

## **Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 5 December 2023**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Hitchen (Chair) – in the Chair

Councillors Azra Ali, Doswell, Good, Ogunbambo, Rawson, Sheikh and Wills

#### **Also present:**

Councillor Rahman, Statutory Deputy Leader

Councillor Midgley, Deputy Leader

Councillor T Robinson, Executive Member (Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care)

#### **CESC/23/51 Minutes**

**Decision:** That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 7 November 2023, be approved as a correct record.

#### **CESC/23/52 Age Friendly Manchester Refreshed Strategy 2023-2028 Draft Delivery Plan**

The committee considered a report of the Director of Public Health and the Age Friendly Manchester Programme Lead which outlined Manchester's new age friendly strategy *Manchester: a city for life 2023–2028* and associated draft delivery plan, which built on previous progress and provided a vision for Manchester over the next five years. This included a series of immediate and preventative responses to address the ongoing impact of the pandemic and the ensuing cost-of-living crisis on the over 50s.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Providing an introduction to the new ageing strategy;
- The development of the new strategy;
- Governance arrangements for the Age Friendly Programme
- A summary of the strategy, including its themes; and
- The draft delivery plan, which set out the activities and collaborative work to be delivered across the city by the Council, its partners and with local communities.

Some of the key points and queries that arose from the committee's discussion included:

- Welcoming the draft delivery plan and requesting that the committee receives progress updates every 6 months;

- How the Council working with social housing providers to encourage and ensure adaptations are made to existing properties to enable residents to age in their homes;
- If the Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Board included a representative from the LGBTQIA+ community;
- Highlighting that the experience of turning 50 years old is different for everybody;
- How the city's neighbourhoods can be made Age Friendly;
- How many attended Assembly meetings and how geographically representative this was;
- The rationale behind choosing Cheetham Hill, Crumpsall and Gorton to test the Age Friendly Neighbourhood Manchester model;
- Expressing ongoing concerns about undertaking the Age Friendly Neighbourhood Manchester model pilot in areas with existing infrastructure, and querying the fairness of this;
- Recognising the need for greater funding for VCSE organisations that support older people;
- Why only the development of the North Manchester Healthy Neighbourhood was mentioned under theme 2;
- What specific analysis had been undertaken into the health and care needs of different demographics;
- Whether there was a helpline for residents to contact to discuss housing adaptations;
- What consideration had been given to older people seeking undergraduate and postgraduate education opportunities; and
- Recognising that residents in North Manchester were likely to suffer ill-health for longer than those in South Manchester.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care stated that the Age Friendly Manchester Strategy was launched in the previous week and endorsed by Full Council at its meeting in November. He explained that the delivery plan for the strategy aimed to ensure that older people in Manchester felt heard and could see changes enacted as a result of using their voice and that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and cost-of-living crisis were considered throughout the strategy and delivery plan. He confirmed that the delivery plan would be launched in January following consideration by the Older People's Board.

The Director of Public Health stated that there was a strong corporate ownership of the strategy across the Council with the Executive Director of Adult Social Services chairing the Age Friendly Manchester Executive, which included membership from across all Council directorates. He also explained that consultation with community groups would continue throughout December and any recommendations from the committee would be incorporated into the final delivery plan.

In response to members' queries, the Programme Lead – Age Friendly Manchester explained that the strategy aimed to identify economic inequalities as well as other characteristics and intersectionality. He noted that the health of a 50-year-old

Bangladeshi person in Manchester was equivalent to that of an 80-year-old white woman and the wider Making Manchester Fairer programme sought to address this.

It was also explained that work had been undertaken previously with the LGBT Foundation to support the Pride in Ageing initiative, which involved the Council providing funding to identify the experience of over-50s in the LGBTQ+ community and how this differed to younger LGBTQ+ people. The Programme Lead – Age Friendly Manchester advised that this initiative led to the establishment of a Greater Manchester advisory group of older LGBTQ+ people who provided detail on their lived experience and a Manchester resident had been recruited from this advisory group to sit on the Older People's Board. This was also emulated through the Carer's Network and the BAME Network to ensure representation from a range of communities.

It was noted that more work was needed with regards to housing and the Age Friendly Manchester Executive was yet to meet to discuss this and to provide a strategic direction. The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social advised that a review into this had been completed between his portfolio and the Housing and Development portfolio to identify how this work would be monitored going forwards. This was governed by the Adult Social Care service and he stated the ambition to ensure that housing providers had the suitable level of support to enable implementation and cited the Manchester Equipment and Adaptations Partnership as a good example of this.

In response to a request for 6-month progress updates, the Director of Public Health confirmed that this could be provided.

The Programme Lead – Age Friendly Manchester explained that a pilot would be undertaken in Cheetham Hill, Crumpsall and Gorton and Abbey Hey but the programme aimed to develop a neighbourhood model which would include the physical, social, and cultural features of an Age Friendly neighbourhood. It was important to understand local older populations as part of this work. The committee was informed that these areas were selected for the pilot because of work that had been undertaken in Gorton prior to the Covid-19 pandemic because of the extra care scheme, the neighbourhood hub, and plans for regeneration of the district centre. The Programme Lead – Age Friendly Manchester specifically noted opportunities around changing population, levels of deprivation and mixed housing use and opportunities to influence at a local and strategic level. Funding had also been received across GM to develop an Ageing in Place partnership model, who provided extra resources for work in Gorton and Abbey Hey. The committee was further advised that there was an aim to undertake this work somewhere within North Manchester with a mixed demographic and that the development of the hospital site and residential areas provided a clear opportunity for this. The committee noted this response but continued to express concern over the practicality of this scheme and that this did not take into consideration areas without existing infrastructure.

It was noted that the pilot areas faced particular challenges including poverty and poor health irrespective of existing infrastructure and the Programme Lead – Age Friendly Manchester explained that the pilot would help to identify ways in which local strategic partnerships, such as ward coordination, elected members and voluntary organisations, could be utilised to understand older people and how services could be delivered in an Age Friendly way across the city. The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care reiterated that the pilot areas were strong starting points for assessing and developing the model.

In response to queries about the Assembly, the committee was informed that this consisted of 90 members who met once per quarter. There was a strong ethnic diversity on the Assembly but a need for more members aged between 50 and 70 years old and from North Manchester was acknowledged.

The Director of Public Health recognised the budget constraints facing VCSE organisations and stated that the Council was trying to provide resources where additional capacity was required through Our Manchester Funds.

In response to a question regarding the specific analysis undertaken into the health and care needs of different demographics, the committee was informed of the Better Outcomes, Better Lives programme which aimed to meet the different needs of communities in Manchester. The Director of Public Health acknowledged the need for a responsive health and social care service and the inequalities between communities and that it was important not to make generalisations about need, particularly following the Covid-19 pandemic. He also informed members of Sounding Boards with Community Health Equity Manchester, which enabled collaborative working with partners across the sector.

The Programme Lead – Age Friendly Manchester noted the specific work being undertaken in North Manchester and explained that the proposed International Centre for Action on Healthy Ageing would be a national site but located in North Manchester. He reiterated that the Council's intention was to strategically influence developments like this to ensure the promotion of the Age Friendly Manchester principles and objectives. The Director of Public Health also stated that the proposed International Centre for Action on Healthy Ageing would benefit the whole city.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care stated that work around North Manchester General Hospital should not be viewed in isolation as this would be a model for work across the city.

With regards to education opportunities for over 50s, it was acknowledged that these were typically around improving an individual's skillset, rather than university degrees, but this could be looked into further with the Council's Work and Skills team.

Officers also recognised the impact of geography and locality on health inequalities and stated that the long-term impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on mental health was still largely unknown, with poor health still felt more widely in certain areas of the

city. It was stated that further investigation into this would be undertaken through the medium-term plan for the strategy.

The Executive Member for Healthy Manchester and Adult Social Care reiterated how the strategy encompassed much of the Council's work and service areas and stated that the delivery plan was ambitious and in-depth. He commended the work of the officers involved and paid special tribute to the Programme Lead - Age Friendly Manchester who would be retiring in early 2024.

In closing the item, the Chair also placed on record her thanks to officers for their work on the strategy and delivery plan.

### **Decision:**

That

1. the report be noted;
2. the committee requests a progress update on the work of the Age Friendly Manchester Strategy Delivery Plan in 6 months, to include an update on recruitment to the Assembly; plans for transport improvements; and an update on communications;
3. the committee requests to undertake an annual 'deep-dive' into the Age Friendly Manchester Strategy and Delivery Plan.

### **CESC/23/53 Our Manchester Funds Programme Overview**

The committee considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an overview of the current Our Manchester Funds programme, activities and priorities and brought together new information and information previously considered by the committee about individual aspects of the programme.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background to the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector and the Our Manchester Voluntary and Community Sector (OMVCS) fund;
- The main priorities of the programme;
- The Supporting Communities Fund;
- The VCFSE Infrastructure Support Contract;
- Other targeted support, including the Cost of Living Fund;
- The Household Support Fund;
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic VCSFE Organisations Support Fund;
- Covid Recovery Fund;
- Other partnerships and forums;
- The OMVCS Programme Board and governance arrangements; and
- How the Council's wider priorities, such as Zero Carbon and the Real Living Wage, were reflected in the Programme.

Some of the key points and queries that arose from the committee's discussion included:

- Welcoming the officer presentation;
- Whether voluntary organisations had direct access to Household Support Funding (HSF) or if this had to be requested from Macc at the point of need;
- How many community leaders attended Zero Carbon training sessions;
- How due diligence was undertaken with regards to the distribution of HSF;
- How equality, diversity and inclusivity were embedded in the programme to ensure funding helps marginalised communities;
- Why the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic VCFSE Organisations Support Fund had been reduced to £95k;
- When an impact assessment on the programme would be undertaken and whether this would include data on the number of people supported;
- Whether the Council had any influence over funding priorities, such as the cost-of-living crisis; and
- Requesting more detail on the support provided by Conversation 2 Cash (C2C).

In introducing the item, the Deputy Leader placed on record her appreciation for the work of the VCFSE sector given the challenging circumstances they operate in and the high levels of demand they face.

The committee received a presentation which highlighted the Council's substantial investment into the VCFSE sector, despite having limited funds available, and provided an overview of the different funds that had been awarded to community groups as well as feedback from service users and funded organisations.

In response to members' queries, the Policy and Programmes Manager (Communities and VCSE) explained that the objective of Macc's distribution of HSF was to provide support directly to residents in need. He stated that Macc had referral partners across the VCFSE sector who could present to Macc with their support needs. A support request was then reviewed against specific criteria and the referring organisation would provide the support if approved, with Macc reimbursing the organisation within a fortnight. The committee was advised that this process had been in place previously to great success.

In response to a question from the Chair, it was stated that Macc undertook due diligence on all prospective referral partners and produced monthly reports on the support provided by each organisation in receipt of HSF. This report also provided information on service users by locality and communities of identity. Officers agreed to confirm outside of the meeting whether there was a monitoring process for HSF funds issued by Macc and HSF funds issued by the Council to ensure there was no duplication.

The committee was informed that there had been online and face-to-face training sessions with community leaders regarding the Zero Carbon agenda. A 'train the trainer' model was used to enable information to be shared widely across individual organisations and to ensure continuation of skills. Information on the amount of people who attended these sessions would be provided outside of the meeting.

The Policy and Programmes Manager (Communities and VCSE) advised members that an Equality Impact Assessment underpinned the whole Our Manchester Funds Programme and noted that the Council had provided an uplift in funding to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) community organisations through a specific Support Fund and this would continue to be a priority. He recognised, however, that the Our Manchester Funds Programme sought to provide assistance to a range of groups and organisations which supported a variety of communities of identity.

It was stated that the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic VCFSE Organisations Support Fund had been reduced to £95k following an exceptional payment that was made to an organisation in need. Collaborative conversations were currently underway to decide how best to use this fund and the Policy and Programmes Manager (Communities and VCSE) endeavoured to involve the member who raised this question in these discussions.

In response to a query regarding an impact assessment, members were informed that one was completed in 2021 which reviewed every VCFSE organisation in receipt of Council funding and this could be repeated in the 2024/25 financial year to identify levels of funding, where funding streams came from and types of funding. The Policy and Programmes Manager (Communities and VCSE) noted that the funding landscape was complex with differing criteria between funds and that an Impact Assessment would provide a comprehensive picture of all VCFSE funding. Members were also advised that the annual report on the Our Manchester Voluntary and Community Sector Fund, which was last considered by the committee in March 2023, assessed the achievements of the Fund and was supported by information provided by funded organisations although the Assistant Chief Executive highlighted that it was important not to place a burdensome monitoring process on VCFSE groups.

The Chair noted that there were great community groups in each area in the city but stated that there needed to be a greater focus on community reach within the monitoring process. The Policy and Programmes Manager (Communities and VCSE) confirmed that the current monitoring process was outcome-led and that groups were asked to identify their objectives and to provide metrics and indicators to demonstrate their progress. He explained that groups were asked to provide figures on the number of service users, their communities of identity and what part of the city they were from every 6 months, and he offered to provide a brief report to the committee after each monitoring period.

It was also stated that the Council was reviewing a number of different funding opportunities to understand what an appropriate response to cost-of-living support

should be in the next financial year, citing that £600k had been allocated for this in 2023/24.

In concluding the item, the Chair thanked each volunteer who provided their time and support to local communities and asked that officers pass this message on.

**Decision:**

That the committee

1. notes the report;
2. requests further information on the number of community leaders who have attended Zero Carbon training;
3. requests confirmation on monitoring arrangements for the distribution of HSF between the Council and Macc;
4. writes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to express concerns about the possibility of Household Support Fund not being continued in 2024/25;
5. welcomes the offer of 6-monthly update reports on the outcome of monitoring periods;
6. requests more detail on the support provided by Conversation 2 Cash (C2C); and
7. requests that the next update report on the Our Manchester Funds Programme references organisations which donate time and goods to their communities.

**CESC/23/54 Final Report and Recommendations of the Crime and Antisocial Behaviour Task and Finish Group**

The committee considered a report of the Crime and Antisocial Behaviour Task and Finish Group which presented the findings of the detailed investigation undertaken by the Task and Finish Group for endorsement by the Committee.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Providing an introduction and background to antisocial behaviour (ASB) in Manchester and the work of the Task and Finish Group;
- Membership of the Task and Finish Group;
- Objectives and key lines of enquiry;
- Methodology and evidence base;
- Findings of the Task and Finish Group; and
- Recommendations of the Task and Finish Group.

The Statutory Deputy Leader thanked members involved in the Task and Finish Group for their work and comprehensive recommendations.

An amendment was requested to recommendation 1 of the Task and Finish Group to include reference to antisocial behaviour occurring in Air BnBs and other short-term let properties.

The committee was also informed that a report on responses to and progress on the recommendations would be considered by the committee in May 2024.

On behalf of the Task and Finish Group, the Chair expressed thanks to the officers and partners who were involved in the review.

**Decision:**

That the committee endorses the recommendations made by the Crime and Antisocial Behaviour Task and Finish Group, subject to an amendment to recommendation 1.

**CESC/23/55 Overview Report**

The committee considered a report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which 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:**

That the report be noted, and the work programme agreed.