



## **Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee**

Date: Tuesday, 23 May 2023

Time: 2.00 pm

Venue: Council Antechamber, Level 2, Town Hall Extension

Everyone is welcome to attend this committee meeting.

There will be a private meeting for Committee Members only at 1.20 pm in the Council Antechamber, Town Hall Extension.

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

Public access to the Council Antechamber is on Level 2 of the Town Hall Extension, using the lift or stairs in the lobby of the Mount Street entrance to the Extension.

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

### **Filming and broadcast of the meeting**

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

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

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The membership of the Committee will be confirmed at the Council meeting on 17 May 2023.

## 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 7 March 2023.

Pages  
5 - 16

**5. [2.05 pm - 2.50 pm] A short update report on migration services in Manchester, including Afghanistan, Ukraine and Asylum**

Report of the Director of Housing Services

Pages  
17 - 32

This is an update report on Council support and services to Afghanistan and Ukraine migrants in Manchester. It also provides an update on asylum dispersal in the city and on the emerging Sudanese situation, Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas) and Chagossians.

**6. [2.50 pm - 3.00 pm] Overview Report**

Report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit

Pages  
33 - 44

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

**Please note, there will be a Work Programming session at the rise of this meeting for Committee Members only.**

## 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. To help facilitate this, the Council encourages anyone who wishes to speak at the meeting to contact the Committee Officer in advance of the meeting by telephone or email, who will then pass on your request to the Chair for consideration. 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.

The Council welcomes the filming, recording, public broadcast and use of social media to report on the Committee's meetings by members of the public.

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.

Joanne Roney OBE  
Chief Executive  
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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 **Monday, 15 May 2023** by the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit, Manchester City Council, Level 2, Town Hall Extension (Library Walk Elevation), Manchester M60 2LA

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## Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee

### Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2023

#### Present:

Councillor Hitchen - In the Chair

Councillors Azra Ali, Benham, Chambers, M Dar, Evans, Hilal, Hussain, Iqbal, Johnson, Ogunbambo, H Priest, Rawson, Sheikh, Whiston, Wills and Wilson

#### Also present:

Councillor Midgley, Deputy Leader

Councillor Hacking, Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure

Councillor Douglas, Deputy Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure

Councillor Karney, Ward Councillor for Harpurhey

Sharmila Kar, Joint Director – Equality, Inclusion and Engagement

Atiha Chaudry, Manchester BME Network

Cath Dyson, Manchester resident

#### Apologies:

Councillor Connolly

#### CEESC/23/14          Minutes

#### Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2023 as a correct record.

#### CEESC/23/15          Digital Inclusion Update

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which provided an update on the Council's digital inclusion work over the last 2 years.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Manchester Digital Strategy 2021-2026: Doing Digital Together;
- Helping the delivery of Corporate Priorities;
- Voter ID;
- Digital Inclusion Action Plan 2021-23;
- Device schemes;
- Data;
- Skills;
- Community Engagement – roadshows;
- Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector support;
- Let's Get Digital campaign and communications;
- UK Communities Renewal Fund Report;
- Sustainability of the digital inclusion programme; and
- Future priorities and projects.

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

- To welcome the work to promote digital inclusion;
- That people who were not online were often excluded from engagement events as they did not hear about them;
- Had there been follow-up with residents who had been given a device and internet access;
- Plans to promote the strategy more widely across the city;
- The digital skills gap among young people and multi-generational digital exclusion;
- Work to help residents who did not live in one of the top 12 most digitally excluded areas;
- Whether the community engagement roadshows would be continuing;
- Digital inclusion for families who had English as an Additional Language (EAL); and
- The role of housing providers in improving digital inclusion for their residents.

In response to a Member's question about wifi access in Council offices across the city, the Head of Libraries, Galleries, Culture and Youth Services reported that a meeting had taken place with the Director of IT the previous day in relation to a programme of work to improve wifi access across the city and he offered to circulate information on this to Members by email. He advised that promoting the digital inclusion work was a priority. The Deputy Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure reported that the digital inclusion steering group was looking at having a co-ordinated approach to communicating this work through a range of partner organisations.

The Citywide Services Manager (Reform) confirmed that residents who had been given a device and internet access were followed up, advising that they were provided with a mentor and that research had been carried out by Manchester Metropolitan University. The Head of Libraries, Galleries, Culture and Youth Services commented that it would be useful to have case studies and that he would take this away as an action point. In response to a Member's question, the Citywide Services Manager (Reform) advised that baseline data was not available but that the Digital Exclusion Index was based on intelligence on the types of people likely to be digitally excluded. He took on board a Member's comments about the importance of doing more to publicise that people could donate their old devices to be refurbished for other people to use. He reported that every area of the city had digitally excluded people in so, although there was a focus on areas with higher levels of digital exclusion, work was taking place across the city. In response to a request for demographic information on residents helped by the strategy, he advised that this could be provided. He reported that the roadshows which were piloted had been useful but might not be the best use of resources; however, talking to residents, directly and through partner organisations, would definitely continue in one form or another, for example, by attending other events.

The Deputy Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure reported that there was university representation on the steering group and that universities were working to bridge the gap between what young people could do online and what was

needed in the workplace. She advised that intergenerational work had also been discussed and that they were working with schools to deliver some work involving children and their parents or carers. The Head of Libraries, Galleries, Culture and Youth Services advised that there was a further meeting of the steering group the following day and that Members' feedback would be fed into that.

The Ward Councillor for Harpurhey expressed serious concern about the new requirements for voters to provide ID when voting at polling stations. He reported that only 243 Manchester residents had applied for the Voter Authority Certificate, which people who did not have an acceptable form of photo ID would need to vote in person. He stated that he felt that this new requirement had been introduced by the Government to suppress voting by some groups, including working class people, young people and black and ethnic minority communities. He expressed concern that this would also lead to polling station staff facing conflict because some voters would arrive to vote unaware of the new requirements. He suggested the Committee consider this issue further. He stated that the Council needed to be more pro-active in addressing this issue, including increased communication about voter ID requirements to Manchester residents and doing more to inform people about the option of postal voting. He advised that the Council should communicate directly with Manchester residents and not just online.

The City Solicitor stated that this was an issue of concern to her, as Deputy Returning Officer and the Chief Executive, as Returning Officer, and that they were keen to have the best communication strategy possible on this, although they had been restricted in what they could do and the timing of it by central Government. She committed to working with the Member and with colleagues to communicate effectively with residents the need to bring photo ID to the polling station and how to apply for the Voter Authority Certificate, if they did not have suitable photo ID. The Head of Libraries, Galleries, Culture and Youth Services highlighted the information in the report which outlined work taking place in relation to this. In response to a Member's question about undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) on those turned away from polling stations and not able to vote, the City Solicitor reported that an EIA had been done on the strategy to date and that the Council would look closely at feedback in relation to those who were turned away at the polling station, although it might not be in the form of an EIA. She advised that this information would go to the Constitutional and Nomination Committee, including learning from the election and what could be done differently in future. In response to a question from the Chair, she advised that, unfortunately, residents could not apply for a Voter Authority Certificate at the polling station on the day. She advised that she was in the process of producing an update on this work and offered to share it with Committee Members when it was ready, to which the Chair agreed.

In response to a Member's example of a resident without sufficient data to access their emails, the Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure reported that some residents had digital skills and devices but were affected by digital poverty and that work was taking place to make data available via libraries. In response to a Member's question about Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES)'s digital training and flyers in community languages, he advised that he would look into this and respond to the Member. In response to a question about financial exclusion and the closing of high street banks, he reported that financial exclusion was part of the

wider digital strategy and that further information could be provided at a future meeting.

The Citywide Services Manager (Reform) reported that MCC Housing Services, formerly known as Northwards Housing, were still very active in digital inclusion work. The Deputy Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure reported that the Digital Inclusion Strategy Board was hoping to involve as many housing providers as possible, including having a meeting focused on the role of housing providers and potentially establishing a subgroup to share best practice. The Chair requested that information on this be cascaded to all Ward Councillors. The Deputy Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure agreed that this would be done, once the initial work had taken place.

In response to a Member's question, the Citywide Services Manager (Reform) outlined how the device lending library with The Bread and Butter Thing in Wythenshawe would work, advising that, if this pilot was successful, it was planned to expand it to other areas of the city.

The Chair thanked officers for their hard work in this area.

The Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure drew Members' attention to the digital inclusion action plan, at appendix one in the report, and asked Members to provide him with any feedback. The Chair asked that the questions and comments that Members had raised at today's meeting be taken on board. The Deputy Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure advised that she would take the minutes from this meeting to the steering group to look at how the issues raised could be incorporated into their work.

## Decisions

1. To receive a further report on digital exclusion, including financial exclusion, at a future meeting.
2. To note that the City Solicitor will share the update on the work in relation to voter ID requirements with Committee Members when it is available.
3. To note that the Deputy Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure will share the information on work with housing providers with all Ward Councillors, once the initial work has taken place.
4. To note that the Deputy Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure will take the minutes from this meeting to the steering group to look at how the issues raised can be incorporated into their work.

## **CESC/23/16            Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) Annual Report 2022**

The Committee considered the report of the Joint Director (Equality, Inclusion and Engagement) which provided an update on the Council's activities to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and the annual report.



Key points and themes in the report included:

- Manchester and the Council;
- Equality objectives;
- Workforce equality;
- Progress update 2022-23;
- Governance and
- Next steps and recommendations.

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

- The "tell us once" approach for trans employees;
- The findings and actions from the Workforce Race Equality Review;
- The Gender Pay Gap;
- Improving data collection;
- Inclusive decision-making;
- Recognising the limits of broader group descriptors such as "African" and the wide range of different communities with different experiences that this encompassed and the need to engage with individual communities, including utilising Ward Councillors' knowledge of communities within their ward;
- Request for further information on the Sounding Boards, including which groups were on the Board, which communities they represented and when they joined the Boards; and
- That the percentage of the population of the city from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities was high and projected to increase and the importance of ensuring they were represented.

In response to questions about Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) communities and about intersectionality, Sharmila Kar, Joint Director of Equality, Inclusion and Engagement, advised that qualitative and quantitative evidence available needed to be used alongside engagement with and building trust with communities. She reported that a lot of work was needed to improve data collection, including taking into account intersectionality and improving communication with people about why data was being collected and how it was being used. In response to a Member's question, she reported that events to celebrate diversity would be reviewed. She recognised that there was still work to be done on inclusive decision-making and advised that the learning from the COVID Health Equity Group could help to inform this work. She recognised the diversity of communities covered by broad descriptors and welcomed the opportunity to work with Ward Councillors on reaching out to individual communities. She reported that the Communities of Identity report would provide further information. She agreed to circulate the requested information on the Sounding Boards, as well as information on targeted engagement work.

The Head of Organisational Development and Transformation informed Members that a more detailed report on Workforce Equality had been considered by the Resources and Governance Scrutiny (RAGS) Committee in November 2022 and that this would be circulated to Members of this Committee. He advised that the trans "tell us once" approach had arisen from engagement with staff, that a working group had been established to progress trans inclusion in the workforce and that the report

to the RAGS Committee provided further information on this, as well as further information on the Race Equality work. He informed Members about the leadership programmes for Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff, advising that there had been some progress in Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff starting to progress higher up in the organisation. He advised that workforce equality profiles would be produced on a six-monthly basis as part of a wider suite of data.

The Head of Workforce Strategy explained how representation was monitored at all levels in the organisation, in addition to monitoring recruitment data and putting in place development programmes, and that improvements had been made but more still needed to be done. He reported that every senior manager had a workforce equality target and that these would be strengthened. A Member requested that information on these targets be circulated to the Committee, to which he agreed.

The Chair questioned whether some of the information which was going to RAGS Committee should be coming to this Committee and advised that this would be discussed further outside of the meeting.

In response to a Member's question, the City Solicitor confirmed that care leavers would be added to the Council's list of priority groups.

The Chair welcomed that people living in poverty had been added as an additional priority group and recognised the additional challenges faced by people from a background of poverty when they tried to progress within organisations. She recognised that first generation immigrants had different experiences, viewpoints and aspirations from second and third generations and asked that this be incorporated into the Communities of Identity report. She requested that equal pay also be included in a future report.

The Deputy Leader thanked officers for their work and welcomed the proposal to work with Ward Councillors on understanding the communities within their ward.

## **Decisions**

1. To note that the Committee will continue to consider reports on Equalities on a regular basis and to request that the two Chairs of RAGS Committee and Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee meet to discuss items to be incorporated into a future report.
2. To request that the different experiences, viewpoints and aspirations of first, second and third generation immigrants be incorporated into the Communities of Identity report, along with the poverty strands.
3. To note that officers will circulate further information to Members, including information on both the Sounding Boards and workforce equality targets and the report previously submitted to the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee.

**CEESC/23/17                      Our Manchester Voluntary & Community Sector (OMVCS)  
Fund**

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on the OMVCS funding programme for 2023-26.

Key points and themes in the report included:

- Application process overview;
- Assessment Panel overview;
- Identification of strategic gap;
- Supporting Communities Fund; and
- Support for applicants.

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

- To welcome that additional funding had been secured;
- Strong concern that the organisations which had received funding through the OMVCS Fund were predominantly from central Manchester and that north Manchester and Wythenshawe were seriously under-represented;
- That some of the organisations which the report stated were delivering in specific wards were not known to Ward Councillors or were not delivering services in that ward but rather delivering services elsewhere which residents of that ward could travel to access and that Ward Councillors had not been asked for their input;
- The importance of funding organisations which had knowledge of their specific localities, rather than just organisations working across many areas;
- Were some organisations duplicating work, leaving gaps elsewhere, or were under-served communities being targeted;
- Why some organisations had been successful and others not, for example, a housing association in one area receiving funding, while a housing association in another area was unsuccessful;
- What work would be done to ensure that the successful organisations did deliver what they had promised;
- Could a breakdown of protected characteristics for successful and unsuccessful organisations be provided;
- Support for organisations which had not been successful in obtaining funding;
- Concern that organisations which did not have the knowledge of how to submit good funding applications were at a disadvantage;
- That the focus of the work going forward should be on how the Fund and the process could be improved to better serve communities in Manchester, particularly more deprived areas, and not just focus on how VCSE organisations could improve;
- That smaller organisations which were doing really good work should be given the opportunity to receive funding, in preference to some of the bigger organisations which had received funding for many years;

- That voluntary organisations were having to provide services which should be provided by the state and to recognise the difficulty in having to make decisions on these applications when the funding was limited;
- Concern that there was a lack of diversity on the assessment panel and could service users be on the panel; and
- To request that a meeting be arranged for Committee Members to discuss this further.

The Policy and Programmes Manager (Communities and VCSE) reported that work had taken place with the aim of increasing funding to north Manchester and BAME-led and BAME-serving organisations and that there had been some improvements but he recognised that more work needed to be done. He reported that a degree of diversity had been built into the co-design process and the panel process, including encouraging an awareness of the risk of bias. He advised that a piece of work had been carried out looking at the organisations which had been recommended by the panel to check that it would not be duplicating Council investment for the same activity in the same organisation. In response to a question from the Chair, the Assistant Chief Executive clarified that organisations could receive other funding from the Council but that checks had been carried out to ensure that it was not for the same work.

The Assistant Chief Executive reported that three-quarters of the successful organisations had said that they would be delivering services in north Manchester but that his team would need to look at the details of what this meant in practice. He highlighted the development fund, which would help organisations to be in a better position to bid for funding and advised that it would be targeting areas of the city where organisations had not applied to the OMVCS Fund. He reported that some of the organisations which had been successful in being awarded OMVCS Funding had been successful last time while others were new. He advised that there was a comprehensive scoring process determining which organisations were awarded funding, including looking at whether they met the aims of the Fund, the quality of the organisation and their ability to deliver for Manchester residents. He advised that the due diligence process included looking at where organisations were delivering services and that this would also be built into the monitoring of the programme. He informed Members that an annual report would be produced on the 60 organisations in the two programmes and that this would monitor the impact of the organisations, comparing it to what they said they would deliver. He drew Members' attention to the detail in the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) but added that more work would be taking place to understand the different groups served by the organisations. He acknowledged a Member's point about the broad area headings of north, central and south Manchester including within them very different wards and stated that some further work would be done on this. He reported that the panel members had been given training to try to ensure that organisations which had skills in writing good quality applications were not unfairly advantaged over those who did not have the same level of bid-writing skills. He highlighted the support that Macc would be providing to organisations.

The Strategic Lead (Resources and Programmes) reported that a number of workshops had been held over the summer to help VCSE organisations overcome the barriers to submitting funding bids and that these had been quite well-attended.

The Policy and Programmes Manager (Communities and VCSE) reported that equality monitoring data collected during the application process related to the recipients of the services, not those who were running the organisation, and that information on the former could be provided. He outlined the monitoring arrangements for successful organisations to ensure that they were delivering what they had set out in their bid.

The Assistant Chief Executive reported that a “lessons learnt” exercise from this process would be carried out and that he would welcome Members’ thoughts on this, including on how to involve Ward Councillors and service users. He advised that, if Members had concerns about any specific groups which had been awarded funding, they could raise this during the due diligence process. In response to a question about whether some of the funding that had been allocated could be recalled and allocated to different groups, he reported that there was no appeals process in relation to the funding decisions; however, he reiterated that Members could raise concerns about specific organisations if they claimed to be doing work in their ward where this was not the case, as part of the due diligence process before the funding was confirmed. The Policy and Programmes Manager (Communities and VCSE) requested that, if Members did have any concerns, that they raise them as soon as possible via the Our Manchester Fund email address or by emailing him directly.

The Chair outlined the process for members of the public to speak at scrutiny committee meetings. She stated that members of the public did not have a right to speak at meetings but could do so if invited by the Chair. If members of the public had a special interest in an item on the agenda and wanted to speak, they should tell the Committee Officer, who would pass the request to the Chair. Groups of people would usually be asked to nominate a spokesperson. Although no requests had been made in advance, on this occasion, she agreed to permit Atiha Chaudry from the Manchester BME Network to speak on behalf of the VCSE groups present and Cath Dyson to speak as a member of public, not affiliated to any of the groups.

Atiha Chaudry from the Manchester BME Network spoke on behalf of representatives from a number of VCSE sector organisations who had attended the meeting. She reported that she had attended a meeting of the Committee in 2018 in relation to the previous round of OMVCS funding where VCSE groups had raised similar points to the ones being raised today. She informed Members that some marginal improvements had been made since then but a lot of the same issues were still present. She welcomed the points that the Committee Members had made. She advised that the funds needed to be invested well, through understanding local communities, and that she was not sure that this had been done well enough. She stated that her group had been involved in the co-design process but not the decision-making process. She stated that she and the other attendees she was representing wanted to work in partnership with the Council to ensure the investment went to the places and people who most needed them, to reduce inequality, reduce poverty and improve lives. She asked that the decisions be looked at again. She reported that a lot of the funding had gone to larger organisations which had been funded for a number of years but would have been better allocated to smaller organisations. She expressed concern at the lack of funding for small BME-led organisations. She stated that some organisations were ticking boxes on forms to

say that they worked with all communities when this was not the case. She stated that the geographic and demographic issues with the distribution of funding had not been adequately addressed. She questioned the way the development fund was being used, as Macc were already funded to do development work.

The Assistant Chief Executive advised that it had been a very difficult process, given the level of demand for funding and the complexities involved. He stated that the Supporting Communities Fund had been set up to support smaller, community organisations. He informed Members about work taking place in relation to other Council and partner funding streams to look at how development funding could be used to support other organisations.

Cath Dyson, a Manchester resident, addressed the Committee in relation to the EIA at appendix one in the report. She expressed concern that the document conflated the terms “sex” and “gender”. She stated that, in her view, LGB (lesbian, gay and bisexual) should be categorised separately from T (trans) in the document, with the latter being under the heading “gender reassignment”. A Member expressed concern that this was not inclusive or relevant to the report and referred to a motion previously passed by the Council in relation to trans issues. The Chair suggested that this issue would be more relevant to the Communities of Identity report, rather than a report focusing on funding for VCSE organisations.

The Deputy Leader reported that difficult decisions had had to be made due to the volume of applications and the amounts that had been applied for; however, she advised that she took on board the comments raised and would look into these, including improving the process for the next funding round and looking at how development funding could be used in the best way possible to support smaller organisations. She highlighted that the list of groups which had been funded included some excellent organisations doing really good work.

The Chair thanked volunteers across the city for all their hard work and staff for providing this report.

## **Decision**

To arrange a meeting between the Deputy Leader and Members of the Committee to discuss this further.

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

## **CESC/23/18            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.

**Decision**

To note the report and agree the work programme.

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## Manchester City Council Report for Information

**Report to:** Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 23 May 2023

**Subject:** A short update report on migration services in Manchester, including Afghanistan, Ukraine and Asylum

**Report of:** Director of Housing Services

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### Summary

The following report is an update report on Council support and services to Afghanistan and Ukraine migrants in Manchester. It will also update Members on asylum dispersal in the city. The report also updates Members on the emerging Sudanese situation, Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas) and Chagossians.

### Recommendations

Members are invited to consider and comment on the report in terms of Manchester City Council's Services to migrants in the city.

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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
Good quality and affordable homes reduce carbon emissions.

<b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments
The housing disadvantages suffered by some individuals or groups were comprehensively evidenced in the Marmot Report 'Build Back Fairer in Greater Manchester: Heath 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.
The work of the Homelessness and Migration Service in helping people find homes that are affordable to them meets our public sector equality duty and broader equality commitments.

Supporting Afghan and Ukraine Nationals in our city to help them find employment, become integrated into society and access affordable accommodation is adhering to the commitment we have made to those populations.

<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. Helping Afghans, Ukrainians and Hong Kong Nationals 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	Supporting those who have come to the city through migration into employment, helping them to integrate through language skills and move into affordable housing will help grow talent in the city.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The support given to our migrant communities has unlocked community potential both through local communities coming together to support new arrivals, and through the people who have newly arrived in our city making a positive contribution.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	People have opened their homes to Ukrainian households. This has meant that spare rooms in properties have been fully utilised.
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

#### **Contact Officers:**

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

Not applicable

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Manchester has always provided a warm welcome to people from overseas who have come to our city to escape persecution and to find a better and safer life for themselves. This friendly hospitality continues today with those who are currently fleeing oppression and ill-treatment in their home countries.
- 1.2 Currently, there are 3 main cohorts who are directly being provided with support in the city. These are:
- The Afghanistan Service, provided by the Council on behalf of the Home Office.
  - The Ukraine Support Service, provided by the Council on behalf of the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC)
  - The Asylum Service, consisting of both contingency hotel and dispersed property accommodation, provided by Serco on behalf of the Home Office.
- 1.3 The City Council is also strategically involved in supporting other cohorts of migrants. An update on the support provided is also included in this report.

## **2.0 Afghanistan Service**

- 2.1 The City Council operates three Afghan Bridging hotels on behalf of the Home Office. These are for those on the Afghan Relocation & Assistance Programme (ARAP) and Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS). These have been in operation from August 2021. There are currently 710 individuals living across the three hotels.
- 2.2 Staff provide the following wrap around support:
- ESOL – Bespoke on-site classes, community classes, online class provision
  - Language support – On-site verbal and written interpretation for 3 main dialects
  - DWP – On-site support with mainstream benefits, employment and volunteering
  - Safeguarding & Early Years Assessment
  - Health Services – On-site GP services, community maternity & health visiting service, registering with local dentists, accessing eye-sight services
  - Education (including School Admission, Travel to School)
  - Laundry Services
  - Access to Charity organisations
  - Resettlement Information e.g. Local Area & Community group information
  - Advice on Budgeting & Affordability
  - Tenancy training – understanding what bills will need to be paid and what your responsibilities are as a tenant
  - Digital Inclusion (Free SIM cards)

- Financial Inclusion – assisting with applying for a UK bank account
- Housing – Affordability assessment to support with find your own accommodation and providing incentives to potential landlords.
- Advocacy, mediation and bespoke casework support
- Work & Skills – Events, Training (Security Guard Licences), Business Start-Ups etc.
- Creating a cultural and faith appropriate environment e.g food, prayer room
- Recreation and activities – Sewing, outdoor trips, community events etc.
- Sport activities

- 2.3 Officers provide a flexible and supportive approach to helping people find settled accommodation. Over 792 individuals have moved on from the Afghan Bridging Hotels into dispersed and settled accommodation across the north-west and north-east as well as other areas across the Country.

#### Case Study

Louise (not her real name) came to Manchester with her 4 siblings. Whilst living in the Afghan Bridging Hotel, she volunteered with the Council team who are supporting the households in the Afghan hotels. After moving out of the bridging hotel into a property Louise applied for a support worker role with the City Council. She has now been working for the Council for circa 12 months. Her siblings have also gained employment in the NHS, hospitality industry or are studying.

- 2.4 In 2021-22 the City Council made a pledge to offer 10 properties as move-on for Afghan families. The families who have moved into these properties have settled well and are in employment. In 2022-23 it was requested that an additional 10 properties were allocated. There are three properties identified so far which are waiting for repairs and relets to be completed.
- 2.5 Officers are supporting Afghan nationals to find their own private rented sector accommodation, but this is difficult due to the housing market and affordability. Many are large families and benefit capped. They also wish to live in areas that have high housing demand, such as London and Manchester. Officers are helping them understand what is affordable and the areas of the country where they can afford to live. Officers are also helping families into employment to eradicate the benefit cap barrier.

#### Case Study

Many Afghan Nationals do not know other areas of the Country and therefore are often unwilling to accept affordable accommodation offers there. Officers have provided day trips to other parts of the country such as Barnsley and Blackpool where housing affordability is more achievable within the benefit allowance that is available. During these trips visits have also been made to local facilities that support people to continue to practice their faith and cultural practices which is an important consideration of any move. Some households

have moved on to live in these areas after visiting and understanding what is on offer in other areas of the Country.

- 2.6 In February 2023, the Home Office announced their priority is 'accelerated move-on' from Bridging Hotels, through a programme of supply, considering local deals for some areas and taking steps to address issues such as refusal rates and affordability.
- 2.7 On 29 March 2023, the Home Office announced further details of ending temporary hotel accommodation for the 8000 Afghan nationals still living in bridging hotels across the country and the Rt Hon Johnny Mercer MP set out the funding and plans to step up support to help Afghans access settled accommodation. The Home Office has written to individuals and families accommodated in bridging hotels setting out the support available to them to help enter settled accommodation. The Afghan population in the three hotels in Manchester have been given notice that their support will cease at the end of August.
- 2.8 Officers are working tirelessly to provide intensive support to Afghan nationals in bridging hotels to ensure they find affordable and settled accommodation and there are no homeless presentations from this cohort. This includes changing staffing patterns to ensure those in employment have support in the evenings, additional Home Office and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) staff in the hotels, and sessions to explain what will happen if they present as homeless. It also involves identifying those households who are vulnerable, for example due to medical issues, and therefore will struggle to move into alternative accommodation. These households will be prioritised for Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) properties (see section 4 below) which are being brought online by Local Authorities across the Country.
- 2.9 The Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC) are also providing additional funding to Local Authorities to help support Afghan households if they move into the private rented sector to ensure the accommodation is sustainable. This support will help them link in with their new local community, move children into local schools, move to a local GP, and gain employment. Manchester City Council will be accessing this funding for those families who move into Manchester to ensure that they are well supported and do not become homeless in the future.

### **3.0 Ukraine Service**

- 3.1 There are two schemes through which Ukrainian nationals can enter the United Kingdom. The first is through a 'Friends and Family' scheme. The Home Office has not provided any information on how many people are living via the friends and family scheme in Manchester. The Council is not commissioned to provide any support to either the Ukrainian people or their family or friends on this

scheme. The scheme is entirely based upon the 'family reunion' approach and premise that the friends or family will support the guests living with them.

- 3.2 The second scheme is called the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme. This scheme is where 'hosts' in England offered to have a Ukrainian household live in their spare room/s in their home. The Council is commissioned by the Home Office to provide support to the Ukrainians who have entered via the 'Homes for Ukraine' route and their hosts. This is because many of the hosts were unknown to the Ukrainians entering the country through this route. In Manchester an estimated 447 hosts joined the scheme; circa 196 currently have a guest living with them. There are 400 guests, consisting of 130 families and 127 single households.
- 3.3 As the hosts and guests were unknown to each other, the initial main consideration was safeguarding and health and safety. All hosts and people living with them over the age of 16 have been DBS checked. All properties have had gas and electrical tests as well as a Housing Health and Safety Ratings System (HHSRS) inspection to ensure there are no Category 1 hazards at the property.

Lara (not her actual name) came to Manchester 9 May 2022, moving in with host along with her two teenage children. Lara did not speak English and struggled to negotiate a good relationship with her hosts. Unfortunately, the relationship broke down but having a support worker meant the family was successfully re-matched to a new host not too far away. The family are now thriving. Lara is learning English and volunteers weekly at Manchester Cathedral welcoming visitors. Her daughter found her own college course and her son is writing his own fantasy book (in English) in his free time.

- 3.4 All Ukrainian guests and hosts have a named support worker who visits them on a fortnightly basis. The support worker provides the following support:
- Bi-weekly Welfare Checks and bespoke casework support
  - HHSRS Property Checks
  - Gas and Electric Checks
  - Safeguarding Checks – Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks on hosts and household
  - £200 Emergency Maintenance Support payment
  - School Admission applications
  - Education admissions for those over 16
  - Early Years Assessment
  - Biometrics Residence Permits (BRP) and other entry immigration issues
  - Welfare Benefit Applications – Universal Credit, Child Benefits etc.
  - Health Services – registering with G.P, Dentists etc.
  - Financial Inclusion – assisting with application for UK Bank account
  - Digital Inclusion (Free SIM cards/ discounted refurbished Laptops)
  - English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision
  - Work & Skills (including Volunteering and Self-employment)

- Qualification Conversion
  - Weekly standardised Newsletter providing updates on useful events and points of interests
  - Advocacy, Information, Advice and Guidance
  - Signposting and making referrals to other mainstream services and VCSE organisations for various available support resources.
  - Translation Service and attending appointments
  - Housing Options with offer of Private Rented Sector incentives
  - Local area and community information
  - Mediating issues between the guest and their host.
  - Rematching guests with another host, if their previous hosting agreement has ended or broken down.
  - Acting as a point of contact for services
- 3.5 There have been 38 rematch requests, 31 of which have been rematched. There have been 19 presentations to the homelessness service, but the majority (14) of these have been from the friends and family scheme.
- 3.6 As the situation in Ukraine continues, many guests now wish to be independent, and hosts want their homes back. The Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC) announcement of the £500million Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) will see a small number of Ukrainians benefit from an offer of settled accommodation (see Section 4.0 below). Officers are providing intensive support to help Ukrainian guests gain employment, so they are more able to find and afford their own accommodation and so prevent homelessness. Of the 159 working age guests who have been in the country for over 6 months, 76 of the guests are now in some form of employment. Officers are undertaking the following actions:
- Purchasing qualification conversions on bulk to help guests prove their qualifications to future employers to help gain employment.
  - Circulating work & skills fliers
  - 1-2-1 Sessions identifying potential jobs in the community
  - Weekly Newsletter – with links to jobs within the Council, Greater Manchester jobs and NHS professionals
  - JCP Plus Appointment support
  - Referral to refurbished laptops scheme (£50 each)
  - Advertising a suitable job of the week – E-mail to guests on a weekly basis
  - Exploring volunteering opportunities within the Council and VCSE
  - Liaising with VCSEs to get additional support into employment – The Growth Company, United for Ukraine.
- 3.7 Significant work has been undertaken with Manchester Adult Education Service for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) provision. A commissioning process to increase provision in the city resulted in 150 additional places. The



service has also transferred ESOL provision from day to twilight (4-7pm) and evening (6-8.15pm) classes to support those in employment.

Iryna (not her actual name) came to Manchester in June 2022. She "hit the ground running", initially finding part time work before becoming employed in her career job as content writer and graphic designer. To give back to her new Ukrainian community she assisted in designing the layout and produced graphics for the fortnightly newsletter the Ukraine support team send to both hosts and guests. In December 2022 she was able to move to live independently but still found time to provide staff training to the team to enable them to continue to produce the newsletter without her professional assistance.

- 3.8 There are concerns regarding the mental health and well-being support for Ukrainians. Some have struggled with counselling via an interpreter. There are services that guests are now being referred to - Mental Health of Ukrainians.org and there are two Ukrainian psychologists who are guests, who are looking to undertake wellbeing and counselling sessions.

#### **4.0 Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)**

- 4.1 In December 2022 the Home Office announced a £500 million Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) programme, across a selection of Local Authorities experiencing significant housing and homelessness pressures. The programme provides funding to purchase properties on the open market, or to renovate properties that are currently empty, to ensure additional properties are available to help accommodate Afghan and Ukraine households. The Council must match fund the LAHF funding from capital monies, but the properties are subsequently available for social / affordable housing in the future.
- 4.2 The Council has signed a Memorandum of Understanding and was allocated a grant of £3,266,898 to provide 30 housing units, at either a social rent, capped at LHA (if existing MCC property) or affordable rent if newly purchased. The target provision is 7 (4+ Beds) for large Afghan families living in Bridging Hotels and 23 (2+Beds) for either Afghan or Ukrainian nationals. The Council is expected to use its best endeavours to meet the delivery target of 30 November 2023, and officers are working across internal services and with the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC) to progress this. Other Local Authorities across the country have also expressed interest and officers in the Afghan Bridging Hotels are collaborating with these Councils to accommodate Afghans from Manchester hotels to these areas.
- 4.3 Across England, the LAHF is going to be expanded in the future by £250m with the majority of the additional funding being used to house Afghan nationals currently in bridging accommodation, and the rest used to ease existing homeless pressures.

#### **5.0 Welcome Desk for Ukraine Nationals**

- 5.1 The UK Government humanitarian response to the Ukraine crisis introduced welcoming points at port of entry in the UK for Ukrainian nationals. Manchester and other relevant Councils who have primary ports of entry were asked to establish welcome point arrangements to provide an initial welcome to the UK and any immediate support required. On 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2022, Manchester Welcoming Point was stood up as a Tier 1 provision, based at Terminal 3 Arrival Lounge in Manchester Airport. This was staffed by Council officers, British Red Cross volunteers and Council staff who volunteered through their volunteering days.
- 5.2 The Welcoming Point core services included:
- Welcome/rest point, with toilet facilities, telephone, telephone charging facilities and translation capability
  - Provision of any necessary immediate humanitarian assistance including food, drink, over the counter medical supplies and other sundries
  - Link with local travel operators for general provision of advice on onward travel
  - Triage point in case matching arrangements broke down, or where arrivals were not met by a host as expected.
  - Provision of emergency overnight hotel accommodation where unexpected travel delays resulted in there being no feasible onward travel options until the next morning, or where hosting arrangements broke down
  - Signposting to relevant online welcome guidance covering access to public services and advice; and
  - Assuring any safeguarding concerns/cases were passed on to the appropriate Local Authority services and liaising with social services as required in the case of any safeguarding concerns flagged by the Border Force.
- 5.3 The welcoming point was very successful and helped significant numbers of people who used Manchester as their entry point into the Country before travelling on to the town or city where their hosts lived. Manchester Airport Group were generous providing free parking for hosts who were picking up their Ukrainian guests. For those who were moving on to live in Greater Manchester, Transport for Greater Manchester were instrumental in helping the process by providing free travel tickets for the Ukrainian national's initial journey to their host. The charity 'Manchester Homes for Ukraine' provided clothing for people who had left Ukraine with very little, the Rotary Club donated books for children to help with the onward journey, and the Chaplaincy at the Airport provided activity packs for women with children to help entertain them.
- 5.4 In Summer 2022, DLUHC made the decision to reduce funding, and subsequently decommission the service from 1st April 2023. Manchester reviewed its operation model accordingly to ensure that the welcoming point provision continued until the end of the fiscal year.

5.5 2556 individuals (adults and children) accessed support from the Manchester Welcoming Point from start of provision 23rd March 2022 – 31st March 2023. Of these, 1089 were given Free Vodafone SIM Cards and 423 Ukrainian arrivals registered and received £50 Cash Assistance from the British Red Cross (Cash Assistance value - £21,150).

## **6.0 Asylum Contingency Hotels**

6.1 Due to the demand on the asylum dispersed accommodation portfolio, the Home Office are currently accommodating asylum seekers in contingency hotel accommodation across the country. There are currently 5 hotels in Manchester.

6.2 Serco is contracted by the Home Office to provide the accommodation for asylum seekers. The Local Authority is not paid for any provision or support at the hotels and does not have any direct control over who is placed there and how they are managed.

6.3 There is a peripatetic health provision onsite most days at the hotels. Currently, Go To Doc (GTD) is responsible for provision at 3 hotels, and Hawthorn Medical Centre is the interim provider for the other 2 hotels. These health providers manage any infectious diseases, as well as providing vaccines and other required health provision. Public Health visit the hotel sites regularly and have given briefings to staff on minimising health risks.

6.4 Officers continue to monitor demographic data provided by Serco, to ensure safeguarding protocols are invoked without delay where a person claims they are below 18 years old. If someone is claiming to be under 18, they are placed in separate rooms and referred to Children's Services. Children's services subsequently assess the young person, and if they are under 18 are taken into care. Children's Services are currently in discussions with the Home Office to agree referrals from Manchester into the National Transfer Scheme. This scheme is the process by which the numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children are distributed across the Country so that any one Local Authority does not have disproportionately more than others.

6.5 Key partners in the voluntary sector continue to respond to essential needs such as socks, shoes, trainers, male clothing and winter coats. Activities to support mental health are being explored with residents in the hotels. There is a contract currently in place with Caritas Shrewsbury to support Afghan refugees in the bridging hotels which is being expanded to help provide some support in the asylum hotels. GMP and neighbourhoods services are aware of the hotels and pay close attention to any community concerns. Staff have provided briefings for residents on hate crime, reporting hate crime and cultural awareness.

6.6 An officer from the Council chairs monthly multi agency meetings to discuss any issues or concerns and ensure on-going support offer. This includes, but is not exclusive to, the below:

- Safeguarding concerns
- ESOL (on-site and at Caritas St. Aidan's Centre)
- Toiletries
- Food + food vouchers for families
- Health Services
- Education (including School Admission)
- Recreation Activities (Knitting+Bollywood dancing)
- Laundry Services
- Access to Charity Organisation for Essential items (Clothes, Shoes)
- Local Area Information
- Referral to other mainstream services
- Advice & Guidance sessions
- Asylum guide orientation sessions for the new arrival
- Volunteering opportunities
- Digital Inclusion - SIM card and phones
- Cooking sessions at Caritas St. Aidans Center

6.7 On the 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023, the Home Office policy on serving positive or negative decisions on asylum applications in contingency hotels changed. It moved from households needing to be in dispersed accommodation prior to a decision being served, to decisions being able to be served in contingency hotels. From a Home Office and individuals perspective, this is a welcome change as decisions will be able to be made in a more timely manner. From a Local Authority perspective, this will place more pressure on the homeless service in areas which have a large number of hotels as the numbers presenting will increase. In Manchester there will be increased numbers of single males who present as homeless due to the population in the contingency hotels, but it is anticipated that the majority of these will not progress to the homeless main duty as they will not be in priority need.

## **7.0 Asylum Dispersed Accommodation**

7.1 The latest published figures (Dec 2022) show that there are 96 households on section 4 support (destitution accommodation when an asylum seekers appeal rights are exhausted (ARE) but they still cannot return to their country) and 775 households on section 95 support (accommodation for someone who has claimed asylum whilst waiting for a decision to be made) in Manchester. This equates to 871 households in dispersed asylum accommodation.

7.2 Last year the Government introduced 'full dispersal' across the country. This means that those Local Authorities who had previously not had asylum seekers in their areas will now have Home Office providers procuring accommodation in their area. Although this was originally introduced to reduce the numbers in certain Local Authorities and redistribute numbers, the demand is so large that the Home Office needs to continue to procure accommodation across the northwest.

- 7.3 Local Authorities across the northwest, in conjunction with the Regional Strategic Migration Partnership (RSMP), have put together a proposal to the Home Office on how this process should work, taking into account current numbers in both dispersed and contingency hotel accommodation, as well as levels of deprivation and homelessness. The Home Office have also produced a dispersal plan, based upon current numbers in dispersed asylum accommodation and cluster limits per population. The current agreement is that the Home Office will procure up to the numbers within the RSMP plan, and then local negotiations will take place on additional placements.
- 7.4 The Home Office is putting in place a new process for agreeing the procurement of dispersed accommodation. The previous process was that a request would come to the Local Authority when a property was offered to Serco, the Local Authority would check the property and area with Greater Manchester Police, Planning, the Anti-Social Behaviour Team and other internal departments as applicable and then agree or explain why the property could not go ahead. This process was complicated as often by the time the information had been collated and returned to Serco, the property had been offered to an alternative provider or put on the open market. The new process is based upon agreeing areas for procurement in advance. A spreadsheet has been completed to an agreed area level and any concerns for procurement in particular areas are identified in advance. This gives Serco a basis to work from and know areas to avoid. Officers are monitoring procurement requests on a regular basis to ensure procurement is not going over cluster limits in particular wards.
- 7.5 Requests for procurement have increased slightly in Manchester but not to the extent of elsewhere due to the buoyant market rent levels. Serco would like to procure in the current moratorium area (M8, M9 and M40) but a formal conversation between the Minister and the MP for Blackley and Broughton would need to occur before this could be lifted.
- 7.6 The Council has led on a national piece of work with the Home Office and Treasury Department to identify any additional costs that may be incurred through having asylum seekers in the city. This will inform any future New Burdens funding. As a result of this, the Government has given all Local Authorities an additional £750 per new bedspace for asylum seekers in the city as a one-off payment. Officers are requesting that this is an ongoing yearly payment to offset additional social care, education, health etc costs.
- 7.7 On Thursday 30 March 2023, the Government laid a statutory instrument (secondary legislation) that, subject to agreement of Parliament, will temporarily exempt asylum accommodation from House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing requirements. This will make changes to section 254 of the Housing Act 2004 subsection (5):

- “(5A) A building, or part of a building, in England which is within subsection (1) is not a house in multiple occupation for the purposes of Part 2 during the relevant period if—
  - (a) it is occupied solely or principally by asylum-seekers or members of their household; and
  - (b) the person managing or having control of it is—
    - (i) a relevant landlord, or
    - (ii) an AASC provider; and
  - (c) in the case of an AASC provider, the occupation as mentioned in paragraph (a) began in the period beginning with the date the Houses in Multiple Occupation (Asylum-Seeker Accommodation) (England) Regulations 2023 came into force and ending with 30th June 2024.

7.8 The Regional Strategic Migration Partnership and Greater Manchester Combined Authority are coordinating a response to Government on behalf of Local Authorities planning, compliance and enforcement, legal, housing and migration teams. This joint response will set out a number of questions that need clarifying as well as raising concerns about the proposed changes to legislation.

7.9 The Home Office announced a new streamlined asylum process on the 23rd February for five nationalities – Afghanistan, Syria, Eritrea, Yemen and Libya. People from these countries who arrived in the United Kingdom before 28th June 2022 have been sent a questionnaire and it is probable that they will receive a positive asylum decision if they complete and return it correctly. The Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit put in place a service to support people to complete the applications correctly. Unfortunately, the take-up has been very low. Officers are requesting that the Home Office provide information on numbers who have been sent / received their questionnaire, granted status in the UK and have been served discontinuation notice to leave their asylum support accommodation. This would help to plan support options for those that are moving onto mainstream services.

## **8.0 Sudanese Refugees**

8.1 There are currently flights coming into the Country from Cyprus, where British Nationals from Sudan are being flown to safety for completing appropriate visas and paperwork before transitioning into the United Kingdom.

8.2 The City Council has been asked to put in place an emergency welcome desk if there are any flights into Manchester airport. Processes and staffing have been organised to be stood up at short notice if required. This includes advice, free onward travel to areas of the country where they have existing connections, basic necessities if required, potentially overnight accommodation if flights arrive very late, and any immediate health concerns.

8.3 Most arrivals will be able to move quickly to their onwards destination, whether that be family and friends or their own home. Nevertheless, in some cases, some

refugees will need to present as homeless. The Government is changing the Habitual Residency Test for those UK nationals arriving from Sudan to ensure they can access benefits and homelessness assistance as quickly as possible.

- 8.4 The Council is discussing potential homeless applications with Local Authorities across the northwest to agree a dispersal process if required. This would mean that Local Authorities all accept a small number of applications on a rota basis so that Manchester, as the port authority, does not take a disproportionate number.

## **9.0 Hong Kong British Nationals (overseas) (HKBN(O))**

- 9.1 The Home Office opened an immigration route on 31 January 2021, providing British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) status holders from Hong Kong and their eligible dependents with the opportunity to come to the UK to live, study and work, on a pathway to citizenship. Their visa condition includes 'No recourse to public funds' which allows employment but not access to mainstream benefits e.g. Universal Credit.
- 9.2 On 24 February 2022, a change to the BN(O) visa route was announced to allow some adult children of BN(O) status holders to apply to the route independently from their BN(O) parent. From 30th November 2022 the United Kingdom government opened a new option route for BN(O) status holders' children aged over 18 born on or after 1st July 1997 to apply for the BN(O) visa independently. Young HKBN(O) are likely to suffer from psychological issues of different degrees due to lack of family support and post-traumatic stress since the 2019 Hong Kong social movement.
- 9.3 The Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC) is leading on the delivery of a funded national 'Welcome Programme' to support those on the British National (Overseas) route and their families to help them to successfully settle in their new communities. As part of the Regional Strategic Migration Partnership, the Council is supporting the programme through the following:
- Providing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) to support BN(O) status holders and their families with English language
  - Providing destitution support if required
  - Online Welcome Pack
  - Being part of a network of 12 Hubs across the UK to support those on the BN(O) route
  - Partake in the commissioning panels to distribute national and regional voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) funds to deliver 42 projects to provide mental health and employability support as well as broader social integration activities

- 9.4 DLUHC is also providing the funding to deliver a reporting and support service for those on the BN(O) route and all other East and Southeast Asian communities in the UK who experience racism or any forms of hate. The Regional Strategic Migration Partnership is progressing this work.
- 9.5 The Home Office is also providing grant funding to Local Authorities and VCSE organisations to provide ESOL, Interpretation/ Translation Services and Destitution support. According to the Census 2373 residents (all ages) stated Hong Kong as their country of birth.

## **10.0 Chagossians**

- 10.1 There have been changes to the support and rights that Chagos/British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) can receive. From the 23rd November 2022 all descendants are entitled to be British Citizens. Whilst the community in Manchester is relatively small (it is challenging to know exact numbers) it is the second biggest in the UK, after Crawley.
- 10.2 There are c.3,000-5,000 people eligible to apply for citizenship under this route in Mauritius and the Seychelles, who may choose to join family in Manchester, and there are also potentially people living without status in the UK at present who are also eligible to apply for citizenship in-country. There has been no further update from the Home Office on this cohort to date.
- 10.3 At the moment, no one knows the impact this may or may not have but there is the potential that people could start presenting to services once they have citizenship. This will continue to be monitored.

## **11.0 Conclusion**

- 11.1 We are committed to providing the best support we can to asylum seekers and refugees in our city and to ensure that Manchester remains a warm and welcoming place of safety.



**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 23 May 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:**

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**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.

Date	Item	Recommendation	Action	Contact Officer
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)
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
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	CESC/22/51 Compliance and	To request that the Committee receive an update on plans for the	A response to this recommendation has been requested and will be	Carol Culley, Deputy Chief

2022	Enforcement Services - Performance in 2021/22	new CRM system.	circulated to Members.	Executive and City Treasurer
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
10 January 2023	CESC/23/05 Overview Report	To request that Committee Members be provided with a briefing note on the analysis of the information on Bonfire Night 2022, when this is available.	A response to this recommendation has been requested and will be circulated to Members.	Fiona Sharkey, Head of Compliance, Enforcement, and Community Safety

## 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 **15 May 2023** 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:**

<b>Subject / Decision</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Decision Due Date</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Background documents</b>	<b>Officer Contact</b>
Dispersed Accommodation Contract (2023/03/31A) To award renewed contracts with dispersed accommodation providers via Regulation 32 of the Public Contracts Regulations.	Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)	Not before 28th Apr 2023		Report and Recommendations	Mike Worsley, Procurement Manager mike.worsley@manchester.gov.uk
City Centre PSPO - extension (2023/05/12A) To agree to extend and amend the current PSPO for city centre wards	Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)	Not before 10th Jun 2023		Proposed PSPO, Decision Report, Equality Impact Assessment	Sam Stabler, Strategic Lead (Community Safety) samantha.stabler@manchester.gov.uk

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

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

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Immigration and Asylum	To receive a report on immigration and asylum.	Councillor Midgley	Dave Ashmore/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	
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/ Councillor Igbon	Fiona Ledden/ Neil Fairlamb/ Sharmila Kar/ Sam Stabler /Keiran Barnes/Dave Ashmore	

**Tuesday 20 June 2023, 2.00 pm (Report deadline Thursday 8 June 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.	Councillor Midgley	James Binks/Keiran Barnes	

Homelessness	To receive an update report.	Councillor Midgley	Dave Ashmore/Nicola Rea	See January 2023 minutes
Overview Report		-	Rachel McKeon	

**Tuesday 18 July 2023, 2.00 pm (Report deadline Thursday 6 July 2023)**

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Communities of Identity	To receive a report on Communities of Identity.	Councillor Midgley	Fiona Ledden/James Binks/Sharmila Kar	
Events	To receive a further report at an appropriate time which includes the Manchester Events Strategy, information on the geographic spread of the funded 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. To include an update on Martyn's Law (the Protect Duty).	Councillor Hacking	Neil Fairlamb/Mike Parrott	See minutes of the meeting on 19 July 2022.
Overview Report		-	Rachel McKeon	

**Tuesday 5 September 2023, 2.00 pm (Report deadline Wednesday 23 August 2023)**

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Domestic Abuse	To receive an update, including information on the victim voice work.	Councillor Midgley	Neil Fairlamb/Sam Stabler	
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	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	Neil Fairlamb/Fiona Sharkey/Sam Stabler	See minutes of the meeting on 6 September 2022.
Overview Report		-	Rachel McKeon	

**Tuesday 10 October 2023, 2.00 pm (Report deadline Thursday 28 September 2023)**

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Overview Report		-	Rachel McKeon	

**Tuesday 7 November 2023, 2.00 pm (Report deadline Thursday 26 October 2023)**

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
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	Neil Fairlamb/Sam Stabler	See minutes of the meeting on 8 November 2022.
Update on the budget position	To be confirmed	Councillor Akbar Councillor Rahman Councillor Midgley Councillor Hacking	Carol Culley/Neil Fairlamb	
Overview Report		-	Rachel McKeon	

**Tuesday 5 December 2023, 2.00 pm (Report deadline Thursday 23 November 2023)**

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Compliance and Enforcement Annual Performance Report	This report sets out the demand for and performance of compliance and enforcement services.	Councillor Igbon	Neil Fairlamb/Fiona Sharkey	
Overview Report		-	Rachel McKeon	



**Tuesday 9 January 2024, 2.00 pm (Report deadline Wednesday 27 December 2023)**

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Overview Report		-	Rachel McKeon	

**Tuesday 6 February 2024, 2.00 pm (Report deadline Thursday 25 January 2024)**

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
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.
Culture	To receive an update on Culture including the results of the Cultural Impact Survey.	Councillor Rahman	Neil Fairlamb/Neil MacInnes /Louise Lanigan	
Libraries and Archives Report	To receive an update report on Libraries and Archives.	Councillor Hacking	Neil Fairlamb/Neil MacInnes	
2024/25 Budget Report	To be confirmed.	Councillor Akbar Councillor Rahman Councillor	Carol Culley/Neil Fairlamb/Dave Ashmore	

		Midgley Councillor Hacking Councillor Igbon		
Overview Report		-	Rachel McKeon	

**Tuesday 5 March 2024, 2.00 pm (Report deadline Thursday 22 February 2024)**

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Digital Exclusion	To receive a further report on digital exclusion, including financial exclusion.	Councillor Hacking	Neil Fairlamb/ Neil MacInnes	See March 2023 minutes
Overview Report		-	Rachel McKeon	

**Items To Be Scheduled**

Item	Purpose	Executive Member	Strategic Director/ Lead Officer	Comments
Equality Deep Dives	To take a deep dive look at one of the equality strands.	Councillor Midgley	Fiona Ledden/ James Binks/ Sharmila Kar	Three deep dives to take place during the municipal year, focusing on different equality strands.
Prevent/Radequal	This report sets out our response to the National Prevent Review.	Councillor Rahman	Neil Fairlamb/ 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	Neil Fairlamb/ Sam Stabler/ Dave Ashmore	
Youth Justice	To be scoped.	Councillor Rahman Councillor Bridges	Paul Marshall/Neil Fairlamb/Fiona Sharkey/Sam Stabler	Invite Chair of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Community Cohesion Strategy	To receive a report on the Community Cohesion Strategy.	Councillor Midgley	Neil Fairlamb/ Sam Stabler	
Advice Services Update	To receive an update report.	Councillor Midgley	Neil Fairlamb/Nicola Rea	See minutes of the meeting on 10 January 2023.

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