

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee - 5 March 2024

**Subject:** Work and Skills Strategy 2022-2027 Update

**Report of:** Director of Inclusive Economy

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### Summary

The Work and Skills Strategy 2022 – 2027 sets out how the Council will use learning and employment to meet the Our Manchester Strategy vision of being a more highly skilled city, and how we will create a more inclusive and zero-carbon economy in Manchester, where more of our residents are connected to our city’s success. This report provides a progress update and the next steps for the delivery of the strategy’s 5 key themes.

### Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to note progress on the themes of the Work and Skills Strategy delivery.

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**Wards Affected:** All Wards

<p><b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b> - The impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city</p>	<p>By promoting and implementing initiatives that enhance carbon literacy, green skills, and related employment opportunities, we aim to support Manchester’s zero-carbon target. Carbon literacy will empower individuals and organisations to reduce their carbon footprint and contribute to the global effort to mitigate climate change. Green jobs and employed residents will foster a more sustainable infrastructure and economy that aligns with the environmental and social values of our city.</p>
<p><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</p>	<p>The ‘Progressive and Equitable’ theme of the Work and Skills Strategy aims to address the inequalities and barriers that prevent some residents from accessing work (such as race, age, or health). Employability skills and training opportunities are offered to support these people. As part of the theme, the council works closely with VCSEs and other organisations that offer tailored support for disadvantaged groups. This allows us to understand the needs of the community and create a more equitable city.</p>

<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	This report outlines the creation of an inclusive economy with fair and good quality opportunities created by supporting development and growth by developing and engaging with local businesses.
A highly skilled city: World class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The Work and Skills Strategy aligns with the Manchester Adult Education and Skills Plan 2016–2025 which outlines how adult education and training providers will make Manchester the UK's top city for adult education and skills, delivering training and qualifications for adult residents. As part of this, the Work and Skills Strategy ensures that the council connects adult education services with employers and labour market information.
A progressive and equitable city: Making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The Work and Skills Strategy aligns with the Manchester Poverty Strategy; the activity outlined in this report demonstrates the support for people to access employment and better-quality employment as a route out of poverty. This is being done by working to remove barriers, supporting all our residents to thrive from a skills perspective, and by contributing to improved health and wellbeing.
A liveable and low carbon city: A destination of choice to live, visit, work	The Manchester Climate Change Framework is supported by the Work and Skills Strategy, which is done by supporting the development of the skills we need to transition to a zero-carbon economy.
A connected city: World class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	By increasing the supply of training opportunities that enable our residents to access services and employment in an increasingly digitised world, the work produced in line with the Work and Skills Strategy aligns to the Our Manchester Strategy.

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):**

- Work and Skills Strategy Update 2022-2027 – Executive – 29.06.2022
- Oxford Road Corridor – Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee – 7.11.2023
- Making Manchester Fairer – Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee – 5.9.2023
- Labour Market and Recruitment – Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee – 9.3.2023

**1.0 Introduction**

**1.1 The Work and Skills Strategy 2022-27**

1.1.1 The Work and Skills Strategy 2022-2027 succeeded the Work and Skills Strategy 2015–2020, building on its success and taking into consideration the significant changes we have experienced in the city since that strategy was produced. This report sets out positive progress and good outcomes to date and includes achievements, challenges and measurement and evaluation of the strategy. The report also includes an in-depth case study on work and skills delivery through the Oxford Road Corridor.

1.1.2 The strategy aims to address many of the challenges faced by the City’s economy seeking to improve the lives of our residents and grow Manchester businesses further. It also aligns with our broader goals of becoming a more inclusive, prosperous and zero carbon city.

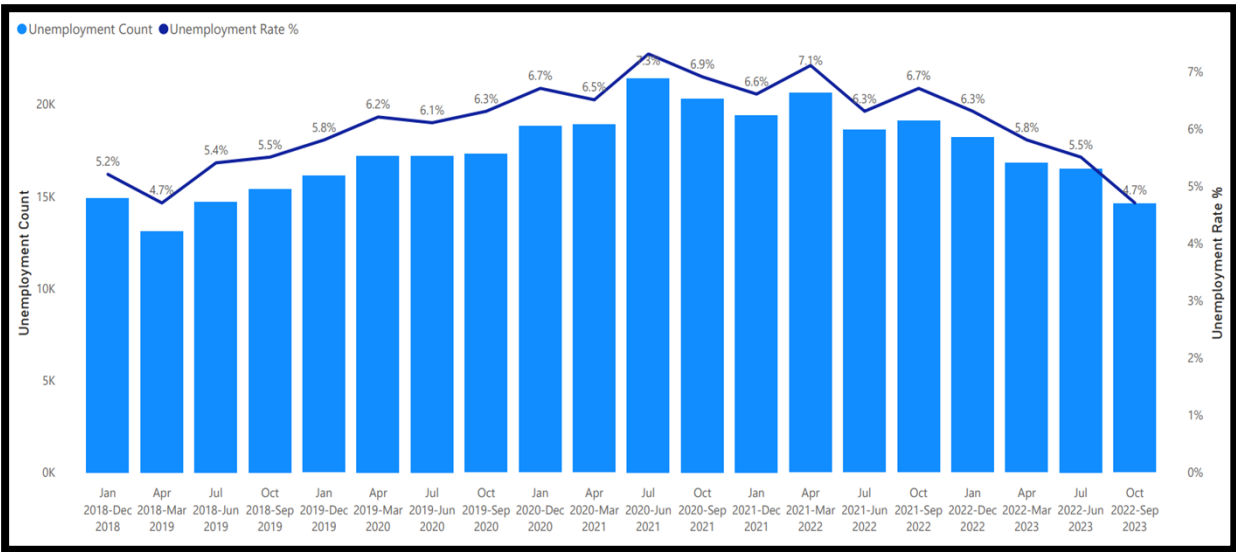
1.1.3 To emphasise and effectively monitor these goals, the strategic priorities are under five key themes, in line with the Our Manchester Strategy:

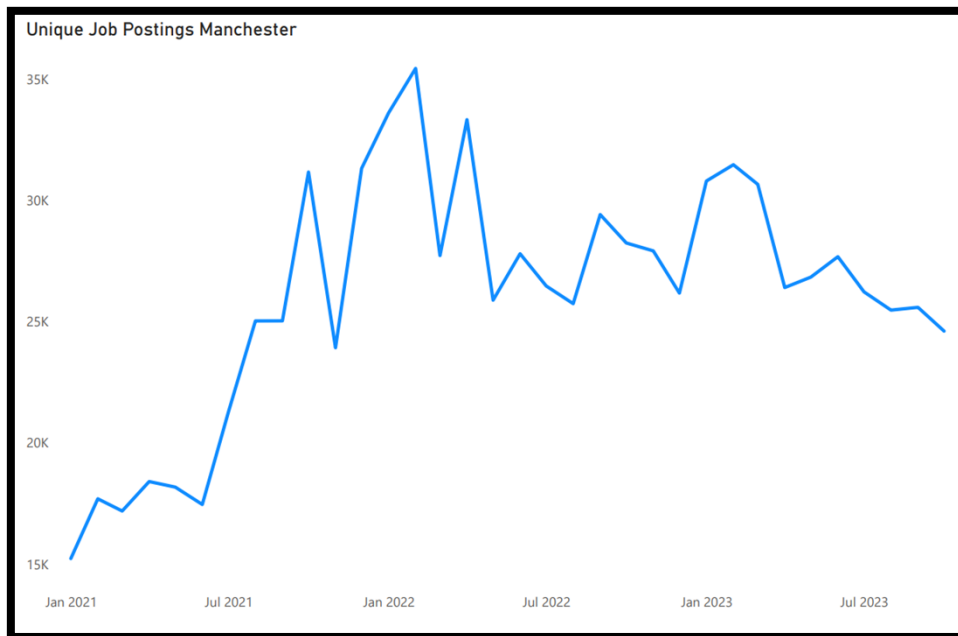
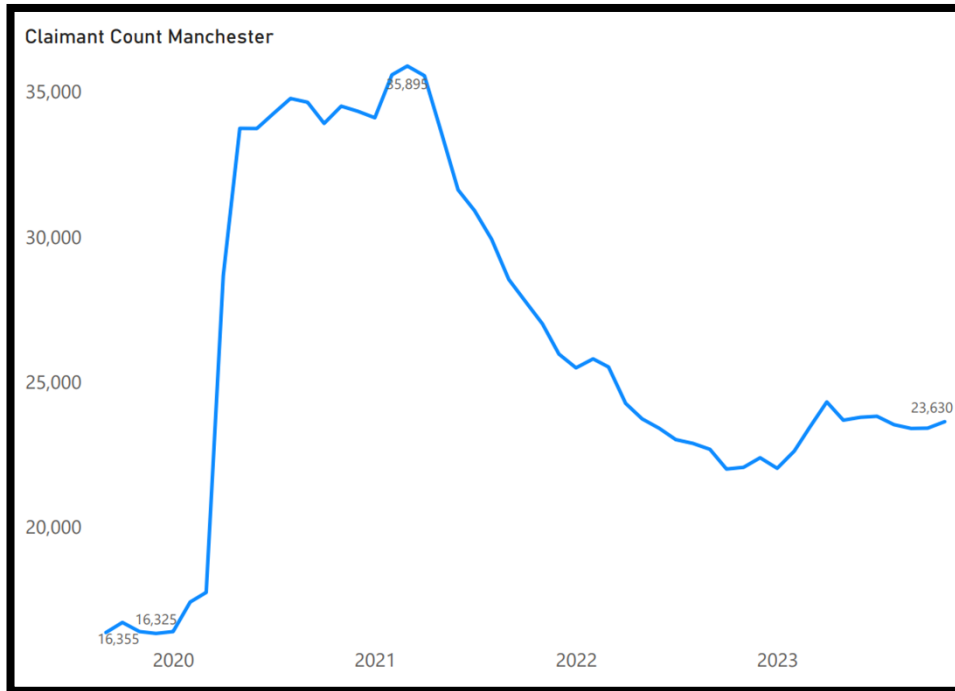
- A ‘Thriving and Sustainable’ city
- A ‘Highly Skilled’ city
- A ‘Progressive and Equitable’ city
- A Liveable and Zero Carbon city’
- A ‘Connected’ city

**2.0 Background**

**2.1 City Context**

2.1.1 The City is the centre and driver of the GM economy and is subject to the impact of national and international factors such as high inflation, recession, low growth and the long term effects of Brexit and Covid on the labour market.





2.1.2 The presented graphs depict trend data spanning the period following the Covid pandemic, specifically focusing on resident unemployment rates, unemployed claimant counts, and job vacancies. Analysis of the data indicates that unemployment rates reached their peak during the Covid period. However, current data reveals that unemployment rates have now declined below pre-Covid levels. Additionally, the claimant count and job vacancies both experienced an increase during the pandemic. Although the claimant count has since decreased, it remains higher than pre-Covid levels. Furthermore, while the recent number of job vacancies has decreased

compared to January 2022, it still exceeds the levels observed during the Covid period.

- 2.1.3 The recent percentage of residents of Manchester residents qualified to L4 is 52.5% in December 2022. This was an increase from December 2021, which was 44.7% There was also a positive change in the percentage of residents with no skills which decreased to 9.2% from 10.3%.
- 2.1.4 The percentage of Manchester residents paid the Real Living Wage was 84% in March 2022. In March 2021, the percentage was 76.9%.
- 2.1.5 In November 2023, the percentage of 16-17 year olds who were NEET or unknown was 9.4%, an increase of 1.8% compared to November 2022, which was 7.6%

## **2.2 Strategic Context**

2.2.1 The Work and Skills Strategy 2022-2027 works in conjunction with various other strategies to deliver the holistic approach and activity needed for successful outcomes. The examples of activity and progress within section 3 of this report are integrated into the delivery of one or many of these strategies, for example the Ambition In-Work Progression service responds to all of the strategies below.

- Making Manchester Fairer - The Strategy responds to the recommendations made in the Marmot report 'Build Back Fairer in Greater Manchester', which makes clear connections between work and health outcomes.
- The Anti-Poverty Strategy – Supports this strategy by providing support for people to access employment (and better-quality employment) as a route out of poverty.
- The Manchester Adults Education and Skills Plan 2016-2025 - This plan sets out the actions that adult education and training providers will take to make Manchester the best city in the UK for adult education and skills, with the delivery of training and qualifications for our adult residents.
- Investing in Success An Economic Strategy for Manchester – A 10 year plan to grow Manchester's economy and make it more inclusive.
- The Manchester Digital Strategy 2021– 2026 – The Digital Strategy will support business growth, employment, skills and training in the digital sector specifically.

2.2.2 Greater Manchester Trailblazing Devolution provides an opportunity to secure significant structural changes to the City Region economy that supports the delivery of outcomes. These opportunities include an integrated technical education city region with a single funding settlement, simplified adult skills

fund, streamlined commissioning of future programmes with DWP and the NHS.

### **3.0 Headline Achievements**

#### **3.1 Thriving and Sustainable**

- 3.1.1 The Work and Skills Team have co-ordinated Small Medium Enterprise (SME) roadshows across the City. These took place in Chorlton, Wythenshawe, Newton Heath and Fallowfield. Over 200 SMEs have been proactively engaged, accessing information on practical advice, guidance and support to facilitate growth.
- 3.1.2 The GM Business Growth Hub works well with partners in the City to achieve a 10:1 return on investment with over 2,537 jobs recreated and 849 safeguarded and 75% of clients increasing productivity. The Growth Hub delivers mentoring, leadership and social impact programmes with strong delivery in Manchester. The work of the Growth Hub is the subject of a separate report to this Scrutiny committee.
- 3.1.3 The inward investment pipeline into the City remains strong and is a strong driver of growth. The Work and Skills Strategy has focused heavily on bespoke recruitment and skills plans to ensure residents can access opportunities created through investment. This is illustrated through the work that has taken place to support Co-Op Live and Treehouse Hotels to establish their offer and sequence recruitment with partners to build a workforce ready for the respective launch dates.
- 3.1.4 The City's main locality business networks continue to provide effective ways to strengthen business in the most disadvantaged areas of the City and also deliver social, economic and education outcomes to residents.
- BW3 in Wythenshawe has delivered Aspirational Mentoring training to new mentors in 2023. Reading mentoring has been delivered in local schools while cultural experiences were provided for pupils. The numbers at Work Programme supported 50 pupils to better understand the importance of maths.
  - The North Manchester Business Network continued to grow its membership in 2023 through its enhanced marketing and branding offer. The What's My Job scheme delivered 9 career aspirations sessions to 570 pupils through 90 business volunteers.
- 3.1.5 The GM Good Employment Charter has provided an effective tool for strengthening good employment in the City and supports our health equality work - as good employment supports good health. Manchester currently has 111 full members whereas in 2022 there were 66. Good Employment Work in June 2023 saw strong delivery from the Manchester partners raising the awareness of what good employment means. During that week, the Work & Skills Team delivered several activities including an Old Town Hall Podcast, a

Disability Confident event in Wythenshawe and an Age in Employment roundtable with residents in Burnage (the events included 100 attendees).

- 3.1.6 The City's approach as an accredited Living Wage Place is paramount to developing an inclusive economy that lifts residents out of poverty. Targets for 2023/24 have been exceeded for the number of new Real Living Wage employers 290 (target of 208) uplifting the earnings of 8,973 employees (target of 6,056). The success achieved to date is welcomed, although we recognise there is more to do.
- 3.1.7 Flourish Together CIC has provided a range of services, grant funded by MCC, for women social entrepreneurs. In 2023 37 women took part in a newly developed Finding Financial Security programme. 28 Organisations received intensive support for funding and bid writing, with 46% of those securing funding as a result. The Manchester Social Economy Alliance is a continuation of this work and was launched in September 2023.
- 3.1.8 In response to the Cost of Living Crisis and a rise in residents on Universal Credit but in work the City developed a new service to target residents on low incomes. The Ambition In-Work Progression programme is delivered through Manchester Adult Education Service and provides a key worker service with tailored action plans. Since the launch in July 2023 the service has started to support 40 residents against a target of 300 over the 2 year life span. Outcomes to date include 4 residents moving into better employment and 9 with improved skills. All participants have reported improved confidence.
- 3.1.9 The Council facilitated the development of the North Manchester Social Benefits Framework, which enables partners across North Manchester to work collaboratively to achieve social value outcomes for residents. This includes a commitment to moving Manchester residents into sustainable, good quality and living wage employment opportunities. The North Manchester Strategy developments (Victoria North, North View and North Manchester General Hospital) have delivered strong social value enabled outcomes for residents. 2,553 jobs have been created, sustained or retained and paid at the Real Living Wage. 14% of these roles have been filled by Manchester residents with 45% filled by residents within the catchment area of the Hospital. 3,110 hours of volunteering have been committed by contractors. This work has been possible through a multi agency approach to enabling contractors to maximise their social value offer to local need and opportunities.

## **3.2 Highly Skilled**

- 3.2.1 The Council's new NEET Prevention Reduction Service (NPRS) contract commenced in April 2023 to support increased participation by young people. This service has been strengthened, extended and deepened by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) NEET provision that began in November 2023, replacing European funded provision. The UKSPF NEET programme is funded by GMCA through MCC. MCC was a strong advocate for GMCA to utilise this funding by building on existing successful provision. Career Connect delivers the NPRS and UKSPF NEET provision on behalf of MCC.



This provision provides essential support to our most disadvantaged young people across the city to enable them to access employment, education or training. An example of this work includes the Wythenshawe Youth Employment Pilot delivered by Career Connect which provided 5 employment opportunities to 16 and 17 year olds including the completion of CSCS card training with all moving up a level in English and Maths. Over the lifetime of the Strategy the NEET rate has widened as the City manages the wider post 16 sufficiency challenge with GMCA, the post 16 sector has worked with Government to provide more provision and places for young people.

- 3.2.2 National Apprenticeship Week continues to provide a focal point to raise awareness of opportunities and co-ordinate partnership activity, this included a specific event in Wythenshawe at which 182 residents attended to better understand opportunities from 26 employers. The City's digital apprenticeship offer has been further strengthened by ADA (national College for Digital Skills) moving to their new larger premises in March 2024 enabling more Manchester residents to access and prosper from degree level digital apprenticeships. ADA is a partner in the recently established GM Institute of Technology (IoT) model to deliver high level STEM skills for the economy.
- 3.2.3 Plan BEE aims to increase the number of Manchester residents accessing higher technical opportunities. The first graduation completed with all 10 learners passing Level 4/5/HNC and all matched with permanent employment via the sponsored employers consortium. 20 new apprentices were recruited for the September 2023 cohort.
- 3.2.4 The Council's Our Town Hall project has seen the creation of 33 apprenticeships and 54 work placements in 2023 demonstrating how developments can play an important role in creating opportunities.
- 3.2.5 On 14 February 2024 it was announced the city of Manchester was successful in our application to be part of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities. Our approach to being a City of Lifelong Learning had been mobilised as we awaited news on the International stage of the application (we had been approved at the UK national stage in Summer 2023). The City of Lifelong Learning work has brought together over 150 partner organisations as part of making Manchester the best city for adult education and skills by 2025. Our approach focuses on knowledge exchange, building capacity and increasing the impact of inward investment on lifelong learning.
- 3.2.6 Adult skills fairs have been held across the City to directly promote opportunities within communities. The multi-agency fairs have taken place in a variety of locations (Wythenshawe/Heaton Park/Gorton/Arndale City Centre) The events have engaged over 1000+ residents onto the various skills offers available in the City and has proven to be an excellent approach to promoting skills provision to hard-to-reach residents.
- 3.2.7 12 Manchester Work clubs have been supported to establish bespoke work and skills plans to strengthen their offer to residents an important element of engaging the community and widening participation in the Adult Education

Budget offer. This has included connecting 3 services with the National Careers Service, 1 centre has hosted an adult skills taster event, via Multiply and 2 more are scheduled, the Manchester Deaf Centre has also been successfully supported to apply for British Sign Language funding.

- 3.2.8 The Manchester Adult Skills Network has developed a CEIAG framework co-designed by 15 training providers. The CEIAG Framework aligns with pre-19 Gatsby Benchmarks. The framework is in the final stages of development and it will be rolled out by providers to support adults to receive a consistent and quality CEIAG offer.

### **3.3 Progressive and Equitable**

- 3.3.1 The Making Manchester Fairer Action Plan has provided a central theme to activity in the Progressive and Equitable theme. The City's response has been shaped by Communities Experiencing Racial Inequalities (CERI) and economic inactivity related to health conditions, disability and looking after family or home.

- 3.3.2 In the last 18 months we have worked closely with GMCA to influence and shape the commissioning of UKSPF. This includes ensuring that the proportion of the funding we receive matches the scale of need in Manchester. The provision will be place-focused and enable community level organisations to bid for funding to engage residents who are economically inactive. Around £18m of newly commissioned programmes have or will start in 2023/24 delivering across GM and in Manchester. All these programmes have had a significant contribution in the design and implementation phase to ensure they are shaped to reflect Making Manchester Fairer. Manchester's influence on these programmes has focused on ensuring they are designed to provide culturally competent services for Communities Experiencing Racial Inequality, they are targeted on need and are integrated into grassroot community based provision. These programmes include:

- Support to Succeed started in January 2023 to support complex adults who are economically inactive with a focused offer for participants aged 50+. The programme is GM wide, funded by UKSPF and it will be aligned to the UKSPF Community Grants.
- Individualised Placement Support in Primary Care (IPSPC) started in September 2023 supporting those with physical as well as mental health disabilities into employment. The programme is designed on a 'place and train' model with rapid job search from the start. The programme is delivered by the Growth Company across Manchester and will run through to March 2025 engaging with 324 Manchester residents, 243 of whom will be out of work and 81 will be in employment. Work has taken place to create the right referral pathways from Be Well, Mental Health (Living Well) and Adult Social Care teams. IPSPC provides valuable extra resource to increase employment for people with a disability and has been influenced to provide targeted support in the North and South of the City integrating and co-locating with health teams.

- Pioneers Work and Health Programme (WHP) started in later 2023 and is delivered by the Growth Company to support 1,500 residents with health conditions or disabilities through a supported employment place and train model who have not been able to access the main WHP.

3.3.3 The City has seen partnership delivery across several work and skills projects for CERI. These projects have been co-ordinated through a Multi Agency Economic Inactivity Task and Finish Group sponsored by the Work and Skills Board.

- In early 2023 the Pathways to Work for Muslim Women project ran a series of workshops to encourage labour market participation. The insights showed a lack of accessible provision, the need for lived experience in designing of interventions and the importance of Islam in engagement strategies moving forwards.
- The Get Me Work Ready project was delivered by Alchemy Arts and MAES in early 2023 commissioned by MCC focusing on Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in Cheetham and Crumpsall. 35 women attended over 12 workshops to support them to move closer to the labour market and provide learning to inform design of future programmes. 16 went into employment and 7 went into education. The learning included that engagement must be culturally appropriate, the impact of culture and religion has an impact on views on employment, trust must be built and engagement with employers is key to delivering outcomes.
- Manchester, Salford and Bury jointly commissioned JEWEL to support and engage the Orthodox Jewish community in North Manchester and surrounding areas. The programme provides a bespoke service that was delivered over 34 interventions or sessions with 11 Manchester residents accessing these and 7 of moving into employment or training. All of those accessing the service report improved confidence, resilience and personal development.
- Future work is planned building on learning to support African, Caribbean and mixed white/black heritage backgrounds in Moss Side in 2024/25.

3.3.4 Recruitment fairs have been held at the City Library to support employers engage large numbers of residents. Over 1,000 residents have attended 5 events since November 2022. 7% of those attending have a disability, and 56% are from a Community Experiencing Racial Inequality. 15% of residents are from the North of the City highlighting the importance in reaching disadvantaged communities.

3.3.5 Partners continue to work intensively with Manchester Airport Group to meet some of their labour market shortages with 700 residents attending Airport careers events at Wythenshawe Forum in 2023. In Wythenshawe over 1,500 local residents have been supported in labour market activity through the Wythenshawe Skills and Employment Group comprising over 20 partners. In

the last 12 months we have also worked alongside Manchester Foundation Trust (MFT) to support local recruitment and continue to explore a partnership with GMMH. Health organisations are key anchor institutions with a core role in increasing employment from Manchester residents through local recruitment activity, providing good quality employment.

- 3.3.6 Age Friendly employment work has been delivered through Manchester's Over 50's Employment Support Group, a collaborative team including Work & Skills, DWP, housing providers, MAES, Growth Company, Ingeus and voluntary sector groups continues to develop and deliver a range of initiatives tailored to the needs of older jobseekers. We are supporting the DWP's 50+Choices programme including webinars to support employers to adopt age friendly practices. The Uncertain Futures Project continues to enhance the understanding of activities including employment to support healthy ageing and this featured in a recent World Health Organisation (WHO) report. We will be visiting the City's employer networks to promote the GM Age Friendly Toolkit with the intention that more employers will review their recruitment practices to be more inclusive and attract and retain older workers.
- 3.3.7 The Working Well Work and Health programme began in March 2018 and will run until 2024. It is delivered across Manchester by the Growth Company, with referrals made via Jobcentre Plus. The programme performs well with 2,322 participants moving into work (converting 22% of all referrals and 42% of all programme starts into work outcomes). This programme is vital to tackling long term unemployment to prevent residents moving into economic inactivity.
- 3.3.8 Work Clubs continue to engage the most disadvantaged Manchester residents. In 2022/23 a total of 4,636 residents were engaged by twenty-two funded work clubs across Manchester, 771 (16%) of which secured full or part time employment and 649 (14%) were supported into volunteering opportunities. The number of clients that accessed digital support was 2060 (44%). 1538 (33%) of clients were undertaking pre-employment training, 819 (18%) clients referred into further learning (i.e., MAES and The Manchester College) and 695 (15%) clients attended pre-entry level ESOL. In the first 6 months of 2023/24 all metrics are ahead of the previous year demonstrating excellent progression from this commission. The Work Clubs have also been financially supported to develop their services in relation to Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training, Net Zero Carbon training and integrating Adult Education Budget delivery into their offer.

### **3.4 Liveable and Zero Carbon**

- 3.4.1 The City maximised exposure of Green Careers Week (GCW) 2023 with activities including promoting GCW webinars, directing people to the Zero Carbon MCR website and sharing resources relating to the green sector. The City prepared and rolled out an 'Every job a green job' toolkit. The toolkit was prepared to support schools and careers advisers to help our vulnerable young people better understand jobs and careers available to them. The toolkit was rolled out in November 2023

- 3.4.2 We continue to work closely with GMCA providing support and promotion of commissioned activities to improve the provision of green skills in Greater Manchester. We have engaged in wider GM provision including the launch of the Green Skills Academy in Trafford Park delivering the Journey to Net Zero programme - a fully funded training programme available to every working person in Greater Manchester.
- 3.4.3 The MAES Sustainability Project 2022/23 delivered Carbon Literacy and Train the Trainer programmes - 118 MAES staff were trained resulting in 945 learners undertaking carbon literacy activities. Carbon Literacy training was also provided to the city's Work Clubs (WC) with 12 WC staff receiving accreditation. This enables awareness raising and new skills in liveable and zero carbon in Manchester's learners.
- 3.4.4 The Strategic Housing Retrofit contract including decarbonisation work will support the recruitment of local people experiencing disadvantage. The social value from this programme to improve Manchester homes will also support community infrastructure through volunteering and funding.

### **3.5 Connected City**

- 3.5.1 Manchester was named number one city for Digital Inclusion support across the UK, according to analysis by Uswitch. The report identified that for every 100,000 people in Manchester, there were 11 digital inclusion hubs. Digital inclusion provides opportunity for enhancing digital skills and pursuing career pathways.
- 3.5.2 The rollout of the National Databank sim cards via all of the MCC libraries has been successful. A total of 2,000 have now been donated via the team and via libraries. This has been invaluable during the cost-of-living crisis and supported the libraries as warm spaces. The most digitally excluded parts of the City have seen strong delivery with 178 free SIM cards provided in Wythenshawe.
- 3.5.3 In January 2023 we received 200 Geobooks from a social value contract with XMA. We have since gifted 104 of these to 33 community organisations, to lend to residents. We received significantly more expressions of interest than we were able to meet, and are seeking more free devices from XMA to meet the demand. We have delivered some of the remaining 96 Geobooks to individual residents, including people who had called the Council's Cost of Living Advice line.
- 3.5.4 We have continued to deliver the Care Leavers Project. Care leavers have been given a combination of devices, data and skills support. In 2023 devices have been donated to approximately 160 care leavers.
- 3.5.5 We have promoted libraries as donation points for the Community Computers refurbished device scheme and the number of donations has increased significantly during this period. Community Computers have sold 200 refurbished devices to residents in this period.

- 3.5.6 We launched a digital toolkit, to support community organisations become digital services. The Council will financially incentivise local community organisations that implement elements of the toolkit. This will encourage organisations to embed elements of digital inclusion including becoming a national databank centre, taking on digital champion volunteers, offering digital training etc. AEB provision has been inbuilt into the toolkit, which is an engagement approach at an entry skills level, as a progression referral route.
- 3.5.7 GMCA secured approximately £7m, in April 2023, for Skills Bootcamps (funding to be spent by March 2024). This funding runs parallel to the national Bootcamp programme (funded via the Department for Education). The Bootcamps aim to help reduce the skills shortages across Greater Manchester's economy, for those aged 19+, providing sector specific training and guaranteed interviews with employers. The programme is fully funded for unemployed residents and co-funded, by employers, for existing employees. Digital bootcamps feature heavily as part of the offer which also includes construction, green energy, manufacturing, hospitality, health and social care, residential childcare, security and events, logistics and education sectors.
- 3.5.8 The Council is working with industry, Bootcamp training providers and GMCA, to maximise the uptake, develop existing delivery to align with employer needs and feed into the co-design of future Bootcamp commissions. Outcome data on the Bootcamps is currently confidential though shows impact in terms of female, CER1 and sustainable employment. The next commissioning cycle for Skills Bootcamps will open in early 2024, with funding and new commissioned training scheduled to be announced around May/June 2024.
- 3.5.9 The University of Manchester will lead on the production of a Digital Skills Framework (DSF) for the city in collaboration with the Council and GMCA. This project is part of the UNESCO City of Lifelong Learning programme of work. The DSF will move beyond essential into enhanced digital skills. The GM Framework aims to increase the understanding of digital skills to providers, employers and others in the digital skills system to support digital skills gaps to be filled. Manchester's Digital Skills Network will be essential in supporting the production of this GM level Framework due to the scale and strength of digital business in the City.

## **4.0 Case Studies**

### **4.1 Case Study Oxford Road Corridor – Work and Skills Interventions**

The Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee received a report in November 2023 detailing how the Oxford Road Corridor facilitates and promotes innovation, commercialisation and employment growth in Manchester. The Committee requested further details on how the Oxford Road Corridor supports the delivery of the Council's Work and Skills Strategy thus contributing to the City's inclusive growth agenda. This case study provides a snapshot of some of the activity being undertaken.

At the heart of the Oxford Road Corridor's 2030 vision is an ambition to transform lives through research, innovation, skills and education. The Oxford Road Corridor is home to over 84,000 students across three universities<sup>1</sup>, as well as one of the largest university affiliated hospital trusts in the country<sup>2</sup>. The area accounts for over 84,000 jobs across a wide range of sectors and occupations. A key component of the partners approach is to inspire and raise ambition amongst young people who may not believe that a university education is for them, or that the opportunities created on the Corridor are within their reach.

Manchester Metropolitan University's award winning *First Generation Scheme* supports young people who would like to go to university, but whose parents didn't have the opportunity. The programme starts in Year 12, supports the students as they consider, choose and apply for university, and continues throughout their time at Manchester Met. Those who progress to the University through the programme receive a £1,500 cash bursary plus ongoing support and opportunities to develop their networks and experience. As of September 2023, a total of 710 students had joined the University as First Generation Scholars. The programme recruit students from some of the most disadvantaged and under-represented areas, and 70% of all First Generation Scholars identify as being from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background and 15% identify as having a disability.

Manchester Metropolitan is also a leading provider of *degree apprenticeships*, rated Outstanding by OFSTED and named the UK's top rated university provider for the fifth consecutive year in 2023. The University has partnered with over 500 employers supporting them to grow talent and reduce skills shortages, while providing an option for those who would not have chosen a traditional degree. Over 40% of participants are first generation, 36% from deprived areas; in 2023, 630 apprentices graduated.

This activity complements programmes aimed at primary and secondary students underrepresented in HE with a particular focus on those on free school meals, looked after children (in care of the local authority), service children and those with additional needs. The University also runs a Saturday school for local primary pupils, providing English and maths support, delivered by current students. Each year these programmes engage over 1,500 pupils.

The University of Manchester's *Manchester Access Programme* is a skills-based programme to help prepare local Year 12 students for university. The programme aims to ensure that talented, capable students can benefit from a university education, regardless of their background and identity. Benefits include a reduced offer in A-level grades, advice and guidance in applying for university, support to increase research and academic skills, and for those choosing to study at UoM, access to a scholarship fund. In 2023, 657 students enrolled on the programme with 488 completing and 170 of those progressing on to a degree with UoM. The University's flagship widening participation programme, *Gateways*, allows learners in Years 7 to 9 to participate in a series of academic enrichment and higher education awareness activities. It is targeted at talented local pupils who have the ability to progress into HE,

and are from backgrounds that are currently under-represented. In 2023/23 over 1,000 pupils from across 30 schools attended at least one of the 25 gateway events, and around 450 students each year complete the access programme.

At a leadership level, UoM's *School Governor Initiative* provides local state schools with staff and alumni to sit on the board of governors to support the raising of educational standards. More than 1,200 staff and alumni give 2,736 days of support each year. Those schools participating have received higher than average inspection ratings.

UoM ran an *access-to-work programme* in partnership with The Works, focusing on business admin and customer skills. This builds on the sector-based academies that have been run previously on catering and building attendants. The programme ran in November 2023 and was for individuals who were long-term unemployed. 15 people attended the course over a two-week period, all individuals who attended obtained a Level 2 accreditation in business admin and customer service. Five appointments were subsequently made, who are still employed by the University and are currently on two year Fixed-Term Contracts.

UoM also seek to drive employment benefit and social impact through large scale development projects. The *MECD Social Impact Scheme* in partnership with Balfour Beatty created 182 jobs and apprenticeships for local people, some of whom were previously homeless or in the prison system.

In addition, all three universities participate in the *Greater Manchester Higher* partnership, which offers support and impartial advice for Year 9 up to college students on pathways to HE. Collectively in the academic year 2022/23 partners delivered:

- 91 activities
- 2,843 unique learners engaged.
- 21 campus visits
- 26 subject specific activities
- 8 multi-week/day projects
- 1 in-school mentoring programme
- 3 summer schools
- 27 in-school information, advice and guidance sessions
- 2 teacher CPD events
- 1 Parent & carer event

This included the *Support for Care Leavers* programme – an 8 week programme for Year 8 and 9 students.

MFT's Widening Participation Programmes are fundamental to their ambition as an anchor organisation to address social determinants of health within the local population and support the aims of MFT and the NHS People Plan to grow their future workforce. In 2022/23 inclusion on their programmes surpassed MFT benchmarks for sex, ethnicity and disability and Manchester



benchmarks for ethnicity and disability. They were awarded Gold in the HEE Work Experience Quality Mark and Gold in the Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Scheme for supporting the Armed Forces Community. Their trailblazing work with care leavers also influenced the national NHSE Universal Family programme. A summary of 2022/23 activity includes:

- 198 MFT staff offered 1385 days of Work Experience to 274 young people.
- 99 unemployed people attended the Pre-Employment Programme, of which 72 were from Manchester, 70% BAME and 83% progressed to employment.
- 73% of Princes Trust learners progressed to employment.
- 28 placements totalling 250 days of Health and Digital T level students.
- 248 Career Ambassadors volunteered 436.75 hours of time.
- 6 Insight events for 114 learners from 9 schools and colleges.
- 33 Supported Internships for 16 to 25 year olds with special educational needs and disabilities with 33% progressing to employment.
- 997 candidates were engaged across 40 events and recruited 57 staff across 5 community recruitment campaigns.

Each year the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) offer opportunities for hundreds of families and young people to enjoy music making via their flagship RNCM Engage programme. The programme allows the RNCM to engage local schools to help support their music curriculum and provides opportunities for their own students to gain valuable teaching experience to further their own career development. The programme aims to encourage families to explore the RNCM's world-class concert halls, regardless of their background, breaking down barriers and raising aspirations amongst local young people. Engage initiatives include the *Young Projects series* for 5 to 18-year-olds, *Young Company* musical theatre group for teenagers, the *Children's opera project*, which works with four local primary schools, and the family-friendly *Young Explorers* concerts and *Christmas Family Days*.

Bruntwood supports local community and voluntary organisations through *Bruntwood Cares*, its staff volunteering scheme. This includes working with Youth Zones in Manchester to create opportunities for young people. In addition, The Oglesby Charitable Trust supports community based organisations across four priority themes: arts; environment; health; and social inequality, donating around £3.5m each year.

The Corridor partners recognise their role as major employers within the city and through the establishment of a new workforce planning group are committed to sharing best practice and coordinating workforce planning efforts where this can add value. The group will identify key current and future roles where there are skills shortages and work with providers to help inform provision. In addition, the group will explore how to build upon and leverage the expertise and resource within the partnership to address skills shortages and increase engagement with underrepresented groups and communities.

#### **4.2 Case Study:** Career journey – Jackson Williams, Morgan Sindall (North Manchester Strategy Developments).

Jackson grew up in Salford (part of the hospital's catchment area), achieved his GCSEs and completed Level 2 plumbing in college. During this time, the pandemic hit. Jackson found himself making poor decisions and as a result of a crime, served nine months in prison at HMP Forest Bank.

It was there that he met a representative from Groundwork, and he enrolled on a 6 week construction course, comprised of a mixture of practical and group learning (classroom based).

Upon his release, he stayed in a hostel in North Manchester. Groundwork stayed in contact with Jackson, and in January 2023, he passed his CSCS. He was then introduced to Morgan Sindall and Footprint Recruitment, where he is currently a site worker. He always had an interest in construction, and he is working towards acquiring the position of Banksman.

#### **4.3 Case Study:** The Manchester Deaf Centre's Work Club, Hulme

A client attended the Work club at Manchester Deaf Centre in Hulme wanting to gain employment. They had no previous work experience or any idea of what they wanted to do. The client was born profoundly deaf and had been isolated.

An advisor from the Manchester Deaf Centre created an action plan, which involved building the clients reassurance, identifying their transferable skills, creating a CV, developing hearing awareness, exploring volunteering options and ultimately paid employment.

The client attended employability training and workshops, including teamwork, time management and wellbeing activities. After several months, they were ready to volunteer. Manchester Deaf Centre provided the client with several volunteer opportunities. They chose to volunteer firstly behind a bar and then within Manchester Deaf Centre's facilities team. The client acquired the skills necessary to work independently within the facilities team and was offered a paid role.

### **5.0 Challenges**

5.1 Delivery against the Work and Skills Strategy has been strong since its adoption in 2022. The selected priorities set out below can be considered as challenges or needing a long term approach to deliver outcomes or success. The priorities are set out by theme and include a summary narrative, with ongoing activity to address the challenges set out in section 3 of the report.

#### **5.2 Thriving and Sustainable**

5.2.1 Manchester continues to grow and expand with business support changing as European Funding concludes and are replaced by new streams such as

UKSPF. Through this period the offer to new businesses including social enterprises will be reviewed and supported. Manchester's attractiveness to new investors and employers as a destination of choice continues to provide ever increasing demand which is a positive but also a challenge to upskill residents to access opportunities.

- Develop and grow Manchester's business support ecosystem and promote awareness of the city's business support offer to our business community to enable them to innovate and grow.
- Influence Manchester's business support ecosystem to support sustainable self-employment & business start-up, as well as promoting sustainable models of ownership including co-operatives and social enterprises.
- Ensure the maximum possible skills and employment benefit from the city's capital and inward investment pipeline.

### **5.3 Highly Skilled**

5.3.1 The announcement by Government of the Advanced British Standard and at a Sub-Regional Level by GMCA of the Greater Manchester Baccalaureate (MBacc) emphasises that the offer for residents accessing technical pathways remains a challenge. This challenge manifests as skills gaps for employers as highlighted across several priorities below.

- Retain and attract more highly skilled graduates in the city and increase the number of Manchester young people accessing advanced and higher-level skills provision, including apprenticeships, T Levels and Higher Education.
- Create opportunities for people to learn and demonstrate core skills and entrepreneurship.
- Work with employers to create more in work training and progression opportunities (placements, apprenticeships, internships)
- Work with education and training providers to ensure training meets the demands of the labour market, is of good quality, and can respond to changes in the economy and growth sectors.

### **5.4 Progressive and Equitable**

5.4.1 Manchester's new Economic Strategy 'Investing in Success' sets out how the City will continue to drive inclusive growth through development recognising the challenge of ensuring that growth benefits our most disadvantaged residents. The re-organisation of the NHS provides further opportunities for integrated work and health services to support economically inactive residents.

- Contribute to the implementation of the recommendations set out in Building Back Fairer for Greater Manchester to better integrate the Work and Skills and health systems to improve work and health inequalities experienced by residents.
- Work with employers to adopt and promote simplified and flexible local recruitment and working practices that make employment accessible to more of our residents.
- Promoting routes for residents and employers to access finance to pay for training and qualifications where lack of funding is a barrier to participation including Lifelong Learning Fund and Apprenticeship Levy.
- Work collectively to make sure more employers consider social value in their own employment and procurement practices.

## **5.5 Liveable and Zero Carbon**

5.5.1 Major National Government policy changes in 2023 highlight the challenges faced in securing long term social, cultural and economic change to realise our Zero Carbon ambitions. The priorities set out below reflect the long term development approach needed to be successful in delivering this theme.

- Use our collective influence and spending power to create demand for green skills such as in retrofit and construction, maintenance of green infrastructure, green energy and biodiversity, building on the Combined Authority's Green Economy Skills Deep Dive.
- Support and enhance ongoing carbon literacy and communications with businesses, schools, colleges and other learning and training providers by working with GMCA and commissioners to embed Carbon Literacy into new and existing programmes.
- Use research and intelligence to ensure that information about future job opportunities in the zero carbon economy is included in labour market information and guidance that is shared with schools, colleges, and other learning and training providers.
- Work with training providers and employers to plan for and build capacity for identified future skills needs.

## **5.6 Connected City**

5.6.1 Manchester's position as the second digital city and attractiveness as a place to invest provides a welcome opportunity that is fuelled by the demand for digital talent. The priorities below reflect the need to enhance the Manchester digital pipeline of talent particularly for residents from Communities Experiencing Racial Inequality.

- Ensure that residents have the digital skills they need, to access employment opportunities, especially highly skilled opportunities that meet the needs of the city's digital sector.
- Support the city's growing digital sector to develop recruitment and training pathways for all residents to benefit from these opportunities.
- Influencing transport policy in Manchester and use the opportunity of the re-regulation of bus services in Greater Manchester, to ensure that residents are connected to opportunities through public transport and good quality active travel options.

## **6.0 Measuring Success**

- 6.1 The Work and Skills Strategy is monitored through the Manchester Work and Skills Board. The delivery plan for the Strategy monitors activity against each priority and also project indicators (Appendix 1) and performance measures (Appendix 2).
- 6.2 The project indicators provide measurement against defined projects that contribute to the overall success of the Strategy (e.g. Number of new Real Living Wage employers contributes to the overall number of Manchester residents paid the RLW). Appendix 1 demonstrates good performance across many of the project indicators at the Quarter 3 stage of 2023/24 delivery.
- 6.3 Appendix 2 demonstrates strong performance against 2021 baselines across many of the measures. This shows good progression and delivery of the Strategy in the context of many of the measures improving against a baseline with action needed to deliver the level of outcomes required for the City's residents and businesses. As set out in section 2 of this report some outcomes for the economy are not at the level required and the Strategy continues to be a driving force in creating an inclusive economy.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

- 7.1 The initial 18 months of delivery against the 5 year Strategy have been successful with many high profile achievements and outcomes. Challenges remain for the City's robust partnerships to deliver the outcomes required although we are well placed to take advantage of opportunities to realise Manchester's potential. The delivery plan for the Strategy will continue to progress activity against all priorities in the strategy. Examples of high level areas of focus for 2024, aligned to existing themes and priorities include:
- Delivery of UKSPF projects and programmes
  - Designing and testing integration activity with the health system through Making Manchester Fairer in preparation for large scale provision in April 2025 (Universal Support).
  - Delivery of the digital skills initiatives including the development of the skills framework.
  - Establishing the City of Lifelong Learning, Local Skills Improvement Plan and further development of Green Skills.

- Maximising the benefits of devolution for delivery of the Strategy.