



Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee

Date: Tuesday, 12 October 2021

Time: 2.00 pm

Venue: Council Antechamber, Level 2, Town Hall Extension

Everyone is welcome to attend this committee meeting.

There will be a private meeting for Members only at 12:00 noon on Monday 11 October 2021 via MS Teams. A separate invite will be sent to Committee Members.

Access to the Public Gallery

Access to the Public Gallery is on Level 3 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 Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee 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 Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee

Councillors - Russell (Chair), Ahmed Ali, Andrews, Clay, Davies, Hacking, Hitchen, Kirkpatrick, Lanchbury, B Priest, Robinson, Rowles, A Simcock, Wheeler and Wright

Agenda

- 1. Urgent Business**
To consider any items which the Chair has agreed to have submitted as urgent.
- 2. 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.
- 3. 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.
- 4. Minutes** 5 - 12
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2021
- 5. Update from the Revenues and Benefits Unit** 13 - 64
Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer attached

This report provides an update on the activity of the Revenues and Benefits Unit, including details of how the service was affected and maintained during the pandemic and includes performance data for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 financial years.
- 6. Equalities Strategy Implementation update** 65 - 116
Report of the Director of HROD attached

This report provides Members with an update on progress to date to increase diversity, ensure that Manchester City Council is an inclusive employer and to challenge discrimination.
- 7. Overview Report** 117 - 130
Report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit.

This report provides the Committee with details of key decisions that fall within the Committee's remit and an update on actions resulting from the Committee's recommendations. The report also includes the Committee's work programme, which the Committee is asked to amend as appropriate and agree.

Information about the Committee

Scrutiny Committees represent the interests of local people about important issues that affect them. They look at how the decisions, policies and services of the Council and other key public agencies impact on the city and its residents. Scrutiny Committees do not take decisions but can make recommendations to decision-makers about how they are delivering the Manchester Strategy, an agreed vision for a better Manchester that is shared by public agencies across the city.

The Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee areas of interest include finances, Council buildings, staffing, corporate and partnership governance as well as Council tax and benefits administration. .

The Council wants 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. If you have a special interest in an item on the agenda and want to speak, tell the Committee Officer, who will pass on your request to the Chair. Groups of people will usually be asked to nominate a spokesperson. The Council wants its meetings to be as open as possible but occasionally there will be some confidential business. Brief reasons for confidentiality will be shown on the agenda sheet.

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Agenda, reports and minutes of all Council Committees can be found on the Council's website www.manchester.gov.uk.

Smoking is not allowed in Council buildings.

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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This agenda was issued on **Monday, 4 October 2021** by the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit, Manchester City Council, Level 3, Town Hall Extension (Mount Street Elevation), Manchester M60 2LA

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Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2021

Present:

Councillor Russell (Chair) – in the Chair
 Councillors Ahmed Ali, Andrews, Clay, Davies, Hitchen, Kirkpatrick, Lanchbury, B Priest, Robinson, Rowles, A Simcock, Wheeler and Wright

Also present:

Councillor Craig, Deputy Leader (Finance)

RGSC/21/35 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2021 were submitted for consideration as a correct record.

Councillor Hitchen asked for the record to show that due to ongoing ICT issues, she had not received all of the papers circulated electronically for the last meeting, despite officers' best efforts.

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2021 as a correct record, noting the comments above.

RGSC/21/36 Capital Support for Regeneration

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which discussed the range of approaches the Council may take to support regeneration across the city. The report included a selection of case studies setting out how such approaches had successfully been used. A summary of recent and expected changes to the local authority capital financing framework was also included.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- An overview of key milestones in driving growth, regeneration and the development of robust public - private partnerships to create opportunities for those who live and work in Manchester, and the Council's role in convening the necessary interventions to deliver long term growth.
- An analysis of the Council's economic base, as determined by a number of official sources.
- An overview of the Council's Capital Strategy 2020/21 priority areas and explanation of its role and purpose; and
- Case studies of successful partnership arrangements with Victoria North and the Manchester College Estate Development and Rationalisation Programme

Some of the key points that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- Manchester's current position in terms of its current economic productivity, in light of impact of the COVID pandemic on the local economy.
- The impact of population growth and the associated financial support that provided by central government
- The impact of the COVID pandemic on investment income, with particular reference to Manchester Airport Group
- The anticipated financial impact of the cessation of the furlough scheme on Council Tax and Business Rates revenue, as well as the impact on residents.
- The capital Strategy's decision making function and how effectively the Council communicates capital spend to residents.

In considering information concerning Manchester's economic position, a member noted that the GVA figures set out in the report were from 2017 and asked whether more recent information about the city's economic position was available. The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer explained that the most recent, publicly circulated GVA figures were used in the report's comparison. More up-to-date figures were available and could be circulated to committee members, however it was important that members note that those figures would not present a fully consolidated economic picture.

Noting the level of investment income that was predominantly generated from Manchester Airport in the 2019/20 financial year, members asked whether more was understood about the level of dividend that the Council could anticipate, in view of the economic impact of significantly reduced international travel. Mindful of the commercial sensitivities associated with financial matters for a publicly listed company, the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer said that prudent assumptions had been made in the budget strategy, where support for key council services and specific projects could be affected. She added that whilst the amount received through the dividend was significantly lower in 2020/21, due to the financial impact of the pandemic, some recovery was anticipated but this would not be to previous levels and the budget strategy is not reliant on the airport dividend.

The Committee discussed the upcoming cessation of the furlough scheme and the anticipated impact on Council Tax and Business Rates income. The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer said that whilst it was difficult to be precise about the expected drop in both income streams, particularly for Business Rates, support was being developed where possible to mitigate the impact on affected residents. The Deputy Leader (Finance) added that information would be circulated to members, setting out the available support to affected residents. She also highlighted the current buoyancy in the local jobs market which could mitigate the impact. The Chair highlighted that the Committee's future Work Programme included a piece of work with the Revenue and Benefits team on Collections and Family Poverty for the Committee to consider in greater depth.

There was a discussion about the decision-making process for new capital projects and how they are assessed against other strategic priorities. The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer explained that projects are assessed against a number of criteria including contributions to social value, the carbon reduction agenda, and funding regime as well as other city priorities. She explained that whilst the report had been drafted with a particular focus on the capital investment perspective of regeneration, it did not reflect the work undertaken by officers in the Growth and Development team to ensure that wider corporate priorities are upheld and coordinated to best meet the needs of the Manchester population and ensure all possible benefits have been leveraged. Discussions then moved to how well capital spend is explained to Manchester's communities. The Committee was informed that a wider piece of work was planned to provide communities with a clearer understanding of the purpose and function of the capital programme and how such expenditure greatly benefits the city.

There was a discussion about the impact of the city's continued growth and increase in population and the support offered to growing cities by central government. The Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer said that one of the challenges for a local authority with a high number of properties in lower Council Tax bands and a rapidly growing population is keeping pace with the delivery of services as the amount raised is limited. She added that this point was regularly raised with central government through Spending Review submissions as part of processes. The Deputy Leader (Finance) also spoke about the discrepancies between the Council's projections of growth in the city when compared with central government's projection. She added that lots of work had been undertaken by the Council in respect of population modelling to provide an analysis of the economic benefits alongside calls on services.

A member asked whether there had been any response to the Council's request to be included in the levelling up agenda. The Deputy Leader (Finance) said that the Council had made a positive case to Government within the context of the levelling up fund in terms of where the Council believes it should get investment development opportunities across the city, for the benefit of Manchester residents, however, to date no feedback had been received.

Decision

To note the report.

RGSC/21/37 Income Generation

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which provided a comprehensive overview of the work taking place to identify further income generation opportunities, as well as what could be learnt from other Local Authorities. An update on the Legal and Democratic services income was also provided at the Committee's request.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- The context, scope and limitations of the discretionary fees and charges scheme.
- An overview of the income generation budget across different service areas and directorates;
- The impact of the COVID pandemic on commercial income; and
- Opportunities for further income generation.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- The process that is in place to facilitate the development of new opportunities to generate new income streams.
- In the context of changing priorities for the city, how the impact of falling income streams is managed, with a particular focus on the services they support.
- The accuracy of the projected overall income generation budget for 2021/22.
- The role of the city's parks and open spaces in generating income for the city.
- The progress of the implementation of the Civic Quarter Heat Network.

A member asked about the process for the development of new potential income streams. The Committee was informed that budget holders and service Directors across the organisation were encouraged to be as innovative as possible. The development of a robust business case which stood up to scrutiny and assessment against specific priorities was key to success. Members stressed the importance of ensuring that, in the context of a reduced workforce, staff were given the time needed to explore and innovate to a meaningful degree.

Using the example of income that is generated through the provision of off-street parking, and the projected decrease in income over the next 5 years, a member asked how the impact on the services they support is managed. The Deputy City Treasurer said that such matters are assessed in terms of infrastructure policy and longer term financial objectives.

A member noted the figures reported in the overall income generation budget and asked whether the projections for the 2021/22 financial were realistic. The Deputy City Treasurer advised that despite the significant impact of the COVID pandemic, substantial activity had taken place across directorates and service areas resulting in a majority of income budgets being tentatively on track against revised budgets as footfall continues to return.

Members welcomed the contribution of the city's parks and open spaces to the Council's budget and noted that there would be significant capital investment in this area to grow commercial assets in this specific area.

Members also welcomed the vision for longer term income generation through the investment in the Civic Quarter Heat Network. The Committee noted the intention to seek additional customers and effectively grow dividends over the next 2 – 3 years. The Committee also noted that a mapping exercise across the Greater Manchester area was underway to explore further opportunities.

Decision

To note the report.

RGSC/21/38 Council Wholly Owned Companies

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which discussed the spend, financing and governance of its wholly owned companies.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- The context of the establishment of Local Authority Trading Companies (LATCs);
- An overview of the Council's Commercial Governance function;
- Case studies of wholly owned companies with examples provided on spend and financing arrangements; and
- An overview of Risk Management.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- The Council's Commercial Governance function and how it compares to other Local Authorities; and
- The scope of the Directors' training programme.

Noting the information on the background and scope of the Council's Commercial Governance function, and in the context of the outcome of recent Public Interest reports into Local Authority commercial activities, a member asked how the Council's arrangements compare with other Authorities. The Head of Programme Management Office: Commercial Governance & Directorate Support described aspects of the function's rigorous practices that facilitate robust oversight and tracking across the portfolio. This, she explained, provided a strong platform for accurately monitoring investment and partnership activity across the city. On the matter of joint ventures, she stressed the importance of early detection of any emerging risks which avoided the escalation of difficulties as a crucial element of the governance process, as well as the use of the right skills and management to ensure that any action is taken in a managed way and in accordance with established legal agreements. She added that the Council had been approached by a number of other organisations to learn from its good

practices, noting the scale of company activity it oversees, and had also been asked to provide information for a Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) good practice guide.

The Committee also noted that a list of the Council's interests had recently been considered by the Council's Audit Committee, as part of the Registered of Significant Partnerships process, which outlined the review and assurance process undertaken on an annual basis.

There was a discussion about the Directors' training programme. The Head of Programme Management Office: Commercial Governance & Directorate Support described this a two cohort system for both new and experienced Board members that covered the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the role as well as information on good practice. Members also requested that training support should be explored for members undertaking Trustee roles.

Decision

To note the report.

[Councillor B Priest declared a prejudicial interest as Board member of the Manchester Central Convention Centre and took no part in the discussion].

RGSC/21/39 The Capital Programme Assurance Review

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer, which provided an update on the external review of the Council's capital programme governance framework and the progress made by the Council following the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer review in 2018.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Information on the external review of the Council's capital programme governance framework and the progress made by the Council following the LGA Peer review in 2018;
- Providing the Executive Summary from the independent review, noting that it identifies that the Council had implemented a number of actions following the LGA Peer review in 2018 and the direction of travel is positive;
- Describing the actions that arose from the report; and
- Conclusions.

No comments / questions were submitted by the Committee. The Chair thanked officers and described the Review as a significant piece of work whose progress would continue to be monitored through the Council's Audit Committee.

Decision

To note the report.

RGSC/21/40 Overview Report

The Committee considered the report by the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which provided details of key decisions that fall within the Committee's remit and an update on actions resulting from the Committee's recommendations. The report also includes the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to amend as appropriate and agree.

No amendments to the Work Programme were proposed.

Decision

To note the overview report and agree the Committee's Work Programme.

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**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee – 12 October 2021

Subject: Update from the Revenues and Benefits Unit

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer

Summary

This report provides an update on the activity of the Revenues and Benefits Unit, including details of how the service was affected and maintained during the pandemic. The report covers:

- Benefits administration, including Council Tax Support and the management of the Welfare Provision Scheme and other discretionary schemes;
- The financial support provided as part of the Test and Trace Scheme;
- Performance in the collection of council tax and how we balance collection, whilst working in an ethical way and supporting those residents on a low income; and
- Performance in the collection of business rates including the support that has been made to businesses during the pandemic.

Because the service did not provide an annual report during 2021 and to show the impact of the pandemic on the service, the report will provide data for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 financial years.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

Wards Affected:

The services provided by the Revenues and Benefits Unit are provided across all wards in the city. The wards with higher deprivation have higher levels of residents in receipt means tested benefits and discretionary awards.

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

The Council's transformation work and response to covid restrictions has meant that the service has worked hard to avoid unnecessary travel by looking to provide services online, by phone or in the local area where possible.
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Our Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
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A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The policies that support the work of the Unit are in the spirit and in accordance with policies to maximise financial well-being and ensure that the economy is supported to recover post-covid.
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The report provides details on our covid discretionary grant schemes that have been developed to support the city's economic recovery and support good employers that are committed to the employment of Manchester residents and the provision of the living wage.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	This report provides details of how we provide support to residents on a low income as well as our approach to recovery, which is fair and consistent and allows residents to manage other household bills.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The report provides details on our covid discretionary grant schemes that have been developed to support the city's economic recovery
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The report provides details on our covid discretionary grant schemes that have been developed to support the city's economic recovery

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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.

Manchester's support for families living in poverty
Economy Scrutiny 9 September 2021
Executive 15 September 2021

<https://democracy.manchester.gov.uk/documents/s26082/Manchesters%20support%20for%20families%20living%20in%20poverty.pdf>

Manchester Poverty Truth Commission Key Findings

<https://www.mhcc.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Agenda-Item-1.3-Manchester-Poverty-Truth-Commission-201921-key-findings-and-impact-report.pdf>

Enforcement Agency Code of Practice 2021/22

https://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/5938/enforcement_agency_code_of_practice_council_tax_201415

Welfare Provision Scheme Policy

https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/5237/welfare_provision_scheme_policy_2020-21

Discretionary Housing Payments Policy

https://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/4494/discretionary_housing_payments_-_2013_council_policy

1.0 Introduction

This report provides an update on the activity of the Revenues and Benefits Unit, including how the service was affected and maintained during the pandemic.

The report will also cover the activity of the Unit as part of the Council's wider role in the in administration of support to residents and businesses

1.1 Support to residents

The Council has worked hard to ensure that any funding that is available, either from local or government funds, has the best impact for our residents and on our communities, supporting the Council's policies and the Our Manchester Strategy.

When considering support, the national context is considered, especially in relation to the wider welfare benefits regime. Whilst the Council is unable to mitigate for all changes to the welfare reform system and there are important contextual factors which impact on the level of demand for discretionary support. This includes the temporary £20 uplift to the Universal Credit payments, the changes to the LHA rates as well as the impact of government furlough and other support schemes including the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS).

The report also provides details of the discretionary support that is provided. This includes the business as usual schemes and the additional Covid related schemes. These were additional schemes provided to help mitigate impact of pandemic.

1.2 Council Tax

The council tax that is collected is extremely important and enables the Council to deliver essential services.

The pandemic had a huge impact on residents' ability to pay Council Tax with the in-year collection rate over 2.5% lower for 2020/21 compared with 2019/20. Residents are still suffering the effects in 2021/22 and although it is recovering, the collection rate has not yet reached 2019/20 levels, meaning reduced levels of revenue for the city.

The Council' Revenues Service is aware of our responsibility to be proportionate and reasonable in the collection of council tax that is owed and where possible works to engage with residents to deliver and sustain payment arrangements. The report details the approach to the collection of money owed and how vulnerable and low-income households are supported.

1.3 Support to businesses

As with council tax the money collected in business rates has a direct impact on the Council's budget. Unless funded by the government any discretionary reliefs and grants are met by the council and ultimately by council taxpayers in the city.

As with council tax, businesses' ability to pay the business rates liability has been hugely impacted by the pandemic. Despite all the grants and reliefs that have been awarded over the last 17 months, the business rates collection rate was nearly 10% lower in 2020/21 compared with 2019/20. There has been some recovery during 2021/22, but companies are still struggling in many sectors of the city's economy.

Unlike council tax, the government provided some support for the Council to mitigate some of the reduction in Business Rates income.

1.4 Scope

This report does not provide details of the extensive financial and other support that is provided to residents by all areas of the Council. This was covered in a separate report that went to Economy Scrutiny and the Executive in September 2021.

The report is split into the following areas:

- Benefits administration, including Council Tax Support and the management of the Welfare Provision Scheme and other discretionary support;
- The financial support provided as part of the Test and Trace Scheme;
- Performance in the collection of council tax and how we balance collection, whilst working in an ethical way and provide support to those residents on a low income; and
- Performance in the collection of business rates including the financial support that has been made available to businesses during the pandemic.

Because the service did not provide an annual report during the 2020/2021 financial year and to show the impact of the pandemic on the service, the report will provide data for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 financial years and well as year to date data for 2021/22.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Unit and what we do

The Revenues and Benefits Unit delivers two large service areas: billing, collection and recovery of money due to the Council and the assessment and payment of several areas of benefits and financial support paid to residents.

The Revenues Service is responsible for the collection of all council tax, business rates, benefit overpayments, miscellaneous income and adult social care debt as the result of a financial assessment for care.

The Benefits Service assesses entitlement and makes payments for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, the Welfare Provision Scheme, Adult Social Care charges and several areas of discretionary support, as required to support the Council's priorities.

2.2 The impact of Covid on our activity

As with many areas of the Council, the impact of the pandemic has been significant.

During the pandemic the service was maintained throughout. This was because we already have a mature model and regime for colleagues' homeworking that has been in place for many years and was extended to include the remainder of the workforce at short notice. The only people that had to remain in the office were those staff that had to deal with post, including scanning and indexing.

In addition, further activity to support residents to submit and manage accounts and applications for financial support was also introduced, including the acceptance of photographic evidence to support claims.

The service also picked up significant, additional work as a result of the pandemic, including the development of additional schemes and other support across many areas including welfare support, council tax and business rates. Delivery of these schemes was achieved by careful planning and resource management and the flexibility, commitment and professionalism of our colleagues at a time when many of them had personal challenges due to the pandemic. There is no evidence of any detrimental performance impact as a result of this homeworking activity and service performance was maintained throughout.

For some services, the Council acts as an agent and partner of the government, for example the administration of Housing Benefit or administering reliefs and grants. As a result, the rate of immediate change and fast-moving policy decisions have had an impact on the work that we had to do. In many cases this has resulted in colleagues working across service areas and picking up new work areas.

It is worth recognising that although not administered by the Council, the temporary £20 uplift to Universal Credit, as well as the one-off 2020/21 hardship grant to provide a grant of £150 towards the council tax for some low-income residents (funded by government in 2020/21 and the Council in 2021/22) has had a positive impact and in some areas reduced demand on discretionary schemes.

There were also a range of grant schemes to support businesses in the city that were intended to mitigate the impact of covid on businesses and the economy.

Further detail on these areas is included in the following sections linked to functional areas.

2.3 Government changes impacting of residents' income

2.3.1 Temporary Uplift to UC

Universal Credit was increased by £20 a week (or £1,040 a year) in April 2020 as part of a government support package when the country first went into lockdown. This was paid to all working age residents in receipt of Universal Credit and other means tested benefits. Things like how Housing Benefit and our CTS scheme were calculated were also adjusted so that this additional income provided an increase in real terms (normally any increase in income would result in a tapered reduction in Housing Benefit and CTS). This has continued for the last eighteen months and has had a positive impact on residents and the economy of the city.

The government has now withdrawn this additional UC payment from 6 October 2021. This withdrawal will have a negative impact on low-income households in the city, including those that are working, and is also expected to have an impact on discretionary budgets including the Welfare Provision Scheme and the Discretionary Housing Payment scheme.

Single people under 25 will be hardest hit by the change, because they have the lowest standard allowance for Universal credit in the first place, at £344 a month.

The withdrawal of the uplift has meant that this will fall by about 25%.

- For single people under the age of 25, the standard allowance with the uplift was £344. When the uplift was cut this fell by more than 25% to £257.33
- For single people over 25, the standard allowance went down from £411.51 to £324.84. A 21% decrease in monthly income.
- For couples under 25, the amount paid reduced by almost 18% from £490.60 to £403.93
- For joint claimants where at least one is over 25, it reduced from £596.58 to £509.91 - a 14% decrease.

2.3.2 Temporary Uplift withdrawal impact on the city's residents and economy

The number of UC claimants in the city doubled at the start of the pandemic. The number has been relatively stable at just under 80,000 since the start of the year. There may be some early signs of the number of UC claimants beginning to decline but it is early days and at this stage it is only a relatively small decrease.

The latest data for July shows that there were 78,132 UC claimants in Manchester (down from 78,508 in June). 29,267 of the UC claimants in July were in employment (just over a third – 37%). Since April 2021 (i.e. when the economy started to open again) the number of UC claimants in employment has increased whilst the number of out of work claimants has decreased. State support for residents in the labour market (rather than the unemployed) is therefore now at a very high level.

The Council has tried to model the financial impact based on data held. There are several factors that must be considered when considering and calculating the impact of the potential withdrawal of the £20 weekly uplift, including:

- I. Couples receive a different higher amount of benefit than single individuals but have received the same uplift for their joint claim.
- II. Claimants' awards are further adjusted by several factors - in particular earned wages for those in employment. Therefore, there are claimant households who receive less than the standard allowance or in some cases no award at all. In total there are 9,148 households in Manchester as at May 2021 who receive a nil award due to earnings or deductions.
- III. Household data has richer data on family structure, so it is used in these calculations – N.B. "Households" is a UC specific admin term and does not necessarily imply multi-individual units

After removing those households in receipt of no financial award and considering the small variation in decrease in benefit applicable to different household structures, a decrease in benefits income for Manchester residents of £4.96m per month is predicted when the uplift is removed. This will impact an estimated 58,339 households in Manchester. This equates to **£59.56m** per annum or £1.14m per week loss of benefits income.

The largest household group who will be impacted by the removal of the uplift is single claimants with no children. There are 31,710 such claimants as at May 2021. 17,667 single claimants with children will be impacted, 1,757 couples without dependent children and 7,194 couples with dependent children will be impacted. N.B. *Rounding has been applied for statistical reasons therefore these figures plus the nil award households do not sum to the overall total.*

We will continue to monitor the impact of this change on our discretionary schemes and if required we will put forward a case to draw down essential contingency funds so that we are able to protect vulnerable residents and maintain tenancies.

2.3.3 Changes to LHA Rates

In April 2020, as a result of covid, the government unexpectedly increased the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates on which housing benefit is based. The rates were adjusted to meet the 30th percentile of the rented properties in the LHA area. The LHA rates were kept the same in April 2021 meaning that the

value of the 2020 increases will be lost if further uprating of LHA rates is not applied in future years.

The table below shows the result of the difference between the old and new rates for the two areas we use in Manchester. Most people in the city fall within the Manchester Central area.

Central	Shared	One Bed	Two Bed	Three Bed	Four Bed
April 2019	£67.20	£105.04	£123.58	£137.32	£186.47
April 2020	£75.50	£138.08	£149.59	£166.85	£218.63
Weekly increase	£8.30	£33.04	£26.01	£29.53	£32.16
Southern	Shared	One Bed	Two Bed	Three Bed	Four Bed
April 2019	£63.21	£105.32	£132.04	£156.33	£206.09
April 2020	£82.82	£120.82	£149.59	£172.60	£253.15
Weekly increase	£19.61	£15.50	£17.55	£16.27	£47.06

Alongside the changes to the UC standard rates, these changes to LHA have had a significant impact on the finances of the poorest and financially vulnerable households (those living in private landlord tenancies) in the city and there would be a significant immediate, detrimental impact of these changes being withdrawn.

2.4 Council Tax Hardship Payment 2020/21

The government also announced in the 2020 budget that it would provide local authorities in England with £500m of new grant funding to support economically vulnerable people and households in their local area. Manchester received £7,458,231.

Local authorities were required to provide all the working age recipients of local Council Tax Support (CTS) during the 2020/21 financial year, with a further reduction in their annual council tax bill of £150. To award the amount authorities had to use their discretionary powers to reduce the liability of council taxpayers outside of their formal CTS scheme design.

Awards were made throughout the year and by the end of March 2021, awards were applied to 43,303 single and family households to a value of £6,317,584 and 2,104 joint-tenant households to a value of £296,817, a total of £6,614,401.

The remaining funds were directed towards the Council's discretionary schemes and the Council's wider food response (see below). All this government grant was spent.

3.0 Additional and discretionary Support provided by the Council

The following sections detail some of the discretionary support provided by the Council and administered by the Revenues and Benefits Unit. Some of these are new schemes in response to covid and some are business as usual. In

addition to this, some are covered by government grants and others are wholly funded by the Council.

3.1 Support that started in 2020/21

3.1.1 Support for Carers

A £100,000 budget from the main hardship scheme above was identified in 2020/21 to provide support for carers in response to the pandemic. This was administered by the Welfare Provision Team. The shape and direction of this financial support was developed in consultation with Adult Social Care, on whose behalf the scheme was introduced.

Support for Carers was introduced into the Welfare Provision Scheme from 12 May 2020.

A total of £116,580 was paid to 597 cases within the 2022/21 financial year.

3.1.2 Covid Support

A further £100,000 budget was identified in 2020/21 to provide Welfare Provision Scheme support to residents facing crisis or urgent need due to the pandemic. £83,298 was paid to 1,138 cases. This budget was available for the 2020/21 period only.

The main WPS budget of £600,000 was fully spent and additional budget made available to ensure vulnerable residents received support across the full year. The total main scheme spend was £841,376, paid to 3,044 applications.

The following tables show the number and percentage of awards made during 2020/21 based on age range and family make-up. This shows that most of the awards are made to working age people with less than 2% being paid to households occupied by residents over 65. The data includes all WPS administered awards including the main scheme, Carers, Covid, and Free School Meals.

Age/Gender Awards 2020/21				
Age Range	Female	Male	Total	% of Total
0-15	1	0	1	0.0%
16-24	552	193	745	7.4%
25-34	3,284	549	3,833	38.3%
35-44	2,709	676	3,385	33.8%
45-54	889	540	1,429	14.3%
55-64	225	223	448	4.5%
65-74	55	73	128	1.3%
75-84	16	12	28	0.3%
85+	2	2	4	0.0%
Total	7,733	2,268	10,001	100%

Family Make-Up Awards 2020/21				
No. of Children	Female	Male	Total	% of Total
0	2,566	1,464	4,030	40.3%
1	1,326	182	1,508	15.1%
2	1,805	215	2,020	20.2%
3	1,188	216	1,404	14.0%
4	509	135	644	6.4%
5	210	31	241	2.4%
6	77	15	92	0.9%
7	31	6	37	0.4%
8	16	2	18	0.2%
9	4	1	5	0.0%
10	1	1	2	0.0%
Total	7,733	2,268	10,001	100%

3.1.3 Free School Meals – Alternative Support

During 2020/21 the Welfare Provision Scheme was used during Easter 2020 and autumn half-term holidays to provide eligible Manchester children with a cash grant of £10 per week. Eligible families included children whose parents are entitled to free school meals due to low income, or as an asylum seeker, or those subject to 'no recourse to public funds'.

Parents that contacted us for support received £40 for each child entitled to free school meals for the period 23 March to 17 April 2020 and £10 for the week of 26 October to 30 October 2020. 4,331 children received support during the Easter period and 6,709 for the autumn half-term.

Spend within the 2020/21 financial year constituted £92,282 for Easter applications (total spend including applications paid in March 2020 was £233,970) and £114,512 for autumn half-term cases.

Government directed schemes providing funding of £15 for each eligible child were implemented by the Council for the 2020 summer holidays and from the Christmas holidays 2020 onwards. Vouchers were provided via schools and other key groups following an approach developed by the Children's Services. The following amounts were paid out through the vouchers and schools:

- Summer 2020 £3.2m (delivered through Government commissioned Edenred voucher system)
- Christmas 2020 £1.12m (delivered locally through schools)
- February half-term 2021 £466k (delivered locally through schools)
- Easter and May half-term 2021 £1.6m (delivered locally through schools)
- Summer 2021 £3.2m (delivered locally through schools)

3.1.4 Discretionary Housing Payments

DWP DHP funding of £2,538,308 was received for the year with the Council providing an additional £1m of funds.

£3,194,110 was paid out with decisions made on 3,569 cases resulting in 2,250 awards. 830 of the 3,569 applications referenced Covid19 as a contributing factor for the DHP request and 79% were paid.

During 2020/21, DHP awards that were due to end were reviewed and, where appropriate, extended. A total of 2,148 extensions were carried out. Most cases had more than one extension. These extensions did not require a new application in recognition of the very limited opportunities available to residents to secure cheaper accommodation or secure employment. Because these cases were extended without contact from the resident or landlord, we do not know how many of these would have indicated Covid-19 as a factor in requiring DHP but it is reasonable to assume that a proportion would have done so.

3.1.5 Discretionary Council Tax Payment Scheme (DCTP)

During 2020/21:

- £70,701 was paid out to 308 households impacted by the 2-child limit within the benefit regulations;
- £107,486 was paid out to support 213 care-leaver council tax cases; and
- £149,674 was paid out in support of 831 other Discretionary Council Tax Payment applications. These would have been considered on the individual merits of each case in accordance with the Council's policy.

DCTP is funded by the Council.

3.2 2021/22 Support

3.2.1 Continuation of the £150 Council Tax Hardship Payments

As part of the 2021/22 budget process the Council agreed to continue the award of the £150 hardship payment. This meant that all working age recipients of council tax support received a further award of £150 towards their bill. This is wholly funded by the Council.

To date this has been paid to 38,430 single and family households to a value of £5,681,500 and 1,499 joint-tenant households to a value of £217,947, a total of £5,899,447. Due to churn and transience this is estimated to cost around £6,500,000 for the financial year, although this could increase further if we receive more claims for CTS as furlough ends etc.

This award means that for those households in the lowest bands, their council tax is almost paid for the financial year.

The following table shows the number of working age CTS recipients across the different council tax property bands and the amount that they have left to pay after maximum CTS and the £150 hardship payment has been made.

Impact of CTS and £150 hardship payment	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Total no. of working age households in receipt of CTS	30,324	3,673	1,607	391	123	20	7	0
No. of working age households with 100% CTax charge in receipt of CTS	10,091	1,786	982	239	81	11	3	0
CTax to pay - 100% charge with maximum CTS and £150 award	£60.68	£95.79	£130.90	£166.02	£236.25	£306.48	£376.70	£482.04
No. of Working age households with 75% CTax charge in receipt of CTS	20,233	1,887	625	152	42	9	4	0
CTax to pay- 75% charge with maximum CTS and £150 award	£8.01	£34.34	£60.68	£87.02	£139.69	£192.36	£245.03	£324.03

3.2.2 Support for Carers

The £100,000 budget was retained in 2021/22 but was also fully funded by the Council. This element of the wider WPS service was developed for 2021/22 in consultation with Carers Manchester Contact Point (CMCP), Manchester Carers' Forum and Carers' Commissioning. Access to this budget is now directed through the CMCP and Carers Team.

At 31 August 2021, a total of £27,834 has been paid to 196 cases.

3.2.3 Welfare Provision Scheme

Demand for support from the core WPS remains high. This reflects the continuing impact of Covid on residents and the number of households moving from temporary homelessness accommodation into general needs housing where WPS support is provided.

Spend against reported application reasons up to 31 August 2021 is shown below:

Reason for Application	Number Approved	Value of Awards
Moving Home / Resettlement	689	£308,231
Other Reason	366	£30,845
Carers Emergency Fund	196	£27,834
Disaster	98	£8,674
Travel	6	£225
Total	1,355	£375,809

Based on current demand projected spend indicates that the core WPS budget of £600,000 needs topping up if the present level of support is to be maintained throughout the year. An additional £500,000 of Council contingency funding has been drawn down to cover the projected spend and to offer further contingency if additional pressures arise during the winter months. This will include support for emergency fuel poverty that can be supported by the existing scheme criteria.

3.2.4 Discretionary Housing Payments

The DWP have provided Discretionary Housing Payments funding of £1,969,832 with an additional £1 million funding provided by the Council. At 22 September 2021 we have paid and committed £1,968,499.

At 30 June 2021, decisions had been made on 1,012 new applications of which 537 have been paid. 128 of the 1,012 applications referenced Covid-19 as a contributing factor for the DHP request and 73% of these cases have been paid.

All DHP cases due to end between 1 April and 31 July 2021 have been reviewed and where appropriate extended to the autumn. 378 cases were extended to 13 September and 160 were extended to 29 November 2021. These extensions did not require a new application in recognition of the very limited opportunities available to residents to secure cheaper accommodation or secure employment. Because these cases were extended without contact from the resident or landlord, we do not know how many of these would have indicated Covid-19 as a factor in requiring DHP but it is reasonable to assume that a proportion would have done so.

Based on current spend the full DWP and Council contributions will be used within the financial year. Demand for and spend against the DHP budget is

closely monitored and if need for an additional Council contribution is identified, for example the impact of the ending of the Furlough Scheme, this will be raised at the time.

3.2.5 Discretionary Council Tax Payment Scheme

At 1 September 2021:

- £77,776 paid out to 209 households impacted by the 2-child limit
- £144,668 paid out to support 244 care-leaver cases
- £53,623 paid out in support of 285 other Discretionary Council Tax Payment applications. These have been considered on the individual merits of each case in accordance with the Council's policy.

4.0 Benefits administration

4.1 Caseload

The transfer of cases to Universal Credit continues. This means that although Universal Credit claims increased substantially during the pandemic the number of claims for Housing Benefit administered by the Council continues to reduce. This is because new claims for benefit from working age people are made through Universal Credit and this includes most housing costs. The Council will now only receive new Housing Benefit claims from residents of pension age and people in temporary or supported accommodation.

It should be noted that although residents claim housing costs as part of their UC claim any and discretionary support for rent costs is still directed to the Council's Discretionary Housing Payment scheme.

Following completion of the roll-out of Universal Credit in the summer of 2018 average monthly reductions in the caseload are:

- HB working age caseload 1.28%;
- HB pension age caseload 0.32%; and
- CTS caseload 0.13%.

The pandemic saw the CTS caseload rise from its lowest reported level of 50,609 on 1 April 2020 to a peak of 53,387 at 1 September 2020 before dropping again to 51,937 at 1 September 2021.

The impacts of the pandemic and the ending of the government furlough scheme from October 2021 mean that it is difficult to offer a definitive assessment of the future demand on HB and CTS. However, it is reasonable to expect that the HB caseload will continue to reduce while fluctuations in the CTS caseload may occur during the remainder of the 2021/22.

The following table shows the caseload from March 2019 to the present across Housing Benefit and CTS. It may be helpful to note that not all

residents in receipt of HB or UC have council tax liability and so numbers of CTS cases do not correlate to HB here, or UC figures elsewhere in the report.

	March 2019	March 2020	March 2021	August 2021
Total Caseload HB / CTS	60,479	57,784	59,578	58,291
HB live claims	46,158	39,884	36,575	35,275
Social Housing	35,936	32,160	30,091	29,247
Private	10,222	7,724	6,470	6,028
Under 60 and working	8,674	6,141	4,281	3,966
CTS live claims	52,608	50,609	52,836	51,937
Claiming Universal Credit	7,769	12,250	18,075	18,240

4.2 Changes due to the pandemic

During the spring and summer of 2020, procedures were adjusted to allow residents more time to provide information and evidence needed to support their HB and / or CTS claim. Claims that would have been treated as unsuccessful when applying normal deadlines were instead kept open and further opportunities given to submit the information. The additional time allowed before finalising the cases resulted in longer speed of processing times for the affected cases. This work was managed during July and August 2020, with most cases finalised in August. The decision to prioritise opportunities for residents to make a successful claim during the core period of lockdown and so maximise access to HB and CTS, over focussing on end-to-end processing times, was seen as offering the correct balance.

4.3 Speed of processing

Despite the pressures of the pandemic, Benefits Operations achieved good average speed of processing outcomes helping to ensure that residents received timely financial support:

HB & CTS	2020/21			2021/22		
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Aug '21
New claim -avg days	17.48	22.35	19.19	19.18	18.73	17.53
Changes - avg days	13.50	12.46	11.78	5.39	8.56	9.66

5.0 Council Tax Support

Council Tax Support (CTS) is a local means tested support scheme funded by the Council that provides financial support to residents towards their council tax liability.

The Council's scheme provides means tested support to working age residents of up to 82.5% of the council tax that is due. Government has determined that pensioners must still be assessed for means tested support towards their council tax based on 100% of the council tax that is due, resulting in a more generous scheme for residents of pension age.

In Manchester the scheme is broadly split with one third pensioners and two thirds working age residents. This is across both claimant numbers and amount paid.

The table at appendix one provides this data split by council tax band by claimant numbers.

Residents' benefits will be changing all the time as their circumstances change, this includes coming on and off benefits. Examples of other changes include address changes, family composition, income details and work status. The levels of transience within the caseload and the number of people going on and off benefits, along with the high levels of deprivation in the city make the administration of Council Tax Support and the collection of council tax challenging and complex. The Council has worked hard to make the process of claiming CTS as simple as possible. This includes linking into the DWP UC claim process and using claim details.

Council Tax Support costs the Council around £39m per year and any increase in council tax charged results in the same percentage increase in the costs of the scheme.

6.0 Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme

6.1 Background

Government introduced the Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme in late September 2020. The aim of the scheme is to support residents whose earnings are affected by staying at home and isolating for ten days. Eligible residents can apply to their local authority for a one-off payment of £500. The scheme has been extended by the government several times since its inception and on 14 September 2021 a further extension to 31 March 2022 was confirmed. Because of how the budget and information has been incrementally agreed and passed to local authorities, the Council had to be cautious in our administration of discretionary budgets.

The Council had to work quickly to set up a team to administer this scheme ensuring appropriate linkages with public health colleagues. The team was selected from our benefit operations staff.

6.2 Criteria

The £500 Test and Trace Support Payment is for people on a low income who must self-isolate because they have:

- Tested positive for Covid 19; or
- Been identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive for Covid 19.
- From 16 August 2021 people who are fully vaccinated and identified as contacts are no longer required to self-isolate. This means that fully vaccinated contacts are ineligible for the Test and Trace Support Payment from 16 August 2021.
- Also, from 16 August 2021 anyone under the age of 18 who is a contact is exempt from self-isolation. This means that most parents and guardians will not be eligible for the Test and Trace Support Payment if their child is identified as a contact, as their child will no longer be required to self-isolate.

Residents may be eligible if they are employed or self-employed, cannot work from home, and will lose income as a result. The parent or guardian of a child or young person who is self-isolating may also be eligible for the Test and Trace Support Payment.

A resident must have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, and as such they are legally required to do so. If a resident has been notified by the NHS COVID-19 app to self-isolate and applies for the Test and Trace Support Payment, they are also legally required to self-isolate.

In addition to the main scheme the Council has also been provided with funds to provide a discretionary scheme to support residents who have been instructed to self-isolate but do not meet the main-scheme financial requirements. The discretionary criteria were initially agreed across Greater Manchester authorities. As with other schemes, the developing nature of the scheme and late confirmation of funding arrangements resulted in complexity and challenges managing the budget. Although demand has been fluctuating and the budget position was not clear at times the Council has maintained a timely response and a rationale and proportionate approach cognisant of the budget and public health priorities.

6.3 Test and Trace Main Scheme

The main scheme applies to residents who are in receipt of one of the following benefits - Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit.

6.4 Test and Trace Discretionary Scheme

The discretionary scheme is open to residents who:

- Are not in receipt of a welfare benefit covered by the main scheme, and
- Will face financial hardship as a result of not being able to work while they are self-isolating.
- The discretionary scheme is also open to residents who have no recourse to public funds, but they meet the rest of the criteria.

6.5 Payments and Budget position

The table below shows the number of and value of awards made over the lifetime of the scheme, and numbers of applications declined, at 13 September 2021.

Status	Main scheme allocation £1,736,500 (3,473 awards)	Discretionary scheme allocation £2,065,500 (4,131 awards)	Total combined allocation £3,802,000 (7,604 awards)
Approved	2,899 (£1,449,500)	2,804 (£1,402,000)	5,703 (£2,851,500)
Declined (can work from home or no loss of income)	601	157	758
Declined – not asked to isolate by Test and Trace	175	94	269
Declined – not employed/self employed	183	42	225
Declined – not in receipt of benefit	47	22	69
Declined – other reason	2,272	3,745	6,017
Total declined	3,278	4,060	7,338
Pending (email sent for further information)	78	106	184
Total outcomes	6,255	6,970	13,225

In respect of the main scheme the main reasons for a claim being declined using the reason 'other' are as follows:

- The start date of the self-isolation was prior to 28 September 2020.
- No loss of income for s/e people who are getting maximum Universal Credit.
- No reply to request for information.
- Live outside of MCC area and need to claim from another council.

In respect of the discretionary scheme, the largest percentage of refusals are because they do not meet the broad financial eligibility criteria agreed with other Greater Manchester authorities, cognisant of the budgets that were available at the time.

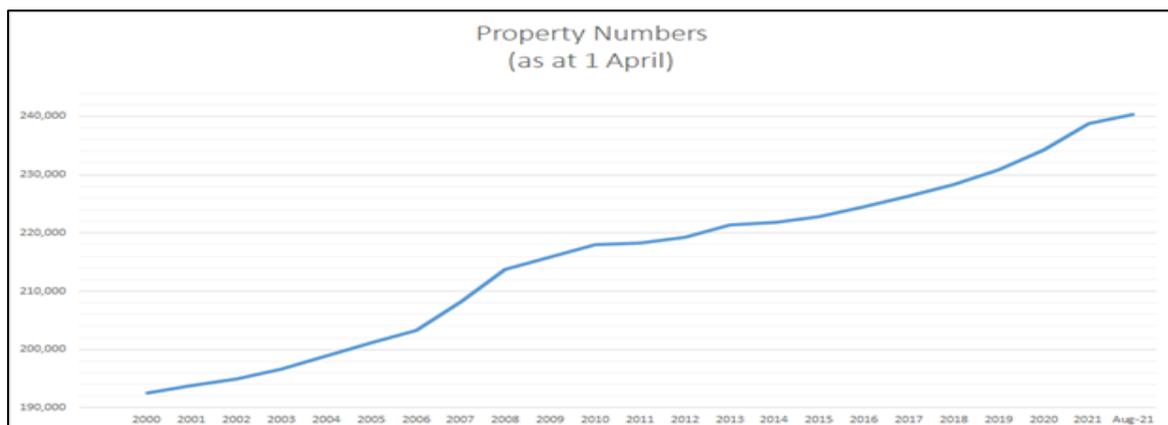
7.0 Performance in the collection of council tax and how we balance collection whilst working in an ethical way and supporting those residents on a low income

7.1 Background

Council tax is essentially a property tax which is levied on the broad capital value of domestic properties. The Valuation Office split all domestic properties into eight bands from A to H, with an amount charged linked to each band. Calculation of the amount payable follows a weighted calculation set by central government. Properties in Band A pay two thirds of the tax levied on Band D properties; those in Band H pay twice the tax levied on Band D.

7.2 Properties in the city

The number of properties within the city has been increasing annually and has increased from 192,588 in 2000, to 238,807 at the end of March 2021, a 20% increase. This had risen further to 240,651 by the beginning of September 2021.



57% of the properties in the city are in band A, with 89% being in bands A-C (inclusive) and less than 5% (1,114 properties) are in the top two bands of G and H.

A full breakdown of properties split into bands and across wards based on March 2021 data is shown as appendix two.

7.3 Council Tax Debit

The following table shows data across the last two financial years including the total number of banded properties, the associated debit, the amount of council tax support that was paid, the 2020/21 hardship award and the remaining balance to be collected.

	Banded properties	Council Tax to be collected	Council Tax Support paid	Balance to be collected
2019/20	234,284	£243,222,000	£38,933,000	£204,289,000
2020/21	238,807	£262,859,000	£49,141,000*	£213,718,000
2021/22	240,651^	£287,019,000	£49,340,000*	£237,679,000

*Includes £6.643 million in 2020/21 and £5.899 million in 21/22 (current snapshot rather than full year) of covid hardship payments.

^At 1 September 2021

7.4 Collection Performance

7.4.1 Background

Council tax collection is measured by the percentage of the collectible debit that is collected in the year that it relates to. Every year the Council sets a target for collection. In recent years the Council has seen an incremental improvement.

The level of deprivation and transience has an impact on collection, and we spend significant activity tracing and chasing residents that have moved property and have not provided a forwarding address.

We also measure the amount of arrears that we collect from previous years. The ultimate collection rate is circa 96.5%, however this takes several years to achieve. This is because we often make plans that extend longer than the financial year and we will stack debt into long term affordable arrangements so that council tax is not paid at the expense of other household bills.

When considering council tax debt our approach in recent years has been to take a holistic approach to recovery, where possible collecting the current year plus an amount towards the arrears. Emphasis is placed on finding a sustainable payment arrangement based on wider household responsibilities (especially property costs and priority debt) with residents who engage with us. Whilst taking this approach recovery levels have improved.

Where the Council does not hold any intelligence on a household's financial status and they fail to engage, there is very little that a council is able to do to recover council tax that is owed other than go through an agreed legal process. The next step if a resident will not engage with us and has not responded to the multiple letters, the summons and the liability order and we do not hold employer or benefit details, is to send the account to the enforcement agents for them to collect. In 2019/20, enforcement agents collected around £3.24 million in council tax owed to the Council.

Ultimately a resident can be made bankrupt or committed to prison for failing to pay their council tax. This is rare and is usually where the household has significant arrears and is failing to engage with the council and or the magistrates' court.

7.4.2 Collection rate and arrears from previous years

The following table shows the collection rates and arrears collection over recent years. 20/21 was significantly impacted by the pandemic, mitigated to some degree by the hardship payments described above.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Collection rate	92.66%	93.01%	92.81%	92.73%	90.15%
Arrears collected	£6.2m	£6.8m	£6.2m	£7.2m	£6.4m

7.4.3 Year to date performance 2021/22

Collection in the current financial year is still being affected by the pandemic. The impact of the pandemic on collection rates has been mitigated to some extent by the £150 hardship payment. However, the collection rate is still lower than it was two years ago but the recovery of arrears from previous years is higher, shown in the table below that shows a snapshot of performance as at the end of August.

	31 August 2019	31 August 2020	31 August 2021
In-year collection rate	40.95%	39.41%	40.06%
Arrears collection	£3.97m	£3.15m	£4.65m

Although the collection rate is improving, it is unlikely to reach the same level as the 2019/20 financial year, as the ongoing and historic pressures caused by the pandemic continue to have a detrimental impact on residents' incomes.

7.5 Proportionate and reasonable collection methods

7.5.1 Recovery data

Where possible and based on intelligence about the city over many years, we take a fair and proportionate approach to recovery of the council tax that is due, where possible seeking to engage with residents and agree affordable payment plans.

The table below shows the annual data for the number of council tax accounts, along with the number of reminders and summons issued. It also shows the number of bankruptcies and the number of residents that were committed to prison for non-payment.

This shows that although the number of properties has been rising year on year and until last year, the number of CTS claimants reducing, the number of accounts receiving reminders, summons has been incrementally reducing. Unfortunately, the nature of council tax debt and the importance of the money that is collected to the Council, means that we will always have recovery activity. However, the aim is that we engage with residents in the most effective way and build a relationship that avoids costs and escalation wherever possible.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Properties	226,299	228,296	230,896	234,284	238,807
Reminders	122,000	120,300	118,500	110,400	72,000
Summons	59,000	57,800	56,000	52,000	20,500
Bankruptcies	0	7	4	6	1
Committals	1	0	0	0	0

Over 37,000 fewer reminders were issued during 2020/21 compared to 2019/20. The principal reasons for this are increases in the numbers receiving maximum Council Tax Support combined with the payment of £150 hardship payment that was paid out to anyone in receipt of Council Tax Support, around 30,000 residents. This meant that, in many cases, residents had virtually nothing to pay, meaning no reminder was issued.

Summons issued and Liability Orders granted were much reduced during 2020/21. This was mainly because the Magistrates Court was closed for much of the year, and only reopened for online hearings with very limited courts available to all the Greater Manchester local authorities. These restrictions have continued in to 2021/22 with hearings only available once every two months. This caused an inevitable delay in taking recovery action.

Over the last five years there have been 18 residents made bankrupt and one has been committed to prison for non-payment of Council Tax.

7.5.2 Use of enforcement agents

Referrals to Enforcement Agents have fallen from a peak of 54,000 ten years ago to 18,000 in 2019/20. No cases for 2020/21 debt were passed to the bailiff during the 2020/21 financial year.

Referrals to EAs will be higher during 2021/22 as residents with debts from 2020/21 who have not engaged with the Council are passed on, along with those with debts from the current year. Before a case is referred an additional warning letter is sent, reminding them of their situation and urging contact in order to avoid referral to EAs and the additional fees that this will incur.

In recognition of the impact of the pandemic on people's circumstances, EAs are required to specifically consider Covid 19 as a cause of vulnerability. They can delay the first payment and offer longer payment records to reduce the pressure on residents.

7.5.3 Extended payment arrangements and Direct Debit take up

The Council offers a range of payment methods and instalments at no additional cost to the resident. Although the cheapest and most efficient way for the Council is collection by monthly direct debit, other payment arrangements including local payzone and post office payments where cash can still be used are available. Payment plans can also be set for the full twelve months rather than the standard ten-month arrangement.

Direct debit payments have been increasing year on year with many residents opting for a 12 monthly direct debit arrangement. This is partly because of the various sign-up channels being maximised via the Council's website, but also because payment by direct debit is the automatic choice for many people moving into the city.

£135.2m (£130.9m in 2019/20) was collected by direct debit during 2020/21, an increase of 3.3% when compared with the year before. This is due to the increase in the council tax from April 2020, as well as more residents choosing to pay by this method. It should be noted that the amount collected by direct debit as a percentage of the total amount due reduced slightly, indicative of the impact of the coronavirus outbreak.

The table below shows the total council tax due and the amount and percentage collected by direct debit:

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Total Council Tax due	£164m	£177.9m	£188.5m	£204.3m	£213.7m
Amount collected by DD	£104.2m	£113.2m	£120.8m	£130.9m	£135.2m
% debit collected by DD	63.5%	63.6%	64.1%	64.1%	63.2%

Direct debits for those in receipt of Council Tax Support were suspended during quarter one to allow the allocation of hardship payments; for many residents there was no subsequent Council Tax to pay.

There are 211,028 live council tax accounts with a balance to pay including residents in receipt of some CTS. The table below shows the number of people who have some council tax to pay and the number and percentage paying by direct debit. Following a dip last year, the percentage of residents paying by direct debit is now higher than in March 2020.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/21 (August)
Accounts with something to pay	196,200	198,000	201,000	204,484	211,028	215,222
DDs	104,500	108,300	110,500	112,271	114,744	118,614
% paying by DD	53.3%	54.7%	54.9%	55.0%	54.7%	55.1%
% change in number Of DDs	4.3%	3.6%	2.0%	1.6%	2.2%	0.7%

7.6 Enforcement agents (EAs)

7.6.1 Reducing referrals to enforcement agents

Over many years we have steadily reduced the number of cases being passed to enforcement agents from 54,000 accounts per year in 2009/10 to 18,000 in 2019/20. This has been achieved through several measures including:

- Vetting cases where residents have failed to engage to see what intelligence is held on our systems.
- Not referring those residents in receipt of maximum CTS that have a balance to pay.
- Improving the checks on those about to be passed to enforcement agents to identify a more effective and less severe recovery method, for example deduction from benefit or from salary.
- Introducing an additional warning letter before a case is sent to EAs, emphasising the costs that could be incurred and urging the resident to engage.
- Improving the intelligence that is held, including taking part in a trial with HMRC where we received employer details for nearly 1,600 residents with Council Tax arrears. These were used to contact the resident and encourage engagement or apply for an attachment of earnings. The trial will be repeated on a larger scale later this year.

7.6.2 Enforcement Agent code of conduct

As well as all fees being covered by legislation, all enforcement agents contracted to the Council must adhere to a strict code of practice which covers:

- The professional standards they must adhere to;
- The procedures they must follow;
- Guidance on how quickly the money should be repaid; and
- When it is inappropriate to take action.

The code also always includes the requirement to operate a body worn camera when dealing with a resident and a robust set of vulnerability criteria that they must adhere to (appendix three).

7.6.3 Management of EA costs

Additional requirements were placed on the enforcement agents to minimise costs charged to residents and to monitor behaviour:

- EAs must write and phone at least seven times before an in-person visit is attempted, keeping costs at £75.
- Where the debt is less than £150, cases are returned without an in-person visit (which would add £235 in costs to the resident's debt).
- There is extensive vulnerability criteria and guidance contained in the Enforcement Agent code of conduct which forms part of the contract with the Council. They are instructed to stop action and return cases to the Council where vulnerability is identified.

7.6.4 Impact of the pandemic on EA work

- All recovery action was suspended between March and September 2020. When it resumed, additional steps were built into the recovery process to minimise costs. This includes longer payment arrangements being offered by Council staff and enforcement agents.
- No 2020/2021 accounts were passed to EAs.
- The Debt Recovery Policy and Enforcement Agent Code of Practice were amended to specifically recognise the impact of the pandemic on residents in the city.

7.7 Discretionary Council Tax Payment scheme

The Council has a discretionary scheme to provide financial help to residents who face pressures additional to those on Universal Credit. Details were provided in sections 3.15 and 3.24.

7.8 Care Leavers' Discount

The Care Leavers' Discount is available to people under the age of 25 who have a Council Tax Liability and were in care at their 16th birthday. Care leavers qualify for a 100% discount if they live alone and a reduced level of help if they live with others. The Unit works closely with colleagues in Children's Services to ensure that discounts are captured. This will often include wider work including writing off costs etc where contact has been late.

The Council also agreed a reciprocal agreement across Greater Manchester local authorities so that all care leavers wherever they are living across GM can access the same level of support.

Other discretionary schemes including DHP and WPS reference care leavers and ex armed forces as special groups that may need tailored and additional support with council tax and discretionary support.

7.9 Manchester Poverty Truth Commission

Officers and members from the Council were involved in the recent Manchester Poverty Truth Commission that was published earlier this year. This included the commissioner role and to take part in a specific session on how the collection of council tax could be improved.

One of the key areas as part of the commission's work was the approach to the collection of council tax. One of the recommendations which is being taken forward is further work within the community.

The Commission suggested piloting a new approach with a different dialogue to find a way that supports early contact and a more supportive and responsive relationship that builds on existing trust, relationships, networks and expertise in our communities.

This included the Council working with the resident to:

- Ensure that the amount being paid is correct
- Ensure that there is a health-check on the account, checking that all discounts and exemptions are being claimed and paid
- Provide specific support to people who could be exempt from council tax due to meeting the specific definition of 'severely mentally impaired'
- Examine whether household income is being maximized and if other benefits should be in payment. Based on current income details, discuss the best way to maintain council tax payments and clear any arrears
- Council staff should consider, where appropriate, discretionary support and withdrawal of some costs if this means that repayment plans can be maintained
- Agree next steps and build on this with regular contact and links that initially can be set up in the community setting.

These principles have been shared across the service and reinforce the requirements of council staff to support and inform the dialogue that we have with residents.

7.10 Working with partners- pilot with the Oasis Centre, Gorton

Following the outcomes from the Poverty Truth Commission, we considered ways in we could improve engagement with residents who may not normally contact us. As part of a pilot we have been looking at ways to improve targeted outreach work with those residents that we have struggled to engage with.

After discussions with the management team at the Oasis Centre, we gave their staff direct access to four named individuals in the council tax back office. On one day a week, they can contact these staff and discuss and resolve issues brought up by the local community who visit the centre.

Although the number of contacts is low, the service has been extremely well received by staff at the Oasis Centre, as well as those residents that have been helped. It is hoped that, once the residents have come to understand and trust the service, that it could be upgraded by having a Council Tax Officer at the Oasis Centre to allow face to face contact.

As well as the above, development staff from the Revenues and Benefits Unit are providing some free training to volunteers at the Oasis Centre to improve their understanding of Council Tax Support and Council Tax exemptions and discounts. It is intended that we evaluate this model and see how we can replicate good practice and learning with other organisations and areas.

The intention is to review the learning from this pilot and to look to extend.

8.0 Performance in the collection of business rates

8.1 Collection Performance

8.1.1 Business Rates in the city

There are 27,267 properties registered to pay business rates in the city. Business rates are charged on most non-domestic properties, including (not exhaustive list):

- shops
- offices
- pubs
- warehouses
- factories
- holiday rental homes or guest houses
- car parking spaces
- advertising units

8.1.2 How business rates are calculated

Since 2017, the ten Greater Manchester authorities, including Manchester, are part of the Greater Manchester 100% of Business Rates pilot. As 1% of business rates is transferred to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (fire and rescue element) the Council retains 99% of business rates.

Any business rates income in excess of Manchester's assessed funding need is still paid back to central government to be redistributed in the form of tariffs and top ups but the Council now retains all the growth it achieves in its business rates base. Under the new regime Revenue Support Grant and Public Health grant are not received but are met from within the Business Rates income with the assessed funding need adjusted accordingly.

The collection of business rates income and the impact on the budget is not covered within this report and is included in the Council's revenue budget reports.

Business rates are calculated using a property's 'rateable value' (RV). The RV is a property's estimated rental value on the open market and is assessed by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), an arm of central government. There are specialist valuation methods for things like pubs and larger, unique venues like football stadia, hospitals and airports. The government then decides on the business rates multiplier which is applied to the RV. The business rates multiplier is currently 51.2 pence (49.9 pence for small businesses) so a business with an RV of £100,000 will pay £51,200 in business rates this year.

The last revaluation, conducted by the VOA and which came into effect on 1 April 2017, refers to values as of 1 April 2015. Revaluations usually take place every five years to ensure it reflects relevant market rental values. The next

revaluation is due in 2023 (delayed by the pandemic) and the frequency may reduce to three years from then

Businesses with an RV of less than £12,000 qualify for 100% Small Business Rates Relief (SBRR) and businesses with an RV of between £12,000 and £15,000 get a tapered amount of relief.

8.1.3 Collection Performance

The following table shows the income and collection performance over the past years. The table shows the significant impact that the pandemic has had on business rates collection in the city.

	In year cash collection	Percentage collected
2017/18	£344,644,000	95.66%
2018/19	£356,005,000	96.91%
2019/20	£363,617,000	97.58%
2020/21	£203,087,000*	87.91%

**This figure has been reduced by £148.9 million due to the introduction of the 100% Expanded Retail Discount which meant that retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in the city had nothing to pay for 2020/21 (see below).*

The government introduced the Tax Income Guarantee (TIG) scheme to help mitigate the impact of the pandemic on Council's revenue collection in December 2020.

TIG is calculated by comparing the predicted level of collection for 2020/21 with the actual level of collection for 2020/21. Adjustments are made for retained Enterprise Zone income above the baseline, costs of collection, Section 31 grants received and adjusted for allowable appeals. Central government then funds 75% of any resulting loss. For Manchester, this amounts to £19.219 million.

The table below shows the collection rate at the end of August and compares it with the same period for the last two years:

	31 August 2019	31 August 2020	31 August 2021
In-year collection rate	46.85%	32.74%	38.09%

Current year collection is very volatile as the impact of the reduction in grant relief within the Expanded Retail Discount Scheme (see section 9) from 100% over the first three months is reduced to 66% for the remainder of the year takes effect. Collection should continue to improve but it is unlikely to reach the same levels as 2019/20 by the end of the financial year.

9.0 Covid Business support administered by the Council

In addition to wider support provided by the government to businesses affected by the pandemic, including business loans and furlough and the self-

employed income scheme, the Council has been required to administer several schemes on behalf of the government.

These have included business rates relief (reducing the amount of business rates that are due) and a series of grants; some prescribed and funded by government and others where the council was given an amount of money and was expected to determine criteria based on local economic priorities.

10.0 Covid Related Business Rates Relief

Any business rates relief is paid as a reduction to the amount of business rates payable rather than a cash grant to the business. If the account then goes into credit a refund is paid.

10.1 2020/21 Financial year

10.1.1 Expanded Retail Discount

Since 2019/20, the Government has provided a 'Business Rates Retail Discount' of 33% for retail properties. This was to be increased to 50% in 2020/2. In direct response to Covid, this was then expanded to include properties in the leisure and hospitality sectors and increased to provide full relief (100%) from the business rates that were due to be paid for the financial year. It was renamed as 'Expanded Retail Discount'(ERD). To award the discounts we used the Council's local discretionary powers (under S47 of the Local Government Finance Act) and claimed full reimbursement from the government.

Businesses eligible for the Expanded Retail Discount included the following:

- Shops;
- restaurants, cafés, bars or pubs;
- cinemas or live music venues;
- assembly or leisure properties - for example, a sports club, a gym or a spa; and
- hospitality properties - for example, a hotel, a guest house or self-catering accommodation.

In 2020/21, 4,981 businesses (18.3% of the city's businesses) received this relief and the amount of relief awarded was £148.882m.

10.1.2 Nursery relief

The government also provided a specific discount to childcare providers. This was called Nursery Relief and provided full relief from the business rates that were due to be paid for the financial year. As with ERD scheme above, the amount paid was reimbursed by the government.

To qualify a nursery had to be liable for business rates and:

- included on Ofsted's Early Years Register; and
- be a provider of care and education for children up to 5 years old (early years foundation stage).

In 2020/21, 81 nurseries received this relief and the amount of relief awarded was £0.896m.

10.2 2021/22 Financial Year

On 3 March 2021 the government confirmed that the Expanded Retail Discount and the Nursery Relief would continue to apply in 2021/22 at 100% for three months, from 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021, and at 66% for the remaining period, from 1 July 2021 to 31 March 2022. This means that eligible businesses will only have to pay 25% of their Business Rates for the whole of the year.

The timing of the award has meant that the Council has had to re-bill the affected businesses in July 2021.

The government confirmed that there would be no cash cap on the relief received for the period from 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021. From 1 July 2021, relief is capped at £105,000 per business, or £2 million per business where the business is in occupation of a property that was required, or would have been required, to close, based on the law and guidance applicable on 5 January 2021, the date the second national lockdown commenced.

Allowing for national caps and the reduced scheme provision from July, we estimate that £91.5m of business rates relief will be awarded in 2021/22. This estimate has been provided to government and will be fully funded via Section 31 grant with a full reconciliation at year end with any excess award being funded by government and conversely any reduced award being returned.

11.0 Business Grants determined by government

11.1 Background

In addition to relief from business rates payable, the government has also provided for a range of cash grants administered by billing authorities where it prescribed and determined the amount of, and eligibility for, the grants.

These grants have been paid from March 2020 with the final scheme ending on 31 July 2021. The grant periods and amounts have broadly been a direct response to the country moving through the various Covid restrictions and lockdowns. The intention was to provide direct support to those businesses where the government determined that they had to close completely or were significantly impacted by the restrictions. The grants were part of a wider package of business support that included furlough etc.

Initially, the government support took the form of one-off grants in the spring/summer of 2020/21 to small business and those in the retail, hospitality

and leisure sector, with £105.87m being awarded to 8,490 businesses up to the end of September 2020.

From October 2020, there was then a series of Local Restriction Support Grant (LRSG) payments made to eligible businesses as the city moved into tier three restrictions, followed by local restrictions and national lockdowns; and closed with another stage of one-off grants in April 2021 linked to businesses re-opening (Restart Grants).

There was also a one-off Christmas Support Payments where £1,000 was awarded to wet let pubs, and Closed Business Lockdown Payments ranging from £4,000 to £9,000 depending on the size of the business and its RV.

The amount and eligibility of grants paid within these schemes was based on government criteria, including having a liability for business rates. Where possible, the Council only required one application, and payments to businesses were made automatically as new payment periods became due.

To ensure that we paid out to all those businesses that were eligible, we undertook a significant amount of take up activity.

11.2 Summary of grants and dates

Grant	Business type	Eligible from date											
		11-Mar	27-May	10-Jun	05-Aug	28-Sep	23-Oct	01-Nov	05-Nov	02-Dec	31-Dec	05-Jan	01-Apr
Small Business Rate Grant	All businesses in receipt of small business rate relief	SBRG											
Retail Hospitality and Leisure Grant	All businesses in receipt of retail relief	RHLG											
Discretionary Fund Grant	All business not entitled to SBRG or RHLG												
(Sector)	Nightclubs & sexual entertainment venues												
Tier 2 (Open V1)	breakfast, leisure businesses & Tier 3 (Open)												
Tier 3 (ClosedV1)	Pubs, bars, casinos, betting shops, soft play centres, adult gaming												
Additional Restrictions Grant	Not eligible for local and/or national restriction grants and in the hire and supply chain												
National (Closed)	ClosedV1, non-essential retail, leisure, hospitality accommodation, personal care facilities												
Christmas Support Payments	Wet-led pubs												
Closed Business Lockdown Payments	Retail, hospitality and leisure businesses												
Expanded Additional Restrictions Grant	Not eligible for additional restrictions grant or local restrictions support grant												
Restart Grant	Non-essential retail, hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care & gym businesses												
Restart ARG	Essential and non-essential retail, and hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care & gym, tourism, culture, airport and the supply to ...												

NB this table includes all grants administered during the period including discretionary grants covered in section 12 onwards.

11.3 Payments for business grants determined by government

11.3.1 Background

The table in section 11.4 below shows a breakdown of government allocations, awards to businesses and amounts to be returned across the support schemes from March 2020 to 31 July 2021.

The main thing to note is that the government allocations were based on the property descriptions held by the Valuation Office Agency (Special Category Codes or SCAT codes). Broad assumptions were made on business activity over the pandemic based on these codes. These codes were, and remain, inaccurate in both description and property activity.

The grant funding was therefore a projected estimation of potential spend rather than an accurate picture of eligibility or a target. Unfortunately, the Council does not have any discretion and can only award funds to a business if they meet the criteria determined by government.

11.4 Payment summary against estimated funding

The table below shows that £236.174m Small Business Grant; Retail, Hospitality & Leisure Grant; and various Local Restriction Support Grant (LRSG) has been received by the Council, £193.172m was allocated to businesses to 31 July and £43.002m is returned, or to be returned, to the government. The two LRSG Restart Grant schemes only ended on 31 July 2021.

The Council does not have any discretion with this and can only use the funding to award based on the detailed criteria set by the government. We also cannot use any unspent money on other schemes.

Business Support Scheme	Govt Funding	No Payments	Allocated by MCC	Balance to return to Govt
	£000	count	£000	£000
Small Business Grant	115,600	6,464	64,640	9,730
Retail, Hospitality & Leisure Grant		2,026	41,230	
LRSG Closed (T3)	502	371	336	77
LRSG Sector		64	89	
LRSG Closed Addendum (National Lockdown)	11,187	3,946	7,048	4,138
Christmas Support Payments	250	245	245	5
LRSG Closed version 2	4,791	1,433	3,014	568
LRSG Closed Addendum Tier 4		3,789	1,208	
LRSG Closed Addendum post January	34,359	7,930	21,748	12,611
Closed Bus Lockdown Payment	33,552	3,931	21,061	12,491
Restart Grant Strand 1: Non-essential Retail	35,935	1,224	4,147	3,382

Restart Grant Strand 2: Hospitality, Accommodation, Leisure, Personal Care & Gym		2,618	28,406	
Total SBG, RHL and LRSG	236,174	34,041	193,172	43,002

NB. The number of payments shown in the table above reflects the number of payments made by the Council not the number of businesses that received grants. It may be possible a single business has received several grant payments over the COVID 19 period as local restrictions and national lockdowns were implemented and ended.

12.0 Discretionary Grants where the Council acted as Principal and had some discretion on eligibility.

12.1 Discretionary Schemes

In addition to the main business support grants, the Council has managed three discretionary schemes:

- Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund;
- Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) (LRSG Open); and
- Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG)

For these grants the government allocated an amount of money per local authority. Any unspent grant is to be returned to Government. Any excess awarded is not funded by government and will be a pressure on the Council. We have not returned any money within these discretionary grant schemes.

12.2 Discretionary schemes spend

The following table provides a summary of funding and spend across all areas of discretionary spend with further details below.

Business Support Scheme	Govt. Funding	No. Payments	Allocated by MCC	Balance to return to Govt.
	£000	count	£000	£000
Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund	5,432	958	5,423	10
LRSG Open	7,864	1,919	7,864	0
ARG for businesses with RV	20,920 For all ARG schemes listed	1,159	3,171	Still Live (ends on 31 March 2022)
ARG for businesses with no RV		1,541	5,987	
ARG for Taxi drivers		1,928	675	
ARG for Childcare / Daycare		592	1,503	
ARG for Cultural / Entertainment		88	2,341	
ARG for Charity		110	867	
ARG for Business of Economic Importance		16	1,113	
ARG Restart RV		240	1,277	
ARG Restart Non-RV		344	1,466	
Total LADFG and ARG		34,216	8,895	

NB. The number of payments shown in the table above reflects the number of payments made by the Council not the number of businesses that received a grant. It may be possible a single business received several payments over the COVID 19 period.

An ARG top up grant of £4.311m was provided to the Council on 16 July 2021, as the original allocation of £16.609m was fully applied by 14 June 2021, meeting the government's criteria on which to apply for further top-up funding. This brings total ARG funding to £20.920m.

There is now £1.4m remaining of the £20.9m Additional Restrictions Grant (after other commitments and including the additional £4.3m received in July). The Council has up until the end of March 2022 to allocate these funds and the next steps will be agreed by the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer and the Deputy Leader and will be considered by the Council's Economic Recovery Group.

Further detail on each of the schemes is included in the following sections.

13.0 Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund

13.1 Background and funding

The Local Authority Discretionary Grant fund was designed to help businesses with no business rates liability, but with fixed property costs, that did not qualify for the Small Business Grant or the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant in the spring/summer of 2020. The level of funding provided was £5.4 million.

13.2 Eligibility and payments

The scheme provided support for start-up and micro businesses, small business in the digital and creative sector, businesses within enterprise zones, charities and independent hospitality and retail businesses.

To qualify, businesses had to show they were a small business, sole trader, micro business or charity with ongoing, fixed costs of more than £1,500 per year. They had to have been trading on or before 11 March 2020 and they had to demonstrate that they had suffered a reduction in income due.

Payments ranged between £2,500 and £25,000 depending on the level of fixed building costs shown. In total, 958 businesses received a total of £5,422,500 with the vast majority receiving £5,000 (839). The government funding was fully spent.

14.0 Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open)

14.1 Background and funding

The Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) was for ratepaying businesses not required to close due to Tier 2 or 3 restrictions (over the summer of 2020) but were severely impacted. The level of funding provided to Manchester was £7.864m.

14.2 Eligibility and payments

This scheme was retrospectively announced by the government in October 2020 and we were advised that it was to provide support to the hospitality, leisure and accommodation sectors or other affected businesses in the city from 5 August 2020, until they had to close as part of local or national restrictions. They could then receive funding under Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed).

Due to the timing of when the scheme was launched, payments were made to qualifying businesses where they had been deemed eligible for a Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) payment. This meant that businesses only had to submit one application form via the Council's website in order to receive all the funding they were due under both schemes.

Payments made mirrored the split by RV in the main scheme and businesses received payments of between £2,635 and £6,900 based on their size and how they were affected by the various tiers. Payments were made in addition to other grants.

The full allocation of £7.864m was paid to 1,919 eligible businesses.

15.0 Additional Restrictions Grant

15.1 Background and funding

The cumulative government funding for Manchester is £20.920m. This was made up of an initial allocation of £11.698m on 24 Nov 2020, a further £4.911m allocation on 18 January 2021 following national lockdown announcements and a top up amount of £4.311m received on 16 July 2021 as the first two allocations were fully applied by 14 June 2021.

The Additional Restrictions Grant had a main scheme that broadly mirrored the main grants for businesses required to close or severely impacted but not eligible for other grants. This was then followed by several local sub schemes.

15.2 Additional Restrictions Grants for businesses with a rateable value

15.2.1 Eligibility and payments

This part of the discretionary scheme was aimed at businesses that were registered for business rates that were not required to close during the periods of lockdown but were seriously impacted. Initially, this was aimed at businesses in the supply chain to personal care services, hospitality, accommodation or leisure sectors, recognising that demand had significantly reduced.

Grants were paid to these businesses for the period from 23 October 2020 up to 31 March 2021, based on the business RV, along with a one-off payment. After 1 April 2021 support under Additional Restrictions Grant was made in the form of a one-off payment to all recipients of a payment under the scheme outlined above, called a Restart Grant.

The table below shows the maximum a business could have received if they had received all the available parts of the scheme.

Rateable value	ARG 23.10.20 to 31.3.21	One-off payment Paid from 1.2.21	Restart ARG paid from 1.4.21	Maximum Payment
Up to £15k	£7,622.57	£4,000	£5,600	£17,222.57
£15k to £51k	£11,428.71	£6,000	£8,400	£25,828.71
Over £51k	£17,142.57	£9,000	£12,600	£38,742.57

The scheme was extended further from 5 January 2021 to include businesses registered for business rates that were significantly impacted by a downturn in the daytime economy or in tourism or cultural sectors or the airport supply chain, recognising the impact of the significant reduction in visitors to the city centre in particular. Again, grants were paid up to 31 March 2021.

Examples of the grants that a business could qualify for under this scheme are contained in appendix four.

15.3 ARG for Businesses without a RV

15.3.1 Background

This part of the scheme recognised that many businesses that were affected did not conform to the standard operating model of leasing premises and paying business rates. It was designed to support businesses that were not registered for business rates but were still required to close under the periods of lockdown or that were not required to close but were seriously impacted.

15.3.2 Eligibility and payments

This was initially aimed at businesses forced to close or severely impacted and in the supply chain of the hospitality, accommodation or leisure sectors. Grants were paid for the period from 23 October 2020 to 31 March 2021.

From 11 February 2021, the scheme was expanded to offer support to those businesses in the daytime economy whose trade had been significantly affected by the absence of workers, commuters and tourists in the city due to the lockdown restrictions. It also included self-employed company directors or sole traders without fixed property-related costs.

Businesses who received grants under this scheme also received a one-off payment from 1 February 2021 and, as above, a Restart Grant for the period after 1 April 2021.

The table below shows the maximum a business could have received if they had received all the available parts of the scheme.

Fixed costs	ARG 23.10.20 to 31.3.21	One-off payment paid from 1.2.21	Restart ARG paid from 1.4.21	Maximum possible payment
Up to £15k	£7,942.72	£4,000	£5,600	£17,542.72
£15k to £51k	£13,857.28	£6,000	£8,400	£28,257.28
Over £51k	£17, 142.57	£9,000	£12,600	£38,742.57

Examples of the grants that a business could qualify for under this scheme are contained in appendix four.

15.4 Additional Restrictions Grant sub-schemes

In January 2021, the Executive agreed sub-schemes to provide additional support to some key business areas in the city. This was based on the eligible funding at that point.

15.4.1 Cultural Sub Scheme - £2.341m

To be eligible for support under this scheme, a properly constituted organisation had to:

- Have a lease, license or similar arrangement over a building or part of a building in the Manchester area which provides cultural, entertainment or convention facilities, and which includes liability for fixed property costs and/or business rates.
- Have been trading on 5 November 2020 and to still be trading.

In addition, where it is a facility that is managed by a company which operates on a national basis, they had to declare that the funding will be invested entirely in the Manchester-based venue that is eligible for the award.

Grants were paid at the following levels

- Small - (rateable value of £0 to £15,000) received a payment of £13,395.85 or £16,744.80 if they qualified for a heritage premium*
- Medium - (rateable value of £15,001 to £50,999) received a payment of £20,093.76 or £25,117.20 (if they qualified for a heritage premium*).
- Large - (rateable value of £51,000 to £499,999) received a payment of £30,140.64 or £37,675.80 (if they qualified for a heritage premium*).
- Very Large - rateable value of £500,000 or over received a payment of £45,210.96 or £56,513.70 (if they qualified for a heritage premium*)

*The heritage premium was issued to facilities that were listed or which are on the Council's heritage assets list. Any heritage assets operated by a university did not receive the additional heritage premium.

After due consideration, 88 eligible organisations were paid a total of £2,340,923.

15.4.2 Charities sub scheme - £0.867m

Eligibility for support under this scheme was determined based on the following criteria:

- Being a registered charity;
- Having fixed property related costs (rent, mortgage); and
- Being required to close under government restrictions or having been severely impacted.

Charities undertaking religious or political activities were excluded and grants were paid at three levels:

- Small - (rateable value of £0 to £15,000) received a payment of £6,163
- Medium - (rateable value of £15,001 to £50,999) received a payment of £9,245
- Large - (rateable value of £51,000 to £249,999) received a payment of £13,867
- After due consideration, 110 groups were paid a total £867,460.

15.4.3 Strategic business support sub scheme - £1.113m

This scheme focused on businesses that suffered a significant negative impact on trade, which in turn has affected the safeguarding of skills and jobs that are vital to the economic recovery and growth of the city.

Unlike other sub schemes, applications were requested under this scheme. Qualifying criteria included:

- Businesses that employ over 75 staff or businesses with fewer than 75 employees but who provide jobs with skills in high demand, or which attract higher wages

- Businesses that provide well paid and secure work, with good terms and conditions which is crucial in reducing Manchester's high rate of in-work poverty and family poverty, for example businesses that are signed up to the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter and pay the Manchester Living Wage
- Businesses that provide permanent lower or entry level skilled jobs in high volumes that support local communities
- Businesses in sectors which will support future growth and the creation of opportunities for residents in sustainable industries and support Manchester's 2038 zero carbon commitment
- Specialist or highly skilled businesses that support the Airport supply chain or aviation sector

Grant values were allocated based on the businesses' annual fixed property costs and the size of their operating losses.

Under this scheme, 15 business were given grants totaling £1,113,108.

15.4.4 Nurseries and childcare providers - £1.503m

This scheme focused on supporting the childcare sector in Manchester, which had remained open and responsive to the needs of keyworker and vulnerable children throughout the pandemic and which plays a key role in supporting the local economy.

Eligibility for support under this scheme was determined based on the following criteria:

- They had to remain open; and
- Had to be registered with Ofsted and actively delivering childcare and claiming Govt childcare funding through the Early Years Access & Sufficiency Team in the Autumn term 2020 and Spring term 2021.

Qualifying businesses were paid three separate instalments based on their rateable value:

- Small - (rateable value of £0 to £15,000) received a total payment of £8,000
- Medium - (rateable value of £15,001 to £50,999) received a total payment of £12,000
- Large - (rateable value of £51,000 to £249,999) received a total payment of £18,000

In addition, 172 childminders were each granted a one-off award of £500, a total grant allocation of £86,000, for providing childcare opportunities throughout the pandemic.

In total 311 organisations and individuals received a total of £1,503m under this scheme and, despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, sufficient childcare was maintained in the city for those that needed it.

15.4.5 Licensed Taxi trade - £0.675m to date (further commitment of £0.755m to March 2022)

Taxi drivers are generally self-employed and can access government schemes for financial support due to lost earnings. Any funding included in this scheme was in addition to earnings support, for example furlough, self-employed support etc. One of the criteria set by government was that it should not cover wages or salary payments.

Eligibility for the scheme was determined on the basis that:

- The recipient is an existing vehicle licence holder with the Council (and had no compliance related issues outstanding) and would be granted the relevant amount to cover:
 - the fee for the next annual renewal of their vehicle licence and the requisite number of tests required by the Council (each vehicle is required to be tested 1, 2 or 3 times throughout the year dependent on age)
- As a vehicle licence holder, they are classed as a small business with a fixed asset cost (the vehicle)
- As a vehicle licence holder we know definitively that their business as a transport provider was severely affected between March 2020 and March 2021 by the various lockdowns and restrictions on supply industries i.e. hospitality – this was evidenced in January 2021 in reports to Committee detailing the mileage reductions recorded on licensed vehicles compared to previous years
- The maximum amount that any one recipient could receive in relation to their licence was £482 (average = £300).

Based on assumptions of the existing fleet of vehicle licence holders and age of vehicles, it was estimated that the cost of the scheme would be £1,419,740. To date, after 6 monthly drawdowns we have spent £674,968 and are likely on projections to spend the whole amount by the end of the financial year.

16.0 Current funding position and future schemes

We are now working through a very small number of late cases or cases where reviews have been requested. These are being considered using our discretion where we can, ensuring consistency within the scope of the scheme.

There is now £1.4m remaining of the £20.9m Additional Restrictions Grant (after other commitments and including the additional £4.3m received in July). The Council has up until the end of March to allocate these funds. Officers are in the process of making proposals as to how best this remaining money could be used to support the business community and the city's recovery.

17.0 Conclusions

The Revenues and Benefits Unit has performed well during a challenging period, responding to covid to delivery business as usual and new activity.

Appendix One – Council Tax Support data by ward and claimant**Table one: Working age claimants at 31/03/2021 by ward and band**

Ward	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Total
Ancoats And Beswick	581	177	91	11	2			862
Ardwick	1,278	157	74	6				1,515
Baguley	1,192	74	24	8	1	2		1,301
Brooklands	819	154	30	19	5	2		1,029
Burnage	983	83	118	12	3			1,199
Charlestown	1,267	88	32	16				1,403
Cheetham	1,136	259	93	12				1,500
Chorlton	187	66	54	14	1		1	323
Chorlton Park	718	70	78	26	13	2	1	908
Clayton and Openshaw	1,562	149	38	11				1,760
Crumpsall	871	242	102	28	2			1,245
Deansgate	40	32	27	61	25	8	2	195
Didsbury East	117	76	98	16	3	1		311
Didsbury West	181	66	44	10	4	1		306
Fallowfield	714	71	21	7	6			819
Gorton And Abbey Hey	1,733	144	10	1	1			1,889
Harpurhey	2,012	141	25	9				2,187
Higher Blackley	1,182	103	45	6	3			1,339
Hulme	1,062	184	42	19	8	2	1	1,318
Levenshulme	1,053	137	54	3	1	1		1,249
Longsight	1,318	228	74		1			1,621
Miles Platting and Newton Heath	1,906	90	29	1	1			2,027
Moss Side	1,564	119	33	5				1,721
Moston	1,063	130	28	3				1,224
Northenden	896	152	34	10	3	1		1,096
Old Moat	728	100	66	11	2			907
Piccadilly	63	35	59	73	16	3	2	251
Rusholme	768	90	85	11	2			956
Sharston	1,242	98	31	10	8			1,389
Whalley Range	884	163	79	31	3	1		1,161
Withington	399	105	118	6	11			639

Woodhouse Park	1,290	91	11	2	1			1,395
Total	30,809	3,874	1,747	458	126	24	7	37,045

Appendix One – Council Tax Support data by ward and claimant**Table two: Non-working age CTS claimants at 31/03/2021 by ward and band**

Ward	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Total
Ancoats & Beswick	368	54	8	4				434
Ardwick	485	45	13	2	1			546
Baguley	553	25	20	12	4	1		615
Brooklands	374	92	29	17	8	2		522
Burnage	424	71	85	3	2	1		586
Charlestown	579	59	14	6				658
Cheetham	429	70	17	1				517
Chorlton	114	66	85	10	5	1		281
Chorlton Park	348	46	71	38	13	2		518
Clayton & Openshaw	630	66	14	1				711
Crumpsall	329	88	38	21	3			479
Deansgate	26	1	6	1	1			35
Didsbury East	72	32	94	23	2	3		226
Didsbury West	108	64	35	23	3	3		236
Fallowfield	344	16	7	1	4	1		373
Gorton And Abbey Hey	586	47	11	1	1			646
Harpurhey	652	43	3					698
Higher Blackley	571	90	28	7	1			697
Hulme	331	38	4					373
Levenshulme	353	37	38	1				429
Longsight	521	104	20	1				646
Miles Plat & NHeath	836	31	6	2				875
Moss Side	667	27	8					702
Moston	363	92	40	5				500
Northenden	402	80	34	17	5	5		543
Old Moat	304	45	34	7	1			391
Piccadilly	8	75	27	9	4			123
Rusholme	289	49	70	7	3			418
Sharston	495	92	30	14	1	1		633
Whalley Range	212	66	46	43	7			374
Withington	171	49	82	7	4			313
Woodhouse Park	653	27	6	3	2	2		693

Total	12,597	1,787	1,023	287	75	22		15,791
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Appendix Two - Number of properties by ward and band at 31/03/2021

Ward	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	U*	Total
Ancoats And Beswick	2,332	2,409	3,259	605	94	36	5	2	489	9,231
Ardwick	5,880	1,996	803	48	6	4	8	2	222	8,969
Baguley	5,212	931	595	196	82	38	2	2	11	7,069
Brooklands	3,417	1,631	924	574	260	75	33	0	2	6,916
Burnage	4,142	809	1,680	158	57	4	1	0	83	6,934
Charlestown	5,316	1,350	574	246	25	1	3	0	1	7,516
Cheetham	4,552	1,179	747	894	16	0	3	1	52	7,444
Chorlton	1,408	1,904	1,966	455	336	45	18	1	37	6,170
Chorlton Park	3,367	1,092	1,606	884	308	94	39	1	46	7,437
Clayton and Openshaw	6,450	1,187	485	46	9	4	2	0	174	8,357
Crumpsall	3,926	1,611	723	253	53	13	10	3	73	6,665
Deansgate	2,629	470	1,821	3,117	1,414	962	258	48	2,318	13,037
Didsbury East	686	715	2,931	1,276	312	284	219	4	42	6,469
Didsbury West	1,772	1,410	1,706	1,303	741	634	319	18	67	7,970
Fallowfield	3,063	1,006	660	141	47	5	1	8	158	5,089
Gorton and Abbey Hey	7,306	1,252	272	38	14	1	3	1	129	9,016
Harpurhey	7,175	1,054	262	55	15	2	2	1	21	8,587
Higher Blackley	5,227	1,025	546	155	39	13	5	2	6	7,018
Hulme	4,453	2,444	1,892	1,068	454	35	26	5	341	10,718
Levenshulme	5,836	1,156	651	46	9	3	1	0	55	7,757
Longsight	4,920	1,497	381	11	6	2	0	1	4	6,822
Miles Plat & N Heath	7,292	918	371	33	12	3	5	1	182	8,817
Moss Side	6,517	853	351	88	48	3	0	0	31	7,891
Moston	4,674	2,156	905	105	29	2	1	2	7	7,881
Northenden	3,402	1,401	1,140	344	172	100	13	0	23	6,595
Old Moat	3,379	1,036	1,085	558	144	36	4	3	16	6,261

Piccadilly	775	1,028	2,251	3,145	671	158	30	2	1,839	9,899
Rusholme	3,414	1,157	1,004	268	52	66	5	6	56	6,028
Sharston	4,615	1,263	712	341	107	8	0	2	7	7,055
Whalley Range	3,969	1,308	853	737	106	18	16	3	159	7,169
Withington	1,963	1,443	1,990	299	261	72	7	0	29	6,064
Woodhouse Park	5,745	967	113	92	38	11	14	4	40	7,024
Total	134,814	41,658	35,259	17,579	5,937	2,732	1,053	123	6,720	245,875

*Band U properties are those that are in the planning pipeline but have not been completed yet. There is no Council Tax liability for these.

Appendix Three – Vulnerability criteria

Copied below is the most recent version of the vulnerability criteria contained in the EA code of practice:

Before the enforcement agency adds the enforcement fee, they must, using their professional judgement, explicitly consider whether the debtor falls into the following vulnerability categories.

Where the debtor:

1. Appears to have been severely impacted by Covid 19. This could include ongoing significant health conditions (long covid) or a significant drop in income that can be evidenced.
2. Appears to be severely mentally impaired or suffering severe mental confusion.
3. Has young children and severe social deprivation is evident.
4. Is disputing liability or claims to have paid, applied for a rebate, Council Tax Support (CTS), discount or any other relief not yet granted. Under these circumstances the enforcement agent should report this back to the Council.
5. Is heavily pregnant and there are no other adults available in the household.
6. Is in mourning due to recent bereavement (within one month).
7. Is having difficulty communicating due to profound deafness, blindness or language difficulties. In these cases, the Council would make arrangements for the appropriate support in terms of a signer or translation services etc.
8. Has severe long-term sickness or illness including being terminally ill.

This judgement must be based on telephone conversations, written responses, visits by company employees not acting as enforcement agents and visits by enforcement agents. A clear statement that the debtor's vulnerability has been considered must be recorded on the debtor's record before the enforcement fee is added. When an enforcement agent makes the first visit to the property and decides that the debtor is vulnerable, no enforcement fee should be added, and the account should be returned to the Council.

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Appendix Four - ARG examples

ARG with RV examples

Cleaning company to the hospitality sector – with business rates liability

A cleaning company that provides cleaning services to pubs, clubs, restaurants had been heavily impacted due to the restrictions within the hospitality sector.

The business was able to claim Additional Restrictions Grant funding of £11,622.57 for the period up to 31 March 2021 and a one-off £5,600 in Restart Additional Restrictions Grant to help them adjust to the gradual reopening of the sector they operated in.

Linen hire company – with business rates liability

A business that supplied linen hire and laundry services for events, restaurants, bars, caterers, gyms, beauticians and the accommodation sectors were severely impacted as the sector they supplied had to close. Their income reduced by 90% but they could not claim any help under the schemes for businesses that were forced to close due to local or national restrictions.

The business was able to obtain an Additional Restrictions Grant of £11,003.22 and a one-off Restart Additional Restrictions Grant of £5,600.

Post Office in the city centre business – with business rates liability

A post office in the city centre also incorporating a convenience store depended heavily on the day-time economy from commuters, tourists and other people visiting the city for hospitality or leisure purposes. Due to local and national restrictions the business was severely impacted as visits to the city centre reduced significantly and office workers moved to homeworking.

This business was not mandated to close and therefore could not claim help under grants that were for businesses that could not trade. However, they were able to claim Expanded Additional Restrictions Grant funding of £12,143 which included a one-off payment of £6,000. They were also entitled to a one-off Restart Additional Restrictions Grant of £2,800 to help them prepare for the lifting of restrictions in April 2021 and the gradual return of visitors to the city.

In total this business received £14,943 in support under the Additional Restrictions Grant scheme which was vital in its survival during restrictions.

Coffee shop in a city centre station –with business rates liability

A takeaway coffee unit beyond the ticket barriers at Victoria Station with access only granted to rail passengers were forced to close. This was a business decision based on the collapse of commuter trade within the station. They did not qualify for help under grants for businesses that could not trade. However, they were able to claim Expanded Additional Restrictions Grant funding of £12,143 which included a one-off

payment of £6,000. They were also entitled to a one-off Restart Additional Restrictions Grant of £8,400 to help them prepare for the lifting of restrictions. In total this business received £20,543 in support under the Additional Restrictions Grant scheme.

ARG without an RV examples

Barbers in the city centre not liable for business rates

A barber in the city centre could not claim Local Restrictions Support Grant or Restart Grants in the city centre because they were not registered for Business Rates due to the set-up of their premises.

Due to the lockdowns and restrictions the business had to close due to government guidelines and turnover had dropped by over 50% in 2020 compared to 2019. The business was able to claim Additional Restrictions Grant funding of £17,964.43 for the period up to 31 March 2021 and a one-off £8,400 in Restart Additional Restrictions Grant funding to help them open safely when restrictions eased in the personal care sector from April 2021.

Beauty studio – ARG no business rates liability

A beauty studio in Affleck's Palace could not claim Local Restrictions Support Grant or Restart Grants in the city centre because they were not registered for Business Rates due to the set-up of their premises.

Similar to other retail businesses they had no customers attending when local or national restrictions were in place and lost a significant part of their annual turnover. The business was able to obtain an Additional Restrictions Grant of £11,246.29 and a one-off Restart Additional Restrictions Grant of £5,600.

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee – 12 October 2021

Subject: Equalities Strategy Implementation Update

Report of: Director of Human Resources and Organisation Development

Summary

Manchester is a diverse and vibrant City and our workforce should reflect and celebrate that diversity at all levels of the organisation.

This report provides members with an update on progress to date to increase diversity, ensure we are an inclusive employer and to challenge discrimination.

Recommendations

Committee is asked to:

1. Note the progress to date
2. Consider the latest version of the Workforce Equality Strategy

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

Our Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The public sector is a major employer in Manchester so if we can recruit more from Manchester residents it will contribute to this outcome. The city council should reflect the communities of Manchester fully and at all levels.
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Employees who work for the city council and live in Manchester will receive skills development.

A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Employees who work for the city council and live in Manchester will make a positive contribution to the city. When the City Council is fully reflective of the communities we serve, we will be an exemplar of a progressive and equitable employer.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Not directly relevant
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Employees who work for the city council and live in Manchester will have their technological skills improved, reducing digital deprivation

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

Workforce Equalities Strategy report to Resources and Governance Overview
 Scrutiny November 2020

1.0 Background

In 2019 an external review of race issues in the workforce of the Council was commissioned. This review was finalised in November 2019. The commission aimed to understand the extent to which our organisational culture and values, reinforced by our policy approach and behaviours, support inclusive employment practices and recognise and respect differences.

The findings of the review were published in 2020 and in order to make progress with pace a working group was established to take the recommendations forward. Over a 12-week period a group of c90 employees from across the organisation met and considerable progress was made to implement the recommendations and an update is provided in this report.

In addition, the working group recommended the development of an overarching Workforce Equality Strategy and work to develop this strategy has continued over the last 12 months.

2.0 Update on activity over the last 12 months:

The actions from the race review were grouped into 5 broad headings and an update on each is provided below:

1. Monitoring:

Action: Understanding the reasons why there are gaps in the data, how we can get better coverage and better reporting to track progress and set targets:

Update:

Work to understand why there were gaps in our workforce equality data identified several reasons including a level of distrust amongst some groups and individuals around how the data would be used or whether it was identifiable and instances where equality data had not been collected at the point of appointment (e.g. when temporary staff were appointed to permanent contracts). In addition, our systems did not have the latest equalities classifications for meaningful reporting or target setting.

The following activity has been undertaken since the last committee:

- The recruitment applicant tracking system has been updated with the correct equalities classifications and equalities data is now collected for all applicants at each stage of the recruitment process so we can identify and target any specific issues, e.g., low/no applications from certain groups.
- SAP has been updated with the correct equalities classifications and the process of resurveying all staff is currently underway. The top 400 managers were asked to input their data over the summer and the remainder of online staff are currently being asked to do the same. This will be followed up in November/December with the resurvey of all offline staff.
- By January all staff should have updated their information and meaningful targets can then be set both corporately and at a directorate level.

2. Developing black, Asian and minority ethnic staff:

Action: Developing interventions to increase diversity including development programmes for black, Asian and minority ethnic staff, review of recruitment panels and race awareness for staff:

Update:

- The first cohort of the black, Asian and minority ethnic staff development programme was launched earlier this year and provided 12 staff with the opportunity to get experience of working at a senior level, access to senior leaders and working on strategic pieces of work. To date 2 participants on the programme have moved into more senior roles. The second cohort is due to start in January 2022.
- The LeadHERship programme aimed at black, Asian and minority ethnic women was launched in Sept this year with 23 staff taking part in an intensive programme of training and development around leadership skills and navigating gender biases in the workplace.
- The roll out of an Inclusive Leadership Programme is underway, aimed at Grade 10+ (c400 staff) with a focus on unconscious bias, structural discrimination and empowering managers to take ownership to tackle discriminatory behaviours and provide inclusive spaces.
- A “Let’s talk about race” programme has been developed which will be mandatory for all staff and will be rolled out over the next 12 months. Themes of these sessions include exploring unconscious bias, structural racism and white privilege through a mixture of online videos where individuals talk about their lived experience and followed up with facilitated group discussions.
- It is now a requirement for all panels to be diverse and in order to facilitate this staff can volunteer to be part of a recruitment panel, in some instances as a development opportunity, and will receive support and training. In addition, all managers who sit on a panel need to have had equalities training.

3. Engagement and Communications:

Action: Increasing visibility of black, Asian and minority ethnic staff within all Corporate and Directorate communications to raise awareness and build confidence.

Update:

- All communications and engagement have been reviewed to be more diverse and reflective of the workforce through a mixture of celebrating a range of community and religious occasions, but also through staff stories which are included each week.
- In addition, the tone and content of our communications and engagement has been reviewed to ensure it is accessible to our whole workforce.

4. HR Policies:

Action: HR policies to be reviewed through the lens of race equality to ensure they promote equality and address issues identified through the race review.

Update:

- HR/OD have started work on a review of all workforce policies which will be brought forward over the coming 18 months. In October a new Disciplinary, Employee Dispute Resolution and 3rd Party Abuse and Harassment Policy will be brought before Personnel Committee.
- In terms of the proposed disciplinary and employee dispute resolution policies:
 - Both policies will now state there is a zero-tolerance approach to any form of discrimination within the organisation.
 - The disciplinary policy in addition makes clear that any form of discriminatory behaviour will be deemed as gross misconduct.
 - Any cases which include any form of alleged discriminatory behaviour (either through disciplinary or employee dispute resolution) must be investigated/heard by a senior officer and they must have attended the inclusive leadership training.
- The 3rd Party Abuse and Harassment policy is new and sets out the Council's approach to tackling incidents of 3rd party abuse against employees, including harassment, discrimination and bullying. 'Third party' abuse and harassment refer to someone that employees interact with as part of their role but who are not employed by the Council. The policy and guidance also provide advice to managers on how to support staff who encounter such abuse.
- The Special Leave policy guidance has been updated and requires managers to consider cultural reasons why staff may need to take extended leave (e.g. family funeral in a distant country, religious observance etc.).
- In order to support the implementation of these policies the HR casework team have been through considerable training over the last 12 months to both support and challenge managers through cases which involve any form of discrimination.
- In addition, issues around disparity of disciplinary cases involving black, Asian and minority ethnic staff have been addressed and are now proportionate with the workforce composition.

5. Leadership

Action: Supporting Leaders and managers to understand and create racial equality and better understand the lived experience of our black, Asian and minority ethnic staff:

Update:

- As set out earlier in this report it is now a requirement of all staff, including senior leaders, to attend the Let's Talk about Race sessions. In addition, all leaders (G10+) will attend the Inclusive Leadership sessions and to date 100 managers have attended including SMT.
- Race and equalities generally are now a standing item on the Senior Management Team, Senior Leaders Group and at Directorate Management teams.
- The workforce assurance dashboard now includes equality monitoring and goes to SMT and Directorate Management Teams.

- All Strategic Directors are met with on a quarterly basis to be taken through their equalities data and to look at casework involving/alleging discrimination.
- A new equality, diversity and inclusion objective is being included in senior leaders' annual appraisal which will monitor how senior officers are personally driving the agenda within their service areas.

3.0 Developing a revised Workforce Equalities Strategy:

- 3.1 As work progressed with the race working group, it became apparent an overarching workforce equality strategy was required and an early draft of the strategy was brought before the committee last November. Since then, work has continued with the new version which is included within the slides that accompany this report.
- 3.2 Key to the development of the strategy has been ongoing engagement with groups across the Council. In order to get a breadth of views, there has been ongoing engagement and dialogue with the staff network groups, the trade unions, meetings with elected members with a lead for equalities and thematic sessions with the wider workforce and members on specific issues.
- 3.3 Through engagement, deeper understanding of the issues and challenges faced by staff and informed by learning both from work on the race review, the strategy has evolved and is now set against 6 broad strands:

Strand 1: Attract, recruit and select in a way that is inclusive and drives diversity at all levels

Reflecting our communities at *all* levels is key to the new strategy. We are aware that we are not yet where we need to be, particularly in terms of our black, Asian and minority ethnic and disabled staff and this is most stark at a senior level. It is therefore imperative that we can attract talent from our communities. Earlier this year a new Talent and Diversity team was established within HR/OD focused on developing our existing workforce and creating pathways into employment from our communities, schools, colleges and universities. Work to date has included:

- Reaching out to community groups to gain trust and increase applications
- Reviewing our approach to apprenticeships and graduates so they are more attractive to diverse communities.
- Supporting the development of internal development programmes

A wholesale review of recruitment will begin this month which will review and change our approach to attracting candidates, ensuring the application process is not a barrier to any specific groups and making assessment methods accessible and relevant.

Strand 2: Educate, develop and build talent within our workforce.

Ensuring all our staff understand equality, diversity and inclusion is key to building an inclusive workplace.

It is essential our entire workforce understands equality and diversity if we are to truly create an inclusive workplace. As set out earlier in this report there are two mandatory programmes, the Inclusive Leadership programme aimed at G10+ and the 'Let's talk about Race' programme which will be mandatory for all staff.

In addition, equalities and inclusion will form part of the revised induction programme for all new staff and will be discussed as part of the About You conversation.

A new behaviour is being developed and will become part of the Our Manchester Behaviours and Our Manchester Experience.

Strand 3: Strengthen the visibility and voice of our staff networks, equality champions and allies.

Our staff networks, equality champions and allies have been key to the development of this strategy and creating space for them to raise issues, bring ideas forward and hold us to account is vital in order to maintain trust and provide rigour.

To ensure this, the City Solicitor supported by the Deputy Director HR/OD has created a group which will include the chairs of the staff network groups and a senior member of each directorate who will have lead responsibility for equalities for their area. The group will monitor progress against the strategy and local action plans in services and this group will report into SMT.

The work to improve diversity within communications, as set out earlier in this report, will also continue.

Strand 4: Be clear there is zero tolerance to any form of discrimination.

It is vital that all staff are clear that no form of discrimination is acceptable either from colleagues or from the public. In order to reinforce this:

- All workforce policies will have our zero-tolerance statement within them
- Any discriminatory behaviour from staff will be deemed gross misconduct
- The new 3rd Party Abuse and Harassment policy provides additional protection and support for our staff and empowers managers to act when abuse occurs
- All discrimination cases will continue to be monitored by HR and the relevant strategic director to ensure consistency of approach.

Strand 5: Set and monitor targets across a range of measures:

In order to set meaningful targets, the entire workforce is being resurveyed on their equality information. This is currently underway for online staff and will be completed for offline staff by the end of this year so by January a new set of measures will be introduced at both a corporate and directorate level and will be monitored annually as part of the business planning process.

Strand 6: Create policies and processes that feel fair to everyone:

A review of all workforce policies is currently underway. In addition to this it is vital we review our processes and “the way we do things” to remove any unintentional bias. However, this is about more than removing barriers, it's about creating inclusive processes that recognise and welcome diversity. Work within this strand will include:

- Root and branch review of the recruitment process (including the policy)
- Development of a new workplace adaptations hub which will be a one stop shop for staff who require adaptations to do their role and will provide advice for managers
- Becoming an accredited Age Friendly employer
- Development of a range of new policies and guidance including support for trans staff and their managers (“tell us once”), greater support for women going through the menopause and for staff who experiencing domestic abuse.

4.0 Conclusion:

- 4.1 The City Council continues a journey to achieving equality, diversity and inclusion for its workforce. The work to implement the recommendations from the race review is ongoing and there has been a great deal of progress over the last 12 months. In addition, the development of the Workforce Equality Strategy provides the framework for these actions and those across all protected characteristics can be tracked and scrutinised.
- 4.2 Members are asked to comment on the progress to date and the Workforce Equality Strategy.

Progress on **Workforce Equality**

Updated Workforce Equality Strategy



October 2021

Introduction from our Chief Executive Joanne Roney



This is Manchester - we do things differently here.

When we have a challenge we own it, we listen to different perspectives, and we take action to address and change things for the better.

Our city is dynamic, forward looking, creative, connected and buzzing and that is of course all down to our people who are more passionate about their city than in any other.

I am proud to lead this organisation and its 7,000 staff, a significant proportion of whom are Manchester residents, and all of us are proud of the work that we do for this City and its residents.

This strategy recognises, as do I, that we have more to do to make our organisation truly inclusive, in making sure our workforce is reflective of our communities at all levels and every single person feels safe to bring their whole selves to work and is confident that we will take actions when we find things that are not right.

Let me be very clear we have a zero tolerance approach to any form of discrimination and the work that is underway and planned will make sure we eradicate any possibility of discrimination and build a truly inclusive workplace and workforce.

This matters to me. I was given opportunities and encouragement in my career and I want everyone who works for us to be able to access support and development throughout their career. I want to ensure every employee has a voice and is heard.

I am pleased with the progress we have made as set out here, and am up for the changes and progress we need to make going forward and I know my colleagues are passionately committed to making change happen.



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Manchester

A city that has always been at the forefront of change.

The first public library, the first passenger railway, and the first football league. The birthplace of the suffragette movement, vegetarianism, and Vimto. The inventors of graphene, the submarine and modern computing. Manchester is a city filled with boundless creativity, innovation and culture.

We're nothing without our people, who have always dared to be different and think differently. After all, it's the people that make Manchester one of the greatest cities in the world.

Manchester has a diverse population of around 580,000 people, and The University of Manchester is one of the largest in the UK, with the city being home to over 100,000 students. Our diversity made us a successful, growing, connected and buzzing city.

Manchester City Council, which has led the growth and development of the city, employs around 7,000 staff and many of us are proud Manchester residents.

However, we know we could do more to make sure that our staff reflect the diversity of our city and that if we do that then we will make better decisions, deliver better services and connect the city council more closely to our residents.

We want to make the workforce of the city council reflect **at all levels** the residents of Manchester. We have work to do to achieve this – the data in this report clearly identifies numerous gaps. This strategy sets out a series of practical actions to make rapid progress.



But this is not just a ‘numbers game’.

While we need to make more and faster progress on getting a workforce representative of the community, it is important that our diverse employees now and in the future are protected from discrimination in any form, have access to development and can progress through the council’s structures, are treated with respect, have good and fulfilling work to do, and can bring their whole selves to work.

We know from the consultation we have done (described in this report) that that has not always been the case and to this day we still hear too many examples of unfair or discriminatory cases, and of employees not prospering or able to be fully themselves at work.

So this report also sets out a series of practical actions to eliminate unfair discrimination, build a culture of inclusion and promote diverse talent.

This is not the first iteration of our Workforce Equality Strategy, and it won’t be the last.

Like any good strategy, it is a ‘live’ document. It’s been informed by the lived experience shared by those we consulted with. We’ll continue to evolve and adapt it as our understanding grows and our data improves, and changed as we learn what works and what needs improvement.

We have many years of work before us to achieve the step change that is needed – and the understanding, buy in and commitment of our Elected Members will be vital over the coming months and years.

While we were creating this strategy, we did not pause...

There has been an incredible effort over the last year to make rapid progress on some of our biggest issues, we have already:

- Created a range of staff development programmes.
- Created inclusive pathways into employment for residents.
- Focused on getting the data right to make sure we understand our City and our workforce.
- Planned all our workforce policies for review. The Disciplinary and Employee Dispute policy, and a new Third Party Abuse and Harassment Policy are now ready for Personnel Committee.
- Addressed the inequality in our disciplinary cases.
- Kept the conversation going by talking to our staff network groups and within our services.

..and people noticed.

- ✓ Our staff network groups can see the commitment of the senior leadership team
- ✓ Our internal communications and engagement is much more diverse and inclusive
- ✓ Staff feel that they have access to senior managers to raise issues, share experiences
- ✓ Staff are really welcoming of the policy changes, in particular clarity on our zero-tolerance approach to discrimination and our 3rd Party Abuse & Harassment policy.

What they told us....

To make our workforce more reflective of our communities we have more work to do.

This list will keep evolving as we understand more and continue to learn.

Page 79

Change the tone and language of our policies to be more accessible.

Asking for adjustments or flexibility to support a condition or caring responsibilities still feels uncomfortable.

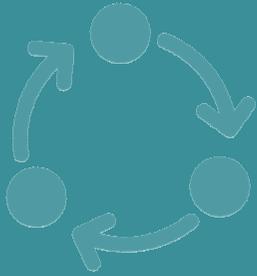
More development programmes linked to other protected characteristics, especially in relation to disabled staff.

Be clear about how we are going to tackle these issues and be honest about where we are up to.

Be more open about our commitment to being an inclusive employer in recruitment.

Have uncomfortable conversations – on an ongoing basis so all staff understand the barriers some people face.

Appendix 1, Item 6



We have **already**
achieved a lot...

1



Formal Training

Formal training forms just a part of what's available for staff to develop their understanding of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

We're making sure that:

- All staff can access a basic level of understanding of equality and diversity, using self service where possible.
- Managers have the skills and knowledge to manage in a way that promotes equality and diversity, with formal training directed as remedial action.
- We have a leadership offer that challenges our leaders to understand, develop and clarify their role in promoting intentional inclusion.

2



Racial Equality Mentoring (reverse mentoring)

A successful pilot has been run, giving four Senior Managers and Leaders the opportunity to be mentored by a Black Asian Minority Ethnic staff member who is in a more junior role.

Learning has now been collected and is being used to shape a new mainstream scheme with the following objectives:

- Help challenge engrained views on what talent looks like, breakdown stereotypes and biases, and help improve diversity in middle and senior grades.
- Provide a unique opportunity for mentors to share insights and experiences, and to provide Senior Leaders with a fresh perspective.

Following the pilot, a new cohort is being finalised with the next round due to commence Nov 21.

3



Offline Staff Support

Many of our staff do not have online access or are in roles where being released from the day-to-day will impact service delivery.

These staff also tend to be in our lower graded roles. The OD/L&D team will work with managers to tailor our offer and content in a way that works best for individuals, teams, and services.

4

'Let's Talk Race in the Workplace'

A race awareness team conversation tool.

In summary

- 45-minute sessions using real stories and case studies.
- Available for all online staff.
- Part of a package used widely across GM authorities.
- Addresses themes such as white privilege and systemic racism.
- Paper-based briefing/activity packs being created for our offline staff (Testing Sep 21).

What it covers

1. Systemic Racial Biases vs Explicit Racist Behaviour
2. An Introduction to unconscious racial bias
3. White Privilege in the workplace
4. Racial microaggressions
5. Tokenism



This is only the start.

We're also creating guides for managers to continue the conversation with their teams. They will provide individuals and teams with opportunities to explore and discuss the themes in their own service and identify improvements they could make (**incremental rollout from Oct 21**).

5

Inclusive Leadership Masterclass

Equipping leaders with the confidence and skills to enhance inclusion.

In summary

Already completed by 97 staff & SMT

- 2.5 hour session
- Available for Grade 10+ Managers
- Delivered virtually
- Aligned to the key areas of focus and challenges for the organisation

What it covers

1. Introduction to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion.
2. What Inclusive Leadership means for you.
3. Using the **Conscious Inclusion Model**:
 - Self Awareness
 - Cultural Intelligence
 - Understanding Bias
 - Empowered to Act



6 Communications

Increasing staff representation

To showcase and celebrate our diversity, our comms now regularly includes stories and celebrations reflective of our diverse communities.

Internal Communications Team supports staff to write accessible documents so that everyone can read and understand, especially where English may not be their first language. This ensures compliance with accessibility law.

Corporate communications aims to include a diverse range of stories, opportunities and learning across our channels to help ALL staff understand the importance of diversity, feel empowered to take action, recognise themselves and feel supported by the organisation.

Snapshot of some of the content:

- International Women's Day
- Pride Celebrations
- Promoting special engagement events (Black History Month & beyond)
- Getting involved in local activities i.e. Caribbean and African Health Network
- Support and guidance around Covid testing and vaccinations
- Connection to communities i.e. Faith Leaders communications
- Comms support for the Race Equality Working Group
- Real staff stories about personal and professional topics
- Greater visual representation in campaigns imagery

Jon Atkin looks forward to Pride Weekend

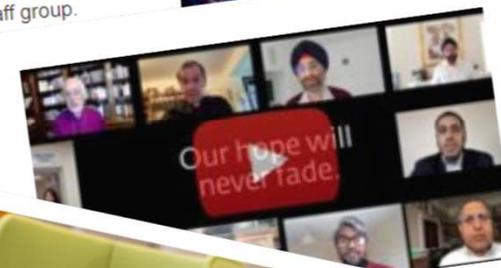
This weekend is one of the most eagerly anticipated events of the year: Manchester Pride!

Jon Atkin, Acting Chair of the Council's LGBTQ+ staff group, tells how he has been part of every parade since 1995. He also explains that the Festival isn't just about the main Pride activities in the Gay Village and Mayfield areas. Jon highlights a couple of Festival fringe events of interest and invites staff to join the LGBTQ+ staff group.



“ This weekend, there will be some fantastic Pride activities.

JON ATKIN



Improving Panel Diversity

A project group was brought together, consisting of employees who took part in the Race Review, as well as those with experience as recruiting managers and applicants.

The aim was to find new solutions to improve our panel diversity.

What we did:

- **4 day Design sprint** – to explore ways to improve panel diversity, identifying challenges and opportunities.
- **Design of a prototype app** – allowing staff to join a pool of panel members for recruiting managers to search.
- **Creation of training video and quiz** – challenging myths around panel membership and strengthening staff understanding of diversity and recruitment needs.

For the first phase of the app, we are focusing primarily on improving racial diversity on panels, and will be trialling this in Oct 21 within the Adults Directorate.

We are also currently developing offline solutions for staff to be included in panels for phase 2 and its official roll-out in early 22.



Directorate Level Engagement



Local activity happening across our directorates.

'Let's talk about Racism'

(Neighbourhoods Directorate)

- 36 half day virtual sessions between January and March 2021.
- Delivered by Manchester Adult Education Service, with groups of up to 10 participants who came together to discuss race inequality.

Regular Monthly Meetings

(Libraries Black Lives Matter/Race Equality group)

- Looking at practical ways of being anti-racist in the library setting in terms of the local communities and staff.

Wellbeing Workshop (12 May)

(Early Help Race and Equality Group)

Hosted by Clinton Jordan - a motivational vocal coach, who coaches you to find your best voice through song!

- Feel Good - Singing releases, the chemical endorphins which give a sense of reward.
- Together - Singing together creates camaraderie. Singing in unison creates unity. Singing in harmony creates creativity.
- Overcome - Singing together provides a safe environment where people can overcome their fears.

Tailored Engagement

Legal, Performance, Research & Intelligence, and Neighbourhood Services

- Wider Leadership Engagement Sessions held with a focus on Equality
- An all staff update of the findings from the council's Race Review.

Directorate Broadcasts

- Directorate communication broadcast utilise the progress updates and include this in their service level bulletins on a regular basis.

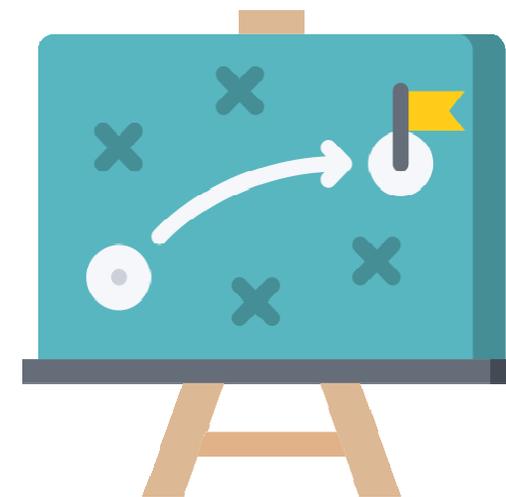
Workforce Monitoring

Jul-Sep

- Development of existing and creation of new equality monitoring questions including:
 - Ethnicity
 - Disability
 - Sexual orientation
 - Gender identity
 - Religion and belief
 - Trans status
- SAP development to update Mi Self and reporting capability
- Launched resurvey initially focusing on Senior Leadership Group
- Rolled out communications to all SAP users
- Launched recruitment dashboard enabling monitoring of all recruitment activities.

Sep-Dec

- Use monitoring information to target communications to drive completion levels
- Resurvey offline staff using paper surveys
- Establish regular recruitment reporting to identify inequity in our processes.



10



Strengthening arrangements corporately:

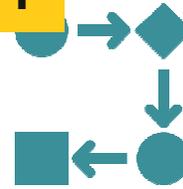
A new corporate board chaired by the City Solicitor has been established to track and monitor the progress against service specific targets with the aim of driving change within services.

The group will include:

- Chairs of each of the staff network groups
- Senior representatives from each Directorate
- Senior HROD officers

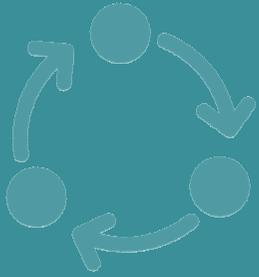
The group will track progress against corporate and directorate targets, to raise and discuss issues and will feed into SMT on a quarterly basis.

11



Building inclusive pathways into employment

- We have committed to taking on 37 young people across the organisation via the government's Kickstart Scheme.
- We are working closely with DWP to ensure these opportunities are promoted within our city's diverse communities. This includes young people with disabilities and those within the LGBTQ+ community.
- We have created new and strengthened existing links with community leaders to help our job adverts reach **ALL** our communities.
- We are refreshing our Apprenticeship Strategy to make sure it's accessible to **ALL** staff.
Key message: 'Apprenticeships are not just for young people'.
- We are working closely with the city's universities to ensure we attract the best talent for our Graduate Management Trainee programme.
Key message: 'Everyone is Welcome' here.
- Work is underway to understand where we can align specific career pathways to underrepresented groups.



Case Studies

Case Study

Supporting breast feeding mums in the workplace

“

A member of my team approached me for support so that she could continue to breastfeed when she returned from maternity leave.

She needed a private space to express milk and a secure fridge to store it in. When I looked into it there wasn't an easy mechanism to request this as there was no information on the Intranet or a form to make the request.

Because I work closely with the Health and Safety team they helped me to find a lockable room and ordered a medical fridge for her to use. If I didn't have those working relationships I'm not sure how I would have resolved this issue.

”

Team Manager based in the Town Hall Extension



Learning from this experience, we are developing better guidance for managers and mums in the workplace.

This will also help inform the estates strategy across the City.

Case Study

Strengthened arrangements to drive Equality and Inclusion

“

As Chair of the MCC LGBTQ+ Staff Group, I really value the opportunity to get together on a regular basis with colleagues from HROD and the Chairs of the other staff groups to consider and contribute to the refresh of the Workforce Equality Strategy.

Equality and its intersectionality with the various protected characteristics is something that affects us all, whatever role we play in the Council and so each of us bring a variety of useful skills and experience to the table to enhance the discussion, as well as the views and experiences of our staff group members and teams.

It's also a useful opportunity to bring other equalities issues to the table for advice. I really hope the group continues to meet after the current strategy review comes to an end!

”

Jon Atkin

Staff Development

Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Development Programme

This programme was set-up as a direct response to the Race Review, and forms part of the emerging Talent Management Strategy.

A 6-month pilot programme was launched in April 2021 for 12 employees (grade 7-9). The aim is to build on existing skills and capabilities of staff and provide them with experience and exposure to working at a more senior level to their current grade with a view to facilitating progression into senior roles in the near future.

The pilot will come to an end in Oct 21 and following an evaluation, we are aiming to go live again with a larger cohort in Jan 22.



**Christianah
Awodiji**

“The programme has given me the opportunity to explore/experience Leadership in our organisation which has been hugely beneficial to me.

The Proventure career coaching course has invoked a change in my thought process, boosted my confidence and has given me tools for leadership development. The programme has been excellent in preparing me for leadership.”

LeadHERship Programme

A programme designed to better equip black, Asian and minority ethnic **women** to navigate the many challenges and gender biases within the workplace and develop the critical skills of aspiring leaders seeking to lead, influence, and mentor.

Launched Sep 21, with 23 staff in the first cohort.

Casework



The way we recorded casework information was not consistently linked to equalities monitoring data.

It was also difficult to fully understand the trends regarding disciplinary action and employee disputes associated with black, Asian and minority ethnic staff.

In 2019/20 we found that black, Asian and minority ethnic staff were twice as likely to be subject to a disciplinary process than their white colleagues, accounting for 38% of all cases.

We took immediate action and through a series of interventions we reduced this imbalance.

Looking at the same timeframe in 2020/21 shows a 10% reduction to 28%. The team are committed to further improvement.

How we did it:

- The casework team took part in equality training to better understand issues around race and lived experience. This included micro aggressions and white privilege.
- Continued development to make sure that we are more consistent with how we work, and to challenge how some cases were being handled.
- Introduced an enquiry stage before any cases enter formal action.
- Worked closely with Trade Unions to analyse casework trends and issues.
- Co-development with Trade Unions on a new disciplinary policy.
- Quarterly meetings with HR and all Strategic Directors to monitor all cases but specifically monitor cases relating to black, Asian and minority ethnic staff. (This now also includes Employee Dispute Resolution cases and all cases that could be related to any of the protected characteristics.)
- Managers reviewing any cases involving elements of discrimination are now required to have attended the Inclusive Leadership programme.
- We have reviewed the level of manager who deals with any case involving an element of discrimination.

New ways of recruiting

Neighbourhoods recruitment

Our Neighbourhoods Directorate wanted to design a more inclusive way of recruiting.

Some applicants find using the ATS system difficult. Usually, this is because English is not their first language, or they have neurodiverse conditions.

What we did:

- Asked applicants to send an email and a short video about what they were passionate about working in their community.
- Advertised the roles in the community and via partners. This included registered landlords.
- Instead of a formal interview, we assessed applicants using a series of tasks.

OUTCOME

40% of successful candidates were Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic

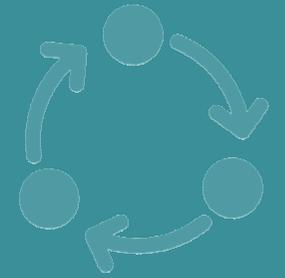


Senior Recruitment

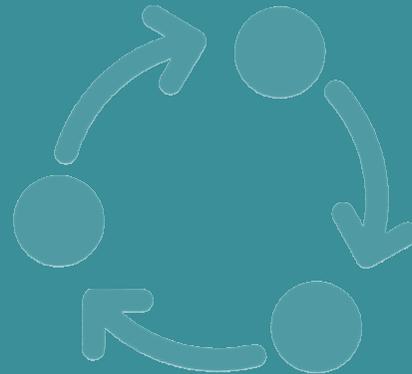
- Brief to all senior recruitment partners includes a requirement for a diverse shortlist
- Target recruitment at diverse media outlets
- All panel members will need to have been on inclusive leadership training
- We have seen consistently more diverse shortlists.



Creating a More Inclusive Council



Workforce Equalities Strategy 2025



Foreword from our **Equalities Executive Member Cllr Rahman**



“ I was first elected to be a City Councillor in May 2008. I was and am proud to have been the first ever Elected Member with a Bengali heritage and from the very start I have been focused on making a difference in people’s lives and communities.

Having previously been the lead Member for communities and equalities I know how the diversity and inclusivity of Manchester has always contributed to our successes. And now as Deputy Leader with the portfolio for HR&OD and equalities I am really pleased to be able to introduce this report which sets out the great progress that has been made over the past months and also an updated iteration of our workforce equality strategy.

As a public sector organisation, delivering people to people services, it is an important part of the ‘contract’ between ourselves and the communities we serve, that we are from and for those communities - that we look and sound like them, and that the city council is an open and welcoming place for members of those communities to seek employment.

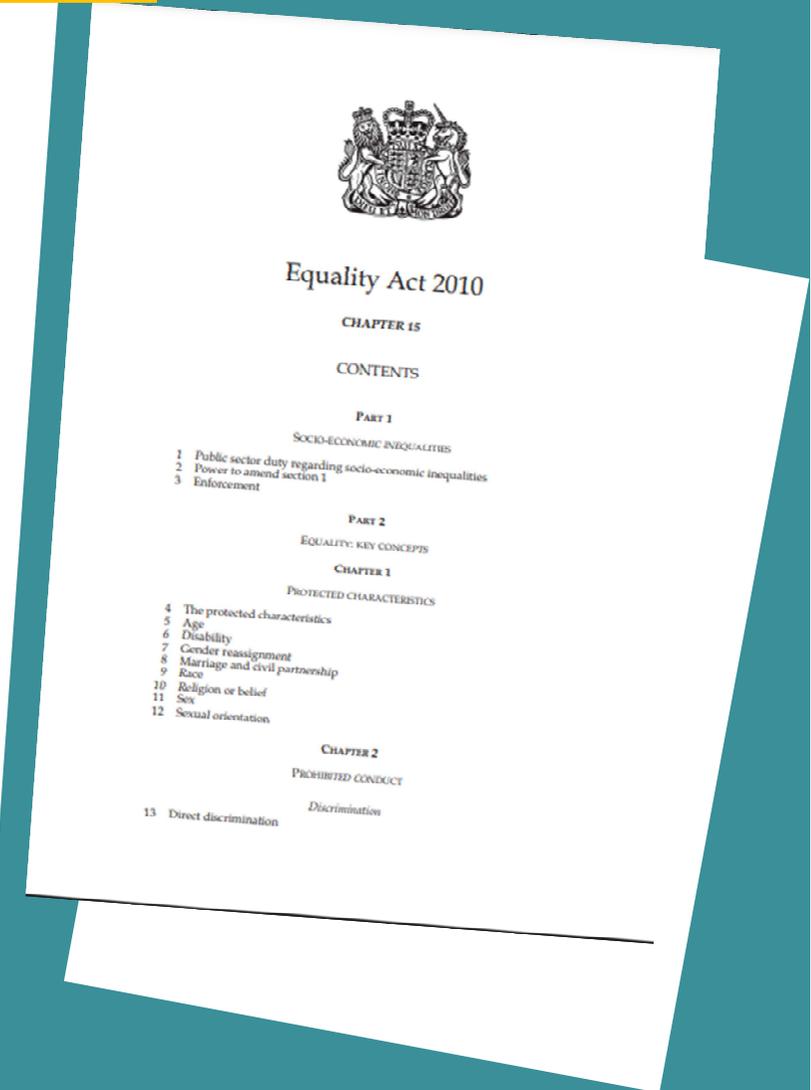
Whilst good progress has been made in workplace equality, we know that inequality still exists within the Council and that we still do not reflect the diverse communities that we serve, particularly at senior levels.

So while I am pleased to be able to report on significant progress, my determination to work with and support officers to make the changes set out in this strategy is undimmed.

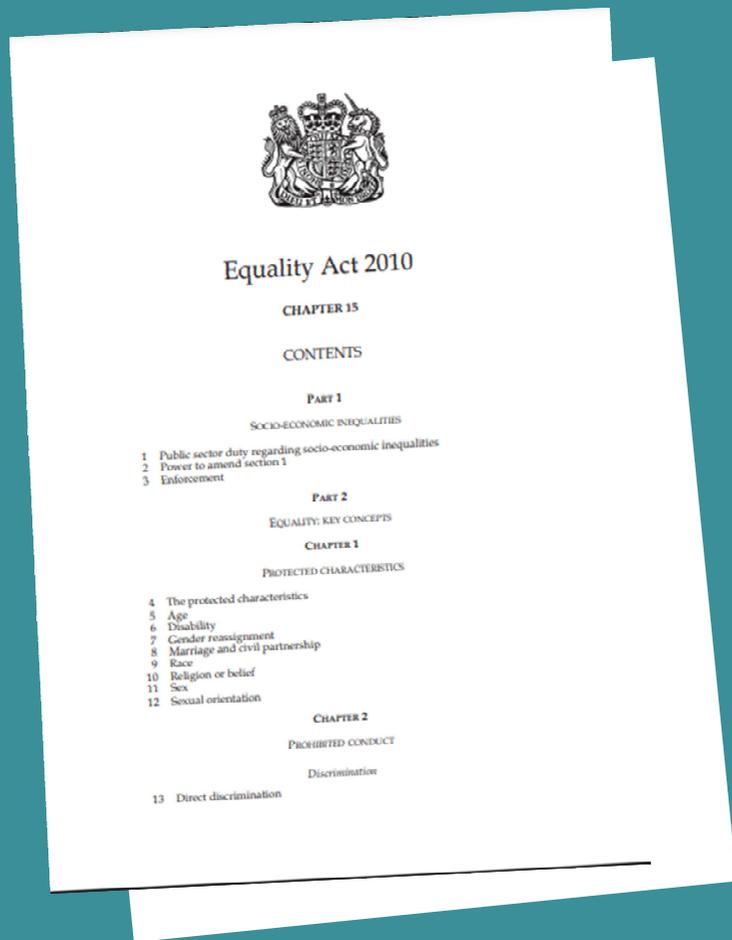
”

The Equality Act 2010

- 116 separate pieces of legislation in one act.
- A legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.
- The Act protects **people against discrimination, harassment or victimisation in employment**, and as users of private and public services based on nine protected characteristics.
- Protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes fairness and equality.



9 Protected characteristics:



Age

Disability

Gender Reassignment

Marriage or Civil Partnership

Pregnancy and Maternity

Race

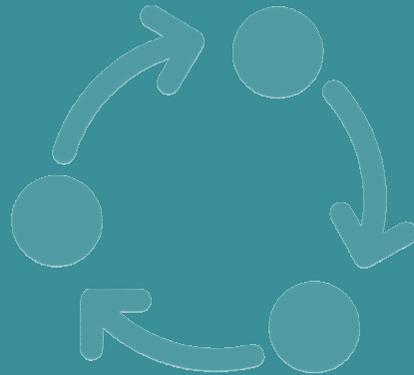
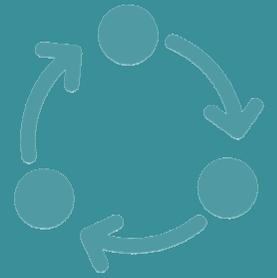
Religious Belief

Sex

Sexual Orientation



How we developed this strategy:





This iteration of our strategy has been based on learning from the past but more importantly from speaking to our colleagues, finding out about their experiences and asking them what they wanted to change.



We ran a number of thematic workshops and interviews with approximately 100 employees. These included older workers, women going through the menopause and staff who had recently been through a recruitment episode



Keen to engage as broad a group as possible, we have had a series of meetings with staff network groups, elected members and trade unions and we are currently testing our thinking with the wider workforce



We are really grateful for the input of everyone we have spoken to for their candor, passion and patience

Our Vision for 2025

“A place where **everyone** can be themselves and thrive”

By 2025, Manchester City Council will be a place where our workforce fully reflects the rich diversity and talent of the communities we serve at all levels.

We tackle discrimination head on, analyse equality data regularly and quickly make changes to address issues. Every individual feels they can bring their full selves to work, talk openly, and access development to fulfil their potential.

Our managers and leaders understand and continually demonstrate their commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. Our policies and processes are fair and do not discriminate against any group or community, and all managers and leaders understand how to support their employees, monitor equality and address any issues quickly.

Our Vision – Summary of aims

“A place where
**everyone can
be themselves
and thrive**”

Page 100

Our workforce fully reflects our communities at all levels

We talk openly and frequently about equality and inclusion

Staff have access to develop and fulfill their potential

Staff will feel free to bring their whole selves to work

Policies and processes are fair and do not discriminate against any group or community

Managers and leaders understand how to support their employees, monitor equality and address any issues quickly

Appendix 1, Item 6

How we'll get there

**Let's face it:
This is a huge
challenge to get right.**

But we are committed to this work, and confident that we will realise our vision through our **6 strands**:

-  1 Attract, recruit and select in a way that is inclusive and drives diversity at all levels
-  2 Educate, develop and build talent in our workforce
-  3 Strengthen visibility and voice of staff networks, equality champions and allies
-  4 Be clear in our zero tolerance to discrimination
-  5 Set and monitor targets across a range of measures
-  6 Create policies and processes that feel fair to everyone

A diverse workforce has more perspectives, better decision making, more cultural awareness, and will deliver better outcomes for our residents.

What we are delivering:

- Making Manchester City Council an employer of choice for our communities, working closely with community groups, partners, schools and universities.
- Encouraging diverse applicants to our Graduate and Apprenticeship opportunities.
- Making sure our recruitment (policy & processes) is inclusive and designed to attract a talented and diverse workforce (see case study).
- Better diversity on recruitment panels, and completion of learning material needed to be able to take part.
- For Specialist recruitment we are monitoring equality information and challenging Search partners to provide more diverse shortlists.
- Every induction will communicate the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion, and what is and is not acceptable.
- Creating a culture of learning and development for everyone, with targeted development to support areas of underrepresentation.
- Connecting this strategy to the Organisational Development plan and activity, identifying any gaps to inform how we do talent management and strategy.

Strand 1

Attract, recruit and select in a way that is inclusive and drives diversity at all levels



Strand 2

Educate, develop and build talent in our workforce

We need to keep learning, developing and having conversations to create understanding around Equality and Diversity. It is our shared responsibility to address issues.

What we are delivering:

- We've already launched two Mandatory development programmes (see page 22 for more details):
 - **"Inclusive leadership"** (Managers Grade 10+).
(Almost halfway through senior leadership group)
 - **"Lets talk about race"** (All Staff)
- We've reviewed our core workforce policies and will be training all our managers on how to use them fairly and properly.
- Redesigning our corporate induction, with equality and inclusion at the heart of it.
- Introducing a new equality, diversity and inclusion 'Our Manchester behaviour'.
- Using methods such as Coaching, Mentoring (including Reverse Mentoring) and targeted Learning, such as the Leadership Pathway for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Staff.
- Adding an EDI objective to every senior managers' annual appraisal.
- Using data from staff surveys to identify gaps and plan ways to upskill staff on creating an inclusive workforce.
(e.g. Develop learning and practice across the HROD service on inclusive practice on the top 3 most common disabilities and impairments recorded by our staff)

Strand 3

Strengthen visibility and voice of staff networks, equality champions and allies



What we are delivering:

- We created a new Talent and Diversity Team HROD, focused on our current and future workforce.
- Directorate Management Team will nominate a senior manager as lead for Equalities
- Creating a new corporate board that includes the City Solicitor, Chairs of Staff Network Groups and Directorate leads. They will track action plan progress and identify any issues.
- Meeting monthly with Chairs of Staff Network Groups to raise issues but also look at intersectional issues.
- Recognizing and celebrating diversity through better representation in communications, both internal and external.
- Giving extra support from HROD to our staff network groups.
- Taking a more human-centered approach to the development of policies, processes and approaches.

“Broadcasts are too long and complex, tone of voice is very ‘middle class white person’”

“We don’t see enough diverse personalities or imagery”

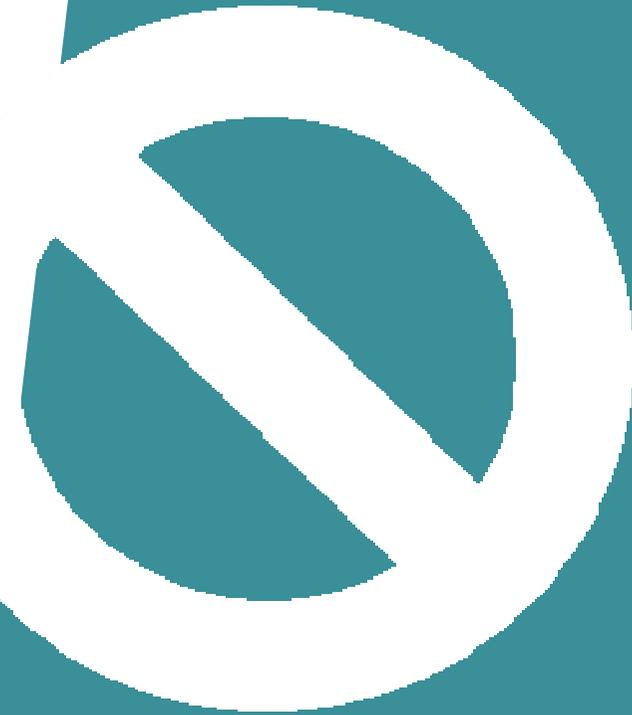
“We want honesty and transparency. We focus way too much on the positives and don’t confront the negatives head on. “

We will not accept discriminatory behaviour.

Everyone must feel free to bring their whole selves to work without fear of discrimination or harassment.

What we are delivering:

- Making any discriminatory behaviour grounds for gross misconduct. (New disciplinary policy)
- Taking a zero-tolerance approach to any form of discrimination or harassment from the general public. (New Third-Party Abuse & Harassment policy)
- Adding a zero-tolerance statement to our website, our intranet and recruitment brands.
- Updating our Employee Code of Conduct.
- Covering these expectations of staff in our Induction.
- Monitoring of all cases and complaints by HR and SMT, making sure we are consistent in our approach.



Strand 4

**Be clear in our
zero tolerance to
discrimination**



Strand 5

Set and monitor targets across a range of measures

To get this right, we need to use data to drive workforce insights on progress and issues.

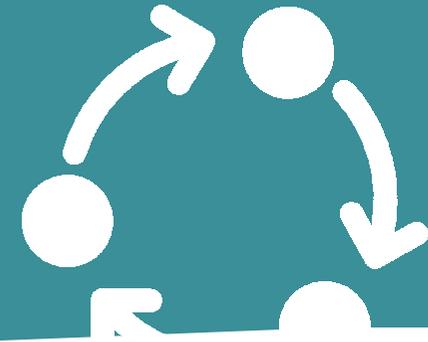
What we are delivering:

- Continuous campaign to encourage staff to complete their equalities data in SAP
- 95%* of SLG to have attended the Inclusive Leadership Training by Mar 22
- Setting targets with SMT in relation to EDI across the organisation
- 100% of SLG to have an Equality Objective within their annual performance review
- Equality information to be shared with DMTs and SMT monthly
- Creating an annual workforce report which compares each protected characteristic and grade with the city's demographics
- Specific targets on diversity to be built into the retender for Executive Search and Retender to be out by Apr 22.
- Training on inclusive recruitment to be developed for SLG by Mar 22
- Monitoring of panel diversity and outcomes to be introduced by Jan 21
- Introduce Ethnicity Pay Gap reporting by Mar 23

*95% targets set as opposed to 100% to account for turnover and new starters

Strand 6

Create policies and processes that feel fair to everyone



Our systems, processes and the "way we do things" will be free from bias and we will improve our policy framework to create a safe environment for all staff.

What we are delivering:

- Reviewing all core workforce policies to remove bias and be explicit in our zero-tolerance approach to discrimination.
- New secondments, act up and honoraria guidance to provide more transparent development opportunities.
- Create a new workplace adjustment hub to provide advice and information on supporting staff with disabilities.
- Reapply for Disability Confident 'Employer' accreditation and develop a work programme to take the council to 'Leader' status.
- Commit to becoming an Age Friendly Employer and work with Older Staff to develop and monitor delivery of our action plan.
- Join the Employer's Initiative on Domestic Abuse and review our Domestic Abuse Policy and training.
- Develop a 'tell us once' approach to support Trans employees and develop guidance and training for staff and managers.
- Commit to the Miscarriage Association Pregnancy Loss Pledge to support staff who have suffered loss.
- Develop very clear breastfeeding at work guidance to support feeding mothers.

How the strategy is connected

Vision

Aims

Strands

“A place where everyone can be themselves and thrive”


Our workforce fully reflects our communities at all levels


We talk openly and frequently about equality and inclusion


Staff have access to develop and fulfill their potential


Staff will feel free to bring their whole selves to work


Policies and processes are fair and do not discriminate against any group or community


Managers and leaders understand how to support their employees, monitor equality and address any issues quickly



Attract, recruit and select in a way that is inclusive and drives diversity at all levels



Strengthen visibility and voice of staff networks, equality champions and allies



Educate, develop and build talent in our workforce



Be clear in our zero tolerance to discrimination



Create more fair and inclusive policies



Set targets and monitor progress across a range of measures

Measuring Progress

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Our workforce fully reflects our communities at all levels	We talk openly and frequently about equality and inclusion	Staff have access to develop and fulfill their potential	Staff will feel free to bring their whole selves to work	Policies and processes are fair and do not discriminate against any group or community	Managers and leaders understand how to support their employees, monitor equality and address any issues quickly
Monthly workforce composition to be shared with SMT.	Build it into work programmes to always feature at events.	Monitor targets as set out in this report and monitor on bi annual basis.	User interviews each year.	Review of number of disciplinary etc cases using monitoring.	Reduction in casework load & escalations.
Annual report on the workforce composition looking at workforce by grade against residents data.	Every training session to mention EDI.	Setting targets within specific services and monitoring on bi annual basis.	New staff survey questions.	Engagement with equality groups on introduction of new processes/policies.	Proportion of managers who have completed Inclusive Leadership.
Quarterly review of the recruitment dashboard and diversity of panels.	Zero Tolerance added to the website, intranet and recruitment brands.		Proportion of staff completing their equalities data in SAP.	Forward plan for policy review.	EDI objective to be included in annual appraisals.
Review of census data for MCR residents when data available.	Proportion of staff who have completed "Lets Talk about Race".		Engagement with the staff networks.	Post Policy impact monitoring and training compliance.	Engagement with the Reverse Mentoring Programme.

Appendix 1, Item 6



Roadmap

2021				2022			
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Talent & Diversity team est.	Engagement with staff groups	Reverse Mentoring	Corporate EDI Board	Council to join the Employers Initiative on Domestic Abuse	Honoraria/Act Up Secondment Guidance	SMT Diversity achieved	Menopause Policy & SAP absence classification
HR & Chairs of staff network group	Systems update for new classifications	Let's Talk about Race pilot	Recruitment strategy	Introduction of new role profiles and career frameworks			
Diverse Panels Sprint	Policy Training rollout begins						
	HROD User Interviews	3rd Party Abuse		'Tell us once' implementation and Trans staff support	Workplace Adjustments Manager guide	Workplace Adjustment Passport	
		Digital inclusion strategy for our workforce	Diverse Panels app incremental launch		Resurvey offline staff		
		Induction	Age Friendly Commitment	Establish an Older Workers' Staff Network	Co-develop action plan with Older workers staff network		
	Resurvey senior staff	Resurvey remaining online staff	Workplace Adjustments working group				
		"Lets talk about race" and "Inclusive Leadership" programmes rollout					
		HROD Core Policy Review					



Conclusion

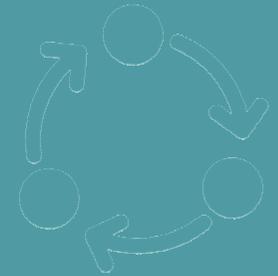
Over the last 12 months, we have rapidly made many significant changes to improve our diversity and inclusion.

This strategy sets a clear path for us to continue the positive change needed to realise our vision. But this strategy is not a static document. It's the start of a wider conversation about making meaningful change to improve diversity and inclusion for everyone.

It will continue to evolve and adapt as we listen to our workforce, learn from the activity underway, and respond to changes that happen at the council and in the city.

But our commitment will not change.

We are committed to making our workforce reflect our communities, to making everyone feel safe, and to making sure that everyone has the opportunity to develop.



"A place where everyone can be themselves and thrive"

2025 Vision

Data and Evidence Sources

Data Sources

Metric	Manchester Residents Data Source	Manchester City Council staff data source
Age	Manchester City Council Forecasting Model (MCCFM) W2020), Shared Intelligence, Core, PRI 2020	August Workforce Composition
Disability	Office for National Statistics (ONS) Annual Population Survey (APS) 2017-2019. The APS separates out disability and Long term health condition. Shared Intelligence, PRI	August Workforce Composition – this question was changed in SAP in Jul 21 to ask staff whether they have a disability or long term health condition
Gender Reassignment	The question was added to the 2021 census.	Transgender question added to SAP in Jul 21 – data first run on 07 Sep 21
Marriage or Civil Partnership	ONS Marriages in England and Wales	Not collected
Pregnancy and Maternity	Public Health England's fingertips tool - calculation is per 1,000 of women aged between 15 and 45	Women who have taken maternity leave in 2020/21
Race	2019 ONS estimates produced as part of Race Disparity Audit	August Workforce Composition – MCC categories updated in Jul 21
Religion or Belief	ONS Annual Population Survey - 2018	Transgender question added to SAP in Jul 21 and data first run on 07 Sep 21
Sex	MCCFM W2020, Shared Intelligence, Core, PRI 2020	August Workforce Composition. The question of gender was added in SAP in Jul 21 with non binary options.
Sexual Orientation	ONS Annual Population Survey 2016-2018	August Workforce Composition, additional fields added in Jul 21 - data first run on 07 Sep 21

Response Rates

Protected Characteristic		Response Numbers	Response Rate
Age		7,260	100%
Disability	Whether or not they have a disability or long term health condition	6,204	85.5%
	Category of condition or impairment	273	48.7% of those who have said yes to having a disability 4% of total workforce
Gender Reassignment		1,397	19.3%
Race		6,285	86.6%
Religion or Belief	Whether or not they have a religion or belief	1,505	20.7%
	The religion or belief	769	96% of those who said yes to having a religion or belief 10.6% of the total workforce
Sex	Sex	7,260	100%
	Gender	1,533	21.1%
Sexual Orientation		4,515	62.2%



The above data shows what response rates we have for some of the old and new equality monitoring questions. This data is from 15 Sep 21.

The highest response rates for the new equality metrics have been from our senior graded staff (grades 10 and above) where around 44% of staff have updated their information since the changes went live in July.

Current picture [1/2]



The below data shows what the make up of Manchester residents looks like compared to the Council's workforce and the Councils Senior Leadership team (staff in Senior Salaried posts).

	Residents	Staff	Senior Staff
Average Age	36	47 (+11 Years)	52 (+16 Years)
Disability Disabled or report living with a long term health condition	21%	7% (-14%)	5% (-17%)
Gender Reassignment	<i>N/A</i>	0.11%*	<i>N/A</i>
Marriage or Civil Partnership	2,164	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>

*19.3% provided this data

Current picture [2/2]



The below data shows what the make up of Manchester residents looks like compared to the Council's workforce and the Councils Senior Leadership team (staff in Senior Salaried posts).

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	Residents	Staff	Senior Staff
Pregnancy and Maternity	The fertility rate of MCR residents is 51.1 per 1,000	The number of women who have taken maternity leave in 2020/21 is 38.7 per 1,000	N/A
Race (Reported to be Asian, Black, Mixed or Other)	37%	21% (-16%)	6% (-31%)
Religion or Belief	66% have a religion or belief: 43% Christian 19% Muslim 2% Other	11% (-56%)	N/A
Sex	49% female 51% male	65% female 35% male	48% female 52% male
Sexual Orientation (Gay, lesbian, bisexual or other)	5%	4% (-1%)	4%

Appendix 1, Item 6

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee – 12 October 2021

Subject: Overview Report

Report of: Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit

Summary

This report provides the following information:

- Recommendations Monitor
- Key Decisions
- Work Programme
- Items for information

Recommendation

The Committee is invited to discuss and note the information provided and agree the work programme.

Wards Affected: All

Contact Officer:

Name: Mike Williamson
Position: Governance and Scrutiny Support Manager
Telephone: 0161 234 3071
E-mail: michael.williamson@manchester.gov.uk

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.

None

1. Monitoring Previous Recommendations

This section of the report contains recommendations made by the Committee and responses to them indicating whether the recommendation will be implemented, and if it will be, how this will be done.

Items highlighted in grey have been actioned and will be removed from future reports.

Date	Item	Recommendation	Action	Contact Officer
25 May 2021	RGSC/21/22 Updated Annual Property Report 2020/2021	To request that the Committee receive an update on the delivery of the projects funded through the Government Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme at an appropriate time.	The Deputy Leader (Finance) agreed to provide this information to Members following the Committee's meeting in June 2021.	Cllr Craig

2. Key Decisions

The Council is required to publish details of key decisions that will be taken at least 28 days before the decision is due to be taken. Details of key decisions that are due to be taken are published on a monthly basis in the Register of Key Decisions.

A key decision, as defined in the Council's Constitution is an executive decision, which is likely:

- To result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates, or
- To be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the city.

The Council Constitution defines 'significant' as being expenditure or savings (including the loss of income or capital receipts) in excess of £500k, providing that is not more than 10% of the gross operating expenditure for any budget heading in the in the Council's Revenue Budget Book, and subject to other defined exceptions.

An extract of the most recent Register of Key Decisions, published on **1 October 2021**, containing details of the decisions under the Committee's remit is included below. This is to keep members informed of what decisions are being taken and, where appropriate, include in the work programme of the Committee.

Corporate Core					
National Taekwondo Centre 2018/10/19A	Chief Executive	Not before 1st Nov 2018		Briefing Note and Heads of Terms	Richard Cohen r.cohen@manchester.gov.uk
Enter into a 39 year lease with Sport Taekwondo UK Ltd for areas within the building.					
Strategic land and buildings acquisition	City Treasurer (Deputy Chief	Not before 3rd Jul 2019		Checkpoint 4 Business Case &	Richard Cohen r.cohen@manchester.gov.uk

<p>2019/06/03B</p> <p>The approval of capital expenditure for the purpose of the strategic acquisition of land and buildings to support the Eastlands Regeneration Framework.</p>	Executive)			Briefing Note	
<p>Strategic land and buildings acquisition 2019/06/03C</p> <p>The approval of capital expenditure for the purpose of the strategic acquisition of land and buildings to support the Eastlands Regeneration Framework</p>	City Treasurer (Deputy Chief Executive)	Not before 1st Mar 2020		Checkpoint 4 Business Case & Briefing Note	Richard Cohen r.cohen@manchester.gov.uk
<p>Establishment of a multi-supplier framework for the supply of gas TC473 (2020/01/28A)</p> <p>To approve a tender to establish a Multi-supplier framework for the supply of Gas. The framework agreement will also be made available on the same basis to other AGMA local authorities and any North</p>	City Treasurer (Deputy Chief Executive)	Not before 1st May 2020		Report and Recommendation	Walter Dooley w.dooley@manchester.gov.uk

West based public sector funded organisation.					
<p>Oldham Road cycling route (2020/05/28B)</p> <p>The approval of capital expenditure to enable a feasibility study for development of a segregated cycling route along Oldham Road A62 from Thompson Street to Queens Road (intermediate Ring Road).</p>	City Treasurer (Deputy Chief Executive)	Not before 26th Jun 2020		Checkpoint 4 Business Case	Steve Robinson, Director of Highways steve.robinson@manchester.gov.uk
<p>Manchester City Centre Triangle (2021/01/14A)</p> <p>The approval of capital expenditure for the construction of a scheme to connect travel hubs in the city centre</p>	City Treasurer (Deputy Chief Executive)	Not before 1st Mar 2021		Checkpoint 4 Business Case	Steve Robinson, Director of Operations (Highways) steve.robinson@manchester.gov.uk
<p>Financial approval of MCR Active Contract 2021/22 (2021/01/28A)</p> <p>Financial approval of third year of MCR Active Contract for period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.</p>	City Treasurer (Deputy Chief Executive)	Not before 1st Mar 2021		Report to Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer	Yvonne O'Malley, Commercial Lead; Neighborhoods yvonne.o'malley@manchester.gov.uk

<p>Chorlton Library Refurbishment (2021/02/17C)</p> <p>The approval of capital expenditure for the refurbishment of Chorlton Library (Libraries Renewal Programme)</p>	<p>City Treasurer (Deputy Chief Executive)</p>	<p>Not before 18th Mar 2021</p>		<p>Checkpoint 4 Business Case</p>	<p>Neil MacInnes n.macinnes@manchester.gov.uk</p>
<p>Provision of Postal Services TC514 (2021/03/10A)</p> <p>To seek approval to appoint a supplier/s to provide Postal Services to Manchester City Council.</p>	<p>City Treasurer (Deputy Chief Executive)</p>	<p>Not before 8th Apr 2021</p>		<p>Confidential Contract Report with Recommendation.</p>	<p>Anna Caswell-Thorp anna.caswell-thorp@manchester.gov.uk</p>
<p>(TC145) Framework for the Provision of Financial Services (2021/05/11A)</p> <p>The appointment of provider(s) to deliver Financial Services Advice and Support.</p>	<p>City Treasurer (Deputy Chief Executive)</p>	<p>Not before 11th Jun 2021</p>		<p>Report & Recommendation</p>	<p>Louise Causley louise.causley@manchester.gov.uk</p>
<p>Provision of Citrix and AppSense licences and Support & Maintenance (2021/05/21B)</p> <p>To seek approval to award</p>	<p>City Treasurer (Deputy Chief Executive)</p>	<p>21 Jun 2021</p>		<p>Confidential Contract Report with Recommendation</p>	<p>Mary Lynch, Head of ICT PMO mary.lynch@manchester.gov.uk</p>

a contract to a single supplier for the provision of Citrix and AppSense Licences and Support and Maintenance.					
<p>Corporate Printer Contract (2021/07/15)</p> <p>To award a new corporate printing contract to the existing supplier of corporate print services.</p>	City Treasurer (Deputy Chief Executive)	Not before 17th Aug 2021			Andrew Blore a.blore@manchester.gov.uk
<p>Early Years - Tendered Daycare Settings (2021/07/16B)</p> <p>The approval of capital expenditure to support the continued provision of high-quality Early Years settings across the City.</p>	City Treasurer (Deputy Chief Executive)	Not before 16th Aug 2021		Checkpoint 4 Business Case	Amanda Corcoran, Director of Education a.corcoran@manchester.gov.uk
<p>Site Acquisition - The Yard (2021/08/06A)</p> <p>To approve Capital Expenditure for the acquisition of land referred to as The Yard, Vaughan Street, West Gorton, Manchester M12 5FQ (Ardwick Ward)</p>	City Treasurer (Deputy Chief Executive)	Not before 6th Sep 2021		Checkpoint 4 Business Case	Ken Richards k.richards@manchester.gov.uk

**New Highways
Maintenance &
StreetWorks Asset
Management Software
(2021/09/17C)**

To approve expenditure to purchase and implement a new highways solution to manage maintenance and StreetWorks.

City Treasurer
(Deputy Chief
Executive)

Not before
11th Oct
2021

Checkpoint 4
Business Case

Chris Wanley, Director of ICT
chris.wanley@manchester.gov.
uk

3. Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee - Work Programme – October 2021

Tuesday 12 October 2021, 2.00pm (Report deadline Friday 1 October 2021)				
Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/Lead Officer	Comments
Equalities Strategy Implementation update	To consider a report on the progress of workforce equality.	Councillor Rahman (Deputy Leader – HR)	Deb Clarke Lorna Williams	Invite Cllr Hacking – Chair of CESC
Revenue and Benefits	To receive an update including collection of business rates and council tax and ethical collection; update on Council Tax Scheme and resident support schemes and how this fits with the Council's anti-poverty agenda.	Councillor Craig (Deputy Leader – Finance)	Julie Price	
Overview Report	The monthly report includes the recommendations monitor, relevant key decisions, the Committee's work programme and any items for information.	N/A	Scrutiny Support	

**Tuesday 9 November 2021, 2.00pm
(Report deadline Friday 29 October 2021)**

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/Lead Officer	Comments
Spending Review and Initial Budget proposals 2022/23	To receive an update on the Spending Review and any implications for local government funding (if available), the Council's budget position and process and any implications and draft proposals for any services in the remit of this committee.	Councillor Craig (Deputy Leader - Finance)	Carol Culley Tom Wilkinson	
Update on the delivery of savings	To receive an update on the delivery of savings that were identified for the 2021/22 Financial Year.	Councillor Craig (Deputy Leader - Finance)	Carol Culley Tom Wilkinson	
Housing Governance	To receive an update on the HRA Business Plan development and governance and workforce arrangements, including the TUPE process	Cllr White (Executive Member for Housing and Employment)	Carol Culley Fiona Worrall	Invite Cllr H Priest – Chair of ESC
Overview Report	The monthly report includes the recommendations monitor, relevant key decisions, the Committee's work programme and any items for information.	N/A	Scrutiny Support	

**Tuesday 7 December 2021, 2.00pm
(Report deadline Friday 26 November 2021)**

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/Lead Officer	Comments
Update on the Government's Finance Settlement (if available)	To receive an update from the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that outlines the key headlines of the Governments Settlement figure for Manchester (if this has been determined).	Councillor Craig (Deputy Leader - Finance)	Carol Culley Tom Wilkinson	
Setting of the Council Tax base and Business Rates shares for budget setting purposes	To receive a report that details the method of calculating the Council's Council Tax base for tax setting purposes and Business Rates income for budget setting purposes for the 2022/23 financial year.	Councillor Craig (Deputy Leader - Finance)	Carol Culley Tom Wilkinson	
S106 Annual Report and Update	<p>To receive and update report following Internal Audit's review of the new S106 governance arrangements and that this report includes the following information:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An indication of affordable housing being provided from S106 contributions • How Developers are encouraged to mitigate any harm from their developments • Best practice and comparison of S106 	Councillor Rawlins (Executive Member for Environment)	Julie Roscoe	Representatives from Neighbourhoods and Capital Programmes attend to help address the Committee's concerns around the rate of spend of S106 agreements

	<p>arrangements with other GM local authorities; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The S106 triggers for planning applications within the Deansgate Ward (Land Bounded By Chester Road, Mancunian Way And Former Bridgewater Canal Offices and Land Bound by Jackson Row, Bootle Street, Southmill Street and 201 Deansgate. 			
Community safety spend	To receive a report on Community Safety spend.	<p>Councillor Craig (Deputy Leader – Finance)</p> <p>Councillor Akbar (Executive Member Neighbourhoods)</p>	Carol Culley Sam Stabler	Invite Cllr Hacking – Chair of CESC
Parks spend - capital & revenue	To receive a report on Parks spend.	<p>Councillor Craig (Deputy Leader – Finance)</p> <p>Councillor Akbar (Executive Member Neighbourhoods)</p>	Carol Culley Neil Fairlamb	Invite Cllr Igbon – Chair of ECCSC
Overview Report	The monthly report includes the recommendations monitor, relevant key decisions, the Committee’s work programme and any items for information.	N/A	Scrutiny Support	Overview Report

Tuesday, 11 January 2022, 2.00pm (Report deadline Wednesday 29 December 2021) * To account for New Year's day Bank Holiday				
Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/Lead Officer	Comments
Finance Settlement	To receive an update from the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer that outlines the key headlines of the Governments Finance Settlement figure for Manchester	Councillor Craig (Deputy Leader - Finance)	Carol Culley Tom Wilkinson	
Overview Report	The monthly report includes the recommendations monitor, relevant key decisions, the Committee's work programme and any items for information.	N/A	Scrutiny Support	Overview Report

Tuesday, 8 February 2022, 2.00pm (Report deadline Friday 28 January 2021)				
Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/Lead Officer	Comments
2022/23 Budget Report	Consideration of the final 2022/23 budget proposals that will go onto February Budget Executive and Scrutiny and March Council.	Councillor Craig (Deputy Leader – Finance)	Carol Culley Tom Wilkinson	
Overview Report	The monthly report includes the recommendations monitor, relevant key decisions, the Committee's work programme and any items for information.	N/A	Scrutiny Support	

Items to be Scheduled (Items highlighted in grey indicate that these have been included in the work plan of one of the above meetings). (New items added are highlighted in blue)				
Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director / Lead Officer	Comments
Commercial activity	Precise Details to be confirmed	Councillor Craig	Carol Culley	
Contract Monitoring	Precise Details to be confirmed	Councillor Craig	Carol Culley	
Future Strategy for City Centre Car Parks	To receive a report on the strategy for the return of NCP city centre car parks to the Council's control	Councillor Rawlins	Carol Culley Steve Robinson	
Review of investments being made by the Council into its Capital Strategy in terms of delivering future VFM post COVID19	Precise scope to be determined	Councillor Craig	TBC	
GMCA Governance and Public Sector Reform	To receive an update on what is being delivered for the City through these arrangements	Cllr Leese (Leader)	TBC	Date to be confirmed