



## **Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee**

Date: Tuesday, 10 January 2023

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Council Antechamber, Level 2, Town Hall Extension

Everyone is welcome to attend this committee meeting.

There will be a private meeting for Committee Members only at 09.20 am in the Council Antechamber, Town Hall Extension.

### **Access to the Council Antechamber**

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**There is no public access from any other entrance.**

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

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**Councillors** - Hitchen (Chair), Azra Ali, Benham, Chambers, Connolly, M Dar, Evans, Hilal, Hussain, Iqbal, Johnson, Ogunbambo, H Priest, Rawson, Sheikh, Whiston, Wills and Wilson

## Agenda

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**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**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2022.

Pages  
5 - 14

**5. [10.05-10.35] Bonfire Night Events**

Report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)

Pages  
15 - 24

This report provides an overview of the approach to planning and delivery of a safe Bonfire/fireworks season. The report includes details of anti-social behaviour during this period and an assessment of the impact of the Council's decision not to reinstate Bonfire Night events during 2022.

**6. [10.35-11.15] An update report on the Homelessness Service**

Report of the Director of Housing Operations

Pages  
25 - 60

This report is an update on the Homelessness Service and the improvement and transformation that is happening across the service in an increasingly challenging social and economic context. The Council's Homelessness Transformation Programme (A Place Called Home) is focussed on

- Significantly increase the successful prevention of homelessness
- Continue our progress to end rough sleeping
- Considerably reduce the use of temporary accommodation
- Deliver Better Outcomes and Better Lives for people and families at risk or who are homeless

7. **[11.15-11.50] Advice Services Update** Pages  
Report of the Director of Housing Operations 61 - 84

This report provides members with an overview of the advice services within the city. It details the range of provision across the city and outlines the outcomes achieved through the advice contracts that the Council commissions.

8. **[11.50-12.00] Overview Report** Pages  
Report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit 85 - 96

The monthly report includes the recommendations monitor, relevant key decisions, the Committee's work programme and any items for information.

## 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 Our Manchester Strategy, an agreed vision for a better Manchester that is shared by public agencies across the city.

The Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee examines the work of the Council and its partners relating to reducing levels of crime, community cohesion, older people and equality and inclusion.

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](http://www.manchester.gov.uk).

Smoking is not allowed in Council buildings.

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## Further Information

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

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This agenda was issued on **Friday, 30 December 2022** by the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit, Manchester City Council, Level 2, Town Hall Extension (Library Walk Elevation), Manchester M60 2LA

## Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee

### Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2022

#### Present:

Councillor Hitchen - In the Chair

Councillors Azra Ali, Benham, Connolly, M Dar, Hilal, Hussain, Johnson, H Priest, Ogunbambo, Rawson, Wills and Wilson

#### Also present:

Councillor Midgley, Deputy Leader

Councillor Rahman, Statutory Deputy Leader

Councillor Igbon, Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods

Councillor White, Executive Member for Housing and Development

Councillor Wheeler, Ward Councillor for Piccadilly

Chief Inspector Adam Wignall, Greater Manchester Police (GMP)

#### Apologies:

Councillors Iqbal and Whiston

#### CESC/22/48            Minutes

#### Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2022 as a correct record.

#### CESC/22/49            Our Manchester Voluntary and Community Sector (OMVCS) Fund

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on the process that had been followed to refresh the OMVCS funding programme for 2023-26. The report described the steps that had been taken, as well as providing an overview of the applications received and the current position. The Committee was given an indication on next steps and timescales for decisions.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Background to the VCSE sector in Manchester;
- Summary of the OMVCS Fund and the refresh process;
- Progress update July – December 2022;
- Overview of applications received; and
- Next steps.

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

- What would happen after the decisions were taken, in particular support for organisations which had submitted an application but had not been successful;

- The geographical spread of applications and what work was taking place to ensure different communities across the city were being served;
- Concern that smaller organisations were at a disadvantage in their ability to submit bids and the importance of supporting smaller organisations with submitting grant applications; and
- Future funding opportunities for organisations which were not successful.

The Assistant Chief Executive highlighted the support, outlined in the report, provided to organisations in submitting applications for the fund. He advised that, due to the high number of applications, not all could be funded and that the infrastructure support provider would provide support to the organisations which were not successful. He reported that a wide range of organisations, covering the different areas of the city, had applied to the fund. He recognised that some areas of the city had historically had an under-representation of VCSE organisations. He highlighted paragraph 4.16 in the report, which outlined how the Panel would proportionately target areas of under-representation across neighbourhoods and communities of identity. In response to a question from the Chair, he highlighted that 69% of the proposals submitted aimed to tackle poverty. He reported that a lot of bids had been received from very small organisations, with 81 bids in the small grant category, and that significant work had been done to engage with these organisations. In response to a question about VCSE groups working to address climate change, he advised that it was a condition of receiving the funding that organisations had to have a plan for addressing climate change. He supported a Member's comment about the importance of collaboration between VCSE organisations, stating that collaborative working was a criteria within the funding process. He reported that small voluntary organisations were supported by the infrastructure provider and neighbourhood officers in their ward.

In response to a Member's question, the Policy and Programmes Manager (Communities and VCSE) clarified that, although organisations applying for the fund could be based outside the city boundaries, they needed to demonstrate a strong Manchester connection over at least 18 months. He reported that all the organisations which had applied to the fund, both those which were successful and those which were unsuccessful, would receive strengths-based feedback on their application, including information on how they could improve their application in future, and that the infrastructure provider would provide ongoing support. He advised that there were alternative sources of funding which unsuccessful applicants could be signposted to. He informed Members that the panel had receiving training on conscious and unconscious bias, with the aim of ensuring that applications were considered based on what the organisation was proposing to do, rather than on how well-written the application was, as the latter tended to lead to already successful organisations continuing to receive the funding. In response to a Member's question, he advised that a diverse panel had been recruited and that an Equality Impact Assessment had been developed throughout the process.

The Chair recognised the important role of volunteers and thanked all volunteers in the city for their work, asking officer to pass on thanks to the voluntary organisations.

## Decision

To request that information on which organisations are successful and alternative sources of funding for unsuccessful organisations be included in a future report.

[Councillor Hussain declared a disclosable pecuniary interest as a Director of Muslim Writers North which had submitted a bid for the fund and left the room for this item.]

[Councillor H Priest declared a personal interest as a volunteer at North Manchester FM which had submitted a bid for the fund.]

[Councillor Ogunbambo declared a personal interest as the Chair of Blackley Football Club of Manchester]

[Councillor M Dar declared a personal interest in relation to Youth on Solid Ground and Keep Youth Work Alive Beswick.]

### **CESC/22/50                      Public Open Spaces CCTV**

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhood Services) which detailed the policy and procedure developed following the review of Public Open Space CCTV. It detailed how the Council would ensure that the significant investment in CCTV was targeted effectively in the city whilst ensuring compliance with the Information Commissioners Office Code of Practice for surveillance cameras. The Committee was invited to comment on the report prior to its submission to the Executive on 14 December 2022.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Background information;
- Investment in CCTV;
- CCTV Board;
- Policy and procedure for CCTV legitimacy and effectiveness;
- Additional cameras; and
- Legal advice.

The Statutory Deputy Leader reported that the Council was committed to investing in upgrading its CCTV equipment and placing cameras in the right locations where they were most effective.

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

- Cameras that could be deployed across the city to address areas that were subjected to sustained fly-tipping;
- Had a data protection impact assessment been carried out and, if so, could Committee Members see it;
- The process relating to proposals to site cameras in new locations, including how Ward Councillors would be involved in this and whether residents could be involved too;
- The concentration of CCTV cameras in the city centre, asking that consideration be given to placing more cameras in other parts of the city and ensuring that their location was spread fairly across the city;

- To request a breakdown of how many CCTV cameras were located in the city centre and how many were in other areas and how many were used to address crime and disorder as opposed to fly-tipping;
- Was a full review being carried out of the location of all CCTV cameras across Manchester; and
- The capacity of the CCTV control room if additional cameras were installed in future.

The Director of Commercial and Operations clarified that mobile cameras, operated by the Compliance and Enforcement team, were used to tackle flytipping and that additional funding had been provided for these from the Growth and Waste funding in the budget.

The Community Safety Lead advised that the Council had a data protection impact assessment for CCTV cameras which was currently being updated and that she could share the existing one. She advised that proposals for the location of cameras would be discussed at a ward level, facilitated by the neighbourhood teams, with Ward Councillors being able to discuss where they had concerns and thought that cameras would be a good solution for a crime problem; however, she advised that the views of the local police and neighbourhood teams would also be taken into account so it could be decided that it was not appropriate to place a camera in a particular location or that there were other ways to resolve the problem. She advised that consideration would be given to how residents could feed into this. She reported that cameras would be located where there was the greatest need, including consideration of the crime statistics and other provision in the area. She stated that she could provide Members with the breakdown of the location of cameras between the city centre and neighbourhood areas. She confirmed that the fly-tipping cameras were not included with the scope of the report. She confirmed that a full review of the location of CCTV cameras would take place and that their location would be continuously reviewed to ensure compliance with the legislation.

The Director of Commercial and Operations advised that decisions on the distribution of cameras would be evidence-based, identifying where they were most needed, rather than an equal spread across the city, and that this was what was required legislatively. In response to a Member's question about changes in technology, he reported that the new cameras would primarily perform the key function of observing what was taking place and feeding it back to the control room and that there were no current plans relating to the use of artificial intelligence. He reported that there was physically space in the CCTV control room to monitor more cameras but it could require more operatives to monitor them, which would be an additional cost. He also advised that the location and capacity of the control room was due to be reviewed.

Chief Inspector Adam Wignall from Greater Manchester Police (GMP) reported that, where there were concerns about crime in a particular location but it did not meet the requirements for installing a CCTV camera, other measures would be put in place to tackle the problem and he outlined some of the work taking place to reduce crime and disorder, including the establishment of prevention hubs and work with the Community Safety Partnership and local communities to solve problems in local areas. In response to a question from the Chair about GMP's budget for CCTV cameras, noting that they had previously invested in cameras in Moss Side which



were now obsolete, he advised that he would need to look into this. He reported that GMP had recently installed cameras in Piccadilly Gardens, with assistance from the Community Safety Partnership.

The Community Safety Lead reported that Safer Streets funding had been used to fill some of the gaps in areas of Moss Side and Rusholme which required CCTV coverage. In response to a question from the Chair about the future replacement of cameras as they reached the end of their lifespan, she reported that replacing the 169 cameras that were over 7 years old would make a significant difference but confirmed that there would be a rolling maintenance programme.

## Decisions

1. To receive the further information that Members have asked for at an appropriate time, including in relation to control room capacity, plans to manage the replacement of other cameras as they reach the end of their lifespan and GMP funding for CCTV cameras.
2. To endorse the recommendation to the Executive that:

The Executive is recommended to:-

Approve the Policy and Procedure for legitimacy and effectiveness of CCTV in the city.

## **CESC/22/51            Compliance and Enforcement Services - Performance in 2021/22**

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhood Services) which provided an update on demand for and performance of the Compliance and Enforcement service during 2021/22. The report also provided a forward look at challenges and future workload pressures as a result of changes to legislation, policy and areas of growth that would have an impact on the work carried out by Compliance and Enforcement teams.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Background information;
- Demand;
- Proactive activities;
- Programmed activities;
- Formal enforcement action;
- Ongoing challenges; and
- Future challenges/pressures.

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

- That enforcement activity and prosecutions in relation to fly-tipping should be publicised to assure residents that action was being taken and to warn fly-tippers of the consequences of their actions;

- Issues with poor bin management by students;
- What work was being done to tackle landlords who were letting properties which were not fit for habitation;
- To what extent could the future challenges and pressures outlined in the report be met and what were the risks associated with these;
- How could local businesses better liaise with the Compliance Team so that they did not fall foul of the regulations; and
- Concerns that jobs were sometimes being recorded as completed on the CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system when this was not the case.

The Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety advised that the Council used social media to publicise action taken in relation to fly-tipping and issued press releases when they had successful fly-tipping prosecutions; however, she advised that they were dependent on the media picking up on the press releases. She advised that they had previously worked with the Manchester Evening News on advertorials and could look into this again. She reported that she was also open to Members' suggestions for other ways this work could be publicised. She advised that the Council did a lot of work to engage with students, as well as engaging with landlords, and that enforcement action was taken where appropriate. She advised that there were no enforcement powers in relation to taking wheelie bins back onto properties promptly, although the pavement should not be obstructed and she would ask officers to look into this issue. In response to a Member's question about street signage, she advised that most legislation did not require this. She reported that Manchester was working to target rogue landlords, including the use of selective licensing and providing information to tenants and landlords on the actions they could take to address and report mould. In response to a Member's question, she offered to provide a copy of the relevant leaflets. The Executive Member for Housing and Development outlined work to address damp and mould in both private rented and social housing, including making it easier for tenants to report issues.

The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods outlined how the Neighbourhood Teams, other Council services and partners organisations, including the universities and Manchester Student Homes, were working together to address the issues raised in relation to areas with a large student population. She reported that this was a constant battle and that they were continually working to address this, as well as looking for new approaches which could be taken. She advised that a further response would be provided to the Member who had raised this in relation to the next steps to address this within his ward of Withington and that she would be happy to discuss this further with him. She agreed that it would be useful to further publicise the positive work which was taking place and that this could be done through the Ward Co-ordination Officers.

In response to the question about future challenges, the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety reported that the service would need to prioritise resources, stating that the service currently did a lot of work above and beyond the statutory role but that, where necessary, the statutory work would need to be prioritised, and the additional work reduced, focusing on the work which was most needed. She advised that, when the government brought in new legislation, there should be funding made available and that her service was always looking for sources of funding and bidding for it. In response to the question about work with

local businesses, she advised that the Compliance Service's initial approach was always to help businesses to comply with regulations, although enforcement was used where businesses were not willing to engage. In response to a Member's question about reporting fly-tipping, she advised that people could still report this by telephone as an alternative to using the website but that a lot of fly-tipping was identified through pro-active work. In response to a Member's question, she advised that she was not aware of an increase in noise complaints due to pavement licensing. She asked Members to feed back on any instances where jobs had been recorded as completed on the CRM system when this was not the case.

The Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods informed Members that a new CRM system was being introduced. In response to a question from the Chair, the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) advised that, although this fell with the remit of the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee as an ICT issue, he would liaise with the Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer about providing an update on this work for this Committee.

In response to a question about the Council's regulatory duties in relation to industrial processes, the Strategic Lead (Compliance and Enforcement) reported that visits were carried out twice a year and that the focus was on education to ensure that they were operating correctly.

The Chair thanked staff in this area for their work, recognising the wide range of work they undertook.

## Decisions

1. To request that the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety circulate the leaflets in relation to damp and mould to all Members of the Committee.
2. To request that the Committee receive an update on plans for the new CRM system.

## **CESC/22/52                      Community Safety Update**

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhood Services) which provided an update on the range of work delivered to address the priorities in the strategy and included updates on the City Centre and Wynnstay Grove Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs). It also included information on how partners worked to help people feel safe in the city centre, including the role of Licensing, taxi marshals, pubwatch and event security.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Tackling neighbourhood crime and antisocial behaviour;
- Keeping children and young people safe;
- Tackling serious harm and violence;
- Tackling drug and alcohol driven crime; and
- Protecting communities through changing offender behaviour.

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

- To recognise the positive, multi-agency work taking place in the Withington and Ladybarn area to tackle anti-social behaviour;
- Plans to expand training, for example on Martyn's Law, to licensed premises outside of the city centre; and
- To request more information on the Complex Safeguarding Hub, including what the thresholds were for referral to the Complex Safeguarding Hub, what percentage of referrals were not dealt with through the Hub because they did not meet this threshold and how Manchester's threshold compared to other Greater Manchester authorities.

The Chair informed Members that the Chair of the Licensing Committee was unable to attend this meeting but had asked for his thanks to be passed on to the Licensing Team, GMP, partner organisations and the Scrutiny Committee for their work to keep residents and visitors to Manchester safe.

The Community Safety Lead reported that, if a referral was not appropriate for the Complex Safeguarding Hub, this did not mean that they would not receive support and that a range of other support could be offered, with a focus on early intervention. She stated that she would ask colleagues in Children's Services to provide further information in relation to the Member's questions on the Complex Safeguarding Hub. She informed Members that the Complex Safeguarding Hubs across Greater Manchester were in contact with each other to understand how other Hubs across the region were working and to share good practice. In response to a Member's question about PSPOs, she reported that the PSPO in relation to street drinking was in place across the city, not just the city centre, although it was not a blanket ban on street drinking and was used to tackle anti-social behaviour. She advised that begging was not covered by any of the PSPOs currently in place in the city but that there was a well-established approach to begging, focused on getting people the right help and support, and that this approach was used across the city.

The Principal Licensing Officer advised that the training referred to would be expanded to the district centres next year. In response to a question from the Chair, he confirmed that the multi-agency partnership was city-wide and routinely considered issues outside of the city centre.

The Ward Councillor for Piccadilly Ward requested confirmation that none of the five Fixed Penalty Notices which had been issued in relation to the City Centre PSPO had been issued to people who were genuinely homeless. The Community Safety Lead confirmed that none of these had been issued to homeless people.

The Statutory Deputy Leader highlighted how partners were working together to make communities safer and the importance of this multi-agency, collaborative approach, particularly in the light of reduced resources.

The Chair thanked everyone for their work and recommended that the Statutory Deputy Leader write to the Secretary of State to highlight the importance of adequate funding to do this work. The Statutory Deputy Leader agreed that he would write to

the Secretary of State and circulate a copy of the letter to all Members of the Committee.

### **Decisions**

1. To note that the Statutory Deputy Leader will write to the Secretary of State to highlight the importance of adequate funding to do this work and will circulate a copy of the letter to all Members of the Committee.
2. To note that the Community Safety Lead will liaise with Children's Services to provide the Member with a response to her questions about the Complex Safeguarding Hub.
3. To request that Members be kept informed of the training taking place regarding Martyn's Law and ACT (Action Counter Terrorism) training.

### **CESC/22/53          Overview Report**

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained a list of key decisions yet to be taken within the Committee's remit, responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to approve.

In response to a question about the Z-Arts grant, it was agreed that information on cultural grants should be incorporated into the Libraries, Galleries, Culture and Leisure Annual Report scheduled for the Committee's February meeting.

### **Decision**

To note the report and agree the work programme, subject to the above amendment.

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**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 10 January 2023

**Subject:** Bonfire Night Events

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

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**Summary**

This report was requested by the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee and provides an overview of the approach to planning and delivery of a safe Bonfire/fireworks season. As requested by the Committee the report includes details of anti-social behaviour during this period and an assessment of the impact of the Council's decision not to reinstate Bonfire Night events during 2022.

**Recommendations**

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

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**Wards Affected:** All

<b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city
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None
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<b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments
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The Community Safety Partnership contributes towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
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<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	This report will highlight how the work to achieve community safety contributes towards this outcome by ensuring neighbourhoods are safe and therefore a destination of choice for people to live, visit and work.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):** Not applicable

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report relates to the approach to delivering a safe and enjoyable programme of activities in the run up to and during bonfire night, following the decision not to reinstate bonfires/fireworks displays in council parks, post covid, which had seen no events held in the previous two years, pending a review of wider impacts.
- 1.2 The report provides details of proactive activity undertaken by partners to reduce the impact of criminal and antisocial behaviour and also highlights activities that have been occurring in place of the organised Bonfire Night events in Manchester.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 In October 2022 Manchester City Council announced that Council organised bonfires would not be taking place that year. This followed a two-year lay-off during the Covid-19 pandemic with Bonfire Night events last being held in 2019.
- 2.2 The commitment to becoming a net zero carbon city by 2038, escalating costs of delivering large bonfire events and the increasing safety and organisational measures needed were all considerations in the decision to pause the reinstatement of bonfire events in 2022, pending a review of the future of Bonfire Night events.

## **3.0 The Greater Manchester Bonfire Campaign 2022**

- 3.1 This section details the annual approach taken in Manchester and across Greater Manchester to preventing and tackling bonfire and firework related injuries, antisocial behaviour, and criminal damage in the run up to and during Halloween and Bonfire Night. It also highlights some of the proactive interventions carried out by partners in Manchester.
- 3.2 The Greater Manchester Bonfire Campaign (previously known as Operation Treacle) is a partnership across Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS), Greater Manchester Police (GMP), Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), local councils, and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM).
- 3.3 This campaign has been effective in helping to tackle key issues such as antisocial behaviour, deliberate fires, and firework safety. In 2021, agencies developed the Bang Out of Order campaign to reduce antisocial behaviour, specifically deliberate fires, over the period. The headline outcomes from the 2021 campaign were mostly positive, with many measures demonstrating reductions compared with the previous year's campaign. Both deliberate primary and secondary fires were reduced overall in the 2021 campaign, however there were increases in attacks on Firefighters and hoax calls attended by GMFRS.

- 3.4 The 2022 campaign, therefore, continued to focus on reducing antisocial behaviour, specifically attacks on emergency services, hoax calls, and deliberate primary and secondary fires. A targeted and evidence-led campaign raised awareness of the consequences of antisocial behaviour, how it impacts on communities and emergency services, and how to report. The campaign also aimed to reduce the number of fireworks and bonfire injuries by promoting fire safety advice and encouraging residents to attend organised events where possible.
- 3.5 Target audiences included young people who get involved in antisocial behaviour and deliberate fire setting, diverting them to another activity where possible while making them aware of the consequences of their behaviour. Parents were encouraged to have conversations with their children about their behaviour during the bonfire period. Residents affected by antisocial behaviour and deliberate fires were informed how to report and who to report to.
- 3.6 The Bonfire Campaign was delivered across all ten Greater Manchester Local Authorities for 2022 and saw key agencies once again working closely together to reduce the negative impact of bonfires and fireworks on communities. The campaign also supported existing local initiatives occurring during the Halloween and Bonfire period to address the issue of antisocial behaviour.
- 3.7 The campaign built on the existing partnership operations that had been undertaken in recent years by aiming to achieve the following:
- Branded recognition
  - An agreed Greater Manchester communications strategy
  - Minimum standards to ensure a consistent approach
  - A best practice toolkit for partners
  - Analysis and evaluation of partnership data to inform future planning
- 3.8 At a local level, the campaign was delivered in three phases covering the period 1 September to 30 November. Phase 1 covered prevention and risk reduction where agencies such as GMFRS, the Council's Trading Standards, and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) worked collaboratively to minimise the illegal and irresponsible sale of fireworks during September, October, and November. Phase 2 expanded on the prevention and risk reduction work to cover enforcement and reassurance activity where GMFRS, GMP and the Council's Community Safety/Antisocial Behaviour Team dealt with the consequences of fire related antisocial behaviour and provided reassurance to communities during the days between Halloween and Bonfire Night. Phase 3 covered prevention, risk reduction and evaluation work where agencies worked to safely store and destroy illegal fireworks.
- 3.9 A communication strategy, led by GMFRS, ran through all three phases allowing the successes during each phase to be publicised. The key messages of the campaign were promoted locally at every opportunity by all agencies. These messages included promoting a safe and enjoyable

Halloween and Bonfire Night, reiterating that antisocial behaviour, deliberate fire setting, attacks on emergency services, criminal damage, and misuse of fireworks have serious consequences and will not be tolerated. Information for parents/carers included knowing where their children are and how to contact them, and ensuring costumes met safety standards and were kept away from naked flames. Details of how to report bonfires on public land and contact the Council for removal along with how to contact GMFRS regarding the safe disposal of fireworks were also provided.

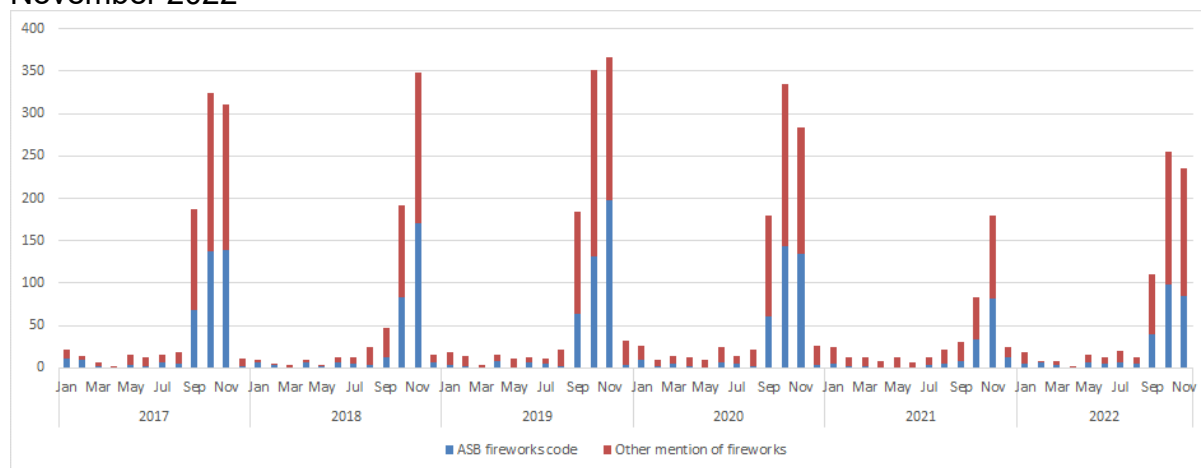
- 3.10 Locally, partners were encouraged to target activities in wards that were highlighted as having the highest seasonal incidents over the previous three years. The Council's Antisocial Behaviour Team (ASBAT) coordinated a multi-agency group to develop and implement a partnership plan that focused on the hotspot wards in Manchester. Members of the group included GMP, GMFRS, housing providers, and officers from relevant Council teams including Community Safety, Housing Services, Parks, Trading Standards, Compliance, and Licensing and Out of Hours. The plan was formulated based on intelligence and the key phases outlined in the 2022 Bonfire Campaign Terms of Reference: Prevention and Risk Reduction, Enforcement and Reassurance followed by evaluation. Alongside the targeted work in the hotspot wards, similar work to deliver the Bonfire Campaign locally was also delivered in our other wards across Manchester by GMP/MCC/Housing Providers.
- 3.11 Trading Standards sent out advisory letters to all registered sellers of fireworks in Manchester. The letter provided advice on how to avoid selling to those who were underage and about the safety requirements for fireworks. Trading Standards did not receive any reports of underage sales this year. Trading Standards and GMFRS undertook inspections of premises licensed to sell fireworks and visited eight premises. Four were inspected with two found not to be selling, and two had closed. The only issue was one that Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue (GMFRS) found at a premises in Longsight. They issued a prohibition notice to stop anyone residing upstairs for the duration of the fireworks period as the occupiers had already failed to adhere to a previous notice issued regarding the fire alarms.
- 3.12 Targeted community engagements took place prior to Halloween and Bonfire Night on key streets that were identified through GMFRS data, previous reports received by the Council, and anecdotal information from partners. Residents were informed of the key campaign messages, how to report crime and antisocial behaviour concerns, how to access victim services, and given the opportunity to request a free Home Fire Safety Assessment from GMFRS. Educational initiatives were delivered to schools and youth provisions to help keep young people safe and explain the consequences of engaging in antisocial behaviour. The Council, GMP and Housing Providers worked together throughout the campaign period to regularly review reports of firework/bonfire related antisocial behaviour which resulted in advice and support being provided to residents and details of incidents being shared with housing providers to follow up and action. GMP also regularly patrolled hotspot areas and worked with partners to provide reassurance to residents and businesses.

- 3.13 The Council delivered a bonfire removals service whereby key partner agencies could report bonfire builds into the Council and in turn the Council would arrange for removal of the bonfire within 24 hours. In most cases this took place on the same day. The Council was only able to remove bonfire builds from Council owned/managed land and/or open and accessible land under no clear ownership or management. The Council could not remove from private land, particularly where Community Associations, etc. organised a bonfire. The Council received 15 reports for removal of bonfires and in the most cases were able to remove these.
- 3.14 An initial debrief was held with members of the multi-agency group who were positive about the intelligence led and coordinated partnership work. The GMFRS analysis of the 2022 Bonfire Campaign is pending and when this information is available officers will utilise the data and recommendations to inform, along with any learning and feedback from partners and the community, activity for 2023.

#### 4.0 Bonfire and Fireworks Incidents

- 4.1 Incidents involving fireworks in Manchester saw an increase during September, October, and November 2022 compared with the same months in 2021. Comparisons with data collected before 2019 need to be treated with some caution, due to the change in GMP computer systems that year, but incident numbers for 2022 were still below the average number of incidents for the same months between 2017 and 2020 as shown in the graph below:

Fireworks incidents recorded by GMP, City of Manchester, January 2017 to November 2022



- 4.2 Only 107 out of 601 incidents between September and November 2022 happened on the weekend of 5 and 6 November. As nuisance linked to fireworks spans several weeks, organised displays are unlikely to have a major impact on this issue.
- 4.3 During October and November 2022, the worst affected wards for fireworks incidents were Miles Platting & Newton Heath, Ardwick, Crumpsall, Moss Side and Cheetham. While some calls were about the noise nuisance associated

with fireworks, a significant number mentioned fireworks being thrown or fired at people, houses, and vehicles. At least ten incidents involved fireworks being posted through letterboxes.

- 4.4 ASBAT data identified 16 Halloween/fire/fireworks reports between 21 October 2022 and 7 November 2022. This is a new case category code introduced in 2022 which means that comparisons have not been able to be drawn with the number of reports with previous years. These reports were received directly from residents or following officers reviewing reports made to GMP. Only one report related to an incident on 5 November. The 15 other reports were received between 21 October 2022 to 2 November 2022 suggesting the majority of firework nuisance and antisocial behaviour occurs prior to Bonfire Night. Separate from actions available to GMP, the Council, and Housing Providers undertook to deliver civil or tenancy warnings if there was evidence of nuisance and antisocial behaviour.

## **5.0 Future of Bonfire Night Events**

- 5.1 As noted above the commitment to becoming a net zero carbon city by 2038 is a key consideration in the review of the future position of bonfire activities in Council parks. This along with an understanding of impacts on other services including GMFRS, GMP, community safety services and other partners, costs of delivering large bonfire events and the increasing safety and organisational measures needed will all be considered as part of the wider review on the future of bonfire events.
- 5.2 As an interim position, a programme of local winter activity and engagement that meets the needs of young people and their families has been developed. The winter period, starting with the half-term school holiday in late October 2022 and concluding with the half-term holiday in February 2023, provides an opportunity to engage with young people and their families in fun and free activity that has a strong thread of community safety and reflects the challenges that residents are facing in the cost-of-living crisis. A locality model has been used to engage with stakeholders to develop the principles of an alternative offer into a programme of activity.
- 5.3 By mid-December 2022, a programme of over 15 events and activities had taken place with more than 6,000 participants. The programme has encompassed a range of activities with a focus on initiatives that provide free or low-cost food, educational resources such as books, opportunities to participate in sports and physical activity, and celebrate culturally appropriate dates in the calendar.
- 5.4 The programme is ongoing with further opportunity for local stakeholders to engage and identify local priorities. It is expected that this will result in a significant increase in participation numbers.
- 5.5 The feedback through the locality approach has focused on smaller scale and local events that deliver to local priorities. The future approach will emerge as the final review of the approach for 2022 can be concluded, early indications

are that the locality approach has been well received and would see support for targeted community events to continue as an alternative model. Park's will continue to provide a vibrant programme of events and activities through this period and there will be a focus on the development of partnerships and commissioned activity that deliver to an increasingly diverse programme.

- 5.6 The full analysis of data collected across partner agencies in 2022 is anticipated in early 2023. The data and the detail of the challenges faced during this period and the positive impacts of the alternative approach will form the basis of consultation that will inform the approach to the programme in the coming years.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Committee is invited to consider and comment on the information contained in this report.

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## Manchester City Council Report for Information

**Report to:** Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 10 January 2023

**Subject:** An update report on the Homelessness Service

**Report of:** Director of Housing Operations

### Summary

The following report is an update on the Homelessness Service and the improvement and transformation that is happening across the service in an increasingly challenging social and economic context. The Council's Homelessness Transformation Programme (A Place Called Home) is focussed on

- Significantly increase the successful prevention of homelessness
- Continue our progress to end rough sleeping
- Considerably reduce the use of temporary accommodation
- Deliver Better Outcomes and Better Lives for people and families at risk or who are homeless

### Recommendations

Members are invited to consider and comment on the report.

### Wards Affected: All

<b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city
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Good quality and affordable homes reduce carbon emissions.
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<b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments
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The housing disadvantages suffered by some individuals or groups were comprehensively evidenced in the Marmot Report 'Build Back Fairer in Greater Manchester: Health Equity and Dignified Lives'. It has since been acknowledged that housing inequality in Manchester is directly related to the disadvantages suffered by some individuals or groups because of their characteristics.
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The work of the Homeless Service in helping people retain their existing accommodation or find alternatives that are affordable to them meets our public sector equality duty and broader equality commitments.
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The people sleeping rough in our city are the most vulnerable and marginalised cohort of people in the city and helping them to find dignified and supportive accommodation meets our moral and statutory duty.

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Having good quality accommodation will help people to thrive. Reducing the number of people who are homeless or placing them in appropriate accommodation with help to access employment and learning opportunities will contribute to Manchester becoming a thriving and sustainable city.
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Having accommodation that people can access, in areas where they have a support network to help them, and their children, into education or employment will help grow talent in the city.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Having good quality accommodation in our communities improves the environment people live in and helps them to make a positive contribution.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Ensuring properties are a good quality and high standard will reduce the need to heat properties and therefore reduce energy waste.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Housing infrastructure is central to Manchester's inclusive growth ambitions

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

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

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

The Manchester Homeless Strategy:

[https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/5665/homelessness\\_strategy](https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/5665/homelessness_strategy)

Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee - 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020 - Update on Homelessness in the City of Manchester

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022 – Homelessness Update

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – February 2022 – Homelessness Update

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 11<sup>th</sup> October 2022 – Homelessness

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide scrutiny with a detailed update on the Council's Homelessness Transformation Programme 'A Place Called Home' and the corresponding service improvement activity to achieve the four main priorities, which are to:

- Significantly increase the successful prevention of homelessness
- Continue our progress to end rough sleeping
- Considerably reduce the use of temporary accommodation
- Deliver Better Outcomes and Better Lives for people and families at risk or who are homeless

The Council's Housing Strategy also clearly sets out the ambitions to work towards ending homelessness and provide affordable housing for all. To oversee the delivery of the Homelessness Transformation Programme the following internal governance is in place.

- Exec Members Group led by Deputy Leader, Cllr Joanna Midgley, Cllr Gavin White and Neil Fairlamb, Strategic Director Neighbourhoods
- Council's Housing Board, chaired by Rebecca Heron, Strategic Director Growth & Development
- Homelessness Transformation Steering Group, comprising of senior officers from across Adults, Childrens, Finance, Revs & Bens, Strategic Housing,

In addition, the homelessness services is inextricably linked to the Council's Making Manchester Fairer programme through the Housing and Homes workstream, which focuses on reducing inequalities through preventing homelessness.

From an external relationship perspective the council has long established partnerships where the deliverables of the transformation programme are shared across multiple agencies. For example, the City Wide, Manchester Homelessness Partnership, GMCA and the Manchester Housing Providers Partnership Homelessness Group.

1.2 Since the previous homelessness report to Scrutiny committee in October 2022, the cost-of-living crisis has continued to intensify, with the UK likely to enter recession in 2023. The cumulative impact of austerity, covid, inflation and now the cost-of-living crisis undoubtedly puts more strain on the country's housing market and by extension on local residents' ability to meet rapidly rising food, energy and rental costs.

1.3 In terms of the Council's statutory obligations in relation to homelessness, the primary legislation on homelessness is Part VII 1996 Housing Act. The Act was

amended by the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) which was implemented in April 2018. The principal homelessness duties owed by LAs are as follows:

- To open a homeless application if a person is believed to be eligible for assistance, homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- A duty to prevent homelessness if an eligible person is believed to be at risk of homelessness.
- A duty to relieve homelessness if an eligible person is believed to be homeless.
- A duty to secure suitable temporary accommodation pending the relief duty (and potentially main duty inquiries) being applied if the person is believed to be in priority need.
- If homelessness cannot be relieved then duty to carry out inquiries to establish whether a person is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need. If so then the person is owed the main duty which is for an LA to secure suitable temporary accommodation pending an offer of suitable longer-term accommodation.

1.4 The homeless duties are sequential: a person can be owed the prevention duty (if they are at risk of homelessness), the relief duty (if homelessness cannot be prevented) and the main duty if homelessness cannot be relieved.

1.5 The prevention and relief duties can be ended by the Local Authority helping to secure 'settled accommodation' which must be assessed to be available for at least 6 months. The main duty can be ended through the offer of a suitable social housing tenancy or a private rented tenancy with a minimum fixed term of 12 months. A Local Authority must reinstate the main duty if a person loses the 'duty discharge' private rented tenancy within a two-year period and is assessed to be unintentionally homeless

1.6 The prevention, relief and main duties are underpinned by the duty on Local Authorities to develop a Personal Housing Plan for each homeless applicant setting out action to be taken to prevent or relieve homelessness.

## **2.0 Data**

2.1 The key metrics relating to homelessness are set out below and relate to the level of demand and need in the city and how we are responding to prevent, alleviate as well as end homelessness.

- Number of homeless applications activated
- Number of applications opened at the prevention duty and relief duty stages
- Settled accommodation outcomes achieved at prevention duty discharge
- Settled accommodation outcomes achieved at relief duty discharge
- Number of homeless applications progressing to the main duty stage

- Number of households in TA
- Number of families in B&B
- Number of families in B&B exceeding 6 weeks

## 2.2 Homeless Applications

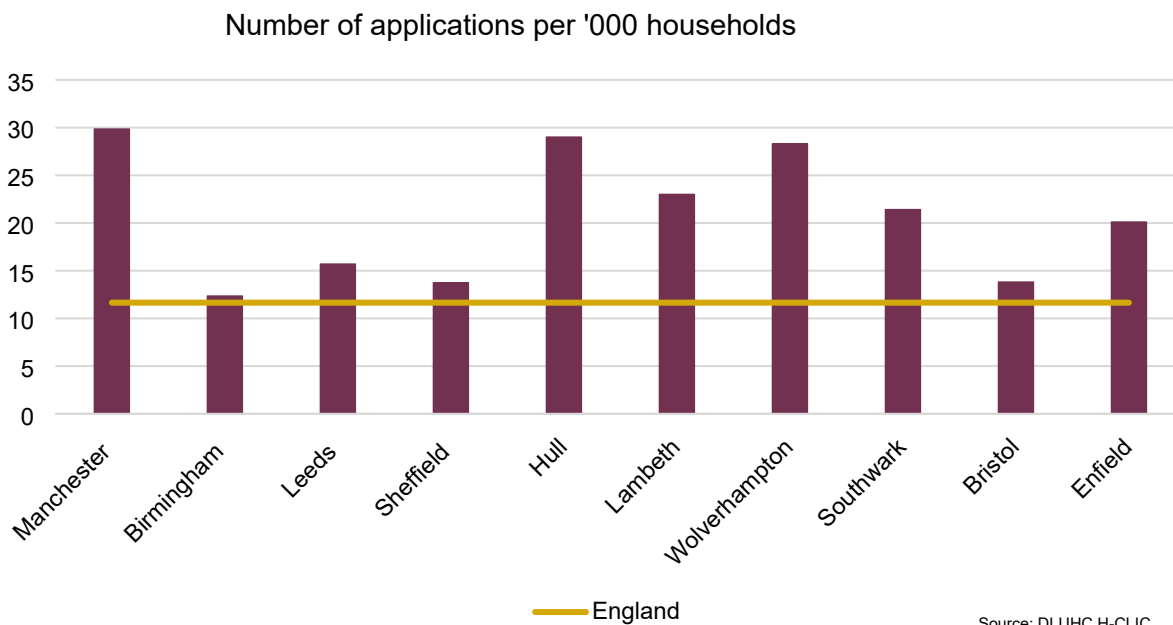
2.3 Manchester opened the highest number of homeless applications out of any Local Authority in England in 2021/22 with 6,525 applications opened. The ten Local Authorities with the highest number of applications opened were as follows:

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Number of Homeless Applications</b>
Manchester	6,525
Birmingham	5,301
Leeds	5,262
Sheffield	3,403
Hull	3,299
Lambeth	3,214
Wolverhampton	3,068
Southwark	2,904
Bristol	2,741
Enfield	2,636

2.4 Manchester's homeless applications for the last four full financial years are as follows:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Homeless Applications	4,238	5,199	5,777	6,525

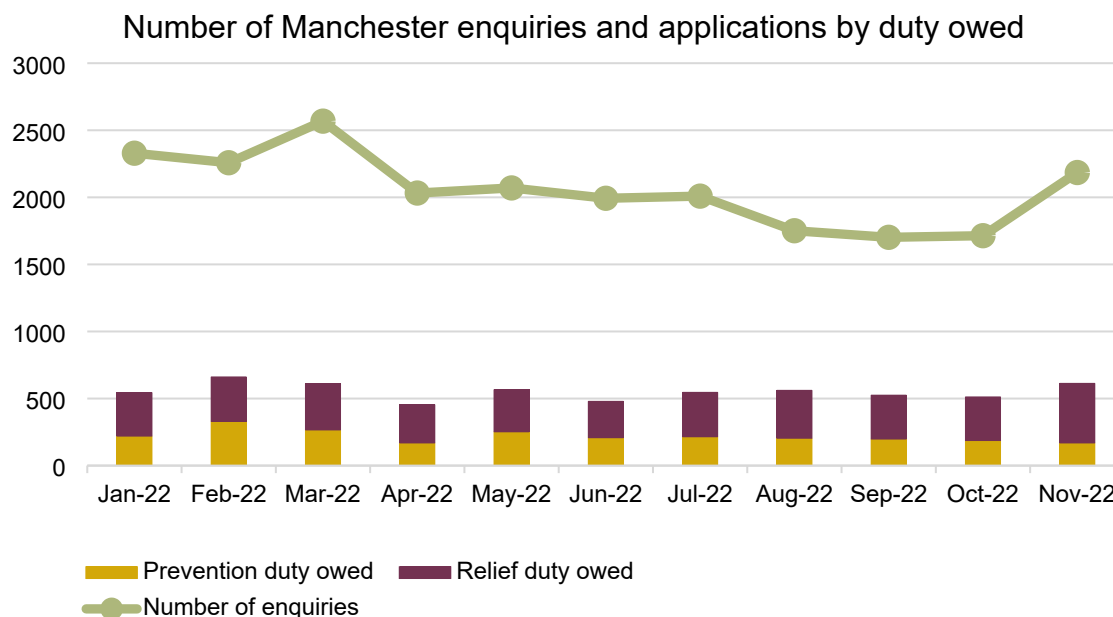
2.5 The number of homeless applications opened by Manchester increased by 54% between 2018/19 and 2021/22. Manchester opened 23% more homeless applications than Birmingham, 24% more than Leeds and 92% more than Sheffield. Birmingham and Leeds are useful comparators to Manchester.



## 2.6 Applications Opened at the Prevention and Relief Duty Stages

	Total Apps	Prevention Duty	% Prevention Duty	Relief Duty	% Relief Duty
Manchester	6,525	2,648	40%	3,877	60%
Birmingham	5,301	1,518	29%	3,783	71%
Leeds	5,262	3,618	69%	1,644	31%
England	278,110	133,450	48%	144,670	52%

2.7 Manchester opened, as a % of applications, fewer homeless applications at the prevention duty (when people are at risk of homelessness and no temporary accommodation duty owed) stage than the national average and substantially less than Leeds. The data on settled accommodation outcomes achieved will highlight the link between early intervention and more positive outcomes achieved.



## 2.8 Settled Accommodation Outcomes Achieved at Prevention Duty Discharge:

	Total Prevention Duty Discharges	Number of Settled Accommodation Outcomes	% Settled Accommodation Outcomes
Manchester	2,326	728	31%
Birmingham	1,202	523	43%
Leeds	3,466	2,920	84%
England	122,290	68,810	56%

2.9 A prevention settled accommodation outcome could be either help to stay in existing home or a planned move to alternative accommodation. Manchester's settled accommodation outcomes were 25% below the national average.

## 2.10 Settled Accommodation Outcomes Achieved at Relief Duty Discharge

	Total Relief Duty Discharges	Number of Settled Accommodation Outcomes	% Settled Accommodation Outcomes
Manchester	4,570	706	15%
Birmingham	3,945	941	24%
Leeds	1,677	875	52%
England	160,900	62,860	39%



- 2.11 Manchester's performance on settled accommodation outcomes at relief duty discharge is 24% lower than the national average.
- 2.12 Nationally 56% of prevention duty discharges result in a settled accommodation whereas the figure for relief duty discharges is 39%. This highlights the importance of maximising the number of applications opened at the prevention duty stage.

### 2.13 Main Duty Decisions

	Main Duty Decisions	Prevention and Relief Duty Applications	% of Main Duty Decisions to Prevention/Relief Duty Applications
Manchester	2,790	6,525	43%
Birmingham	2,513	5,301	47%
Leeds	151	5,262	3%
England	62,070	278,110	22%

- 2.14 The table highlights that more homeless applications progress to the main duty stage in Manchester compared to the national average because of performance relating to settled accommodation outcomes achieved at the prevention and relief duty discharge stages. This also applies to temporary accommodation placements. The number of placements in temporary accommodation for the three Local Authorities on 30 June 2022 (latest published data) is as follows:

	Manchester	Birmingham	Leeds
Number of households in TA	2,879	3,958	93
Number of households per 1,000 households in TA	13.18	9.23	0.28

- 2.15 Manchester's performance of 13.18 households per 1,000 households was the 14<sup>th</sup> highest in the country. The London Borough of Newham was highest at 48.85 households in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households. Twelve of the thirteen Local Authorities with higher placements than Manchester (using the per 1,000 household's metric) are London boroughs with the other being Luton. Critically, this report sets out proposals including changes to the allocations policy that have been informed by practice applied at the London Borough of Camden. London Borough of Camden placed 4.66 households per 1,000 households in temporary accommodation on 30 June 2022. Manchester would have 1,018 households in temporary accommodation if its temporary accommodation number per 1,000 households matched that of the London Borough of Camden.
- 2.16 Manchester Temporary Accommodation numbers at the end of each quarter:

	31 Dec 20	31 Mar 21	30 June 21	30 Sept 21	31 Dec 21	31 Mar 22	30 June 22	30 Sep 22	21 Dec 22
Number of households in TA	2428	2537	2624	2627	2705	2793	2879	2996	3189

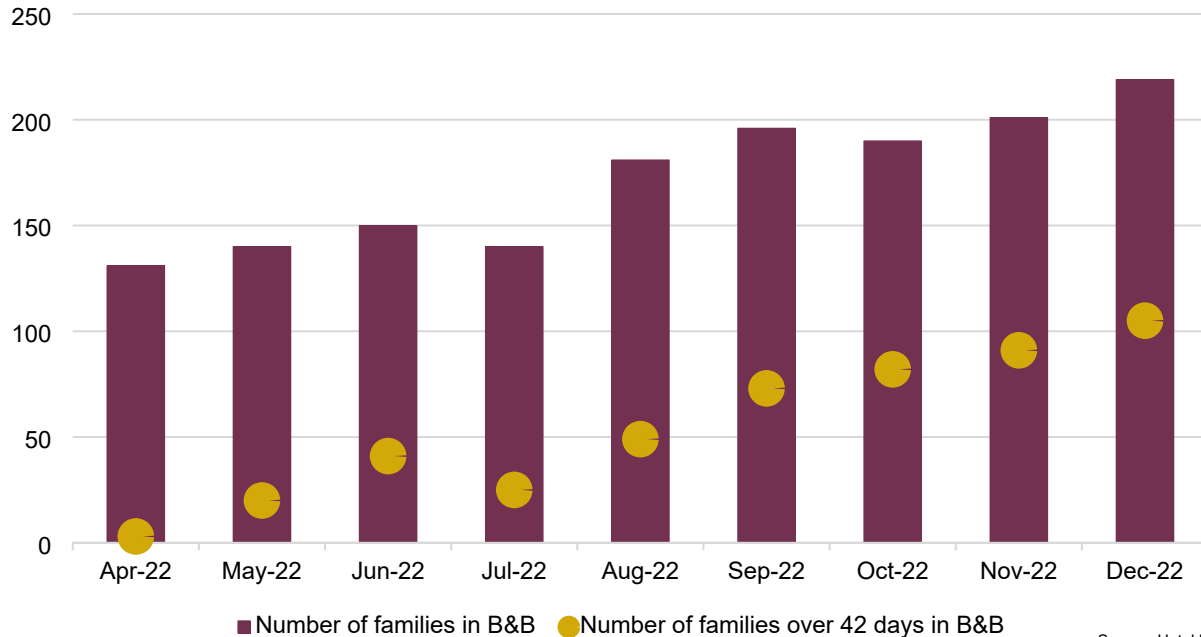
2.17 The October to December 2022 increase in temporary accommodation numbers is primarily a result of bringing more rough sleepers into accommodation under a temporary accommodation duty.

2.18 Bed and Breakfast Placements for Families:

2.19 A bed and breakfast placement for families can never be suitable, can only be used in exceptional circumstances and then for no longer than 6 weeks. A condition of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) funded Homeless Prevention Grant (Manchester 22/23 allocation £3,285,784) is that a Local Authority with more than 5 families in bed and breakfast for longer than 6 weeks submits a Bed and Breakfast Elimination Plan to government. The Council has submitted its plan to DLUHC setting a target to eliminate 6-week plus placements by the end of June 2023 and to have no more than 10 families placed in bed and breakfast accommodation at the end of 2023 with no families placed for longer than 6 weeks. This is an ambitious target that will need to be delivered within the context of the cost-of-living challenge, rising rent costs and increasing homeless applications. The plan is framed around three priorities:

- Maximising homeless prevention,
- Maximising move-on
- Finding alternative supplies of temporary accommodation.

### One night snapshot of Families in B&B per month

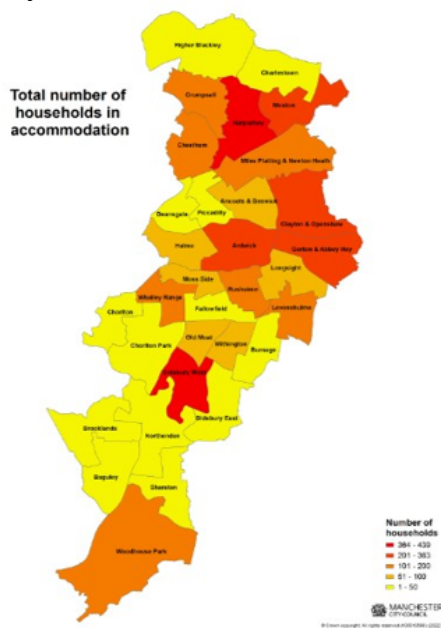


Source: Hotel list

### 2.20 Monthly bookings in and out of B&Bs for families

	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22
Booking In	106	131	114	104	144	123	119	108
Booking Out	94	114	98	113	107	123	108	96
Net moves	12	17	16	-9	37	0	11	12

### 2.21 From a geographic perspective the diagram below sets out the broad location of temporary accommodation across the city



### 3.0 Homelessness Transformation

3.1 The Council has developed a transformation plan, a Place Called Home, to address homeless related challenges with the plan being framed around four key priorities:

- Significantly increase the successful prevention of homelessness
- Continue our progress to end rough sleeping
- Considerably reduce the use of temporary accommodation
- Deliver Better Outcomes and Better Lives for people and families at risk or who are homeless

3.2 A short to medium term service improvement plan has been developed and is appended to this report.

### 4.0 Homeless Prevention

4.1 The definition of a homeless prevention is that a person, at risk of losing their home, is assisted to either stay in their existing home or to make a planned move to alternative accommodation with the assumption that the housing option is available for a minimum of 6 months.

4.2 The platform for successful homeless prevention is being able to help people as early as possible in their homeless situation. A focus has therefore been placed on *significantly improving access* at the earliest opportunity for residents to the Council's Housing Solutions service.

4.3 The focus on improving access is centred on telephony, face to face and digital, with telephony being the preferred method for residents. The changes outlined below significantly increase our capacity to engage with residents much earlier and are a key feature of our new ways of working.

#### 4.4 Telephone Access:

4.5 Since the beginning of the Covid crisis the main route into the Housing Solutions service has been through telephone access comprising around 90% of contacts. As at the end of October 2022 the Housing Solutions service had 3 Housing Solutions Officers answering the telephone during the standard working day. An additional 3 full time equivalent officers have now been placed on telephone contact duty and performance has improved to 75% of calls answered (507 out of 667 calls) with an average waiting time of less than 8 minutes. A target has been set that by the end of March 2023 a minimum of 85% of calls are answered with a waiting time of no more than 10 minutes.

#### 4.6 Homeless Application Interviews:

- 4.7 The Housing Solutions Service, in partnership with Customer Services, has restarted booked face-to-face assessments at the Town Hall Extension with up to five interview rooms available at any time during the standard working day. These are by appointment only.
- 4.8 In addition to the Town Hall location, the locality hub at Moss Side is also providing one face-to-face interview service at any time during the working day and the same offer will be made at the Harpurhey and Gorton hubs when they open. Further face-to-face services are being provided at the Centrepoint young person's service (2 at any given time), in hospital, at court and some provision at homeless day centres.
- 4.9 The target, combining face-to-face and telephone based, is to carry out a minimum of 1,000 homeless application interviews per month or 12,000 per year. The aim is to carry out 13,050 assessment interviews per year which would equate to an average of 2 interviews per homeless applicant based on having 6,525 homeless applications in 21/22. A further target has been set that the service would offer an interview slot within 2 working days of the initial contact being made by the person.
- 4.10 Digital:
- 4.11 In addition to the significant changes in practice for face to face and telephony services, officers are working with the Council's ICT to review our digital capabilities as part of the Council's Future Shape programme, as digital access is key. However, the immediate focus is to enable the conversations with residents around prevention and alternative accommodation at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.12 Homeless Application Case Checks:
- 4.13 The Housing Solutions Service introduced, in December 2022, a programme of manager case checks on live homeless applications to ensure that cases are being progressed appropriately, Housing Solutions Officers have the necessary support with cases, homeless prevention and relief options are being identified with the ultimate result being temporary accommodation placements not needing to be made. The aim, from January 2023 onwards, is to carry out 300 case checks per week. The service, based on 6,525 per year, receives around new 125 homeless applications per week. The Housing Solutions service currently has approximately 1850 live homeless applications. The target will ensure that by the end of March 2023 the Housing Solutions Service has the necessary understanding of case detail.
- 4.14 'Invest to Save':
- 4.15 The average gross cost of a bed and breakfast placement for a family is £194 per night which equates to £924 per week or £48,180 per year. This detail is being conveyed to all Homeless Service officers to ensure that everyone has a firm

understanding of the cost implication for the Council. A priority action is to embed a culture of 'invest to save' in the Homeless Service whereby opportunities to use funding to prevent homelessness are identified and a comparison is being made with the cost of a bed and breakfast or other temporary accommodation placement. The Council has received £529k additional Homeless Prevention Grant (in addition to the core allocation of £3,285,784) in 22/23 which must be spent by the end of March 2023. The £529k allocation is being used as a Homeless Prevention Fund. Work is being carried out to calculate the value of homeless prevention funding required in 23/24 with the assumption being that this would facilitate substantial reductions in bed and breakfast use.

#### Case Study Example

Mrs X has rent arrears of £1000. Her landlord wants her to leave the property before the arrears increase. The Housing Solutions Service negotiate with her landlord that they will pay off the arrears and refer Mrs X to a support agency for advice around budgeting in return for a new 12-month tenancy.

This is a better solution for Mrs X as she can keep her children in the local school and her local networks; for the Landlord as the arrears are paid off and they do not have a property that they need to advertise and turn around; and for the Council as paying the arrears is cheaper than putting Mrs X in temporary accommodation.

#### 4.16 Allocations Policy:

4.17 The principal purpose of an allocations scheme is to set out the framework by which available social housing will be let to housing applicants including the 'reasonable preference' (priority) for re-housing afforded to specific groups of housing applicants including homeless people. The current Manchester Allocations Policy awards the following priority banding to homeless people based on their homeless duty status:

- Prevention Duty – Band 3
- Relief Duty – Band 2
- Main Duty – Band 2

4.18 The Homeless Service and Council's Housing Board is strongly of the view that the current framing of the Allocations Policy does not encourage residents in approaching early in their homeless situation given that a lower level of priority is awarded at the prevention duty stage. It is notable that the Leeds Allocations Policy awards the same level of priority for re-housing to applicants owed the prevention, relief and main duty and this is a contributory factor to people presenting early (at the prevention duty stage) and low temporary accommodation numbers.

4.19 Manchester is taking proactive steps to address the current position whereby admission to bed and breakfast/other temporary accommodation is the principal

route by which people can address their homeless situation. A key action is to better use the private rented sector as an interim housing option that homeless applicants can use pending re-housing by a social landlord. This is practice adopted in Leeds and Camden whereby homeless applicants who accept a private rented tenancy do not lose their priority status for social re-housing. At present, the Manchester Allocations Policy does not permit this practice; as a private rented tenancy can only be secured for applicants owed the main duty with this duty not being ended through the offer of the private rented tenancy so that the person still has a Band 2 for social re-housing.

- 4.20 To directly address this key issue a report was submitted to the Housing Access Board in December 2022 proposing the following:
- Applicants owed the prevention duty will be awarded Band 2 status for re-housing – the same award made to applicants owed the relief and main duties
  - Applicants owed the prevention or relief duty who accept a private rented tenancy will not lose their Band 2 status
- 4.21 The Housing Access Board representatives agreed in principle to these proposals and the Strategic Housing Service is writing to every locally operating Registered Provider to advise on the proposals.
- 4.22 The Homeless Service and Council's Housing Board is strongly of the view that the proposals will not result in a substantial increase in the number of housing applicants owed Band 2 for re-housing on the basis of the short-term sequential nature of the homeless duties. A person awarded Band 2 status on the basis of being owed the prevention duty would invariably have secured the Band 2 status at the relief duty but most importantly when they had been placed in temporary accommodation. Waiting times for social housing are longer in Camden than in Manchester. On 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 Camden had 4.66 households in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households with Manchester's figure being 13.18.

## 5.0 Main Causes of Homelessness

- 5.1 It is standard national practice to target homeless prevention investment against the main causes of homelessness. The breakdown of the 6,525 homeless applications in 21/22 by homeless reason is as follows:

Homeless Reason	Number of Applications
Family or Friend Eviction	1926
Loss of Assured Shorthold Tenancy	1262
Domestic Abuse	869
Other	574
Relationship Breakdown Partner (No Violence)	459
Loss of Social Housing	325

Loss of Supported Housing	290
Other Violence	288
Leaving Asylum Accommodation	190
Leaving Institution	169
Other loss of Private Rented Sector	173
Total	6,525

- 5.2 Three causes of homelessness (family/friend eviction, loss of AST and domestic abuse) account for 62% of all homeless applications. This increases to 76% if combine family/friend eviction with relationship breakdown with partner, domestic abuse with other violence and loss of Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST) with loss of other Private Rented Sector (PRS).
- 5.3 Key homeless prevention action is being targeted against the main causes of homelessness.
- 5.4 Family/Friend Eviction:
- 5.5 The key action relating to family/friend eviction is negotiating for people to remain in the home either on a long-term or interim basis. Applications are now being opened at the relief duty stage on the basis that a person is believed to be homeless because they have no legal interest in the accommodation they are occupying, have no security of tenure and have no rights relating to notice period to leave. A key part of the negotiating offer will be the award of Band 2 status for re-housing. One of the principal options will be to negotiate a temporary stay to afford the service/applicant enough time to secure an alternative private rented tenancy with the Homeless Prevention Fund being used to cover set-up costs. Applicants owed the main duty can retain this status/accompanying Band 2 award if they accept a private rented tenancy. This would mean the tenancy cannot be set up until the 56-day relief duty period has elapsed which highlights one of the issues with the framing of the current Allocations Policy and the benefits of the proposed changes. The Homeless Prevention Fund can also be used to cover 'cost of living' pressures/other interventions that have led to a person being asked to leave. For example, the Homeless Prevention Fund was used to cover the cost of a bed purchase which was required for a mother to able to re-accommodate her adult son.

#### Case Study Example

Miss Q lives at home with her mum and 2 siblings. Miss Q becomes pregnant, and her mum asks her to leave as there is not the space for a baby, and she is not happy with her daughter being pregnant. The Housing Solutions officer mediates with Miss Q's mum and it is agreed that Miss Q can live there for 6 months until the baby is born. Miss Q is immediately put in Band 2 on Manchester Move and referred to the private rented sector team who try and source an alternative property for Miss Q to move into in 6 months time and still



retain her Band 2 priority. This is a better outcome for Miss Q as she did not have to go into B&B or temporary accommodation.

5.6 Loss of Assured Shorthold Tenancy:

- 5.7 The Homeless Reduction Act (HRA) expressly stipulates that a person served a section 21 (1988 Housing Act) notice is at risk of homelessness if the notice will expire within 56 days. The purpose of this provision is to ensure that Local Authorities are proactive in helping people before they are evicted from their tenancy through a bailiff warrant. After assessing current practice, a revised approach has been put in place for Housing Solutions Officers to make an assessment as to whether there are 'realistic prospects for preserving a tenancy' because the landlord has agreed that the tenant can remain in the property on a long-term basis. Continued residence on the basis of a delay in court action will not meet the definition.
- 5.8 If there are 'realistic prospects of preserving the tenancy' then the homeless application will be opened and maintained at the prevention duty stage. Key action may include using the Homeless Prevention Fund to cover common issues such as rent arrears or rental increase. The Council will seek, as a condition of the funding intervention, the awarding by the landlord of a new tenancy potentially with a 12-month fixed period.
- 5.9 If there are no 'realistic prospects of preserving the tenancy' then the homeless application will be opened or progressed to the relief duty stage. The current Allocations Policy permits a Band 2 award for social re-housing to be made. The most common action will be for a Housing Solutions Officer to negotiate with the landlord to delay the eviction process to afford the service/applicant enough time to secure an alternative private rented tenancy with the Homeless Prevention Fund being used to cover set-up costs. Applicants owed the main duty can retain this status/accompanying Band 2 award if they accept a private rented tenancy. This would mean the tenancy cannot be set up until the 56-day relief duty period has elapsed which highlights one of the issues with the framing of the current Allocations Policy and the benefits of the proposed changes.
- 5.10 The Housing Solutions had 493 live homeless applications open on 7 December with a homeless reason of 'loss of AST'. These cases are all being checked by service managers as part of the first stage of the case checks work.

**Case Study Example**

Mr Y has been served a section 21 notice. The Housing Solutions Officer tries to preserve the tenancy but is unable to. They negotiate with the landlord to try and delay the eviction. The Housing Solutions officer puts Mr Y in Band 2 on Manchester Move. Mr Y manages to use the time to find an alternative private rented sector property, with the prevention fund paying for the deposit and first month's rent. He remains on Band 2 and lives in the private rented sector

property until he gets a social house offer. This is a better outcome for Mr Y as he has the opportunity to source accommodation that he would like to live in, in an area he would like to live in, whilst maintaining his homeless priority.

#### 5.11 Domestic Abuse:

- 5.12 22% (195 out of 869 applications) with domestic abuse as the reason for homelessness were opened at the prevention duty stage with the applicant looking to remain in their current home. The comparable position in Leeds was that 68% of homeless applications with domestic abuse as the reason for homelessness were opened at the prevention duty (594 out of 871 applications) because the applicant expressed a preference to stay in their existing home if that was an option. A review of the homeless service offer to people who experience domestic abuse is currently being carried out. A focus is being placed on making a concurrent service offer to people whereby they are offered options such as a Sanctuary installation to create a 'safer' current living environment and a priority award (alongside a commitment to secure suitable temporary accommodation) so that the person also has the option of re-housing.

### 6.0 **Rough Sleeping**

- 6.1 A person is defined as a rough sleeper if they are bedded down/or about to bed down in the open air or in a place not designed/functioning as a place for residential living such as a car or a derelict building.
- 6.2 All Local Authorities are required to carry out either a count or an informed snapshot of rough sleeping numbers on a single night between October and November. The figure to be submitted has to be verified by an independent organisation (Homeless Link) commissioned by government. The annual count figure for Manchester by year are:

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 (unpublished)
Count Number	123	91	68	48	58

- 6.3 The count figures demonstrate significant progress has been made since 2018 but the figure is beginning to increase.
- 6.4 The Council is working closely with a number of external partners to get a collective position on the number of people who are sleeping rough continuously, those who do so intermittently as part of a wider transient lifestyle and those who are at significant risk of street sleeping. Preventing people starting to sleep rough is an emerging priority work area and there are no current agreed criteria in place for assessing the risk of a person starting to sleep rough. Council officers are going to work with external partners on establishing agreed criteria for making 'at

risk of rough sleeping' assessments and this work will also be informed by comparable work being carried out in London.

- 6.5 An identified gap in service provision for people who sleep rough has been the limited 'off the street' emergency accommodation offer to people who sleep on the streets. Essentially whereby a person found sleeping rough, at whatever time of day/night, can be secured accommodation on an immediate basis. Such a service is vital so that an offer can be made when a person feels ready to take accommodation and to foster trust/engagement between the Council's outreach services and people who sleep rough. The 'A Bed Every Night' (ABEN) services in Manchester do not currently provide an 'off the street' offer and work on a referral/waiting list for admission basis. Since the beginning of November 2022, the Council has funded 66 'off the street' accommodation units at the Etrop hotel which is close to the airport. A range of Council and external support services who work with people who sleep rough are based at the Etrop. From January 2023 the Urban Village health service will provide a service at Etrop. The Etrop service is funded until the end of March 2023. A priority for January will be to identify how an ongoing 'off the street' service can be provided.
- 6.6 The Homeless Service is working to ensure that all people who street sleep have a live homeless application so that an assessment of housing need is carried out, to confirm the duties owed by the Local Authority to the person and so that the accommodation secured for the person is made under a legal accommodation duty. Approximately 130 rough sleepers have been placed in emergency accommodation since the beginning of November 2022 and the vast majority of these are being accommodated under a temporary accommodation duty and therefore are included within the temporary accommodation reporting number.

## **7.0 Rough Sleeping Initiative**

- 7.1 Manchester has successfully bid for funding through the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) since 2018 and has received £7.8 million for the period 2022 - 2025. This funding will continue to support a range of existing accommodation and support services, as well as increase access to the private rented sector for people who are ready for their own tenancy with resettlement support. The funding is also being used to expand specialist provision for young people and for women with complex needs.
- 7.2 Young People's pathway: RSI funding from April 2022 has expanded the existing Centrepont Outreach service for young people, and between July and December this service had worked with 174 young people either sleeping rough or at risk of rough sleeping. The funding has also provided an additional 8 units of short-term accommodation for young people in the city, with some dedicated resource to enable quick move-on, including into the private rented sector.
- 7.3 Complex Women's pathway: the pathway for women with a history of sleeping rough and complex support needs has been greatly enhanced using a

combination of RSI, Respite Rooms, and Domestic Violence and Abuse New Burdens funding. A new accommodation scheme, Peony Project, was launched in July 2022. Commissioned jointly with Salford City Council, Peony Project provides 9 self-contained units with five of these ring-fenced for Manchester women. Additional support is provided on-site by Manchester Women's Aid and Manchester Action on Street Health (MASH) using the successful Respite Rooms approach, and Change, Grow, Live ((CGL) commissioned drug and alcohol service) also provide a weekly drop-in session at the Project. This multi-agency approach will deliver better outcomes for women referred into the Project as well as reduce the costs of repeat homelessness often associated with this cohort.

## **8.0 A Bed Every Night (ABEN)**

8.1 There are currently 8 ABEN accommodation schemes in Manchester providing 174 short term bed spaces every night for people sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough. Included in this is a women only scheme and a scheme for the LGBT+ community. There are also two schemes for non-UK nationals and people with no recourse to public funds (NRPF). The ABEN schemes are funded in 2022/23 as follows:

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA): 88 bed spaces - £1,628,000
- Greater Manchester Mayor's Charity: 30 NRPF bed spaces - £396,00
- Manchester City Council: 56 bed spaces - £779,586

8.2 GMCA has indicated that funding for ABEN will continue until March 2025, although at a reduced rate in 2023/24 and further reduced in 2024/25. A review of ABEN services is currently being undertaken, both to address future budget constraints and to ensure that the schemes support the objectives in the Council's Ending Rough Sleeping plan. Key to this is ensuring that ABEN provides an immediate "off the street" emergency accommodation offer to people sleeping rough.

8.3 The Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme (RSAP) is a government funded capital and revenue programme to deliver medium-term (generally two to three-year tenancies) homes for people who sleep rough. Properties will be let to a succession of people who have slept on the streets over a 30-year period. Bids needed to be made by Manchester City Council, or the GMCA, as the strategic lead for homelessness in partnership with a Registered Provider that would part fund and manage the properties. Manchester City Council has bid for schemes which are to be managed as part of the wider council housing management pool. The Manchester bids have involved the purchase and repair of private sector housing to be integrated into the social landlord's stock base or the modernisation of existing moribund social housing stock that could not be let in its current form. Properties, given they are time-limited, are let on assured shorthold tenancies by local housing associations and non-secure tenancies by the Council. Tenants are

awarded priority on Manchester Move to help secure a 'lifetime' social housing tenancy. All tenants receive a housing support service. The Council secured funding for 159 properties and have been/will be allocated 61 properties from the GMCA allocation. To date around 100 properties have been let and it is hoped that the remaining properties will become available in 2023. Properties must be ready by the end of March 2024.

- 8.4 The Supported Housing Accommodation (SHAP) was launched in December 2022 and will complement RSAP provision in that it will fund capital and revenue schemes for supported housing schemes for people who sleep rough whose support needs are higher than that which would enable them to sustain an RSAP tenancy. Local services that work with people who sleep rough will hopefully play an important role in developing bids and delivering services. A standard condition of securing capital funding is that the scheme is managed by a Registered Provider. Part of the initial work on SHAP is partnering local services for people who sleep rough with Registered Providers. Manchester's RSAP bids involved the use of existing housing. There is the opportunity to develop new build, including modular build, schemes through SHAP. A Council contribution could be the provision of land. SHAP schemes need to be submitted to government in 2023/24 and delivered by the end of 2024/25. SHAP will deliver 2100 units of supported housing across England. The provisional target is to deliver 100 units in Manchester.

## **9.0 Move-on from Temporary Accommodation**

- 9.1 A number of the Manchester Registered Providers have agreed to make an additional 90 lets to families who are long-term resident in dispersed temporary accommodation with the focus being on those who have housing applications registered from before January 2020. The applicants will have their housing application priority status placed in Band 1 for re-housing and backdated to the date of move-in to temporary accommodation. The Allocations Policy Band 1 provision of 'management discretion' will be triggered to facilitate these priority awards. Applicants will be able to bid for available properties through choice-based lettings to ensure that families have a high level of choice in determining where they want to live. It is envisaged that the lettings will be made between January and June 2023. The released dispersed temporary accommodation units will be made available for families who are currently or would otherwise be placed in bed and breakfast accommodation. The success of the scheme heavily depends on the Homeless Service better preventing homelessness so that fewer new people require temporary accommodation.
- 9.2 The GMCA has secured £3.9m, to be drawn down in 2023/24, to deliver a capital leasing scheme providing longer-term tenancies to homeless families as move-on from temporary accommodation. The scheme will deliver 200 homes which will be sourced from private landlords and managed by local Registered Providers. The properties will be let on assured shorthold tenancies. The capital grant is intended to cover the net cost of the provision. It is assumed that Manchester will

be allocated 100 of the 200 properties. Further work on scheme detail will be carried out from January 2023.

## **10.0 Alternative Temporary Accommodation to B&B**

10.1 The Homeless Service is working with private providers in the city to deliver a leasing scheme for 200 units of self-contained dispersed accommodation that will be used as an alternative to bed and breakfast placements. The ask to providers is to deliver 120 two-bed, 60 three-bed and 20 four-bed properties. The term of the initial lease arrangement will be five years. The providers will be offered guaranteed rental payments and provision to cover repair and furniture costs. The ask to providers is to deliver 200 properties by the end of March 2022 although this is recognised as being an extremely demanding target. Providers have identified 21 properties as of 21<sup>st</sup> December 2022. It is forecast that the initiative will cost the Council £7.9m over the five-year term and save approximately £34m over the five-year period. This is based on a current net cost of one bed and breakfast placement of £819 per week once housing benefit deducted. The success of the scheme heavily depends on the Homeless Service better preventing homelessness so that fewer new people require temporary accommodation.

## **11.0 Commissioned Supported Housing**

11.1 Manchester's housing related support (HRS) services have been commissioned to provide accommodation with support that helps people move away from homelessness and prepare for independent living. The support is commissioned to be delivered on short term basis, supporting individuals in the schemes to develop resilience and recovery and practical life skills. When individuals have received the support they require and are ready to live independently the expectation is that they will move on to new accommodation at that point.

11.2 Four distinct housing related support pathways have been commissioned for adults, young people, people with complex needs and a history of rough sleeping and a pathway offering harm reduction and abstinence support for people with drug and alcohol support needs. Each pathway has a dedicated resettlement and floating support service.

11.3 Housing related support providers are required to return outcomes on a quarterly basis, covering both pathway wide outcomes as well as individual outcomes for all residents in the schemes. One element of the quarterly outcomes requires providers to confirm which residents are ready to move on. For each of the people who are ready to move on, the provider also details any barriers in place to move on, as well as the type of accommodation required.

11.4 From the quarterly outcomes we know that most of the residents in our housing related support accommodation schemes are ready to move on. At the end of

quarter 2 in 2022/23 the percentage of people ready to move on within each pathway was:

Pathway	Number of spaces	Number Ready to Move On	Percentage of total ready to move
Adults (Connect Manchester)	163	140	85%
Young Persons (Manchester Young Futures)	190	132*	69%*
Complex needs (Rough Sleeper)	59	30**	51%**
Drug & Alcohol (Harm reduction & abstinence support)	63	25*	40%*

Source: MAS Gateway. \*Some data missing. \*\*Q1 data

11.5 327 of the 465 people in supported housing have been assessed as 'ready to move-on'. Improving move-on from commissioned services is a key priority for the Homeless Service to ensure that there is a better functioning housing pathway:

- The Registered Providers want to let properties to people who are tenancy ready
- People who have been assessed as ready to move on from supported housing meet the definition of being tenancy ready
- Improving the success rate for people who are ready to move-on from supported housing will enable more effective use of accommodation and allow greater use by people, including rough sleepers and those placed in bed and breakfast accommodation, who require support.

11.6 The Manchester Allocations Policy awards Band 2 status for people who are ready to move-on from supported housing. The interpretation of this provision is that an award is made when the person is 'ready to move-on'. Waiting times for social housing means that it will be approximately two years before a person can move-on from supported housing after they are ready to move-on. This results in the bed blocking position. People in supported housing do not routinely have a homeless application. If they did then they would be owed the relief duty, with accompanying Band 2 award, from the date of admission. The Council needs to ensure there is equity in treatment for homeless applicants and those in supported housing. One option would be to backdate the Band 2 award, once a person is ready to move-on from supported housing, to the date of admission. Consideration will also be given to facilitating move-on to the private rented sector, with floating support, with a retained Band 2 award. Homeless applicants, owed the main duty, can accept a private rented offer and retain their Band 2

status and it is proposed that this option is extended to those owed the prevention or relief duties.

## 12.0 Dispersed Temporary Accommodation Contract Uplift

- 12.1 Where temporary accommodation is required the provision of dispersed temporary accommodation delivers a more affordable and suitable accommodation model than the use of B&B emergency hotel provision. Hotel accommodation for one family costs the Council on average £924 per week. There are currently (December 2022) over 200 families in B&B type accommodation in housing need. Over 90 have been in this accommodation in excess of 42 days, this means the Council is in breach of its statutory responsibility in this regard. This type of accommodation fails to provide the full facilities that a self-contained unit of accommodation can and providing support to household in hotels the Council does not manage is extremely challenging.
- 12.2 Supporting the elimination of B&B usage for families relies upon a steady supply of dispersed temporary accommodation from the 19 accommodation providers on the temporary accommodation (TC 504) framework agreement. Cost-of-living implications, mortgage rate rises, escalating property maintenance and material costs are resulting in accommodation providers struggling to procure enough temporary accommodation to meet current needs based on existing rental rates.

The rates the Council pays are no longer in step with the buoyant rental market. A table showing the average rents in comparison to the local housing allowance is in Appendix 3. A small rental uplift agreed in November 2021, paid for newly sourced 2 bed properties only within Manchester, failed to increase property flow. Faced with increasing costs accommodation providers have informed the service many of the small individual landlords they work with are withdrawing existing properties from the contract and they cannot procure new accommodation for our needs. The table below shows the number of properties, an 872% increase from the previous year, being withdrawn from the scheme due to the challenging market conditions.

<b>Properties removed from the dispersed scheme</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
Jan	2	8
Feb	0	18
Mar	0	3
Apr	0	3
May	0	11
June	0	14
July	4	29
Aug	4	49



Sept	2	12
Oct	2	19
Nov	4	9
Dec	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>175</b>

12.3 Whilst officers are progressing the prevention work outlined above, which should result in an overall reduction in the amount of temporary accommodation, it is essential that a rental uplift on temporary accommodation is secured to sustain existing temporary accommodation currently and support the flow of new stock required to reduce B&B numbers. A key decision request has been submitted on this matter for January 2023.

### 13.0 Improving Property Standards and Inspections

13.1 The Homeless Service is working hard to ensure that properties used as temporary accommodation are free from damp, mould and disrepair issues. All dispersed temporary accommodation properties are inspected by the Homelessness Inspection Team ensuring compliance with the Housing Health & Safety Rating Standard (HHSRS) prior to let.

13.2 In emergency accommodation (B&B), any issues of damp or disrepair are picked up by the services' Inspections Team. These issues may be picked up by the regular inspection regime that is in place, or through complaints from residents. Any complaints are taken very seriously, and staff will inspect to ascertain concerns. If there are issues of disrepair/damp or mould then people will be moved out of the affected rooms, and placed elsewhere in the B&B, or in a different accommodation site. The issue is subsequently addressed with the landlord to be rectified.

13.3 Significant work has been undertaken over the past year to improve standards in temporary accommodation by a newly created Housing Management and Inspections Team. The team has been increased by 4 additional staff (16 in total). Service improvement includes:

- A revised training package undertaken by inspectors in damp and mould assessment and management
- All staff within the wider team are trained to HHSRS inspection standards and able to spot category hazards effectively in temporary accommodation housing stock including damp and mould issues
- An improved collaborative approach working with all accommodation providers and escalation routes for damp, mould and disrepair to ensure a prompt response for residents
- Improved contract monitoring of requested repairs to ensure that all repairs are completed in a timely fashion as stipulated, and to the correct standard (HHSRS compliant)

- As families move into dispersed temporary accommodation a conversation takes place with both their support worker and housing management officer jointly around the prevention of condensation, damp and mould in a property. Tips and guidance are provided.
- A mailout to all residents living in dispersed temporary accommodation (1981 households) of a letter and leaflet providing advice and guidance on condensation prevention and damp and mould recognition and elimination has just taken place. This includes signposting to energy and money saving advice.

#### **14.0 Floating Support Prototype – a new way of working to deliver better outcomes, better lives.**

- 14.1 It has been acknowledged that newly placed households in dispersed temporary accommodation are at a greater risk of becoming a failing tenancy resulting from a delay in the service's ability to allocate a named face to face support worker at the outset of a tenancy. Currently, each support worker in the Floating Support Service is carrying a caseload of 45 dispersed temporary accommodation cases each. This ratio of visiting support provision is insufficient for those in housing need and must change. To deliver a better outcome for families, caseloads need to be reduced to an average 1 to 20 ratio model. The elimination of the use of B&B accommodation and subsequent reduction in budget pressure will enable the service to reinvest in sufficient staffing resources to fund the right level of support required in different settings to better meet housing needs.
- 14.2 The Floating Support Service began a 6-month prototype to trial the impact of allocating support at the commencement of a tenancy and reducing caseload numbers. The delivery of this intensive wraparound support offer began in October 2022. Each prototype support worker is allocated cases at the point a household moves into dispersed temporary accommodation. They will hold a maximum of 20 cases each to ensure quality time for an improved offer to clients.
- 14.3 At the end of the 3-month period, each case will be reviewed by the support worker and manager. They will assess whether the case is then regarded as a high or low need case. This will determine the type of support required going forward.
- 14.4 During the three months the prototype has been operating, support workers have identified multiple benefits to the new model and actioned many issues that the existing support model would not have picked up quickly. Some examples have been: Improved support for all families; addressing unclaimed child benefit; speedier assistance with school admissions; rent arrears prevention work; improved tenancy management; prompt discovery of property abandonment; subsequent improved ability to relet to other homeless families, thereby reducing the time spent in a B&B accommodation; improved ability to manage tenant expectations.

- 14.5 The prototype continues until March 2023 and the findings will inform the delivery model to be implemented.

## **15.0 BEAM**

- 15.1 The Floating Support Service is currently working in partnership with BEAM, an externally commissioned service focusing on families who have recently been placed into dispersed temporary accommodation and who, with a crowd funding model of support, could return to employment and move on from temporary accommodation.
- 15.2 To date 36 families have been referred into BEAM, of which 26 have been contacted for an appointment with case workers and 6 appointments made for the new year.
- 15.3 Each family is allocated a support worker from BEAM, who works with the family throughout their journey into employment and securing a suitable, affordable home within the private rented sector. Financial barriers are addressed and removed such as access to training, childcare costs, deposits and rent support via crowd funding donations, empowering homeless families into employment.

## **16.0 Young Persons Pathway**

- 16.1 Collaborative working with colleagues in children's services is continuing to help to shape and develop the young person's pathway. An action plan has been developed to guide and deliver the progress of the young person's pathway across homelessness and children's services. A key action in the plan is to develop a joint housing protocol for care leavers, which will help children's services, homelessness services and key partners ensure that the accommodation and support needs of all young people who are leaving care are met, and that homelessness is prevented where a risk of homelessness is identified. The protocol confirms our commitments as corporate parents and sets out how this commitment will be delivered in practice.
- 16.2 The joint housing protocol has been developed by officers in children's services leaving care team and homelessness colleagues. The protocol has also been co-produced with input from care leaver and young people currently receiving support within the young person's pathway, as well as key partners who provide accommodation and support for young people in Manchester. An engagement event was held in November 2022 where young people and partner organisations were invited to attend and give feedback on the joint housing protocol and services within the young person's pathway. Feedback from the event is currently being incorporated into the draft joint housing protocol and, once completed the final version will be delivered for approval.

## **17.0 Centrepont Housing Solutions Service for Young People**

- 17.1 The front door for Manchester’s housing solutions service for young people aged 18-25 years old is delivered from the Centrepoint hub at Oldham Street in the city centre. The Council’s housing solutions officers are based at the Centrepoint hub and work closely with Centrepoint officers to deliver a specialist service for young people and meet the duties to prevent and relieve homelessness under the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA).
- 17.2 The Council will be working with Centrepoint to put in place, where applicable, homeless prevention practice set out earlier in the report and to measure service performance using the performance metrics set out in the report introduction.
- 17.3 Alongside the work to meet homelessness prevention and relief duty work the Centrepoint services also deliver a flexible support for young people outside of the legal duties, where possible. The hub hosts a telephone advice line for young people, a rent deposit scheme, an independent living skills programme and delivers training opportunities and employment support. A health service with specialist mental health workers is also delivered from the Manchester Hub, along with the commissioned floating support and resettlement service that supports young people who are moving on to independence from the housing related support young person’s accommodation schemes, as well supporting young people who are at risk of homelessness within their own homes.

## **18.0 Greater Manchester Young People’s Prevention Pathfinder**

- 18.1 After an initial pilot in three local authority areas, including Manchester, the Greater Manchester Young Peoples Prevention Pathfinder now operates in all 10 boroughs in the region. The regional programme is managed by Greater Manchester Better Outcomes Partnership (GMBOP), with delivery within Manchester from DePaul UK. MCC Housing Solutions and Centrepoint teams are linked into the pathfinder team in Manchester and help to identify young people who would benefit from early-stage support that the programme offers. As of start December 2022 a total of 201 young people in Manchester had been accepted onto the pathfinder programme. Work is continuing via the programme steering group, GMBOP and GMCA to learn from activity and outcomes in the pathfinder to date and strengthen its ability to offer earlier preventative help.

## **19.0 Domestic Abuse Commissioning**

- 19.1 The domestic violence and abuse new burdens funding in 21/22 has enabled additional investment in specialist support services for people experiencing domestic violence and abuse, and the ambition is to provide a coordinated Domestic Abuse Support in Safe Accommodation Pathway in Manchester. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has just confirmed that this funding will continue until March 2025.
- 19.2 As well as providing additional staff in the IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisors) service, the funding has been used to deliver new services including:

- The Connect service, run by the Pankhurst Trust Manchester Women's Aid (PTMWA), and based in the Early Help Hubs, this continues to work at the earliest stage to prevent Domestic Abuse from escalating, and they report that 80% of their clients have been supported to remain in their own homes and are managing their tenancies.
- The Reach service, also run by PTMWA and delivered to singles and families living in dispersed accommodation, this includes housing related support, alongside specialist domestic abuse support and interventions. In the first two quarters of this year (up until September) they had supported 164 people to maintain a tenancy and helped to find emergency accommodation or a place in refuge for 28. Delivering this service is in line with our statutory duty to deliver support in safe accommodation to victims and this service also alleviates pressure on resources within the established Homelessness Floating Support Team.

19.3 As part of a large grants programme that has just been delivered, with support from Elected Members, refuges have been given money to support the move on of their residents. Smaller organisations that serve their local communities have also received funding to offer practical and emotional support to victims to help them stay safe. This can include paying for emergency accommodation and buying items of furniture/ white goods, connecting residents up to Wi-Fi as well as attending Groupwork sessions in their home language such as Polish or BSL (British Sign Language).

## **20.0 Homelessness Strategy Review**

- 20.1 Manchester's existing homelessness strategy covers the period 2018-2023. The Council intends to work with the Manchester Homelessness Partnership to develop a new homelessness strategy for the city for 2024. Prior to developing a new strategy, the Council is required to undertake a review of homelessness in the city and then publish the results of the review. The Homelessness Act 2002 s.2(1) sets out what should be covered within a homelessness review; this should include the levels, and likely future levels of homelessness in the city, the activities that are carried out to prevent homelessness and to secure accommodation for households that experience homelessness, as well as the provision of support for households who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The review should also consider the resources that are available to the authority and partners to deliver these activities. The findings of the review will then help to inform the development of Manchester's new homelessness strategy.
- 20.2 The document will be reviewed, updated and signed off by the Manchester Homelessness Partnership Strategy Scrutiny Group in early 2023

## **21.0 Conclusion**

- 21.1 Homelessness for any period of time can have a devastating impact on individuals and families and the council is absolutely committed in its mission to prevent homelessness in all its forms and to ensure residents have A Place to Call Home.
- 21.2 The Transformation programme continues to operate in a challenging context, with the cumulative impact of austerity, covid and the cost of living crisis continuing to adversely impact the housing market and exacerbate hardship for local communities, more often those with the least resources.
- 21.3 That said, the transformation programme's focus on prevention, increased access to tailored support and increasing the availability of both temporary and affordable housing as outlined in the report and the council's housing strategy, will have a positive impact in our aim to tackle homelessness head on and of course support residents to maintain or find a place to call home.

## Appendix 1

### The Homeless Service Improvement Plan

Refreshed priorities under the 4 Strategic Objectives

<b>Strategic Objective: Increasing Prevention</b>	<b>Strategic Objective: Ending Rough Sleeping</b>	<b>Strategic Objective: More Suitable &amp; Affordable Accommodation</b>	<b>Strategic Objective: Better Outcomes Better Lives</b>
<b>Priority 1</b> - Deliver an immediate access housing solutions service using different channels/at range of locations including the development of three localised hub services	<b>Priority 1</b> - Establish an off the street emergency accommodation offer to people sleeping rough including the review of ABEN service delivery	<b>Priority 1</b> - Ensure we have a sustainable/high quality privately sourced TA offer for as long as required	<b>Priority 1</b> – Deliver a housing support that targets support at priority points and is tailored to meet individual needs
<b>Priority 2</b> - Deliver a personalised housing solutions service, focused on homeless prevention, including social housing banding awards	<b>Priority 2</b> - Develop a case conferencing approach to rough sleepers including review of homeless application status	<b>Priority 2</b> - Develop a long-term leasing proposal, as an alternative to B&B, with private providers and fund through capital	<b>Priority 2</b> - Deliver a housing support service to people living in a range of tenures/ circumstances including care of family/ friends and PRS. One support service different settings
<b>Priority 3</b> - Develop an ‘invest to save’ approach comparing cost of homeless prevention to cost of TA	<b>Priority 3</b> - Deliver up to 200 RSAP units as swiftly as possible and ensure lets go to people sleeping rough	<b>Priority 3</b> - Case management panels established to speed up TA move on	<b>Priority 3</b> - Deliver a manageable housing support service with a standard ratio of 1 worker to no more than 20 clients
<b>Priority 4</b> - Make best use of housing stock in Manchester with a focus on people’s needs and preferences	<b>Priority 4</b> - Develop a number of viable SHAP proposals to submit to DLUHC including identifying land and or buildings	<b>Priority 4</b> - Recruit two Accommodation Providers specialists who will lead on interdepartmental work to deliver additional and improved housing options	<b>Priority 4</b> - Optimising move-on and improving access for people in Housing Related Support Services
		<b>Priority 5</b> - Effectively manage existing Temporary Accommodation provision	

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## Appendix 2

### Equality data for households in temporary accommodation

#### Ethnicity

	Families	Singles	Total	Percent
Any other Asian background	103	18	121	3.8
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	103	13	116	3.6
Any other ethnic group	118	28	146	4.6
Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background	9	2	11	0.3
Any other White background	98	34	132	4.1
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	29	7	36	1.1
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	4	1	5	0.2
Asian/Asian British: Indian	8	8	16	0.5
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	186	58	244	7.6
Black/ African/Caribbean/Black British: African	500	112	612	19.1
Black/ African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	51	25	76	2.4
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	11	1	12	0.4
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	20	12	32	1.0
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	48	32	80	2.5
Other ethnic group: Arab	163	40	203	6.3
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	529	501	1030	32.2
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	15	4	19	0.6
White: Irish	16	9	25	0.8
Don't know / refused	158	58	216	6.8
Not recorded	12	53	65	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2181</b>	<b>1016</b>	<b>3197</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### Sexual orientation of the main applicant

	Families	Singles	Total	Percent
Heterosexual / Straight	2007	743	2750	86.0
Gay / Lesbian	6	35	41	1.3
Bisexual	1	6	7	0.2
Other sexual orientation	12	7	19	0.6
Applicant Prefers not to say	143	172	315	9.9
Not recorded	12	53	65	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2181</b>	<b>1016</b>	<b>3197</b>	<b>100</b>

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### Appendix 3 Rent Amounts on the Open Market in Comparison to Local Housing Allowance Rates

Ward	Claimants in PRS	1Bed Rent	Difference from LHA	2Bed Rent	Difference from LHA	% Within LHA
Gorton & Abbey Hey	1853	£625	£27	£741	£93	52.6%
Levenshulme	1722	£638	£40	£815	£167	29.0%
Harpurhey	1492	£618	£20	£693	£45	74.8%
Crumpsall	1452	£637	£39	£737	£89	57.8%
Moss Side	1327	£742	£144	£892	£244	11.3%
Longsight	1297	£651	£53	£757	£109	32.8%
Clayton & Openshaw	1215	£688	£90	£812	£164	27.0%
Moston	1206	£525	-£73	£727	£79	41.9%
Cheetham	1194	£720	£122	£850	£202	40.8%
Whalley Range	1187	£657	£59	£853	£205	33.0%
Rusholme	949	£683	£85	£839	£191	33.7%
Miles Platting & Newton Heath	938	£666	£68	£818	£170	28.2%
Higher Blackley	747	£612	£14	£744	£96	55.2%
Charlestown	663	£583	-£16	£709	£61	37.7%
Ardwick	641	£733	£135	£906	£258	9.9%
City Centre	561	£906	£308	£721	£73	0.8%
Withington	557	£710	£112	£870	£222	21.8%
Burnage	542	£757	£159	£795	£147	13.7%
Woodhouse Park	499	£666	£142	£845	£197	13.9%
Hulme	496	£773	£175	£866	£218	7.2%
Old Moat	467	£727	£129	£964	£316	10.8%
Chorlton Park	462	£743	£145	£922	£274	6.4%
Northenden	459	£638	£114	£850	£202	17.9%
Fallowfield	449	£609	£11	£814	£166	27.2%
Ancoats & Beswick	431	£707	£109	£915	£267	3.2%
Baguley	418	£575	£51	£846	£198	14.0%
Sharston	408	£688	£164	£841	£193	9.5%
Brooklands	387	£650	£126	£859	£211	9.9%
Didsbury West	349	£781	£183	£1,057	£409	6.8%
Chorlton	337	£771	£173	£1,015	£367	7.7%
Didsbury East	287	£757	£159	£1,001	£353	4.9%

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**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 10 January 2023

**Subject:** Advice Services Update

**Report of:** Director of Housing Operations

### Summary

This report provides members with an overview of the advice services within the city. It details the range of provision across the city and outlines the outcomes achieved through the advice contracts that the Council commissions. It articulates the pressures that are increasing for all advice providers in serving Manchester's population. The report explains the offer that other advice providers give, including the Councils retained advice service and Registered Providers provision.

### Recommendations

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

### Wards Affected: All

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

The City-wide Advice Service (CWAS) providers play their part in limiting the impact of climate change. They are committed to reducing waste, limiting energy consumption, and procuring materials from sustainable sources where possible. They are looking to include this commitment within their supply chain. Their work includes addressing tenancies affected by damp and disrepair. The resulting property improvements increase their energy efficiency. On back of CWAS funding one of the providers Citizens Advice Manchester (CAM) obtained additional funding for an energy champion. They deliver efficiency advice and training programs empowering citizens to make informed choices.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

The inequalities suffered by some individuals or groups were comprehensively evidenced in the Marmot Report 'Build Back Fairer in Greater Manchester: Health Equity and Dignified Lives'. It has since been acknowledged that in Manchester that the need for advice services is directly related to the disadvantages suffered by some individuals or groups because of their characteristics.

The work of Advice services in supporting residents helps the city council to meet our public sector equality duty and broader equality commitments.

People accessing advice services are some of the most vulnerable and marginalised communities in the city.

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Advice services, including the City-Wide Advice Service (CWAS) contract provides a range of employment opportunities to Manchester residents. The city-wide advice contract also brings in additional funding and job opportunities, including for people with lived experience.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The CWAS partners have made a commitment to pay the Manchester real living wage and invest in staff, volunteer and resident training programs Assisted digital services empowers residents through information, advice, and education. They are investing into local communities, building resilience, and providing sustainable solutions. Two of the CWAS providers Cheetham Hill Advice Centre (CHAC) and Citizen Advice Manchester's (CAM) decision-making boards are all volunteers from their local communities. CWAS design involved people with lived experience in both the co-production and co-evaluation.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Advice provision aims to remove or reduce inequalities enabling all residents to have a fair and equal chance to contribute no matter where they live enhancing community resilience and vibrancy.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Advice provision strengthens citizens' ability tackle issues around fuel poverty and take steps to improve energy efficiency making Manchester a destination of choice for people to live.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	CWAS providers are an advocate for digital inclusion, and offer advice through a range of digital channels such as video, whatsapp and facebook messaging. Their office and outreach locations are accessible by public transport encouraging sustainable travel choices.

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management

- Legal Considerations

**Financial Consequences – Revenue**

None

**Financial Consequences – Capital**

None

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

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

Citizens Advice Cost of Living Dashboard

[CA cost of living data dashboard | Flourish](#)

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Our Manchester Strategy 2025 articulates a vision of our city where residents from all backgrounds feel safe, can aspire, succeed, and live well. A key element of this is having a robust advice offer that supports those who can, to access advice independently, with more targeted support in place for those people who need a little more help to access, understand and act on the information given to them.
- 1.2 This paper provides an update on the Manchester advice sector, including the CWAS contract and other non-commissioned services, as well as setting out the challenges faced by the sector.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Over the last decade advice provision has changed substantially across the city. A new city-wide advice service (CWAS) model was commissioned in 2014 and recommissioned in 2019. This service is underpinned by a new approach to delivering advice focused on developing individuals' capacity to self-manage, as well as delivering a range of advice channels to meet different needs. The key principles of this approach are:
- Early intervention and prevention action, rather than allowing problems to escalate
  - A one-stop Manchester helpline and website, providing a comprehensive advice service for the general public which can act as a safety net for those who have nowhere else to go or, whose needs cannot be met by other providers
  - Use of new digital technology, not just to reduce costs, but to provide information and advice in innovative ways to interact with individuals who are not digitally excluded
  - Ensuring that more face-to-face, in-depth and resource intensive support can be targeted at those most in need and most disadvantaged
  - Maximising investment into front line advice provision rather than in buildings through embedding advice in settings where people regularly go, such as GP surgeries and community centres.

## **3.0 Advice Services in Manchester - The City-Wide Advice Service (CWAS) Contract**

- 3.1 The current city-wide advice contract is delivered by a City-wide Advice Partnership consisting of three organisations:
- Citizens Advice Manchester (CAM)
  - Shelter
  - Cheetham Hill Advice Centre (CHAC)
- 3.2 The contract covers the provision of welfare benefit advice, debt management, and housing/homelessness advice, and has three elements:



- General access - multiple channels providing access for the widest range of clients, including online and face to face delivery.
- Priority Access – Proactive advice offer targeted at key partners such as the Early Help Hubs; hospital outreach; joint working with partners such as social work teams, DWP, housing associations, mental health & drug and alcohol services etc.
- Private Rented Sector Advice – Early intervention and prevention for vulnerable tenants, including work with landlords and managing agents.

3.3 The contract was awarded on a three-year basis in 2019 and was renewed in April 2022 for an additional two years. The recommissioning process for a new contract will begin in 2023, with a new contract in place from April 2024. The annual contract value is £960,000.

3.4 Using a blended access approach, advice services are delivered across six main channels:

1. A Gateway website offering a suite of self-help resources covering welfare benefits, debt and housing topics, in easily understood formats.
2. Enhancing Digital access: via website, email, Skype, facebook messenger and WhatsApp
3. Telephone Gateway: for early and brief interventions and referral to specialist advice when required
4. Face-to-face drop-in at Digital Assisted Hubs – one in each of the city's 12 neighbourhoods
5. Face-to-face appointments at Citizens Advice, Shelter or CHAC's office where more in-depth advice is required
6. Referrals from partner agencies

3.5 Contact details for the three CWAS advice agencies can be found in appendix 2 of this report.

#### **4.0 City-Wide Advice Service (CWAS) Advice Delivery**

4.1 As part of the general access element of the contract, face to face advice is currently delivered at Longsight Library, Wythenshawe Forum, and Newton Heath Library at weekly drop-ins. Virtual access is also provided at various venues via community access kiosks.

	Location	Session times	Frequency
Face to face	Longsight Library, Wythenshawe Forum, Newton Heath Library	10am-1pm	Weekly
Community access kiosk	Longsight Library, Wythenshawe forum, Newton heath Library, Gorton Sure Start Centre, Wai-Yin Welcome Centre, ITC Centre, Avenue Library, Manchester Settlement, Longsight Library, Number 93, Levenshulme inspire, NEPHRA Good Neighbours,	various	Weekly

	Beacon Centre, The Bread & Butter Thing, Yes Centre - Newton Heath, Gorton Hub, Powerhouse, Lime Square, Harpurhey Market, RASTA HQ, St Ambrose primary School, St Georges Community Centre.		
Mobile Advice Van	The Bread & Butter Thing, Yes Centre - Newton Heath, Gorton Hub, MRI, Wythenshawe Hospital, Powerhouse, Lime Square, Harpurhey Market, RASTA HQ, St Ambrose Primary School, St Georges Community Centre	10am – 3:30pm	Dependent on venue

- 4.2 In September 2022 CAM launched their new Advice Van. The van is out in communities across the city throughout the week providing people with immediate access to the information and advice they need. CAM works with partners to target the sessions at groups / communities where there is most need and works with residents to understand where they would be most likely to access the service. Based on this feedback, the van has been taken to shopping centre (Limesquare) and supermarket car parks.
- 4.3 The van also enables CAM to take their service to people who are impacted by the cost-of-living crisis and have not reached out to an advice service before / do not know what help is available. The van includes several digital kiosks through which residents are assisted to make online transactions with energy companies, local and national government supporting their digital inclusion.
- 4.4 A key element of the CWAS general access offer is digital innovation. CAM has adopted Facebook Messenger as a primary access channel allowing customers to send messages both synchronously and asynchronously, which addresses the growing demand outside standard business hours. In addition, they host an Energy Advice Chatbot, which is available through Facebook, Whatsapp and other channels. The Chatbot instantly provides fixed answers to simple questions and common problems by sending clients straight to a self-help page on the public CAM site. The service is also planning to broadcasts live events and offer Q&A sessions through all social media platforms; TikTok, Twitter, and Facebook. The live sessions will ensure the maximum possible reach, raising awareness around key issues including energy. CAM will pro-actively encourage people to ‘ask the expert’ during these sessions and provide viewers with detailed information on how to access services.
- 4.5 Whilst digital innovation has supported the CWAS to reach new communities and engage with residents in different ways, a Digital by Default strategy can cause numerous challenges for marginalised and digitally excluded communities. In response to this, CAM’s Energy Champions focus their efforts on working those communities/individuals who are impacted most by digital exclusion. Plans for 2023 include the Energy Champions delivering awareness

sessions in venues where people will have access to IT equipment and will be helped and supported by our Energy Champion to:

- Sign up to the Extra Care Register
- Connect to the Energy Chat Bot
- Access the self-help Energy materials on the Citizens Advice website

4.6 Alongside the work delivered by CAM, Cheetham Hill Advice Centre (CHAC) also provide a dedicated and comprehensive advice offer from their offices in Cheetham Hill. CHAC offer face to face appointments Monday to Friday alongside sessions to make appointments or drop off documents on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between 10am and 1pm. They can provide advice in ten languages and also arrange interpreters when needed.

4.7 The targeted and private rented sector elements of the contract are delivered directly by Shelter. The service provides several face-to-face advice sessions, either via appointment or drop-in at a range of venues across the city.

Location	Frequency	Appointment or Face to Face
Whalley Range Sure Start	Monthly	Appointment
Moss Side Sure Start	Monthly	Appointment
Cheetham Hill Sure Start	Every two weeks	Appointment
Booth Centre	Monthly	Appointment
Cornerstone	Every two weeks	Drop-In
JCP Mosely Street	Every two weeks	Appointment
Manchester Action on Street Health (MASH)	Monthly	Drop-In
Women's Aid	Monthly	Drop-In

4.8 In addition, Shelter has been working closely with the Manchester Communication Academy to deliver rights awareness training to academies/schools whose pupils reside in poor housing provision. The aim of this is to enable front line staff to effectively advocate for the families that they are working with. Shelter has also been providing rights awareness training around homelessness, disrepair, and security of tenure for the Community health/adult social care Integrated Neighbourhood Teams in Hulme, Moss Side and Rusholme.

## 5.0 Advice Demand, Trends, and Pressures

5.1 The table below details advice given through the general access element of the contract, by advice channel, since 2019.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 (Q1 & 2)
Face to Face Drop In	6,000	259	804	1,093
Telephone	58,111	52,460	63,762	32,642
Digital Webchat/Facebook Messenger/Whatsapp	3,200	5,224	5,224	2,990

Website	55,000	59,520	69,051	330,000
Video	0	0	624	552
TOTAL (incl. website)	122,311	117,483	139,485	367,277
TOTAL (excl. website)	67,311	57,963	70,434	37,277

- 5.2 Support via telephone and digital access, including CAM's website, has risen over the last few years, and delivery of face-to-face advice has begun to rise again post pandemic. The development of video advice has also helped to provide a valuable new offer as this allows CAM to increase their reach and the number of appointments that they are able to offer.
- 5.3 All advice services report an increase in demand for advice services, and increased complexity of the issues that people are presenting with. The impact of Brexit and cost-of living increases has played a key part in driving demand and further detail about the impact of cost of living is in section 12 of this report.
- 5.4 The CWAS has seen a significant increase in the number of enquiries this year. There was a 50% jump in the number of enquiries between the beginning of April 2022 to end of September 2022. Since the contract began in 2019 there had been a general decline in the number of welfare rights enquiries as individuals understood Universal Credit. However, since April 2022 this area has seen a 40% enquiry increase, demonstrating the pressures that individuals and families are facing in making ends meet. For the same period debt enquiries worryingly increased almost 8 times from 519 in April to June 2022, to 3,910 in July to September 2022. During this period housing enquiries almost doubled. These statistics show the very real impact that the current economic situation is having on Manchester residents.
- 5.5 Shelter has reported that the level of demand from people in need who contact Shelter Manchester directly means that they must prioritise those families/individuals who are in crisis and where they can add something extra to the support that they may already be receiving. This means that for some of the people who contact them directly they signpost due to capacity to engage in form filling, initiating benefit claims etc. In addition, people are presenting with increased mental health difficulties that often need multi-agency support. This means cases are taking longer to support/resolve, with a lack of suitable accommodation further hindering progress.
- 5.6 The relative proportion of face-to-face to online accessible advice also remains an ongoing issue across the city. Many detailed issues relating to welfare benefits and debt, in particular, are not easily resolved remotely and require a higher proportion of face-to-face access.
- 5.7 A further area of concern is around employment advice. Access to (free) employment advice for those in work has been a challenge for Manchester residents for a number of years. Whilst CAM has some employment advice as part of the initial contact, general advice and signposting offer it is not currently covered as part of the CWAS casework and specialist contract. CAM has worked in partnership with The Growth Company to provide access to

employment advice through local solicitors delivering pro-bono advice to offset this, however demand is still outstripping capacity particularly for more generalist level employment queries. Their employment enquiry figures from April 2022 to September 2022 show a significant increase.

## **6.0 Impact of the City Wide Advice Service contract**

- 6.1 Despite demand and complexity of support needed, the CWAS has been successful in achieving significant cash gains for residents in terms of welfare benefits. They secured £8.1m for residents in 2020/21, rising to £8.3m in 2021/22. In the first two quarters of 2022/23 they have so far secured £4.9m, which indicates that cash gains for this year will likely once again be higher than previous years.
- 6.2 The CWAS providers assist residents to manage or write off their debt liabilities. The cash figure for 2020/21 was £7.1m which rose to £9.6m for 2020/22. From April 2022 to September 2022 this figure stands at £11.3m. Through reducing debt and maximising income, the CWAS providers have a significant positive impact on reducing financial hardship.
- 6.3 Over the past 12 months, the CWAS has been actively involved in preventing households living in the private rented sector (PRS) from losing their homes. This work has included supporting a targeted communications campaign in 10 specific areas of the city and providing dedicated advice resources to those households who need advice. Additional funding of £300k through the Vulnerable Renters Fund was provided to CWAS and this is being used to prevent households in the PRS from becoming homeless.
- 6.4 The CWAS provides a range of volunteering opportunities to Manchester residents with comprehensive training to develop skills and knowledge, and support to meet the needs of disabled volunteers. For many this can be a route into employment – nearly one third of volunteers who leave CAM go into paid employment.
- 6.5 The advice services that make up the CWAS bring in additional investment into the city through other contracts, bringing added value to the contract and increasing the reach and capacity of advice services across Manchester. See 9.0 below for more information.

## **7.0 Social Value and Tackling Inequalities**

- 7.1 Social value and tackling inequalities are key elements of the contract and CWAS partners endeavour to ensure that social and added value is embedded across everything they do. A recent review of the service demonstrated positive delivery of social value in the following areas:
- Being a good local employer
  - Improving the health and wellbeing of the people they support
  - Involving people with lived experience
  - Contributing towards strong local communities

- Environmental impact
  - Supporting the Manchester Poverty Truth Commission
  - Supporting the Covid-19 Vaccination programme
- 7.2 The CWAS is also committed to tackling inequalities, both through the advice they deliver and within their own organisations. All staff undertake mandatory annual equalities training to ensure that they are empowered to identify and act upon discrimination. All organisations' boards also have quotas for BAME membership. In addition, Shelter, in response to Black Lives Matter, has undertaken an anti-racism theory of change programme to inform how the organisation needs to change to become truly anti-racist.
- 7.3 Data from advice providers clearly shows that issues requiring an advice response disproportionately impact certain communities and groups, with many vulnerable groups are being far more disproportionately and detrimentally impacted on than others. In particular, disabled people and people living with long-term health conditions now seek help for issues related to the cost-of-living crisis more than all their other issues combined. Lone or single parents similarly, are having to face extremely tough decisions and many report that they feed their children and go hungry themselves. At the same time, tenants renting in both private and social housing and people of colour are more impacted by negative budgets. This means their essential costs are not met by their income, so they are effectively insolvent. For the 6-month period from March to September 2022 CWAS have seen an increase from 36% to 48% of the number of people with a negative budget.
- 7.4 CWAS service user monitoring for the first two quarters of 2022 showed that:
- 57% of service users were women which is an increase on the 55% figure recorded in 2015/16.
  - 37% were from BAME communities a drop from 40% in 2015/16 but still higher than recorded in the Census 2011 for Manchester. This figure varied between the different advice organisations, for example, 83% of clients seen by Cheetham Hill Advice Centre for 2021/22 were from BAME backgrounds. Shelter report that over 50% of the clients that they assist through their Targeted Advice offer are from an ethnic minority.
  - 46% were disabled people or people with a long-term health condition compared to 34% in 2015/16 (again, this is significantly higher than the numbers recorded in the 2021 census for people in Manchester who are recorded as having their day-to-day activities as limited). In addition, the 2022 community funded Greater Manchester Law Centre Neighbourhood Advice Project reported that 82% of clients advised disclosed that they have an underlying health issue/disability.
- 7.5 The CWAS actively seeks to address multiple inequalities through their work, including income inequality, wealth inequality, racial inequality, housing inequality and health inequality. Key elements of this work include:
- Targeting their face - face advice at the most vulnerable communities through their Mobile Advice Unit

- Targeting the work of their energy champions at those most likely to be in fuel poverty
- Providing advice from locations accessible by disabled people and providing support for those who access their services remotely. This includes ensuring they are bearing the costs of accessing advice rather than residents (e.g. phone calls, stamps, envelopes, photocopying, scanning and accessing on-line processes).
- Providing advice to women who are disproportionately in households with poverty, in part-time and lower paid work and disproportionately facing harassment and violence.
- Providing help to people who have no recourse to public funds.
- Providing advice in multiple languages directly and in other languages via translation.
- Providing advice on employment issues that are disproportionately faced by people for racialised communities (e.g. unfair dismissal, wage theft).
- Advising people who are notifying official agencies of a change of name and/or gender.
- Helping older residents to claim access to their pensions, claim pension credits, access bus passes and meet any additional costs needed for their health and independence.
- Working alongside Manchester Deaf Centre to ensure that people with hearing loss are able to access advice
- Undertaking a piece of work with Autizma to ensure that the CWAS service and written materials are accessible to neuro diverse communities.

## **8.0 Volunteer Programmes**

- 8.1 In 2022 CAM welcomed back a group of volunteers who volunteered with them pre pandemic and recruited a new intake of volunteers. These volunteers have now completed their training and are supporting front line delivery on CAM's Advice Van. A further 10 volunteers have recently been recruited. In addition, CAM have been working with the city's two Universities to give students the opportunity to volunteer with CAM and gain an insight into the advice sector as a career option post-graduation.
- 8.2 CHAC recruits residents to be volunteer advisors. Initial training is delivered via the Manchester Volunteer Advice partnership (MVAP) partnership. On-going support, supervision and training is provided by an Advice and Volunteer Manager. Expenses are provided.
- 8.3 Shelter currently has 3 volunteers attached to various programmes, including a person with lived experience, who is receiving funded employment experience as part of a pathway into employment. Shelter's 'Health Now' project also has numerous peer advocates who have lived experience.

## **9.0 Bringing Investment into the City**

- 9.1 CAM recently secured a new contract with Cadent to provide energy advice across the north-west. This enables them to provide a dedicated energy service for Manchester residents and includes an Energy Champion to work

with residents and front-line workers to raise awareness of energy issues and referral pathways into the service. In addition, CAM deliver advice in Trussell trust food banks across the city with this work is being funded by Trussell Trust.

- 9.2 CAM holds a contract to deliver face-to-face and telephone debt advice (locally and nationally) funded by Money Advice and Pension Service. A planned expansion of the service offer will potentially provide employment opportunities for up to 30 local residents.
- 9.3 Shelter also bring further significant investment into the city. In addition to the 5 Manchester Targeted Advice posts they also deliver the following:
- Motiv8 – 3 posts
  - Changing Futures - 5 posts a shared integrated mental health key worker
  - Network Rail team - 4 posts plus a shared integrated mental health key worker
  - Shelter Funded - 5 Advice Posts; 1 Team Leader; 1 Service Manager
  - Fairer Housing Futures – 2 posts
  - Health Now – 1 post plus peer advocacy service
  - Manchester Legal Team - 6 solicitors, 2 paralegals
  - DIYSA (DIY Skills Adviser) – 1 post
- 9.4 During the current contract, CHAC has raised an additional £821,590 for services to residents in Manchester. This includes £113,904 that was raised by CHAC to be distributed with other voluntary sector groups in the city.

## **10.0 Other Advice Providers in the City**

10.1 Alongside the CWAS, there are also several other organisations across the city providing specialist advice.

### 10.2 Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit (GMIAU)

10.3 The Manchester City Council contract for specialist immigration advice is currently held by Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit (GMIAU) who are a voluntary organisation with an established track record of supporting people subject to immigration control from their office in Crumpsall. They offer free legal advice, representation and support services to people seeking asylum, refugees, children and vulnerable adults. GMIAU represents clients at all stages of appeals and Judicial Review in the Immigration and Asylum Chamber, Administrative Court and Court of Appeal.

10.4 GMIAU have held the contract for immigration advice in Manchester since 2014. They have a national reputation for their work as well as a very high profile in Greater Manchester and the north west of England. The contracted service delivers a number of positive outcomes for their client group. These include:

- Being supported and settled into the community



- Achieving freedom and independence
- Developing networks
- Improving positive outlook and mental health
- Access to healthcare and education
- Supportive family units and relationships

#### 10.5 Manchester City Council In-house Advice Provision

10.6 The city Council's in-house advice offer is comprised of 3 distinct teams. The Appeals Team provides free court representation to any Manchester resident whose appeal against a DWP decision (typically Universal Credit or Personal Independence Payment (PIP)) is assessed to have merit, thus ensuring access to justice. Their current cash gains for 2022 stands at £1m. Mental Health Advisers work in partnership with Health colleagues to advocate for users of secondary level mental health services on key social welfare law issues including benefits, debt & housing, from form-filling to appeal work. In 2022 they generated cash gains for residents of £4m. A similar condition-specific service is afforded to anyone with a cancer diagnosis (and their carers/dependants) who are receiving treatment in Manchester. The Macmillan advisers are hospital-based and work closely with clinical staff from North Manchester General Hospital, Manchester Royal Infirmary and Wythenshawe Hospital. Approximately 50% of the clients seen are from within the Manchester City Council boundary and this service has secured a current 2022 cash gain of £7m.

#### 10.7 Manchester Volunteer Advice Partnership (MVAP)

10.8 MVAP is a partnership of voluntary organisations, providing free training and voluntary placements to Manchester residents who want to volunteer in advice services. The partnership works in collaboration with partner organisations Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit, Manchester Refugee Support Network, Cheetham Hill Advice Centre, and Manchester City Council Homelessness Team to share knowledge and best practice.

#### 10.9 Gateway M40 Debt Advice and Money Education Centre

10.10 Gateway M40 serve tenants from Jigsaw Miles Platting and Housing Operations (formally Northwards Housing) plus referrals from partner organisations, self-referrals and walk ins. They are a team of 7 employees with an FTE 3.8 and around 20 volunteers. Their main office and interview suite is based at Wilson Park, plus 4 outreach centres located at Church of the Saviour Collyhurst, No.93 Harpurhey, Blackley Hub and St Georges Community Centre who offer sessions on a weekly / fortnightly basis. Their qualified caseworkers provide face to face welfare rights and debt advocacy services. In 2022 they completed 1743 face to face debt and welfare benefit interviews and saw 5000 clients as part of a Food Pantry support programme. Their service outcomes included £1.3m of debt managed, £305,430.52 awarded in additional benefits and arranged for 1224 crisis fuel vouchers to be issued. In 2023 they will be offering additional welfare rights and debt advocacy outreach sessions at Newton Job Centre and Newton Heath Library.

### 10.11 Greater Manchester Law Centre

10.12 Greater Manchester (GM) Law Centre are a campaigning organisation that includes an offer free legal advocacy to residents across the Greater Manchester region. They are a founder member of the Housing Justice Network working in partnership with Manchester Tenants Union. As part of their social policy work, they have successfully challenged Government policy which resulted in asylum seekers with a negative decision being accommodated during the pandemic and recently an upward revision of the rate of support to asylum seekers to reflect the cost-of-living price increases. Their advocacy work focuses on the needs of clients who for multiple reasons of exclusion cannot access legal help from private solicitors. They provide in-depth case work to a specialist level in:

- Welfare Benefits
- Employment
- Housing
- Discrimination
- Human Rights
- Debt
- Domestic Abuse
- Education
- Community Care
- Mental Health
- Immigration and Asylum
- Public Law.

10.13 Since August 2022, GM Law Centre has been delivering the Neighbourhood Advice Project. Through this they have delivered 13 advice sessions at Westcroft Community Centre, Barlow Moor Community Centre, Burnage Library, and Didsbury Mosque. In total, 55 residents have been supported so far.

### 10.14 Registered Providers

10.15 Registered Providers play a key role in delivering welfare and debt advice to their tenants. Below are some examples of the schemes offered:

- Housing Services (formally Northwards Housing) employ 4 Money Advisors who are affiliated to the Institute of Money Advice to support their residents. They also offer casework advice on welfare rights, including access to Universal Credit (UC) and Personal Independence Payments (PIP), as well as dealing with debt cases and working alongside the Appeals Team.
- Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG) has a team of 5 Financial Inclusion Officers who also advise tenants around their welfare benefits rights and debt management. They support tenants with foodbank vouchers, signposting to local food pantries. They have an officer who assists people accessing community support which include warm hubs,

food hubs and schemes designed to reduce social isolation. Their Livingwell fund is currently providing emergency fuel support, and white goods if there are no other support options.

- Clarion provides nonregulated money guidance via the telephone. They help residents to understand their household money needs, budget, entitlements, energy costs and money pressures so an action plan can be agreed. For residents engaging with the service, they can provide short term help in the form of supermarket and or energy vouchers. They can also help with white goods and beds in cases of financial hardship.
- Johnnie Johnson Money Advice Team provides customers with advice and guidance on a range of financial issues such as benefits and entitlements, UC and managed migration, debt and rent arrears, energy advice and money saving tips, budgeting and benefit calculations, understanding bills and priority payments, cost of living information and benefits entitlements. They also have a wellbeing team to provide a holistic support package.
- Arawak Housing association are assisting their tenants through advice communication interventions promoting welfare and energy support schemes.

## **11.0 Manchester Advice Forum (MAF)**

- 11.1 A key part of Manchester's advice offer is the Manchester Advice Forum (MAF). The MAF, which meets quarterly, works collaboratively with commissioners, statutory, voluntary stakeholders and service users to enable a more coordinated and informed approach to the planning, funding and effective targeting of advice services. The MAF is comprised of advice providers from across the city, as well as the City Wide Advice Service.
- 11.2 Over the last three months the MAF has been working collaboratively to target resources around communities most impacted by cost-of-living increases. They have also built an awareness of each other's provision, so services are not duplicated. The forum's workplan for 2023 includes developing a collaborative response to the city's new Anti-Poverty Strategy as well as continuing to develop joint working relationships and initiatives, and working to capacity build frontline staff working for the city council, partners, and the VCSE.

## **12.0 Response to Covid-19**

- 12.1 The global outbreak of Covid-19 in early 2020, and the subsequent UK-wide restrictions created significant challenges for Manchester's advice sector. The sector worked hard to adapt to the changes to service provision necessitated by Covid-19. This included increasing access to telephone and digital channels and investing in new technology and ways of working. Similarly, extensive effort went into establishing new services to meet new and emerging need.
- 12.2 The City Wide Advice Service invested significant time and resource into developing a new advice model to the city's changing needs. This included expanding referral pathways into their services by developing links with

emergency food providers, homeless day centres and housing solutions teams to ensure access to advice is embedded into support being delivered across the city. They also sought to meet the predicted increase in volume and demand through:

- Extending their service hours to be more agile
- Delivering more capacity on digitally and by telephone
- Increasing volunteer numbers

12.3 A gradual return to face-to-face provision has occurred since restrictions were lifted, but newly developed digital channels have remained in place to meet growing demand.

### 13.0 Cost of Living

13.1 The cost of living has been increasing across the UK since early 2021. The annual rate of inflation reached 11.1% in October 2022, a 41-year high, affecting the affordability of goods and services for households. Coupled with rising energy and food costs, many individuals and families across the city have seen a real-term drop in incomes. The impact of the cost-of-living crisis also reach far beyond 'disadvantaged' parts of our population: 4 in 5 (82%) Greater Manchester (GM) residents say their cost of living has increased during October 2022 and a similar proportion (80%) are worried about the rising costs of living.<sup>1</sup> A third (34%) of GM homeowners are already finding it difficult to pay their mortgage, whilst almost half (47%) of renters are having difficulties with rent payments.<sup>2</sup>

13.2 The impact of cost-of-living increases on advice services has been significant. CAM has reported they have experienced unprecedented demand for its services, from young families wondering how they will pay the bills, to people unable to afford to heat their homes, and isolated older people struggling to cope. The number of calls a month has nearly doubled from 4000 to 7000 compared to pre pandemic levels

13.3 Data from CAM shows that between March and September 2022 requests for crisis help increased by 154%. In addition, there has been:

- An 102% increase in the number of people presenting with council tax arrears compared to 2021
- An increase of 1,163% in the number of clients presenting with Buy Now Pay later arrears (eg Klarna) and are getting into financial difficulty.
- A 161% increase in debts such as gym memberships, nursery fees, tuition fees
- An increase from 36% to 48%, in the numbers of people in 'negative budgets', where essential costs are not met by someone's income. This is a challenge as many current debt solutions are not appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> Greater Manchester Residents' Survey Survey 4 October 2022

<sup>2</sup> Greater Manchester Residents' Survey Survey 4 October 2022

- An increase in families struggling to manage their energy costs. Nationally, by the end of August, Citizens Advice had seen almost as many people struggling with their energy meter as had been seen in the whole of 2021.
- An increase in the number of people with long-term health conditions and disabilities as well as a deterioration in existing health conditions. There is a huge demand for help to complete personal independence payments applications.
- An increasing number of people who want to challenge their housing band and are struggling to afford private sector rental prices, including people who have recently seen an increase in their private sector rental amount.
- Staff working on CAM's Mobile Van have also advised that they are increasingly seeing people in work who are no longer able to manage.

13.4 Staff delivering advice have reported an increase in the number of residents who are being (verbally) aggressive to advisors, demonstrating the impact that cost of living is having on individuals' stress and capacity to manage. At the same time, providers are seeing higher than average levels of attrition (loss of skilled staff since Covid) across the service. This is partly driven by the competitive job market and other employers / sectors being able to offer more attractive salary packages.

13.5 Evidence also suggests that the complexity of issues faced by people accessing advice services has also increased. Where in the past individuals may have been presented with 1 or 2 simpler issues, more and more residents are presenting with a range of advice issues that are difficult to resolve.

13.6 The advice sector continues to respond to the current challenges with a high quality, comprehensive offer but providers and partners are concerned that many individuals are struggling to access the support they need, with long wait times and services at capacity.

13.7 As part of the Council and partners' cost of living response, an easy-to-use booklet that contains Covid and flu vaccination details, set within essential information to help with heating, food, bills, computer and mobile phone support was launched. These booklets, which form part of the city's Winter preparations, are available at community outlets like churches, mosques, libraries and neighbourhood groups. The booklets are image-led so that they give help quickly and easily with essential written details. This EasyRead format has then also been translated and are set to be available in 11 different languages, Braille and British Sign Language. In support of these booklets, the Council has also launched a cost-of-living helpline to provide essential help, advice and information to Manchester residents. Information for residents on help with the cost of living can be found at [https://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/10050/help\\_with\\_the\\_cost\\_of\\_living\\_crisis](https://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/10050/help_with_the_cost_of_living_crisis)

## 14.0 Future Demand and Delivery

14.1 Brexit, Covid-19, the war in Ukraine, and cost of living increases have created a challenging context for both individuals in need of advice, and the organisations providing that advice. The emerging picture is one of increased

need for advice services, and an increasing complexity of the advice being sought. In particular, cost-of-living increases are driving increased demand. 2023 is anticipated to bring further demand and challenges as energy costs, interest rates, housing, and food costs remain high.

- 14.2 It is hoped that changes to the policy and practice of the City Council's Housing Solutions service will help to alleviate some pressures on advice services, as it focus' more on prevention. At the same time, the Advice Forum will continue to work together to tackle current and emerging issues and challenges. Nevertheless, very real concerns about the capacity of advice services to deliver a comprehensive service to all residents in need, remain.
- 14.3 There is also a real need to continue to capacity build frontline staff so they can support residents in accessing general advice information, for example, frontline staff need support in knowing which questions to ask and where to direct people. GM Law Centre report that they only take on cases for 1 in 10 people who call them, demonstrating the importance of signposting to the right organisation/channel in the first instance to prevent an advice 'merry go round' where people are passed from service to service, increasing the risk of disengagement. The CWAS deliver a range of training and resources to capacity build staff outside the remit of their contract, and will continue to work with the wider Advice Forum to develop and deliver this work.
- 14.4 The current CWAS contract is due to expire at the end of March 2024 and commissioners will begin the recommissioning process in early 2023. This will be an opportunity to work with partners and residents to develop a model that responds to current and emerging challenges and need, and that targets support to the most vulnerable and excluded communities in the city.

## **15.0 Recommendations**

- 15.1 The Committee is recommended to consider and comment on the information in the report.

## **Appendix 1**

### **City Wide Advice Services Case Studies**

#### **Case study 1**

Jane\* had been in full time employment, but was diagnosed earlier this year with a debilitating health condition which severely affected her mobility. She unexpectedly found herself unemployed and relying on credit to meet her essential costs, leading to her accruing a significant amount of debt.

Our dedicated Money Advisers have been helping her to take steps forward by maximising her income and looking at how we can help her to clear the debt to get a fresh start. This has been challenging as Jane has been in and out of hospital, delaying us being able to obtain important information but persistence has paid off and we have successfully been able to write off £1300 worth of energy arrears via an application to the Scottish Power Trust fund and a further balance of £800 via a write off request to Lendable.

Whilst we are still awaiting a response from her final creditor, the client emailed to say:

*"I CANNOT THANK YOU ENOUGH!*

*I hope you realise how much this has made such a difference for me, you are absolutely amazing, so very grateful.*

*Thank you, thank you thank you"*

#### **Case study 2**

John\* lives with multiple health conditions and contacted us when he had a prepayment metre fitted for someone else's debts, despite providing evidence to his energy supplier that the debt was accrued before his tenancy started. The supplier was refusing to speak to him due to his name not being on the account, and this was even a challenge for us when contacting them on John's behalf through a dedicated adviser line, which shows how challenging it can be for energy customers. John had no money to top up the meter and was extremely worried about what he was going to do through the winter. Eventually, we managed to get an agreement for a credit meter to be reinstated, meaning that John could heat his home and cook for himself again, restoring some independence and wellbeing. We also helped John to explore his disability benefits as we believed he would be entitled to more support than he was getting; this has been approved and he will now get an increased award each month, as well as £1000 in back-payments; an incredibly welcome bit of news as we go into winter.

#### **Case Study 3**

Aatif\* had suffered a workplace injury and had been unable to return to work for a long time. As a result, he had built up a lot of debt with his water and gas accounts, which he was very worried about. We worked with him over a couple of weeks to gather evidence and made applications to charitable support funds, successfully getting £595 off his water bills and £800 towards his energy debts. We helped him to set up an affordable payment plan for the rest, so he is now much better off and feels better able to cope.

#### **Case Study 4**

We spoke to Karen\* at a community event; she had multiple health conditions, one of which left her reliant on a CPAP (continuous positive airways pressure) machine.

She was so worried about energy prices and keeping the machine switched on that she wasn't switching on the heating and rarely eating hot meals. She was especially anxious about her pre-payment metre running out of credit, and we explained to her that with a smart metre she would be able to set an automatic top-up; however, she couldn't afford data on her phone to operate any apps like this. Our team organised an emergency fuel voucher for Karen to help with the immediate concern, as well as getting her a SIM card with free data to help her with online support. We registered her on the Extra Care Register with Electricity North West so she will get additional support in case of power cuts, and arranged a full benefit check as we believed she might be entitled to Personal Independence Payment. Karen left feeling incredibly supported and much more positive about the weeks ahead

\*These are not their real names



## Appendix 2

### City Wide Advice Service Contact Details

#### Citizens Advice Manchester

Has the following advice contact channels, and their availability is:

- Web advice self-help library, 24/7
- Freephone telephone advice line 0808 278 7800, Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm
- Facebook messenger, Adviser available Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm
- WhatsApp, Adviser available Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm
- Digital webchat, Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm
- Face to Face drop in and appointments (sessions listed in table below)
- Assisted Digital Community Hubs
- Mobile Advice Van (list of sites visited below)
- Social media broadcasts via TikTok, Twitter and Facebook
- Digital Energy Chat Bot

#### [Contact Us — Citizens Advice Manchester](#)

#### Drop in Outreach sessions

	Location	Session times	Frequency
Face to face	Longsight Library, Wythenshawe Forum, Newton Heath Library	10am-1pm	Weekly
Community access kiosk	Longsight Library, Wythenshawe forum, Newton heath Library, Gorton Sure Start Centre, Wai-Yin Welcome Centre, ITC Centre, Avenue Library, Manchester Settlement, Longsight Library, Number 93, Levesnhulme inspire, NEPHRA Good Neighbours, Beacon Centre, The Bread & Butter Thing, Yes Centre - Newton Heath, Gorton Hub, Powerhouse, Lime Square, Harpurhey Market, RASTA HQ, St Ambrose primary School, St Georges Community Centre.	various	Weekly
Mobile Advice Van	The Bread & Butter Thing, Yes Centre - Newton Heath, Gorton Hub, MRI, Wythenshawe Hospital, Powerhouse, Lime Square, Harpurhey Market, RASTA HQ, St Ambrose Primary School, St Georges Community Centre	10am – 3:30pm	Dependent on venue

#### Shelter

Refers complete the Targeted Advice request form and then email it to a dedicated inbox. Refers include the following providers:

Be Well Pathways  
Booth Centre

Cheetham Hill Children's Centre  
 Citizens Advice  
 City Hearts  
 Cornerstone  
 DWP  
 Early Help Hub  
 Gaddum Centre  
 George House Trust  
 Greater Manchester Mental Health Home Treatment Team  
 Health Care Alliance  
 Health Visitors  
 MASH  
 Manchester City Council  
 Martenscroft Children's Centre  
 Moss Side Children's Centre  
 Motiv8  
 Mustard Tree  
 Network Rail  
 Northwards Housing  
 NHS  
 Rams Lodge Hostel  
 Shelter Helpline  
 Shelter Legal  
 Whalley Range Children's Centre  
 Women's Aid  
 Women MATTA

#### Outreach sessions

Location	Session Times	Frequency	Appointment or drop in
Whalley Range Sure Start	1pm - 4pm	4 weeks	Appointment
Moss Side Sure Start	1pm - 3pm	4 weeks	Appointment
Cheetham Hill Sure Start	10am- 1pm	2 weeks	Appointment
Booth Centre	9.30am - 12.30pm	4 weeks	Drop in
Cornerstone	10am - 12pm	2 weeks	Drop in
JCP Mosely Street	10am - 1pm	2 weeks	Appointment
Mash	3pm - 5pm	4 weeks	Drop in
Womens Aid	12pm - 2pm	4 weeks	Drop in

#### **Cheetham Hill Advice Centre**

1-3 Morrowfield Avenue, Cheetham Hill, Manchester M8 9AR

0161 740 8999

triage@cheethamadvice.org.uk

Appointments available Monday to Friday

Sessions to make appointments or drop off documents on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between 10am and 1pm.

Advice provided in ten languages and interpreters are arranged when needed.

**Appendix 3**  
**City Wide Advice Service Enquiry Type for Quarter 1 & Quarter 2 2022/23**

<b>Enquiry Type</b>	<b>No. of issues Q1 April 2022 to June 2022</b>	<b>No. of issues Q1 July 2022 to September 2022</b>
Benefits & tax credits	3,205	5,212
Benefits Universal Credit	6,084	10,103
Consumer goods & services	1,531	1,102
Debt	519	3,910
Education	70	117
Employment	487	2,416
Financial services & capability	2,499	1,632
GVA & Hate Crime	21	121
Health & community care	155	223
Housing	1,761	3,123
Immigration & asylum	187	544
Legal	287	978
Other	197	204
Relationship & family	231	785
Tax	97	181
Travel & transport	130	183
Utilities & communications	924	1,097
Charitable Support & Food Banks	735	1,331
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>22,637</b>	<b>33,262</b>

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**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 10 January 2023

**Subject:** Overview Report

**Report of:** Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit

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### **Summary**

This report provides the following information:

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

### **Recommendation**

The Committee is invited to discuss the information provided and agree any changes to the work programme that are necessary.

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**Wards Affected:** All

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### **Contact Officer:**

Name: Rachel McKeon

Position: Governance and Scrutiny Support Officer

Telephone: 0161 234 4997

Email: [rachel.mckeon@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.mckeon@manchester.gov.uk)

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

None

## 1. Monitoring Previous Recommendations

This section of the report lists 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.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
8 October 2020	CESC/20/38 Update on Work with the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector During COVID-19	To request information on the financial support that has been given during the pandemic by the Council and external funders, broken down by equality strands, as well as information on any gaps in provision.	A response to this recommendation has been requested and will be circulated to Members.	Keiran Barnes, Programme Lead (Our Manchester Funds)
21 June 2022	CESC/22/22 Homelessness Update	To request a breakdown of the information in table 2.3 by protected characteristics.	A response to this recommendation has been incorporated into the Homelessness report for the Committee's 10 January 2023 meeting.	Nicola Rea, Strategic Lead (Homelessness)
19 July 2022	CESC/22/28 Community Events	To request that the Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure circulate the criteria and timetable for the Community Events Fund, along with the Equality Impact Assessment and information on sports activities that are currently being funded across the city.	A response to this recommendation has been requested and will be circulated to Members.	Mike Parrott, Events Lead
8 November 2022	CESC/22/43 Crime and Policing	That the Members' questions which had not been raised during the meeting, due to time constraints, will be sent to the Mayor's Office for a response.	The response to Members' questions was circulated to Members by email on 2 December 2022.	Rachel McKeon, Governance and Scrutiny Support Officer

6 December 2022	CESC/22/50 Public Open Spaces CCTV	To receive the further information that Members have asked for at an appropriate time, including in relation to control room capacity, plans to manage the replacement of other cameras as they reach the end of their lifespan and GMP funding for CCTV cameras.	A response to questions in relation to the location of cameras and GMP funding was circulated to Members on 22 December 2022. Further information will be circulated when it is available.	Sam Stabler. Community Safety Lead
6 December 2022	CESC/22/51 Compliance and Enforcement Services - Performance in 2021/22	To request that the Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety circulate the leaflets in relation to damp and mould to all Members of the Committee.  To request that the Committee receive an update on plans for the new CRM system.	These were circulated to Members by email on 6 December 2022.  A response to this recommendation will be circulated to Members of the Committee.	Fiona Sharkey, Head of Compliance, Enforcement and Community Safety  Neil Fairlamb, Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)
6 December 2022	CESC/22/52 Community Safety Update	To request that Members be kept informed of the training taking place regarding Martyn's Law and ACT (Action Counter Terrorism) training.	A response to this recommendation will be circulated to Members of the Committee.	Sam Stabler. Community Safety Lead

## 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 **30 December 2022** 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.

#### Register of Key Decisions:

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Decision Due Date	Consultation	Background documents	Officer Contact
<p><b>Framework for the provision of GM Online Library Service (2022/10/27B)</b></p> <p>The appointment of Provider(s) for GM Online Library Service</p>	Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)	Not before 27th Nov 2022		Report & Recommendation	
<p><b>Culture in the City - HOME Arches (2022/11/07A)</b></p> <p>To approve capital expenditure to address cost increases largely in relation to methodology, 3<sup>rd</sup> party requirements and market pressures which are fixed.</p>	City Treasurer (Deputy Chief Executive)	Not before 7th Dec 2022		Checkpoint 4 Business Case	Dave Carty d.carty@manchester.gov.uk
<p><b>Factory International (2022/11/22A)</b></p>	City Treasurer	Not before		Checkpoint 4 Business	Jared Allen jared.allen@manchester.gov.u



<b>Subject / Decision</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Decision Due Date</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Background documents</b>	<b>Officer Contact</b>
To approve capital expenditure for cost pressures including inflation, market & supply chain pressures, client-side costs and fitting out costs.	(Deputy Chief Executive)	22nd Dec 2022		Case	k
<b>Financial approval of MCR Active Contract 2023/24 (2022/10/27A)</b>  Financial approval of 5 <sup>th</sup> year of MCR Active Contract for period 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024.	City Treasurer (Deputy Chief Executive)	Not before 27th Nov 2022		Report to Deputy Chief Executive and City Treasurer	
<b>Z-Arts Grant Agreement (2022/11/04A)</b>  To approve a three-year Z-Arts grant agreement with revenue support of £184,488 in 2023/4, 2024/5 and 2025/6	Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)	Not before 4th Dec 2022		Z-Arts Overview Report	
<b>The rate for temporary accommodation properties (2022/12/13A)</b>  Increase the rate for properties in temporary accommodation due to market conditions.	Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)	Not before 13th Jan 2023		Commercially Sensitive	Nicola Rea nicola.rea@manchester.gov.uk
<b>Contract for the provision of support and interventions for Children and Young People affected by Domestic Violence &amp;</b>	Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)	Not before 29th Dec 2022		Report and Recommendation	

<b>Subject / Decision</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Decision Due Date</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Background documents</b>	<b>Officer Contact</b>
<p><b>Abuse (2022/11/29A)</b></p> <p>The appointment of Provider(s) for support and interventions for Children and Young People affected by Domestic Violence &amp; Abuse.</p>					

**Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee  
Work Programme – January 2023**

**Tuesday 10 January 2023, 10.00 am (Report deadline Thursday 29 December 2022)**

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Bonfire Night 2022	To receive a report on anti-social behaviour in relation to bonfires and fireworks around Bonfire Night 2022, including an assessment of the impact of the Council's decision not to hold Bonfire Night events and the views of Greater Manchester Police (GMP) and Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS).	Councillor Rahman	Fiona Worrall/Neil Fairlamb/Fiona Sharkey/Kylie Ward	Invite representatives from GMP and GMFRS Invite Chair of the Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee
Homelessness Service Transformation	To include items requested by Members at the meeting on 21 June 2022, including the Transformation Programme, work to reduce the use of bed-and-breakfast accommodation, void properties, how the Housing Solutions and PRS teams are working together and how their systems are keeping pace with the private rented sector, the imbalance in the geographic spread of temporary accommodation provision, support to help people settle into their new accommodation and information on equalities and how different communities are being served by this work.	Councillor Midgley	Dave Ashmore/Nicola Rea	
Advice Services	To receive a report on advice services, including those delivered by housing providers.	Councillor Midgley	Fiona Worrall/Neil Fairlamb/Nicola Rea	

Overview Report	The monthly report includes the recommendations monitor, relevant key decisions, the Committee's work programme and any items for information.	-	Rachel McKeon	
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**Tuesday 7 February 2023, 10.00 am (Report deadline Friday 27 January 2023)**

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
VCSE Support Review	This report describes the review and assessment process to date with a detailed timeline for further developments. To also include a list of the organisations who were awarded funding through the OMVCS Fund and how the organisations which were not successful were being supported, including other funding sources which they were being signposted to.	Councillor Midgley	James Binks/Keiran Barnes	February or March (TBC)
Community Cohesion Strategy	To receive a report on the Community Cohesion Strategy.	Councillor Midgley	Fiona Worrall/ Sam Stabler	
Libraries, Galleries, Culture and Leisure Annual Report	To receive an annual report on Libraries, Galleries, Culture and Leisure, including an update on each area and the results of the Cultural Impact Survey. To include an update on Cultural Grants.	Councillor Hacking Councillor Rahman	Fiona Worrall/Neil Fairlamb/Neil MacInnes /Louise Lanigan	
2023/24 Budget Report	Consideration of the final 2023/24 budget proposals that will go onto February Budget Executive and Scrutiny and March Council. To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbourhoods Directorate 2023/24 Budget</li> <li>• Homelessness Directorate 2023/24 Budget</li> </ul>	Councillor Akbar Councillor Rahman Councillor Midgley Councillor Hacking Councillor	Carol Culley/Fiona Worrall/Neil Fairlamb	

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Overview Report		-	Rachel McKeon	

**Tuesday 7 March 2023, 10.00 am (Report deadline Friday 24 February 2023)**

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Digital Exclusion	To receive a report on digital exclusion.	Councillor Hacking	Fiona Worrall/Neil Fairlamb/Angela Harrington	
Immigration and Asylum	To receive a report on immigration and asylum.	Councillor Midgley	Dave Ashmore/Nicola Rea	
Equalities Update	To receive an overarching report, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Communities of Identity report, informed by the Council's Corporate Peer Review conducted in 2021;</li> <li>an update on race and ethnicity since the report to the Committee's October 2021 meeting;</li> <li>Faith and belief; and</li> <li>Events to celebrate the diverse communities within the city.</li> </ul>	Councillor Midgley	Fiona Ledden/Sharmila Kar/Lorna Young	
Overview Report		-	Rachel McKeon	

**Tuesday 23 May 2023, 2.00 pm (Report deadline Thursday 11 May 2023)**

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Sex and Gender	To receive a report on sex and gender.	Councillor	Fiona Ledden/	

		Midgley	Sharmila Kar /Lorna Young	
Overview Report		-	Rachel McKeon	
Annual Work Programming Session	The meeting will close for the annual work programming session where members determine the work programme for the forthcoming year. To follow a presentation from the Director/Lead Officers on upcoming issues and challenges within the Committee's remit.	Councillor Rahman/ Councillor Midgley/ Councillor Hacking	Fiona Ledden/ Fiona Worrall/ Sharmila Kar/ Sam Stabler /Keiran Barnes/Dave Ashmore	

### Items To Be Scheduled

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Prevent/Radequal	This report sets out our response to the National Prevent Review.	Councillor Rahman	Fiona Worrall/Fiona Sharkey/Sam Stabler	
Support for People Leaving Prison	To include information on changes to probation services, how ex-prisoners are re-integrated into society and links with homelessness.	Councillor Akbar Councillor Rahman	Fiona Worrall/ Sam Stabler/ Dave Ashmore	
Youth Justice	To be scoped.	Councillor Rahman Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall/ Fiona Worrall/Neil Fairlamb/Fiona Sharkey/Sam Stabler	Invite Chair of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Events	To receive a further report at an appropriate time which includes the Manchester Events Strategy, information on the geographic spread of the funded	Councillor Hacking	Neil Fairlamb/Mike Parrott	See minutes of the meeting on 19 July 2022.

	events and an update on work on the additional areas for development and improvement referred to in the report considered by the Committee on 19 July 2022.			
Manchester Sport and Physical Activity Strategy	To request a further report including place-based activity across the wards, comparison of different areas of the city, coaching opportunities, the impact of the cost-of-living rise, work to engage people with different protected characteristics, including women, and providing activities to engage young people.	Councillor Hacking	Neil Fairlamb	See minutes of the meeting on 6 September 2022.
Community Safety Strategy 2022-25	To receive a further report at an appropriate time, including the information requested by Members at the meeting on 6 September 2022.	Councillor Rahman	Fiona Worrall/Neil Fairlamb/Fiona Sharkey/Sam Stabler	See minutes of the meeting on 6 September 2022.
Serious Violence Strategy	To request a further report, including information on measuring the outcomes of the Strategy, work to tackle the increase in youth violence in north Manchester and disparities across different areas of the city.	Councillor Rahman	Fiona Worrall/Neil Fairlamb/Fiona Sharkey/Sam Stabler	See minutes of the meeting on 6 September 2022.
Crime and Policing	Following the item considered at the November 2022 meeting, to invite the guests from the GMCA and GMP to attend a future Committee meeting, including asking Chief Superintendent Richard Timson to provide an update on the communications work, public confidence and how the journey to improvement is going.	Councillor Rahman	Fiona Worrall/Neil Fairlamb/Sam Stabler	See minutes of the meeting on 8 November 2022.

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