promoting inclusion for all;
  7. Fostering pride and belonging;
  8. Cultivating a reputation for showing up and getting things done; and
  9. Taking ownership by participating, helping others and getting together to bring positive changes in Manchester.
- 2.5 The behaviours are being embedded into a programme of workforce development focused on social cohesion for staff and elected members to be delivered during October / November 2024 by the national Belong – Cohesion and Integration Network. Place-based work will also embed the behaviours into the work with our partners including communities.
- 2.6 Over the summer and across the country we saw events and incidents, which tested levels of social cohesion. Based on the levels of disorder and violence experienced, including in Manchester, the work focused on building stronger

communities and engagement in the city was accelerated to respond to the impact on our communities and staff.

### **3. BSCT in Action – Place-based Approach**

- 3.1 Since the launch of the strategy, work has been taking place at a neighbourhood level with our partners and communities to understand what work is already underway to support the aims of the strategy and fill the gaps where we have identified concerns or potential tensions. The ambition is to develop a place-based approach to achieving the three priorities in the first year of the strategy and ensure that strengthening social cohesion is part of delivery in every ward of the city.
- 3.2 Through the delivery of the strategy, we also want to test new ways of working, codesign activities with communities and identify how we bring people together in a positive way locally. We also want to build our understanding of the impact of these actions and interventions locally to ensure we have a consistent loop of reflection and learning based on data and intelligence and importantly what communities are telling us.
- 3.3 Across the city it is recognised that growth and demographic change can have a real impact on social cohesion, so to develop, strengthen and test different approaches to responding to how we deliver social cohesion activities with a focus on relationships, participation and belonging, we have three pilot areas. In North Manchester, the BSCT strategy pilot will work with primary and secondary schools and their connection into the voluntary sector to support understanding, respect and celebrate diversity as a key priority. The Neighbourhood Team and Education colleagues have held a series of sessions with school leaders to understand some of the challenges faced by our children and young people with a view to focusing on pragmatic actions we can take collectively to problem solve and tackle these. Addressing some of the issues raised around identity and culture a series of drama workshops will be commissioned for young people exploring issues of mental health, masculinity and race / identity.
- 3.4 In Central Manchester and specifically in Moss Side (but also potentially parts of Hulme and Rusholme), the pilot BSCT strategy activity has a similar focus on young people and work is underway to commission a piece of work with young people to understand their sense of place in the community. Key to this is understanding young people as residents, their sense of belonging and identity to drive our medium to long term approach in the area. This project is the result of a consistent and intensive engagement approach through the neighbourhood team over the last 15 months where residents told us that investing in the environment and working with young people was important. A Moss Side Lived Experience Group has also been established which is aimed at developing meaningful relationships between services providers and residents in the area to increase trust and better relationships between the community, the Council and GMP so decisions about improvements to the area but also policing in the community are made together.

- 3.5 In South Manchester, working with communities and their connection to future investments and improvements is also a focus for the work in Wythenshawe. The redevelopment of the Civic Centre presents a real opportunity for people to interact with one another, get involved and strengthen the sense of civic pride and belonging to the area. Significant progress has already been made on this project with engagement already happening and planned to ensure residents feel this investment is for them and being delivered alongside them. To support this the Neighbourhood Team are working with several community groups who are involved in growing projects and have funded some pilot activity to bring those groups together. Alongside this the Neighbourhood Team is working with the local housing provider and community groups to explore developing a shared Community Space in the Civic Centre. This space will support the residents of Wythenshawe to access opportunities to engage in the new, improving Civic Centre. Working closely with Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (a key partner in this work), a workshop was held on 31 January 2024 to engage and explore whether community groups would be interested in getting involved in such a shared space.
- 3.6 The groups were extremely supportive of the concept and had lots of ideas about what they would like to deliver and see delivered in the space. Work is now taking place with several community groups who are involved in growing projects in Wythenshawe. Funding has been provided for pilot activity and an event took place at the civic centre on 21 February 2024 to bring these groups together. There are several events planned in partnership with the Work and Skills team where opportunities for volunteering and involvement will be showcased. On 24th September, Age Friendly Wythenshawe hosted an event bringing together community partners who provide a range of support in partnerships with The Forum Trust and MCC's Neighbourhoods Team. The Work & Skills Team were invited to provide Employment and Skills support, and employers with current vacancies to promote to the residents of Wythenshawe.
- 3.7 Engagement, participation and bringing people together are strong themes across the work planned in all three localities. Be that community clean up days, young people in conversation or community groups in discussion with consultants about future developments and use. This inevitably builds on and improves relationships locally and will hopefully foster a sense of belonging and pride in where people live and the city.
- 3.8 We are currently working with colleagues in the Performance, Research and Insight team to look at what data measures and monitoring tools are needed to support this work and measure impact and change. Some of this will be quantitative such as: number of people attending events and the range of people accessing services and new facilities as part of the redevelopment of Wythenshawe Civic Centre. However, a key aspect of this will be the qualitative insight and learning from what we learn and identify from conversations with young people in Moss Side and the workshops in schools in North Manchester.

- 3.9 Whilst there are many examples of activities and projects that contribute towards the delivery of social cohesion across all wards of the city, we have included some of the examples below.

North Manchester Inclusion Partnership – this partnership was formed in 2023 after the covid 19 pandemic by the local care organisation. It includes the membership of partners such as Manchester City Council, Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust and CAHN. The partnership initially aimed to help focus and connect Black and African-Caribbean residents in the north of the city into Council programmes to address the health impact that the covid 19 pandemic had on this community, but was then used to build trust, connections and share key messages to try and improve health and wellbeing outcomes across different wards in the north of the city - Cheetham and Crumpsall, Higher Blackley, Charlestown and Harpurhey, Moston, Miles Platting and Newton Heath.

The partnership has managed to do this and so much more. It has delivered many community events such as the well-attended Africa day, held funding sessions to help groups struggling with writing funding bids and continues to help spread health messages across North Manchester.

Ramage Walk Summer Event – an intergenerational project delivered in August 2024, brought 80 children, parents and grandparents together from Ancoats & Beswick, Clayton & Openshaw to celebrate their local community. Families who identified themselves as White British, Black British and Southeast Asian took part in the celebrations, which helped to build social cohesion by providing shared spaces and a shared focus for people to come together to interact with one another to develop meaningful relationships across different groups. Initial activities included a fun day and an agreement to constitute a litter picking group to continue efforts going forward to build pride across neighbourhoods.

Eden Gardens Orchard – this project connected local school pupils from a high school and students from college into a volunteering programme at the wellness centre during its open day, where typical volunteers were age 40+ and came from diverse backgrounds (such as Thai, Polish, Black and White British). The centre is focused on improving the health and wellbeing of residents living in Clayton & Openshaw and the open day was held to increase access, membership and participation from people from different backgrounds and age groups.

Gorton and Murals – during the Autumn of 2023, a project aimed at bringing communities together to start conversations, bridge, bond and link people within the places they live through murals was delivered. Vine Street in Gorton was the first area activity started in. It brought families from different backgrounds and intergenerational groups together to take ownership of and build pride in their local area and work together to make changes to the area for the better.

Levenshulme In Bloom – in November 2023, a funded programme of activity which brought together VCSF (including faith-based organisations), residents and businesses to plant flowers in planter along the A6, on Stockport Road. This activity provided a shared purpose for people from different backgrounds and sectors to come together, bond, bridge and make a joint submission to In Bloom. The people involved in this activity have now formed a group to look at longer-term cleaning and greening projects across the ward increasing local participation, pride and sense of belonging.

Hulme, Moss Side and Rusholme GMP and Partners Work – Programme across Hulme, Moss Side, and Rusholme which commenced in Spring to recreate a youth panel, increasing representation and influence to address local issues like youth violence. Partnership included work with Councillors to secure free passes for ten young people to gain free gym membership for a year. The impact of this work and the panel has increased a sense of place for young people and created better connections with residents who they previously felt excluded from. The young people also felt more engaged in decision making and more engaged with local services.

Burnage Westcroft Community Centre Active Street 'Westfest' – the Active Street 'Westfest' was all about connecting residents from across the ward together and bring them into contact with officers from a range of services to support and give information to residents e.g. Biffa, the MCR Active, Dr Bike, Southway Housing group and others. Activities included traditional street games and activities for children, and families. More than 250 people attended the event, and there were 76 positive conversations with officers attending recorded.

Fallowfield/Withington Student and Community Event – building on the long-standing strategic approach and learning from each academic year, this event is being planned to take place in October 2024 and is aimed at connecting new and existing students (who are often disconnected from the neighbourhoods they live in) with one another but also students with local residents so there are better connections and cohesion between students and residents.

'Wythenshawe Loves All People' at Brownley Green Baptist Church – this Wythenshawe Community Housing Group led event is planned to take place on 26 September and aims to act as a connector event for residents from different backgrounds and different wards across the south of the city and promote the Our Manchester strategy and the BSCT strategy work across Brooklands, Northenden, Sharston and Baguley. This event aims to bring people from different backgrounds and neighbourhoods together and raise awareness of social cohesion.

- 3.11 The work since the launch of the strategy in May 2024 across all neighbourhoods has focussed on identifying the right partners, communities and existing governance structures to embed the BSCT strategy priorities and principles of working together along with engage, listen and reflect. This will continue over the next 12 months at least, and we will look to share and

embed our approach where it works and learn from what doesn't. It must be recognised that these actions are a snapshot of the work underway as part of a citywide engagement plan following the events over summer, and of the ongoing work across neighbourhood teams with residents and community groups, all of which is done in the spirit of increasing participating, building better relationships and fostering a sense of belonging.

#### **4. BSCT Activity - Responding to the Disorder over the Summer**

- 4.1 We recognise that the events over the last 12 months but more recently over the last six weeks in the city have prompted an acceleration, greater need and urgency for work in the city on social cohesion and building stronger communities together. The international conflicts including the war between Russia and Ukraine and Israel and Hamas have generated concern within our communities and we have seen an increase in peaceful protest activity in the city.
- 4.2 The recent elections across the country also identified political discourse and whilst we have a new government that won by a clear majority, we know that some communities have lost their trust in politics and public institutions. However, it also important to recognise there are wider, deep rooted contextual factors, including poverty, deprivation and the rise and changes in use of social media.
- 4.3 We recognise that the immediate response to the events and incidents taking place in the city, needed to be led by the police in partnership with ourselves to manage incidents and the disorder along with understand the community impact and sentiment. The immediate response was quickly followed by the development of a *community engagement plan*, which sought to ensure that the 'Manchester Message' was available and accessible to everyone through our library networks, youth providers, hate crime reporting centres, and community groups and influencers. Community WhatsApp groups and social media networks proved to be most effective for this. The Manchester Message included a specific email inbox, which had been created for people to get in touch, raise their concerns, or to ask for help.
- 4.4 Alongside the wider communications and as part of the community engagement plan, work took place to identify those that had *been most impacted or feeling vulnerable* in our communities to help reach out and have conversations, aimed at providing reassurance, safety advice and a voice to those who might not normally engage with public services or feel able to share their concerns or experiences. The outcomes of this led to an acceleration of activity to build stronger community engagement and cohesion in our communities and how we tackle misinformation and disinformation, which became a real challenge throughout the period of disorder.
- 4.5 The Manchester Message but also the BSCT strategy helped to frame this engagement, and the language used to describe events, the response and the behaviours and expectations on us all in the recovery process.



- 4.6 As the disorder took place over the summer period, schools, colleges and universities were closed for the summer break. In recognition of this, advice and guidance was issued to these institutions ready for the start of the Autumn term to allow the creation of safe spaces to talk about and process the events that young people and adults would have seen over the summer break and offer support to those that might request for it.
- 4.7 Given the nature and impact of the events along with the sentiment and behaviours that have been seen to take place in the city, it is recognised that long term recovery work will be required, which is carefully considered and built into existing programmes of work and where there are gaps, we will need to look at the right ways to take this forward through the appropriate governance arrangements. We will also need to rebuild confidence and trust with residents and communities who felt the most isolated or impacted by the disorder. Developing an audience specific response by working with individuals, and not just those impacted by recent events will be key.
- 4.8 It is recognised that the Recovery Plan will need to dovetail into the work to deliver the BSCT strategy, across the Council and its partners. The government has announced a Community Recovery Fund of which Manchester will be a beneficiary and so this will provide an opportunity to shape what this transition and programme of activity will need to include.

## **5. Enablers to delivery**

- 5.1 It is important to note that there are number of areas of work that will support the delivery of the Building Stronger Communities Together Strategy. These are pieces of work already in existence but are able to support the ambition and priorities set out in the strategy. They are as follows:-

### **Our Manchester VCSE Fund (OMVCS)**

The Our Manchester VCS Grants Programme is the Council's largest grants programme for the voluntary and community sector (£2.4m per year) between 2023-2026. 64 groups are currently funded across the city and engage residents as volunteers to both govern delivery and engage in actual delivery activities. The purpose of this grant programme is to support and invest in a healthy and thriving local voluntary sector and community hubs, so that it can continue to support Manchester's residents and focus on what the sector excels at in addressing some of the city's highest priorities. The fund is primarily aimed at supporting groups that work with communities and that address one or more of the following aims:

- Addressing inequalities and building inclusion;
- Promoting communities' health and wellbeing;
- Tackling poverty.

### **MCRVIP**

MCRVIP encourages residents to get involved and participate in making their area a better place to live. The platform enables residents to sign up to volunteer their time and skills to support local initiatives or organisations. Neighbourhood Officers will also engage and make many connections with residents and community groups and will advise them of the opportunities available and encourage volunteering.

### **Neighbourhood Investment Fund (NIF)**

To encourage resident and community led projects at a neighbourhood level, the Neighbourhood Teams lead the annual NIF investment programme (£20k per ward- £640k in total). NIF can be spent on environmental improvements, litter picks, cultural events and activities that bring communities together. NIF is an enabler for Officers and Ward Members to work with communities on their ideas for change, foster a stronger sense of community and residents feeling they have a greater stake in what is happening in their neighbourhood.

## **6. BSCT Social Cohesion Learning and Development**

6.1 The national Belong, Cohesion and Integration Network has been helping us to develop our thinking and activities to deliver social cohesion in the city along the way. As part of the work to build awareness of and strengthen both the capabilities and capacity to deliver the new Building Stronger Communities Together strategy, MCC and the national Belong Network are in the process of developing and hosting several BSCT and social cohesion learning and development sessions for staff and elected members. These sessions will aim to:

- Build an understanding of social cohesion in the context of the new strategy
- Identify and reflect on the strategic challenges – internationally, nationally and locally
- Identify the skills and behaviours needed to deliver and inform workforce development plans where there are gaps (pre work to share at the session)
- Deliver interactive exercises equipping participants to be able to use different models to deliver the BSCT priorities (People – Relationships, Participation and Belonging) and live the behaviours in partnership with communities
- Take away - Key tips sheet for participants to help to think social cohesion in what they do

6.2 Dates for the training and development sessions are currently being agreed and will be issued to everyone in the next fortnight.

## **7. Making Manchester Fairer and Communities and Power – Leadership and Governance**

7.1 A Communities and Power Board is being established to provide leadership across the city on the actions outlined within the Communities and Power and

Fighting Systemic and Structural Discrimination and Racism themes of the Making Manchester Fairer action plan. The Board will consist of a diverse group of senior leaders and strategic leads from across the Council, and partners, and will provide oversight on programme activity, support key decision making, assurance of progress, learning and evaluation of the following three key workstreams:

1. Communities and Power
2. Building Stronger Communities Together strategy
3. Tackling Systemic and Structural Racism and Discrimination

- 7.2 In addition to the Board, an officers' coordination group will be established, which brings together the lead officers responsible for delivery across the three workstreams described above. This will be to ensure that there are opportunities to collaborate on the ongoing design, development and delivery of pilot projects, reflect on learning, join up where required and the long-term implementation of these projects across the wider system. This group will also develop and deliver a regular "temperature check" of progress to feed into monitoring and evaluation reports for the Communities and Power Board.

## **8. Measuring Cohesion – Key Indicators**

- 8.1 Understanding and measuring levels of social cohesion is not easy and there is currently no national framework for doing this. Therefore, we will use the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's "Policing and Community Safety Survey", which is conducted every quarter across all districts in Greater Manchester. The survey includes the qualitative measures set out below, to measure overall social cohesion in Manchester. Three of these indicators are used as headline measures for the priorities of Relationships, Participation and Belonging in the Building Stronger Communities Together strategy. These indicators are in addition to the measures, activities and outcomes to be developed through place-based working.
- 8.2 The table below provides survey results for Manchester and Greater Manchester (GM) for the period July 2023 to June 2024. Comparative figures for the three strategic headline measures are also provided for the Greater London Authority (GLA).

Measure	July 2023 to June 2024		GLA Average
	Manchester	GM Average	
1. How safe do you feel in your local area?	86%	88%	-
2. How safe do you currently feel when out and about anywhere in your district, away from your local area?	81%	79%	-
3. My area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together (Relationships Measure)	79%	76%	95%
4. My local area is a place where people look out for each other	66%	72%	-
5. I feel a strong sense of belonging to my local area (Belonging Measure)	68%	70%	56%
6. I have a say in what happens in my local area (Participation Measure)	42%	36%	31%
7. I am proud of my local area	70%	71%	-

Source: Policing and Community Safety Survey (GMCA), 'State of London' dashboard (GLA)

- 8.3 The latest survey results show that Manchester was the same or better than the Greater Manchester average for three measures including two of the headline measures (Relationships and Participation). For the headline Participation measure, Manchester was the top district across Greater Manchester for respondents 'feeling they had a say in what happens in their local area'.
- 8.4 For most of the other measures, Manchester's results are only a percentage point or two below the Greater Manchester average. The exception to this is the measure relating to 'the local area being a place where people look out for each other' where there is need for improvement.
- 8.5 For the three strategic headline measures, Manchester is exceeding performance for Belonging and Participation when compared to results from the Greater London Authority. However, whilst results for Manchester's headline Relationships Measure (79%) is better than the Greater Manchester average (76%), results achieved by the Greater London Authority are considerably higher at 95%. The aim of the work of the action plans is to improve in this area.

## 9. Recommendations

The Committee are invited to:

1. Note progress on the delivery of the Building Stronger Communities Together Strategy and place-based activities along with the work that has

supported community recovery post the incidents and events over the summer.

2. Commit to attending the BSCT and social cohesion learning and development sessions for elected members and encourage elected members outside of the membership of this committee to also attend.

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