

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Executive – 28 June 2023

**Subject:** Our Manchester Progress Update

**Report of:** The Chief Executive

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**Summary**

The report provides an update on key areas of progress against the Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025 which resets Manchester’s priorities for the next five years to ensure we can still achieve the city’s ambition set out in the Our Manchester Strategy 2016 – 2025

**Recommendations**

The Executive is requested to note the update provided in the report.

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**Wards Affected - All**

<b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b> - the impact of the decisions proposed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

<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

<b>Our Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The work to reset the Our Manchester Strategy considered all five of the Strategy’s existing themes to ensure the city achieves its aims. The themes are retained within the final reset Strategy, Forward to 2025.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city’s economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	

A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

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

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

### **Financial Consequences – Revenue**

None

### **Financial Consequences – Capital**

None

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

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

*Executive Report – 17th February 2021 - Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025*

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This is the latest in an ongoing series of reports highlighting examples of areas where strong progress is being made against key strategic themes identified in the Our Manchester Strategy.

## **2.0 Homelessness**

- 2.1 Manchester's homelessness figures have improved significantly, with numbers in temporary accommodation (including B&Bs) and sleeping on the streets both falling.
- 2.2 As of 6 June, overall numbers in temporary accommodation had fallen to 2,775 households from a peak of 3,194 at the end of last year – a 13.1% reduction, equating to 419 fewer households.
- 2.3 Reductions have been particularly marked in B&B accommodation. The overall number of households has gone down from 814 at its peak in February this year to 278 – a 65.8% reduction, or 536 households. The number of families in B&Bs has dropped from 227 at its peak in February this year to 46 – a 79.7% reduction. And the number of families in B&B accommodation for six weeks or more has plummeted 93.9% from 131 in February to just 8. This bucks the national trend, which is seeing an increase in temporary accommodation placements, including B&Bs.
- 2.4 Meanwhile the rough sleeper count has also shown a marked decrease, down from a peak of 61 in September 2022 to 37 last month, May 2023.
- 2.5 Significant ongoing challenges remain, not least the cost of living crisis, and there is zero room for complacency but the figures illustrate progress being made through the homelessness service transformation programme.
- 2.6 A key factor in achieving reductions in temporary accommodation use, including the use of B&Bs, has been changes to the Council's social housing allocation policy introduced in February this year.
- 2.7 One change gave people at risk of homelessness the same priority on the Manchester Move waiting list as those already experiencing it – encouraging people to seek support earlier, when more can be done to help them, rather than wait until they have already become homeless. This has had a positive impact on prevention.
- 2.8 Another change has been to allow people to keep the same priority on the waiting list if they move into private rented sector housing rather than temporary accommodation on an interim basis while they are waiting to be re-housed. This has had a positive impact in reducing temporary accommodation, especially B&B, numbers.
- 2.9 The increased emphasis on prevention has also seen more intensive scrutiny of homelessness cases, to identify opportunities for innovative solutions and

the opening of Homelessness Prevention Hubs in Harpurhey and Moss Side (now expanded to also cover Hulme) to offer early help to residents who may be struggling with debt, have had an eviction notice, or experiencing other early indicators of potential homelessness.

2.10 There have also been a range of initiatives to increase the amount of suitable temporary and move-on accommodation available. These include:

- Up to 200 family-sized properties being leased by the Council from private providers to provide temporary accommodation as an alternative to B&B accommodation for families.
- 140 properties for use as longer-term accommodation for either homelessness prevention or for people moving on from temporary accommodation -funded by the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC) via a grant to Greater Manchester Combined Authority.
- Better retention and management of existing temporary accommodation properties due to an uplift in the rent paid to landlords.

2.11 The reduction in number rough sleeping has been brought about through a combination of 'assertive' outreach, working with people who have previously declined offers of support and ensuring that help is focused on those who are consistently sleeping rough and do not have other accommodation to go to.

2.12 Extra accommodation has also been made available for those moving off the streets:

- Etrop Grange, which opened at the beginning of October 2022, provides 64 single rooms to people who have been sleeping on the streets. To date 184 people have had positive move-ons to supported accommodation, longer term accommodation or been reconnected with friends.
- 135 properties have been acquired or refurbished by the Council and housing Registered Providers to accommodate people with a history of rough sleeping, with another 53 in the pipeline.
- The Council will lease up to 50 one-bed self contained properties for people moving on from Etrop Grange, with a funding contribution from DLHUC.
- Further accommodation for those with higher support will be sourced via funding from the Government's Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP.)

2.13 More details can be found in the Update report on the Homelessness Service which went to the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday 20 June 2023.

2.14 **Relates to Our Manchester Strategy themes:**

- Progressive and Equitable City
- Thriving and Sustainable City

### **3.0 Intensive Support Programme**

- 3.1 Unique school plans have been put in place in 10 areas of high deprivation in Manchester to help both pupils and their families.
- 3.2 The new Intensive Support Programme has been brought in to give swift early and intervention to primary school children who need extra support to meet development or social needs. The support does not stop there and is extended to the pupil's family or carers, who may also need help with issues including cost of living support,
- 3.3 The 12-month council-funded programme launched earlier this year. It includes a dedicated intensive support worker at the school as well as regular access to a speech and language therapist and an assistant educational psychologist – also connect pupils, parents and carers straight to the right organisations in a prompt way, before situations become harder to deal with.
- 3.4 The programme is part of the five-year Making Manchester Fairer action plan, which aims to address inequalities in the city which can start early in life and even affect how long people live for, and their opportunities around work and housing. The plan also includes work around tackling cost of living pressures and poverty, which are also integral to improving health and wellbeing.
- 3.5 The Intensive Support Programme sits within a £1m budget dedicated to 10 identified schools in the Clayton and Openshaw, Gorton and Abbey Hey, Hulme, Moss Side and Sharston wards, and also other plans for all the city's primary schools including support for clusters of schools in areas hardest hit by the cost of living crisis, plus a free book and reading pack for children going into reception.
- 3.6 **Relates to Our Manchester Strategy themes:**
- Progressive and Equitable City
  - Highly Skilled City
  - Thriving and Sustainable City

### **4.0 Manchester Aquatics Centre**

- 4.1 Manchester Aquatics Centre reopened its doors to the public last Sunday, 26 June 2023, following a multi-million refurbishment to upgrade facilities and improve its energy efficiency.
- 4.2 The centre has been closed to the public and operating at a reduced capacity since November 2021 while the first phase of works were carried out.
- 4.3 All areas of the building have been upgraded including all of the swimming pools, enhancements to health and fitness facilities (which now feature three new gym spaces all on one level), a new fitness class studio and a new group cycle studio, new café facilities, health suite and changing spaces with new

accessible provision to support disabled people and those with additional needs.

4.4 Energy efficiency and decarbonisation have been at the heart of the MAC's refurbishment and the building has been adapted accordingly.

4.5 Over £3m in investment was secured for New Green Technologies, funded by the National Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. Green energy systems and renewable energy sources have been implemented across the centre to reduce its carbon emissions.

4.6 The existing gas heating system has been replaced by high efficiency, Air Source Heat Pumps and 1,006 solar panels have been installed on the roof of the centre, alongside a battery system that will allow the MAC to use solar energy even on cloudier days. In addition to this, a Building Management System, using energy efficient lighting and new air handling units have also been introduced to preserve heat and reduce emissions.

4.7 Phase 2 of the refurbishment works will commence in September and will include upgrades to all basement areas, programmed over the next 12-month period.

4.8 The centre will host the World Para Swimming Championships in late July.

4.9 **Relates to Our Manchester Strategy themes:**

- Progressive and Equitable City
- Thriving and Sustainable City

## **5.0 Single Use Plastics**

5.1 Manchester City Council has pledged to help make single use plastics (SUPs) a thing of the past by helping the city become a Refill destination.

5.2 On the 16 June, World Refill Day, the Council made the pledge to support the drive to eliminate the over-consumption of plastic items.

5.3 Working in partnership with not-for-profit organisation City to Sea, the Council will use some of its buildings to enable residents to fill up re-useable water bottles for free, and encourage other venues to do so.

5.4 Some of the locations where people can fill up include Central Library, Abraham Moss Leisure Centre, Gorton Hub and 10 sites across the city's parks and their cafés. The list of non-council refill sites is also growing all the time.

5.5 Residents are encouraged to use City to Sea's Refill app to find out where they can fill up or how to get involved in the wider refill movement.

## 5.6 **Relates to Our Manchester Strategy themes:**

- Liveable and Zero Carbon City
- Thriving and Sustainable City

## 6.0 **Park tennis courts**

6.1 A partnership between the Council, Government and Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) will see almost £500,000 invested in improving the tennis courts in nine parks across the city.

6.2 The park courts which will benefit are at: Blackley Recreation Ground, Chorlton Park, Cringle Park, David Lewis Recreation Ground (Boggart Hole), Debdale Park, Fog Lane Park, Kingswood Park, Ladybarn Park and Platt Fields Park.

6.3 The Council is providing £324,145 of funding with the Government and LTA Tennis Foundation serving up the remaining £158,950. Work is scheduled to complete in August.

6.4 Together with Manchester Active and We Do Tennis, the Council also work with the LTA to deliver a range of tennis activities across park sites including free weekly organised park tennis sessions for Manchester people of all ages, playing levels and experience with equipment provided for those who do not have their own.

6.5 The grassroots tennis boost comes as Manchester prepares to host Davis Cup group fixtures at the AO Arena in September.

## 6.6 **Relates to Our Manchester Strategy themes:**

- Progressive and Equitable City
- Thriving and Sustainable City

## 7.0 **HS2**

7.1 Manchester City Council and Greater Manchester partners have this month made the case in Parliament for the best form of high-speed rail in the city with a new underground Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR)-HS2 station.

7.2 The Leader gave evidence to the High-Speed (Crewe-Manchester) Bill Select Committee, urging them to call on HS2 to rethink current plans for a surface turnback station, which would squander many of the potential benefits of the infrastructure project.

7.3 Partners have made the case that building the right solution at Piccadilly, with an underground through-station, is pivotal to delivering transformational connectivity north-south and east-west, and unlocking economic growth for generations to come.

- 7.4 Manchester Piccadilly, at the heart of the network, will be central to capturing the opportunities of both HS2 and NPR. Independent analysis commissioned by the Council suggests that an overground station would be at full capacity once NPR services start running, undermining reliability and giving little scope to add more services as populations grow or new opportunities arise.
- 7.5 An underground NPR-HS2 station would also provide a unique opportunity to level up the Piccadilly area, supporting 14,000 jobs, new housing, green space and adding £333m a year more in benefits to the local economy by 2050 than the overground proposal.
- 7.6 By contrast, an overground station would require a huge concrete viaduct, up to six tracks wide, running from Ardwick – where it would emerge from a tunnel – to Piccadilly, cutting a swathe through communities.
- 7.7 The Select Committee will also hear from HS2 representatives, responding to the Manchester case, before making its recommendations on the Piccadilly station issue. It will consider other issues relating to the Manchester section of the line which the Council and others have made representations on, for instance around the location of tunnel ventshafts, in the autumn.

7.8 **Relates to Our Manchester Strategy themes:**

- Connected City
- Thriving and Sustainable City
- Highly Skilled City

**8.0 Active Travel Fund**

- 8.1 Work is getting underway on improvements to the city centre road network to make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 8.2 Funding for the schemes was secured through the Government's Active Travel Fund and support the Council's City Centre Transport Strategy sets a goal of 90% of all peak morning trips into the city centre being made on foot, by bike or on public transport by 2040.
- 8.3 The improvements being implemented, following public consultation last year, include:
- A new CYCLOPS junction at Peter Street/Quay Street
  - Improved bus stop integration with cycle lanes, allowing cyclists to safely pass buses which have stopped to let passengers off.
  - Better drainage on Whitworth Street West, Old Deansgate and Chester Road using nature-based solutions such as shrubs and rain gardens.
  - Changes to the junction at Great Jackson Street/Chester Road to add a zebra and Belisha beacon crossing and naturally slow vehicles.
  - Additional disabled parking bays to improve accessible access on Deansgate.



#### **8.4 Relates to Our Manchester Strategy themes:**

- Connected City
- Liveable and Zero Carbon City
- Thriving and Sustainable City

#### **9.0 Contributing to a Zero-Carbon City**

9.1 Achieving Manchester's zero carbon target has been reflected throughout the work on the Our Manchester Strategy reset, with sustainability being a key horizontal theme throughout. Forward to 2025 restates Manchester's commitment to achieving our zero carbon ambition by 2038 at the latest.

#### **10.0 Contributing to the Our Manchester Strategy**

10.1 The reset of the Our Manchester Strategy will ensure that the city achieves its vision. The five themes have been retained in the reset Strategy, with the new priorities streamlined under the themes.

#### **11.0 Key Policies and Considerations**

11.1 There are no particular equal opportunities issues, risk management issues, or legal issues that arise from the recommendations in this report.

#### **12.0 Recommendations**

12.1 The Executive is requested to note the update provided in the report.