

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee - 8 February 2024

**Subject:** A new Our Manchester Strategy 2025-2035

**Report of:** Assistant Chief Executive

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**Summary**

This report describes the background to and process of creating a new Our Manchester Strategy for the city.

**Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to consider and comment on the proposed process for developing a new Our Manchester Strategy

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**Wards Affected:** All

<b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b> -the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city	None directly – however the new OMS will include themes and priorities relating to the city’s zero carbon target.
<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	An equality impact assessment (EqIA) has been completed for the development and engagement process with supportive feedback from the council’s Equalities Team. Recommendations made were to be more specific in naming the people, groups and organisations that we need to connect with which is something that officers are working on with both internal and external colleagues.

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the Our Manchester Strategy/Contribution to the Strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Not relevant.
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Not relevant.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Not relevant.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	Not relevant.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Not relevant.

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.

- *Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025*, Full Council (March 2021)
- *Manchester Strategy 2016 – 2025*, Full Council (January 2016)

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The Our Manchester Strategy is the ten-year strategy for the city. It shows where we want to get to and how we will get there. Officers are beginning work on the next Our Manchester Strategy for 2025 to 2035. This starts with a period of intensive engagement with people across the city to inform its contents. At this early stage in the development process, there is an opportunity for members of this committee and members more widely to shape the process, and make sure we are listening to as wide and as a diverse an audience as possible.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1. The Our Manchester Strategy (OMS) was originally developed in 2015 and launched in 2016. It set out the city's overarching 10-year vision and strategic priorities. The development of the OMS was overseen by the Manchester Leaders' Forum, now the Our Manchester Forum, a partnership board of 40 leaders from Manchester's public, private and voluntary sector. The Our Manchester Forum remains in place today to provide governance around the implementation and progress of the strategy.
- 2.2. In May 2020, the Executive agreed to undertake a reset of the Our Manchester Strategy 2016 – 2025. This was to reflect upon progress made in the first half of the Strategy's implementation, and to assess new and existing challenges. This work was also undertaken as part of the Council's COVID-19 recovery planning. The reset strategy, known as *Our Manchester: Forward to 2025*, was adopted by Full Council in March 2021.
- 2.3. Since its adoption *Our Manchester: Forward to 2025* has guided the city's overall direction and informed development and delivery of all the Council's work. As the strategy is now approaching the end of its life, we need to begin work on the next Our Manchester alongside our partners and stakeholders to create a new vision for the next ten years.

## **3. What is Our Manchester?**

- 3.1. The OMS is the overarching strategy for the city, not just the City Council, with the current version running to the start of 2025. It states what we want the future of Manchester to be, and how we plan to get there, with all people and organisations playing a role in making it happen. The current version of the OMS is structured under five themes:
  1. Thriving and sustainable
  2. Highly skilled
  3. Progressive and equitable
  4. Connected
  5. Liveable and zero carbon
- 3.2. Individual priorities under these themed are delivered by the Council and our partners and stakeholders around the city. The structure of the OMS provides

the foundations for the Council's wider policy and strategy framework, with connections across one or more OMS themes. Recent examples include our Economic Strategy, Housing Strategy and Making Manchester Fairer.

- 3.3. As well as the strategy itself, Our Manchester describes a set of behaviours and an approach to working that is inclusive, collaborative, and trusting. The Our Manchester Behaviours are codified for MCC staff, and employees are expected to demonstrate them in their work. These are not within scope of the development of the new strategy.

#### **4. Progress to 2025**

- 4.1. Manchester has come a long way since the original OMS was adopted, and at the same time has responded to some significant external events and challenges, demonstrating the resilience of the strategy itself and the partnerships and networks around it.

- 4.2. Manchester is known world-wide for great things like creativity in the arts, sport and science, to our tolerance, warm welcomes and talent for having a good time. In recent years our high-profile achievements include:

- Local Government Chronicle Council of the Year 2022
- Time Out Top Ten must-visit city, 2024
- English National Opera's new HQ
- Aviva Studios, home of Factory International – landmark new cultural space for Manchester and the world
- Top shopping and Christmas market attractions
- Co-op Live – UK's biggest venue floorspace opens in 2024
- Michelin restaurant guide 2024 winners' awards – Midland Hotel
- Chanel international catwalk venue 2023
- ACES Capital of Cycling 2024
- UEFA Euro 2028 match host – Etihad Stadium

- 4.3. Manchester's growing international standing is boosting our local economy too, bucking the UK trend and outgrowing every other UK city. Our workforce attracts investment from all over the world, allowing our city to invest more in services and projects to benefit everyone in line with our commitment to become zero-carbon by 2038.

- 4.4. As we've grown – despite Covid and the cost-of-living crisis – Manchester has managed to keep the basics on track and deliver people's priority services:

- 72,000 more workers in the city between 2015 and 2022
- 90% of primary schools and 80% of secondary schools classed 'good' or 'outstanding'
- 45% of residents now have a degree
- only 10% of our residents have no qualifications
- fewer children in care – 1,385 in 2023 – and child protection plans halved since 2018, bucking the national trend

- 25,000 new homes built in the city since 2015 and over 12,000 under construction
- 36,000 new homes planned to 2032, 10,000 affordable, 3,000 in the city centre.

4.5. At the same time there are still issues where we need to improve, and the new OMS will not shy away from addressing these challenges. These include:

- Over 59,000 children in Manchester were growing up in poverty in 2022, the third highest rate nationally (45%)
- 23% of Manchester residents in work are paid less than the Real Living Wage
- Around one in five households have less than £30 per month disposable income after paying for essentials.
- Falling life expectancy, more so than the national average. Life expectancy in Manchester is now 74.8 years for males and 78.7 for females against 78.7 years and 82.8 years for males and females nationally.
- Worst health outcomes in the country in terms of premature deaths related to heart, lungs and cancer
- Still almost 3,000 households in temporary accommodation despite reductions

## 5. The development process

5.1. Officers will undertake a mixed methods approach that utilises extensive listening and engagement activity, supported by other research and data analysis. The current timeline for development is:

Date	Activity
January 2024	Internal and limited external engagement with key partners to refine the development process and approach
February – May 2024	Citywide engagement activity Desktop research and data work
May – July 2024	Analysis of information collected Production of early themes and priorities Report on engagement to all 6 Scrutiny Committees
August 2024	First draft of full strategy
August – September 2024	Consultation on draft strategy
September 2024	Production of the final text
October 2024	Final design work Executive approvals process begins
November 2024	Strategy discussed at all 6 Scrutiny Committees Final OMS adopted by Executive and Full Council
December 2024	Launch & celebration event

5.2. The aims for our citywide engagement activity are to run the best possible engagement process in terms of:

- The overall visibility and reach of the engagement campaign
- The response from diverse people and communities
- The quantity of responses
- The quality of responses

5.3. To do this, our approach will be to:

- Draw on the resources that are already available to us and our partners, including other recent consultation and engagement work. This includes examples such as the current Culture Strategy, Making Manchester Fairer, and the Housing Strategy
- Have conversations directly with residents, partners and stakeholders in different settings and locations around the city.
- Make use of activities that are already planned over the listening and engagement period, including those of our partners, to help us speak to more residents.
- Equip our partners and stakeholders with the tools to have conversations on our behalf.
- Have an open access online component that anyone can respond to at any time.

5.4. All engagement activity will be supported by an ongoing, multi-channel comms campaign led by Corporate Communications. Direct engagement activity with residents will consist of both a universal element and a targeted element. For the engagement taking place through to the end of May, both elements will begin with broad and open-ended questions that guide respondents to consider what they think a future Manchester should be like. Questions include:

- What makes you proud of Manchester?
- What should Manchester do next – or do more of – to make its mark on the world stage?
- What do you want Manchester to be like in the future?
- If you could do one thing to make Manchester better, what would it be?
- How can Manchester make this one thing happen?

5.5. In person engagement methods will be varied and will specifically target the people and places that we know we struggle to reach. Engagement activities will be designed and delivered in a way that is culturally competent and sensitive to the circumstances of residents and communities. Officers are taking forward several ideas to make this the most inclusive engagement process possible:

- Officers have been engaging with neighbourhood teams, elected members, and partner organisations in Manchester to refine the proposed approach to engagement. This has resulted in useful, supportive and positive feedback that endorses the current plan.

- Officers will be equipping partners to have conversations on our behalf, recognising that MCC staff are not always best placed to have these conversations. We are also exploring commissioning some voluntary and community sector organisations to run Our Manchester engagement sessions with their own service users.
- We will appoint Our Manchester Ambassadors, people who are trusted and known in their communities, to drive engagement in those communities, equipping them with the tools and training to undertake this role. OM Ambassadors may be MCC Staff or trusted external partners.
- Staff networks will be engaged across the Council
- Officers will run pop-up engagement events at locations across the city to promote the process and speak to people in person. Venues could include libraries, markets, health centres, community centres, shopping centres, places of worship and sports facilities.

5.6. The communications campaign that will support the work will continue throughout the engagement period, meaning that people should see and hear about it from multiple sources, increasing opportunities for engagement. At the time of writing the final creative concept is being finalised but will retain much of the “look and feel” of the current OMS brand, which is already recognisable and well known, and which will help create a sense of continuity from the current strategy to the new one.

5.7. Development is overseen by a Corporate Steering Group made up of senior officers together with direct input from the Leader and Chief Executive. Officers are regularly consulting with external partners and stakeholders about the development and engagement process itself, so we can ensure that the proposed model is right for Manchester.

## **6. Conclusion and next steps**

6.1. The process of developing a new Our Manchester Strategy will be high profile and important in setting the strategic direction for the whole city, not just the city council. The proposed approach will ensure that we are able to listen to and capture as broad a range of views as possible.

6.2. Following the initial engagement period, officers will report back to Scrutiny Committees in July 2024 on the outcome of the engagement process. The final strategy will be brought back to Committees in November 2024 in advance of going to Executive and Full Council later in the same month.

## **7. Recommendations**

7.1. To consider and comment on the proposed process for developing a new Our Manchester Strategy.