

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 11 October 2018

Subject: Widening Access and Participation, Leisure, Libraries, Galleries and Culture - Update

Report of: Chief Operating Officer - Neighbourhoods

Summary

This report updates members on Widening Access to Culture and Leisure. The purpose of the Widening Access work is to understand resident engagement in services provided by Leisure, Libraries, Galleries and Culture and to explore routes to increase participation among groups or communities that may be less engaged.

This report also provides information about how leisure's approach to 'poverty proofing', as requested by the Committee.

Recommendation

That members of the committee consider and provide comment on the content of the report.

Wards Affected: All

Alignment to the Our Manchester Strategy Outcomes (if applicable)

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Increased participation and footfall contributes to the economy of the city whilst new programmes which attract new audiences within the cultural and leisure portfolio which can encourage new investment and funding in the city which will lead to an enhanced and expanded offer for our residents.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	A number of the programmes delivered across the culture and leisure portfolio upskill our residents with hard and soft skills including confidence and resilience. Our programmes also encourage residents to consider careers in the creative and industries and also business start up support from Business and Intellectual Centre at Central Library.

A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The purpose of the Widening Access work is to understand resident engagement in services provided by Leisure, Libraries, Galleries and Culture and to explore routes to increase participation among diverse groups or communities that may be less engaged at the moment. The report recognises that engagement in leisure, library and cultural activities supports health & wellbeing, motivation and education outcomes which help unlock and grow people and communities potential.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	This report describes work towards ensuring that access to a varied cultural, leisure, recreational and library offer is improved and recognises the impact that can have in supporting community wellbeing, active citizenship and vibrant neighbourhoods.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Access to the Internet through community venues such as our 22 libraries gives our residents to free access to wifi thus enabling connectivity for those who may not have access at home - digital programmes in our libraries showcase the benefits of connectivity and upskill our residents to face an ever changing digital world.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

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

Report to Community and Equalities Scrutiny Committee - 12 October 2017

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Access to a varied cultural, leisure, recreational and library offer is vital to supporting community wellbeing, active citizenship and vibrant neighbourhoods. Manchester achieves this through a portfolio of city wide, high quality facilities and a rich calendar of programming, events and participatory activities, as well as space and support for community groups to lead activity. The international creative and sporting reputation of the city sits alongside the many opportunities for residents and community groups to volunteer, participate, watch and deliver activity that instils civic pride, activates engagement and builds personal and community capacity, wellbeing and resilience.

1.2 Feedback from residents to a number of consultation exercises, Manchester Parks Strategy, Sport and Leisure Strategy, Our Manchester resident survey, identify the city's leisure, library and cultural assets as being really important to them, in part, because many are free to access, they can take their families to learn and have fun together.

1.3 Responding to these consultation findings is a priority for our services and the cross service Widening Access and Participation Board was convened to ensure that opportunities to access and participate in leisure, libraries, galleries and culture are as wide as possible and inclusive of all Manchester residents.

1.4 Following the Our Manchester Strategy and approach, we are taking a proactive approach by engaging with stakeholders, partners and residents to hear about their experiences and how access could be improved from their point of view. Recognising and valuing the amazing assets in Manchester across leisure, libraries, galleries and culture from grassroots to neighbourhood to citywide or high profile events and activities is important to this issue and encouraging more connections and collaboration between them is crucial to help deliver on the Our Manchester 'We Wills', in particular:

- Collectively improve our health and wellbeing and be more active as adults and children
- Be known for high life-quality, better green spaces and world-class sport, leisure and culture
- We'll invest in culture and sport – for residents' benefit and to increase the city's international attractiveness.
- Manchester people will be proud of their cultural institutions which will reflect and celebrate diversity and engage a broad audience.

1.5 Officer representation on the Widening Access and Participation group includes Neighbourhoods, Leisure, Libraries, Galleries & Culture, Policy, Partnerships & Research, Communications and Youth Strategy. Dave Moutrey, the city's Director for Culture, also attends to facilitate a strong communication link with the city's cultural partners. The Board has overseen the delivery of an initial 12 month Widening Access and Participation Action Plan and development of a draft action plan to 2020.

1.6 However, we cannot achieve these ambitions on our own and continue to engage with a much wider cohort of partners in consultation and delivery. This includes internal and external partners such as, community groups, cultural organisations, Age Friendly Manchester, Community Explorers networks, Youth and Play providers, schools, Area Team Neighbourhood Managers community groups and residents.

2.0 Background

2.1 The scope of provision for work on widening access and participation includes;

- 22 Libraries
- Manchester Art Gallery
- 25 Cultural Institutions
- 20 Sport and Leisure Centres
- Community Access to Secondary Schools
- 144 Parks and Open spaces
- Over 500 community organisation

2.2 The four improvement themes for Widening Access and Participation are:

- **Data improvement:** developing data capture and analysis methods to better inform future service planning and to track progress in relation to underrepresented groups people;
- **Targeted Activity:** Implementation of initiatives with/for underrepresented groups of people to widen access and participation;
- **Communication:** maximising joint and cross-promotion and information opportunities across the service areas;
- **Engagement and Consultation:** Conversations with residents, using the Our Manchester approach, regarding opportunities to increase access and participation.

2.3 Initial work on the analysis of engagement and participation data across the services revealed that it is not possible to make direct comparisons between the services, due to the differences in the categories and level of information collected. However, through interrogation of our data, together with 'on the ground knowledge' and comparative national information, we identified the following groups of people as priorities for all the services to increase and deepen engagement with:

- Young people/young adults 13-19 years old
- Older people – 50+
- Disabled people
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people
- Women and girls

2.4 The following sections of this report provide an update of work progressed under each of the four improvement themes and a summary of proposed actions over the next 12 months.

2.5 Other reports on the agenda of this committee about Manchester International Festival, the Cultural Ambition and volunteering provide further context and detail about work that is deepening engagement with residents, volunteers and other stakeholders across the city.

3.0 Data Improvement

3.1 Leisure

3.1.1 We know from national data held by Sport England that poverty is a strong predictor of health outcomes and physical inactivity levels. Nearly 71% of socio-economic group NS-SEC 1-2 (professional occupations) are classified as physically active (more than 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per week). This compares to only 50.7% of NS-SEC 6-8 (semi-routine occupations & long term unemployed), being classed as physically active.

3.1.2 The Council has maintained a long term objective to raise physical activity levels across the city, in particular in families where cost and/or availability and/or the suitability of provision is a barrier to their participation. Until recently, tracking progress on this objective as part of a robust evidence-based assessment has proven challenging for both Manchester and the leisure sector as whole both regionally and nationally. This has been partly addressed in Manchester with the introduction of the Manchester Active card, which for the first time, is starting provide robust data on the uptake of activities across all Council led leisure activities.

3.1.3 MCRactive is a membership scheme whereby people sign-up for a membership card and in return are entitled to up to 30% discounts on pay and play activities at leisure centres operated on behalf of the Council by the Eastlands Trust and Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL) under the Better brand. In time it is intended that the scheme will be rolled out to a wider range of facilities including those leased by the Council and those on School sites. The purpose of the card is to gain valuable insight on participation levels across Manchester to enable services to be targeted to tackle low participation levels. The scheme was launched in September 2017 with the aim of signing up 50,000 people within the first 2 years. At the end of month 11 this target had already been surpassed with over 83,000 people registered. In addition, the Council already held data on over 59,000 who have either a pre-paid gym membership or who are enrolled on a course or programme. Therefore, the Council for the first time has a very strong understanding of the makeup of service users across all facilities managed under these arrangements.

3.2 Libraries

3.2.1 Libraries have robust and detailed data on library members and this demonstrates that membership closely reflects the demographics of the city. Work has been undertaken to identify where the best data sets are to monitor and analyse engagement of target groups that have been identified as priorities for the service. As a result, development plans are being drawn up for each library, and these will contain detailed demographic data, a schedule of activities and events currently offered, as well as key priorities for the next few years.

3.2.2 Libraries have also been working on developing a greater understanding of the use of Central Library across all wards. This is to monitor participation from all wards and to identify the usage of Central Library and awareness of it as a whole city resource. The data shows that a large percentage of most wards' library members are also users of Central Library.

3.2.3 Work to address lower engagement by some schools with libraries has been undertaken. There has been a focus on performance management and data analysis. Libraries now use data which shows school engagement in the academic, rather than financial, year. At a glance it is possible to see which schools (and colleges/universities) have visited a library, or received a visit from the library/archives team in the last two years enabling local teams to plan their engagement more effectively by targeting schools who have not visited. Libraries are also developing a shared school contact list for use across the service of libraries and have had some success increasing school engagement with the service over the last 12 months; the number of visits increasing by 28% in 2017 compared to 2016.

3.3 Manchester Art Gallery

3.3.1 Manchester Art Gallery (MAG) has drawn on the expertise of the Manchester Partnership's data manager (who works across MAG, the Whitworth and Manchester Museum) to collect and report more robust audience data.

3.3.2 Across the three venues, the 2017/18 period has seen a second year of significant growth in visitor numbers, with visiting up 10% between 2016/17 and 2017/18. Collectively, last year, the three venues welcomed over 1.3 million people, with Manchester Art Gallery attracting the highest number of visits across the Partnership.

3.3.3 In 2017/18 MAG welcomed 641,361 people - a record year. Satisfaction levels have remained very high with 98% of Manchester Art Gallery visitors rating their experience as good or excellent.

3.3.4 As well as growing in number, visitors to Manchester Art Gallery are becoming more diverse and representative of the communities we serve. 42% of visitors are from the C2DE socio-economic group, 20% are BME, 19% are aged 65 or older and 11% of visitors are disabled.

3.3.5 Research findings have been incorporated into the 2018-22 business plans for both MAG and for the Manchester Partnership and include audience development strategies to further increase the diversity of visitors to the venues.

3.4 Culture

3.4.1 Following a comprehensive redesign of the annual Cultural Impact Survey in 2017, which included a co-design process with representatives of the culture sector, 39 organisations responded to the request to complete the survey for the year 2016/17. Completing the survey, which is an online process, is mandatory for those organisations included in the city council's Cultural Partnership and Strategic Cultural Investment grants and voluntary for non-Council funded organisations.

3.4.2 The survey has recently been completed again for the year 2017/18. Early highlight results, subject to further data validation and consolidation include:

- 37 organisations, representing 11 art forms, responded to the survey
- Manchester organisations reported a total footfall of 4,475,390 people, with Manchester Art Gallery reporting the highest footfall (641,361)
- Manchester organisations reached audiences of 639,485 outside Manchester through touring their work
- Activity was delivered in all 32 wards of the city.
- 34 cultural organisations who responded to this question employed a total of 1,524 people
- 34 organisations who responded to this question provided opportunities for 4,410 volunteers who worked a total of 219,706 volunteer hours.
- 17 organisations who responded to this question engaged with 113 (63%) of Manchester schools (excluding private and independent schools). Overall, the engagement sessions led by these organisations reached 6,342 individual participants.

3.4.3 A full analysis of the data collected will be available over the coming month.

3.4.4 The survey is aligned with data collected by Arts Council England and responds to the Widening Access work by asking for people and place data across audiences, participants, volunteers, staff and board members. The survey also collects data on schools engagement.

3.4.5 The data collected through the survey allows us to identify communities and geographical areas in the city which may be less engaged by cultural partners and to work with those partners to address these gaps. More information about how this work is taking place is the subject of another report to this committee (MANchester's Cultural Ambition).

3.4.6 Last year, two workshops for cultural organisations were held to feed back the results of the survey to the sector and to focus on priority areas identified. These included participants and volunteer engagement, audience diversity, diversity in boards and governance and schools engagement. Similar engagement events are planned for later this year. The data collectively helps to demonstrate the economic and social impact of culture in the city as a whole, and is a resource for cultural partners when bidding for external funding or undertaking research for future projects.

3.4.7 However, as this is only the second year the survey has been carried out in this format and due to some discrepancy in organisations that have responded in each year, both in terms of numbers and individual organisations, a year on year comparison for all responses is not yet possible. However, work is underway to develop a methodology through which the results of a core cohort of funded organisations (which are mandated to respond every year) can be analysed and tracked to monitor progress. The stability provided by the four year Cultural Partnership grant programme and the Strategic Cultural Investments will support this

approach as the number of Council grant-funded organisations, subject to budget setting, is not expected to change between 2018 and 2022

3.4.8 Among the Core Cities, Manchester City Council's approach to collecting and analysing city-wide cultural impact data is unique and a recent delegation from Manchester's German partner city Chemnitz have expressed an interest in a knowledge transfer to learn more about the process and to embed it in their work practice, to support evidence based cultural policy making and Chemnitz' bid to become European Capital of Culture 2025.

4.0 Wider Access for Under Represented Groups

4.1 The Widening Access and Participation priority has been communicated to staff teams across Leisure, Libraries and Galleries and is part of the services' Management Action Plans.

4.2 Our cultural partners have been engaged through the Cultural Leaders Group and the new round of Cultural Partnership Agreement grants (2018/19) review meetings. This area of work has been positively received and we are encouraging organisations to incorporate it within their business plans. Widening Access and Participation is also a strong theme in the Cultural Ambition, which is the subject of a further report to this committee.

4.3 Collectively the service areas, the city's sport, leisure, cultural and community partners deliver a huge number of initiatives aimed at engaging underrepresented groups of people. Examples of these activities are being captured as part of Widening Access and Participation. Some examples of recent initiatives are detailed in the following sections of this report.

5.0 Leisure

5.1 The Manchester Active card is providing valuable data to enable the Council to target those groups or residents who are inactive (less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week) and despite significant funding reductions to the sport and leisure budget over the last decade, the Council has sought to continue to protect services for those residents who are least likely to lead a healthy lifestyle, including those living in poverty. Principally this is being delivered through the following service commitments:

5.2 Provision of free or low cost activities at a neighbourhood level:

We know from consultation and engagement with residents that continuing to provide low cost access is a high priority. Equally, having activities available locally with a good geographical spread is critically important. Fear of judgement is also an important perception to address i.e. residents feeling like activities are for people like them. The following provisions have been introduced to address this:

- Free swimming for under 5s is available in all Swim for All sessions - 528 hrs of activity is provided per week across the city.
- Free swimming for over 60s is available in all Swim for All Sessions and Adult only sessions - 546 hrs of activity is provided a week across the city.

- Free swimming for children 16 and under in school holidays - 5,124 hrs of activity is provided per year across the city.
- Universally low charging for all leisure facilities (our provision compared to benchmarks).
- Affordable leisure provision to be available with 20 minutes' walk and public transport time of every household. This provision has been enhanced by the establishment of Active Lifestyles activities in non-traditional leisure facilities (66 sessions per week at 35 venue locations across Manchester).
- Targeted activities and appropriate training for front line staff.

The Council are also working with partners in health to develop new and innovative ways in which to tackle inactivity levels, particularly within our poorest neighbourhoods. We are investing with Sport England into a tackling inactivity initiative in north Manchester as part of the broader Winning Hearts & Minds programme in order to test new approaches to support inactive people to become more physically active. The learning generated through such approaches will help to inform future work in this area.

In addition, we are also at the early stages of developing Manchester's local delivery pilot, which is part of a broader GM programme to get more people physically active, again funded through Sport England. The pilot is in its very early stages of design, but will inject £1.5m to target working with people who are out of work or at risk of becoming workless, in order to develop approaches that support them to become more physically active. This is a three year programme which is due to commence in the Winter (2018/19).

5.3 Community capacity building:

There were 3,394 voluntary sector organisations active in Manchester in 2017, with around 44% of these stating that they deliver health and wellbeing activities for communities. Building capacity with these groups is a key recommendation of the recently adopted Manchester Sport and Physical Activity strategy and the Council is working with partners to support these groups in the following ways:

- Recruitment, Training, deployment of volunteers and coaches, through the Manchester Volunteers Inspire Programme. There are currently over 6,000 volunteers registered on the programme.
- Providing funding and small grants for programmes and activities.
- Working with groups to access wider funding opportunities, both national, regional and local funding opportunities.
- Supporting running and cycling sessions programmed in parks (i.e Park Run, Great Run Local, Couch to 5k etc).
- Supporting groups with property related matters such as leases, licenses and asset transfers.

5.4 Widening access to leisure centre programmes through careful programming: Programming our leisure facilities is a delicate task, one where the Council is seeking to balance a number of competing demands, including: providing statutory school programmes; teaching children the fundamentals of sport and physical activity; providing pay and play activities to the general public; supporting clubs; meeting the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 by ensuring that targeted programmes meet

the needs of under-represented/ protected characteristic groups; meeting contractual requirements with funders (i.e. providing access to stakeholders such as the universities or national sports bodies); and finally, building the core market (i.e. general public footfall, which generates income to sustain the running costs of these facilities). Specifically in relation to under-represented groups and groups with protected characteristics, the Council has worked with its partners to introduce the following to help to widen access within facilities:

- Women only sessions – 47 hours provided per week across the city.
- Faith groups sessions – 47 hours for women are suitable for faith groups
- Over 50s - 21 hours provided per week across the city

5.5 Improving swimming attainment at KS2:

We know people who learn to swim at key stage 2 are more likely to lead healthy lifestyles. We also know that children who live in poverty are less likely to access paid swimming lessons. Consequently for many children, participating in school swimming can be a child's first exposure to learning to swim. This is reflected in the ability start point for many of our children when they enter the programme (we have a data sample for this indicator which, shows that over 50% could not swim 5 meters at the start of the programme).

This is being addressed through the delivery of a programme that is a leader and exemplar nationally. The programme ensures all pupils at key stage 2 are provided with a minimum of 30 hours instruction. Progress is tracked alongside the national teaching plan and parents and teachers can review progress online in real time. This approach resulted in 79% of pupils meeting the national benchmark last year. This is one of the highest recorded achievements in England and represents the greatest distance travelled of any local authority in England.

5.6 Protecting, providing and enhancing playing fields:

Local access to high quality playing pitch facilities is at the heart of our plan to poverty proof leisure services and provide a platform to enable the creation of physical activity habits during childhood leading to pathways that develop sporting habits for life. These facilities contribute to tackling inactivity and increasing participation in sport and physical activity. They are a resource required by all sectors of the community to be active both formally and informally.

We have worked with NGB's, Sport England and local stakeholders to develop the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS). The PPS provides the evidence required to help provide, protect and enhance playing fields and to ensure sufficient land is available to meet existing and projected future pitch requirements. Planning policy and other relevant sport related corporate strategies must be based upon a robust evidence base in order to ensure planning, local policies and sport development criteria can be implemented efficiently and effectively.

The PPS evidences that we are well provided for in terms of playing pitch provision and indicates that our key priorities are to protect and enhance the existing stock. This includes improvements to ancillary facilities such as changing rooms. The PPS has been adopted by Manchester's planning authority and will inform all future planning applications on playing pitch sites. Part of the PPS suite of documents

includes a site by site action plan. This plan describes that for each site our priority should be either to protect, provide and enhance provision. This approach will ensure that quality of provision is sustained, maintained and improved.

6.0 Libraries, Galleries and Culture

6.1 Libraries are actively seeking to reach certain target groups by increasing activities aimed specifically at those groups and then monitoring take up of services. Examples are activities for older people, such as the Grand Day Out sessions at some of our libraries the Sunday fundays at Central Library, aimed at increasing access for families.

6.2 A recent, successful area of targeted activity is the libraries' Read and Feed programme. The scheme ran in July-August 2018 in Fallowfield Library, Gorton Library, North City Library following a pilot at Fallowfield Library in 2017. The scheme tackles holiday hunger faced by children who usually have free-school meals and engages children with the Summer Reading Challenge. The scheme had 1600 attendances in total. The scheme is only promoted in the local areas where it takes place to ensure attendance is from the local community, and those who need it most. There was high engagement with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic children, including some families who were not previously library members.

6.3 Since the redevelopment and re-opening of the Central Library, the library service has been proactive in working closely with local arts and cultural providers, artists and community groups to engage people more widely in high quality arts and cultural experiences. Library Live, a cultural programme at Central Library was launched in May 2014 and helped to establish Central Library as a vibrant, democratic and creative hub.

6.4 Delivery of a second phase (May 2017 - June 2018) has just been completed. This phase saw Longsight, North City and Wythenshawe Forum libraries launched as Creative Spaces in the heart of our communities. Highlight events during this period included:

ILLUMINATE with Company Chameleon - a site specific dance performance premiered at Central Library and toured to our 3 Creative Space libraries, seen by an audience of 650 across the 4 venues;

This Vibrant Thing with Platform Manchester - cross art form festival style events at our Creative Space libraries, celebrating the diversity and creativity in our communities, particularly aimed at 14 - 25 year olds. As well young, emerging artists the events involved over 20 community organisations and engaged 1,400+ people.

The Ministry of Lost and Found with Z-Arts and Manchester Art Gallery - a family Saturday Spectacular event, with Central library transformed and teeming with the intriguing characters of a secret government ministry. Children (0-11) and their families were invited to explore their creativity, make noise and have fun. In the months leading up to the event, artists tested ideas and engaged with families from a number of branch libraries in their local venues and at a special consultation day at the Gallery. The event was attended by approximately 3,000 people.

Films about all these events can be found on the Library Live website at this link:
<http://www.librarylive.co.uk/media/>

6.5 The inclusion of more events at neighbourhood branch libraries during phase 2 has helped to engage more local people, with Manchester residents accounting for a much higher proportion of audiences at these events than at Central Library or during phase 1. 63% of all audiences to events this year were from areas with higher than average levels of deprivation, which, traditionally have lower engagement in the arts.

6.6 Library Live and Creative Spaces have been supported through 2 major awards we have secured from Arts Council, England and we have just been successful with our third application to further develop and embed these programmes, expanding to another 5 neighbourhood libraries.

6.7 More widely across the service, there are strong relationships with organisations such as the Royal Exchange, Manchester Museum and Manchester Literature Festival, who all have a commitment to developing a place based presence - engaging people in their creative work and displaying items from their collections in neighbourhoods. The library venues and staff knowledge of community networks make them crucial partners and supportive facilitators of this work.

Things in our local library make it easier and more accessible

It's great to see people coming together and enjoying themselves. The perfect examples of what libraries should be. Thank you.

6.8 One of the Archives+ partners is the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust. They, are part of The University of Manchester, and funded predominantly by the University and Manchester City Council. As an Archives+ partner, they are based at Manchester Central Library, where they deliver the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre on the lower ground floor of the library.

6.9 The Trust helps people of all ages and backgrounds learn about Britain's ethnic minority communities. It runs oral history projects to collect the life stories of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in Manchester, organises events and exhibitions to share Black history, works with schools to make sure the next generation has a positive attitude to diversity in Britain, supports BAME groups to develop community history projects and to bid for external funding.

6.10 They also receive external funding for delivery of projects, and have recently received £357,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, for the three year Coming in from the Cold project. This funding increases the Trust's capacity to carry out one of its core roles - engagement with the communities of Manchester. Over the last 12 months, approximately 30 of Manchester's BAME community groups have been supported by the Trust. They have worked with approximately 7000 school children, and over 3000 people have attended their events.

6.11 Manchester Art Gallery takes increasingly innovative and collaborative approaches to engaging and creating dialogue with diverse audiences and voices.

6.12 Following on last year's success, Proud and Loud Arts returned to Manchester Art Gallery to run another takeover. This year's selection of pop-up performances, *Affirmations*, attracted an audience of 400 who had specifically come to see the event. The disabled artists of Proud and Loud Arts event showcased their work and talent, challenging people's views about the labelling and stigmatisation of people with disabilities.

6.13 The gallery continues its vibrant programme of audio described tours and BSL tours, the latter growing as we extend our connections with deaf people and groups in Manchester. Participants to both these programmes are signposted to join the gallery's Making Conversations sessions, a monthly art group for adults with access needs. Overall, the gallery's access strand places value and importance on the creativity of disabled people, assisting them as artists and participants to be part of the cultural life of the city.

Both Herbie (guide dog) and I enjoyed the visit to Manchester Art Gallery yesterday. As always, the exhibition was extremely interesting and the audio description and additional information about the works was delivered impeccably – member Henshaws Society after an audio described tour.

6.14 As part of Black History Month, Manchester Art Gallery launched a call out to artists and creatives from BAME communities to take part in a discussion group. This resulted in four sessions that shaped the gallery's thinking and underpinned the Black Arts and Modernism strand within our exhibitions, especially the works of Sonia Boyce and Speech Acts. Still an ongoing initiative, the group is helping the gallery explore the sometimes uncomfortable, though vital, issues of race, empire and lost histories.

6.15 The 15 organisations in the new Cultural Partnership Agreement programme (2018-22) serve diverse audiences and participants across North, Central and South Manchester and through a variety of art forms.

6.16 There are 5 new organisations funded through the programme, Streetwise Opera and the Men's Room work with people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and in the case of the Men's Room with men engaged in or at risk of becoming engaged in sex work.

6.17 Reform Radio CIC works with young people predominantly on skills development. Company Chameleon is Manchester's only dance organisation in receipt of Arts Council NPO funding, has a youth dance company based at Central Library and a comprehensive free/low cost offer for schools. Quarantine engages people of all ages and backgrounds through performance art.

6.18 Together with the ten organisations who retain their CPA funding (Contact, Venture Arts, Manchester Jewish Museum, Brighter Sound, Community Arts Northwest, The Edge, Manchester Craft and Design Centre, Manchester Camerata, Castlefield Gallery and Manchester Histories), engage people of all age groups and backgrounds.

6.19 Age Friendly Manchester has recently launched its refreshed strategy in which culture remains a key element. There is a quarterly Age Friendly Culture Working Group comprising of around 15 organisations. The group meets quarterly and works closely with Manchester's Age Friendly Team, as well as sharing practice and insights, the group works collaboratively on funding bids and initiatives such as the Greater Manchester Festival of Ageing and engaging with the city's Age Friendly Cultural Champions, of which there are over 100 in Manchester. Currently members of the group are advocating their organisations consider joining the GM housing provider led, *Take a Seat Scheme*, which simply asks local businesses to make seats, toilets and a drink of water available to people who may need them, as well as other suggestions of ways to make their premises more age- and dementia-friendly.

6.20 Libraries, the Gallery and many of our arts and cultural partners also provide opportunities and services for children and young people in the city and we are initiating discussions to establish a framework for a Curriculum for Culture that will complement and clearly communicate culture's contribution to the newly introduced Curriculum for Life. This work will be shaped by children, young people, schools, higher education, libraries, culture, arts and heritage partners, as well as strategic partners such as Arts Council, England and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

6.21 The intention of this work is make more visible and accessible, as well as helping to identify points for collaboration, challenge and improvement. Ultimately, the aim, is to inspire young Mancunians to get involved in the growing culture sector in our city and to develop a lifelong engagement with culture.

6.22 It will also support the development of a Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP) in Manchester. LCEP's are part of the Arts Council's Cultural Education Challenge that seeks to asks art and cultural organisations, educational institutions and local authorities to come together to drive a joined-up art and cultural offer locally, to share resources and bring about a more coherent and visible delivery of cultural education through Cultural Education Partnerships.

6.23 Through the Cultural Education Challenge, the Arts Council want to make sure that more children and young people can create, compose, and perform. They want every child to have the chance to visit, experience and participate in extraordinary work, and be able to know more, understand more, and review the experiences they've had.

6.24 Manchester and Greater Manchester are cited in the recent the All Party Parliamentary Group report, *Creative Health*, as a leader in developing practice that connects engagement and participation in arts and culture and positive benefits on health and wellbeing. These connections are now being built on through strategic conversations with health partners about measures to increase access, particularly for our most vulnerable residents and ensure we are developing cultural work that responds to population health needs.

6.25 Two strands of work have recently been initiated:

- Libraries, Galleries and Culture and the wider culture and health fora in Manchester¹ and the Manchester Health and Care Commission to develop a 3-year plan, articulating a shared vision and priorities;
- Closer working between Libraries and the Buzz Wellbeing Service to maximise the use of local venues to engage residents with their support and information services close to where they live.

7.0 Communication

7.1 The communications priority for Widening Access has focused on testing some different approaches to ensure we are promoting activities across the services in a more coordinated way. We have started by re-focussing the promotion of our school holidays programme - All Sorts To Do.

7.2 Since the 2017 Easter holidays we have approached our communications differently, using a more interactive approach which focuses on the top 10 free activities and attractions to visit during the holidays. Working with the services, more engaging content has been developed - particularly short films to highlight all the different and fantastic free to access activities and venues on offer to children and families. Over the next year we need to make sure that we continue to gather and bank new and engaging content to allow us to continue to interest of our target audience.

7.3 Our evaluation shows that this new approach is having a huge impact on the amount of people visiting our website to view activities. Over the summer holiday period this year our unique web page views grew from 1,683 visits in 2016 to 13,974 in 2017 and 15,910 in 2018.

7.4 Whilst these statistics are very impressive, understanding how this increased digital engagement translates to the numbers of participants attending the events is where the real success story lies. There is further work to do with our data and reporting systems to be able to provide a fuller picture of this success.

7.5 Future work this year will include piloting other targeted communications approaches to increase participation in particular areas or with particular audiences.

7.6 Communicating the wider culture offer is more complicated, as these services are provided by a large number of independent organisations in the city. However, consultation with residents, other partners and key workers (e.g. health / schools/ youth engagement) over a number of years also tells us that people are not aware of the breadth of the arts and cultural offer in the city and do not know how to find out about it. It is difficult to signpost people to an accessible source of information about the offer beyond individual organisations websites.

7.7 Existing cultural activity offers are fragmented and arts and cultural organisations are often duplicating effort and resources to reach and engage with

¹ Further detail in Culture Ambition report elsewhere on the agenda of this committee.

residents that are currently underrepresented among their audiences and participants. This can include multiple contacts with the same community or voluntary to take up or promote opportunities and offers.

7.8 Creativetourist.com is the only website dedicated to promoting the culture offer / experience in the city. More recently Creative Tourist have developed Culture Hosts, a shared listings database / platform that allows partners to upload event and venue listings online. In Manchester, Culture Hosts is supplying listings to the online magazine creativetourist.com, and generating bi-weekly What's On cultural briefing notes to local hotel partners and front of house teams.

7.9 However, as the site title suggests, the content is primarily aimed at visitors to the city and those already actively engaged in and seeking cultural experiences. So whilst it provides much learning to build on, partners are not, as yet, populating Culture Hosts with the broad range of their offer – for example participatory and community based activity. It is these gaps we are seeking to address.

7.10 Therefore we are exploring the possibility of developing an 'online, one-stop shop' for residents to find information about arts and cultural activity available in the city with the aim to widen access and increase participation in arts, heritage and culture activity in Manchester and to reach more of the population that are currently not engaged.

7.11 For this ambition to be realised investment is required to design the resource and establish a practical and sustainable operational model to maintain and support ongoing development. A business case is currently being scoped with ICT and the Manchester Culture Leaders group. We are also working closely with McrActive colleagues to learn from their experience and assess any potential areas of partnership and efficiencies.

8.0 Resident Engagement, taking an Our Manchester Approach

8.1 Following the initial work on the analysis of engagement and participation data a communication and engagement pilot with residents, using the *Our Manchester* approach, was undertaken.

8.2 A number of conversations were held with a range of groups and individuals in order to better understand people's experience of participating in activities, what works well and to hear their suggestions for improvement.

8.3 Colleagues from across Leisure, Libraries, Galleries and Culture worked together to develop and deliver the conversations. Additional guidance was provided by the Our Manchester team, as well colleagues who led on the Family Poverty Strategy consultation. This was to ensure our exercise employed the strengths based approach of Our Manchester to engaging with residents and stakeholders and learnt from previous experience.

8.4 Stakeholders from other areas of the Council and the voluntary and community sector were also engaged in the development and delivery of the conversations, including an induction session about the purpose of the exercise and

the Our Manchester approach. In the main, these stakeholders led the final conversations, supported by our staff.

8.5 Our partner stakeholders included; Breakthrough UK, Age Friendly Manchester, Venture Arts, Afro Tots Community Group, Wythenshawe Grand Day Out, Talk English Group (MAES), MCC Youth Engagement with Factory Youth Zone and Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre, Yellow Bird Community Group.

8.6 The conversations were based around 4 areas of enquiry;

- Where people go and why?
- How they find out about places/events?
- What motivates them to try new things?
- What could be improved?

8.7 In total, 148 people were involved in the conversations. This is comparable to the number of people engaged by the Family Poverty Strategy consultation. 10 conversations took place in group settings and on a 1:1 basis with members of the public in Gorton Market and The Forum.

8.8 Groups identified as underrepresented were targeted for engagement in the conversations. This was a pilot project to test the Our Manchester approach in practice and sample sizes were small, therefore the results are indicative of general themes rather than statistically representative of any group of people. Similar to the Family Poverty Strategy analysis, responses against each area of conversation were coded and grouped in order to identify commonality.

8.9 To provide additional context, the responses were also considered alongside results from a number of other consultation exercises, including; Manchester Physical Activity & Sports Strategy (Sept 2017), Manchester Art Gallery, We Make the City conversations New North & South programme (Sept/Oct 2017), Family Poverty Strategy consultation conversations (2016) and the Our Manchester Resident Survey (2016). Findings across these exercises are broadly reflective of each other.

8.10 A summary of the engagement conversation findings are below:

8.11 **Venues and activities:** The range of venues used and activities undertaken by various groups. For Disabled People visits to Galleries/Museums were mentioned by 28% of respondents, with 32% taking part in Social activities such as visiting cafes or meeting friends. The main venue for Young People was Leisure Centres with 46% of responses, activities included swimming, boxing and free running. Although there were a relatively small number in total 44% of BAME respondents mentioned swimming or the gym as venues for activities. For the Women & Girls group the main venues used were Leisure Centres and parks (60%)

There were many positive comments about the venues and events available in in Manchester including '*... the culture, libraries and leisure offer in Manchester is rich and diverse in forms of art, in genres of music being played and in food and cuisine.*'

8.12 Finding out about activities: Social media & internet search was the most popular form of communication, with 30% of respondents overall mentioning this. Being told about an activity by a friend or an organisation that is trusted was significant for several groups. Both Older People and BAME groups mentioned Word of Mouth more than any other method, whereas Young People got information most frequently from other projects that they attended. Print, including newspapers and flyers, was also popular with 24% of respondents. The Older Persons groups also stressed that information on local activities was more useful than activities across the whole of the city. The use of local radio, as opposed to city-wide stations, also supported this point.

One young person commented *'I know Levi's music project at the Zion centre. People pass the word on Social media'*

8.13 Motivation to try new things: By far the most important point for all participants was that they knew someone else who was attending, this was mentioned in nearly half of the responses. Several aspects that made venues attractive were mentioned: that they were accessible; the attitude of staff; the cost; whether the building had an interesting history; and its location. A social activity to attend or a reason to get out of the house were other motivators.

8.14 Thoughts about what could be improved fell into a number of broader categories:

8.15 Transport: A number wanted cheaper transport - *'Trams are too expensive. It should be 10p per stop for kids'*. At the 1:1 conversations in Wythenshawe reliable transport links were very popular.

8.16 Times of events: Suggestions included having more events at weekends and evenings, especially for people working during week. However, for groups of older people there was a reluctance to travel at night or at very busy times. They also said that they could use free or subsidised travel for events starting after 9:30 am

8.17 Types of events: In general there was a desire for more music events, more courses, and more family events. A warm welcome at the venue and a cafe were significant for several people, as was knowing other people who were attending. Other incentives to attend included taster sessions before committing to a course and several participants mentioned the importance of culturally diverse events and an interest in things that were culturally significant to them.

'[I am] ... very interested in going to the South Asian gallery at Manchester Museum when it's completed'

8.18 Information: Finding a good website for events was very valuable, several participants mentioned the 'Hoop' site for families as being informative and easy to use. There were suggestions about having more information on events in local papers.

8.19 This was a pilot exercise and it is intended to continue with this approach to embed this way of working in our services more fully. Next steps include:

- Sharing the process and results of the conversations to date with staff forums across libraries, leisure, galleries and culture. A presentation was well received by the Libraries Senior Staff meeting in August.
- Holding 4 conversation exercises at events over the next year, the next is planned to take place during the Cheetham Hill Festival at the end of the month.
- Consider how best to facilitate staff and stakeholders coming together to share, reflect and determine actions arising from the engagements.

9.0 Next Steps

9.1 A new action plan to March 2020(?) is being drafted and the Widening Access and Participation Board will continue to monitor and inform delivery, along with consultation and involvement of the wider stakeholders that are already engaged and supporting this work (as detailed at point 1.5 of this report).

9.2 However, there are several priority actions identified for development over the coming months. These include;

- Continued improvement and partner engagement in MCR active and increase the number of active card holders, ensuring that the sign up is more representative of Manchester's communities.
- Finalising library area plans and engaging stakeholders in consultation and conversation about activating them;
- Submitting a business case for capital approval to support a resident facing, digital solution to communicating the city's culture opportunities more easily to residents and key workers and, if successful, initiating the project;
- Finalising the analysis and reporting for the 2017/18 Cultural Impact Survey and holding engagement workshops with the sector, wider public sector and VCS stakeholders, including neighbourhoods, education, youth and play, health and MACC, disseminate the findings and consult on future priorities;
- Hold a further 4 Our Manchester engagement conversations with residents at events across the city over the next 12 months and design and pilot a process to feedback to and engage staff in reviewing the responses.
- Deliver targeted communication pilots with leisure and libraries with a geographic focus;
- Establish robust evaluation process for communications initiatives to better understand effectiveness
- Conversations with Manchester Health and Care Commissioning in relation to Arts and Leisure

10.0 Conclusion

10.1 At the heart of this work is the recognition that Leisure, Libraries, Galleries and Culture all have an important role for growth, people and place. The belief that these service areas benefit good health and well-being, increase confidence, skills, aspiration, prospects, community cohesion and social connectedness is reflected in the Our Manchester strategy. Focussing on making sure our service areas easier to access, influence and connect with - for residents, community connectors and activists - is essential to growing the number of activities taking place and in enabling

more people to get involved more often with active, learning, cultural and creative opportunities, both on their doorstep and elsewhere in the city.

10.2 The Widening Access and Participation work is important in helping to improve our data collection and analysis and define the forward strategies needed to ensure our services are relevant to our customers and participants and to inform future investment. Identifying the most productive areas for collaboration between Leisure, Libraries, Galleries and Culture, our shared partners and residents will enable us to engage more powerfully with other partners involved in public sector reform and service transformation, such as health and social care, education, work and skills and youth and play.