

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Resolution**

**Report to:** Health and Wellbeing Board - 5 June 2024

**Subject:** Age Friendly Manchester – delivery progress update

**Report of:** Director of Public Health and Executive Director of Adult Social Care

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**Summary**

This report introduces the city’s new age friendly strategy Manchester: A City for Life 2023–28. It then provides a summary of progress and update on arrangements that have been put in place to support delivery of the strategy.

The foundations are being laid that will help realise the ambitions set out within this strategy for the next 5 years. A delivery plan is in place which provides a route map, subject to change and update, that seeks to coordinate activity across the broad partnership that is in place.

**Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:

- To consider and comment on the progress reported.
  - To agree to receiving future progress updates and set a schedule for this.
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**Wards Affected:** All

<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>The Age Friendly Manchester Older People’s Board, and more broadly the Assembly, are strategic partners in the delivery of the Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020-2025</p> <p>A key principle within the framework is that older people as residents of Manchester have a role to play in reducing the contributors to and impacts of climate change. It is expected that this will contribute to Manchester’s zero carbon target.</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>Age is a protected characteristic under the 2010 Equalities Act. Manchester: A City for Life 2023-2028 specifically considers the inequalities Manchester residents may face in mid to later life which are related to ageing. It makes proposals</p>

	<p>for how the city can act collaboratively to challenge ageism, gain a better understanding of equalities and the specific characteristics of ageing, and as a result design and deliver services which will better meet the needs, and improve the quality of life, of residents aged over 50 in the city.</p> <p>Manchester's new ageing strategy recognises intersectionality and how ageing may affect different groups in the city differently. While we all age together, we don't all age equally - experiences of inequality earlier in life (and perhaps ongoing), such as racism, sexism, disablism and homophobia, will shape the quality of life for different groups moving into older age.</p>
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<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	<p>A key ambition of the city's ageing strategy is to see an increase in the number of age-friendly employers and age-friendly employment practices.</p> <p>This in turn will improve greater retention rates and stability throughout a greater number of Manchester's employers</p>
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	<p>With a greater number of age-aware services and employers the strategy will support improved skills and employment support offered to Manchester's over 50s, both in terms of in-work progression and when returning to work.</p>
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	<p>An age friendly approach starts with hearing the voice of people in mid- to later life and using their lived experience to shape what we do</p> <p>A major component of the AFM programme is a long-term commitment to tackling ageism, promoting age equality and placing older people's voices at the centre of its work.</p>
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	<p>Incorporating the principles of the age friendly neighbourhood model and the practice of the Ageing in Place Programme into the integrated neighbourhood model will help support older people to live well in their own home for longer</p>
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.

Age Friendly Manchester Refreshed Strategy 2023-2028. Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Age Friendly Manchester Refreshed Strategy 2023-2028 – draft 18-month delivery plan. Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Manchester's new Age Friendly Strategy Manchester: A City for Life 2023–28 was launched in November 2023 and followed extensive engagement with the Age Friendly Manchester (AFM) Older People's Board (the Board), with people aged over 50 at the Age Friendly Assembly (the Assembly) and direct collaboration with key strategic partners, services, frontline workers and key complimentary strategy teams, for example Making Manchester Fairer.
- 1.2 The new strategy builds on previous progress, provides a series of responses to the ongoing impact felt by some older people to the pandemic and the struggles faced by the cost-of-living crisis for many people aged over 50. It outlines a series of priorities and commitments to drive better outcomes so that more people can age well in place with increased financial security.
- 1.3 This report briefly introduces the strategy, and its ambitions and then provides an update on the first 6 months of this strategy, a period of putting key foundations in place and securing the ongoing commitment of the broad range of partners lined up to support the realisation of the ambitions laid out within the strategy.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Manchester: A City for Life 2023 – 2028, Manchester's Age Friendly Strategy was approved by the Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Board and launched in November 2023.
- 2.2 It also builds on examples of strong progress over many areas, for example:
  - An increase in age friendly features across more of Manchester's neighbourhoods. This includes all libraries being badged age-friendly and the former Buzz Age Friendly Team championing a significant expansion of age friendly benches that support improved navigation routes between where people live and where they want to go to locally.
  - Providing a greater age friendly lens to how services are commissioned how resulted in the Community Falls Service being better connected to neighbourhood-based activity so that falls prevention work can start much sooner in a person's life. The Community Nutrition and Hydration Service now has a neighbourhood based and community development approach to prevention that builds on the lived experience of older people.
  - An improved set of guidance is now in place to support people to carry out better equality impact assessments that takes a more rounded view of age as a protected characteristic.

- Our pandemic response successfully amplified the voice of older people, challenging the ‘invisible and vulnerable’ characterisation of older people that had taken hold during successive lock downs.
- 2.3 While there have been a whole range of positive steps forward since 2017’s strategy refresh, these have been in the shadow of the terrible impact of the pandemic, followed by the national cost of living crisis. This has meant some Manchester residents in mid- to later life have seen a stalling or reversal in the quality of their lives, while those who were already experiencing some of the biggest challenges are now facing even greater difficulties.
- 2.4 While looking ahead towards the sort of age friendly city we want Manchester to be in five years’ time, the strategy also proposes the immediate responses required to address the impact of pandemic and the cost-of-living emergency in the here and now, which is something older people have told us is a priority.
- 2.5 Building on the eight key features which go towards making an age friendly city as identified by the World Health Organization, Manchester has identified four key themes:
- Being Heard and Age Equality
  - Age Friendly Neighbourhoods where we can all Age in Place
  - Age Friendly Services that support us to Age Well
  - Work and Money
- These are briefly outlined later in this report.
- 2.6 Our ambition is that in five years’ time Manchester will be a city in which more people in their mid to later life can age happily with equality, respect, and independence, and where they both have a voice in the life of the city and are economically, physically, and socially active.
- 2.7 This will be achieved by many more voices of people aged over 50 being better heard and responded to in all the spaces and places across Manchester. As we age, more of us will feel our neighbourhoods, the places we where we work and the areas where we mix with our friends and family will feel welcoming to us, and where our needs are met. More of us will be in good work for longer, our identity will be better reflected in the cultural fabric of the city and the very services we may depend on to help us age and live well will better understand our needs and meet them as these change with age.
- 2.8 Practically there will be more age-friendly neighbourhoods with the key features required to enable us to age well in place. In these neighbourhoods, activity will be delivered in local spaces that help address some of the worse effects of the deconditioning experienced by many because of the pandemic. There will be greater range of targeted support to help us of age well with strengthened financial security and a significant increase in the number of

people claiming their pension top-up and other benefits they are entitled to. A greater number of the positive contributions of Manchester's over 50s will be recognised and celebrated by a greater number of people.

- 2.9 More people will feel equal and fewer feel marginalised as this strategy and its delivery plan becomes the mechanism through which Making Manchester Fairer's ambitions are realised for people aged over 50.

### **3.0 Main issues**

- 3.1 The Age Friendly Manchester Team sits within the Department of Public Health and has key responsibility to coordinate activity and support delivery that contributes to Manchester's age friendly strategy.

- 3.2 The fundamental focus for the first six months of this new strategy has been on building the foundations for the next 5 years programme. For example, establishing a range of project steering groups, refreshing the partnership structure so that it is fit for purpose and putting in place arrangements for new project activity and delivery in key Manchester neighbourhoods.

- 3.3 For ease of reference there follows a summary of updates under each of the four themes within the strategy.

#### **3.4 Theme 1: Being heard and age equality**

- 3.4.1 Evidence shows that ageism is widespread in society, impacting the career and recruitment prospects of older workers and pitting younger and older generations against each other in all forms of media.

- 3.4.2 This theme outlines an equalities approach that is at the heart of everything we do. It stresses the certainty of voices of residents in mid to later life, informing and shaping the life of the city.

#### **3.4.3 Communications and reaching out further: progress headlines**

- ◆ **Recruiting more widely to the Board and Assembly**
- ◆ **Older peoples voice and involvement**
- ◆ **Relaunching the AFM newspaper**

#### **3.4.4 Communications and reaching out further: in more detail (table 1.)**

Table 1:

#### ***In more detail***

**A recruitment campaign** was launched for the Board at the beginning of April following a review of the demographics of our current board members – the campaign particularly focuses on the recruitment of:

- ◆ People from South Asian communities
- ◆ People living in East and North Manchester

- ◆ Men
- ◆ People who are disabled

The campaign has been shared widely through the established networks and shortlisting has begun.

The Board continues to provide an **age friendly perspective and lived experience** towards a range of things including the development of Manchester's new mental wellbeing strategy and recently securing a place for a board member on the Highways Access Group. This summer there will be an opportunity to support the Highways Service and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) consultation around key corridor journeys.

**A recruitment campaign** is also underway for the Age Friendly Assembly (the Assembly) with posters and flyers launched with a particular aim of increasing membership from the North and East of Manchester, where older people are underrepresented. The campaign is being shared across established networks.

The Assembly currently meets quarterly, has over 100 members and has recently been consulted on the Our Manchester Strategy, providing valuable insight at the very start of the Our Manchester Strategy renewal.

**The Age Friendly Newspaper**, in partnership with Community Post Community Interest company led by Drawing Board Productions, is relaunching in Manchester. Around 20,000 copies will be distributed in early June, with an Autumn/Winter edition in November. It will be available at multiple venues including supermarkets, libraries, community venues and online, with trial door-to-door distribution in age-friendly focus areas: Gorton and Cheetham and Crumpsall. A board working group oversees its direction with a view to future issues becoming increasingly co-produced.

### 3.4.5 Digital Inclusion: progress headlines

- ◆ Libraries recruiting digital champions
- ◆ New sessions from Ability Net
- ◆ Digital switchover support

### 3.4.6 Digital Inclusion: in more detail (table 2.)

Table 2:

#### ***In more detail***

**Manchester Libraries Digital Inclusion Team** is enhancing its over 50s offer, with Digital Champions, some over 50, and training sessions for over 65s supported by Ability Net and BT.

**Ability Net** are planning new sessions at Gorton Hub and Age UK Brunswick and the digital inclusion team continues to support people using Age UK's Crosscres day centre. Further support sessions are being planned for the Age UK centre at Brunswick. The team has also formed a partnership with the Technology Enabled Care (TEC) team and are building links between this team, Ability Net, and Community Computers to enhance their digital offer for older residents. Manchester City Council is providing extra support to residents with personal alarm units during the BT **Digital Switchover**. Concerns have been raised about the timetable and lack of communication for digitally excluded older residents, prompting calls for a better campaign to reach older residents.

### 3.4.7 Connecting with the most marginalised: progress headlines

- ◆ **Making Manchester Fairer (MMF) Anti-Poverty Insight Group**
- ◆ **MMF Community Forum**
- ◆ **Mental wellbeing -Trauma informed approaches**
- ◆ **Strengthening Age equality within the Equalities Impact Assessment**

### 3.4.8 Connecting with the most marginalised: in more detail (table 3.)

Table 3:

#### ***In more detail***

**The Making Manchester Fairer (MMF) Anti-Poverty Insight Group** is currently going through co-design phase to ensure that there is a range of voices from across the city and its communities. Due to the changing demographics of the city, it is important that we ensure the voices of communities impacted by racial inequalities and older adults are included in this.

The MMF Community Forum will work with and support the Programme Board by reviewing, questioning, and helping to develop MMF delivery plans and will have a key role in supporting the MMF Programme board to hold partners to account from a community perspective playing a key role in the MMF governance structure. AFM has helped influence and inform the development of the Community Forums community engagement framework.

After discussing **trauma-informed approaches** with the AFM Board, it became more evident how trauma among older individuals can be frequently overlooked and stigmatised. A collaboration was initiated among a creative board member, AFM, and the trauma lead, resulting in the creation of a female-led dramatic production based on real-life experiences of older women. Premiering in September, the play seeks to raise awareness about Adverse Childhood Events (ACEs) prevalence and encourage affected individuals to seek support. These partnerships will persist in supporting ongoing co-production, training, and awareness initiatives.

The **MCC Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)** is a practical tool for designing and delivering services that meet the needs of our diverse residents. It enhances our understanding of how our practices affect the communities we serve. A review of



the MCC EIA process is complete and now live. The revised version has been influenced by the strategy to strengthen age equality guidance.

### 3.5 **Theme 2: Age-friendly neighbourhoods where we can all age in place**

3.5.1 Where people live strongly influences individual experiences of ageing, and as people get older, increasing amounts of time are spent in immediate neighbourhoods. An average of 7.5 years can be added to a life when people feel or are supported to feel positive about ageing.

3.5.2 This theme sets out a range of things that if put in place will support an increased number of people to age well in the neighbourhood of their choice with access to the right services and opportunities.

#### 3.5.3 **Creating the conditions for age friendly neighbourhoods: progress headlines**

- ◆ **Developing the refreshed age friendly model for neighbourhoods**
  - Initial phase of work in Gorton and Cheetham Hill and Crumpsall
- ◆ **Preparing for climate change: heatwave planning**
- ◆ **Working with local opportunities: North Manchester General Hospital and Healthy neighbourhood including the International Centre on Active and Healthy Ageing**
- ◆ **Making places more accessible: Neighbourhood Infrastructure Renewal Fund**

#### 3.5.4 **Creating the conditions for age friendly neighbourhoods: in more detail** (table 4.)

Table 4:

#### **In more detail**

An agreement is now in place for Manchester's Neighbourhoods Service to work with Age Friendly Manchester on co-producing a **refreshed age friendly neighbourhood model**. This will be developed and tested in the four neighbourhoods of focus mentioned in the scrutiny report of July 2023. Initially the focus is on two areas, Cheetham & Crumpsall and Gorton. To further support this the Making Manchester Fairer workforce development workstream includes consideration on how best to understand and meet the needs of older people in an age friendly way.

In Gorton, an event has already been held to engage a wider range of stakeholders to begin to establish what elements of Gorton are already age friendly and where there is scope for development. A relationships building exercise is ongoing in the area, including with the Ageing in Place Partnership in Abbey Hey.

In Gorton, a community event engaged stakeholders to assess local age-friendly elements and potential developments. Relationship-building continues, including

with the Ageing in Place Partnership in Abbey Hey. The Peer Ambassador project, detailed later, will run in Gorton and Levenshulme, recruiting volunteers to share experiences and encourage others to check pension credits and other support. In Crumpsall and Cheetham Hill alongside Gorton, efforts are ongoing with neighbourhood colleagues to map support, services, and social infrastructure for older residents. Demographic mapping related to older people is also underway. These initiatives will inform a plan for the neighbourhoods.

AFM will collaborate with Public Health colleagues on a **Heatwave Plan**, with input from the Board and the Assembly to maintain an age-friendly perspective. For instance, the relaunched newspaper will convey messages on preparing for extreme heat events. Given that 85-90% of excess heat-related deaths occur in the 65+ age group, the plan prioritises older people. Their input will shape its delivery over the long term.

Discussions continue with **NMGH strategy** team to shape the wider offer across this footprint, to ensure that design and engagement includes age friendly features and supports the development of an age friendly neighbourhood.

The **Neighbourhood Infrastructure Renewal Fund (NIRF)** is funding over 60 age friendly benches across 9 Wards, in 3 localities. The Neighbourhood Age Friendly team are working with NIRF project team to pool resources across previous projects and to ensure that older people are being engaged and consulted and that a sense of ownership over place is developed. In addition, **Abbey Hey Ageing in Place Project** is funding a route of benches in Abbey Hey, led by the Neighbourhood Age Friendly team. As these benches are in addition to the previously installed buzz funded benches the route can now link up and venture into green spaces.

### 3.6 **Theme 3: Age-friendly services that support us to age well**

3.6.1 Not all services are universally age-friendly and they do not always understand nor meet our needs as we grow older.

3.6.2 This theme has a focus on ensuring that services are designed and delivered through in an age-friendly way. It also addresses the approaches needed over the first 18 months to counter the impact of Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis.

#### 3.6.3 **Age Friendly services: progress headlines**

- ◆ **Initiating Social Connections projects**
- ◆ **Enhancing the age and dementia friendly offer in libraries**
- ◆ **Family Arts Campaign, Age Friendly Standards**
- ◆ **Supporting and guiding development of the Supporting Communities Fund (SCF)**
- ◆ **Working with MCRactive and partners to find ways to improve movement, strength and balance and support reconditioning for 50+**
- ◆ **Supporting GP surgeries to be more age and disability friendly**

◆ **Improving access to talking therapies for older people**

3.6.4 **Age Friendly services: progress headlines: in more detail** (table 5.)

Table 5:

***In more detail***

Work has begun on the **Social Connections Project**, delivering social eating activities to enhance social connections, nutrition, hydration, and movement/falls prevention. This initiative addresses the Board's priority of developing novel approaches to support reconditioning at the neighbourhood level, prompted by persistent deconditioning levels among older people due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Initially, it will target the first two pilot age-friendly neighbourhoods.

A co-design workshop was conducted with the AFM Neighbourhood Coordination Group, comprising frontline services supporting age-friendly practices across neighbourhoods. The focus was on existing projects using food to foster connections and identifying gaps. Subsequently, a project steering group, including representatives from AFM, MCRactive, Manchester Local Care Organisation, and the VCFSE, was established.

The project will launch first in Cheetham Hill and Crumpsall, in collaboration with Winning Hearts and Minds (WHM), leveraging Supporting Communities Funds (SCF) to promote social connections through food. Insights from this initiative will inform activities in Gorton and two additional areas, to be determined in coordination with MMF and Neighbourhoods colleagues.

Manchester Libraries recently won an award at the EDGE Library Conference in Edinburgh for its work on creating **Age Friendly services** for customers. Building on this the AFM team is collaborating with Manchester Libraries, MLCO (Manchester Local Care Organisation), and dementia and carer organisations to enhance dementia resources and activities in libraries, improving accessibility for those with dementia and their caregivers. Leveraging the **Age Friendly and Dementia Friendly** status of Manchester Libraries, the project aims to extend this approach to shared buildings like Gorton Hub Abraham Moss Leisure Centre and Wythenshawe. A Steering Group has been formed to:

- ◆ Establish a resource bank in collaboration with dementia organisations and individuals affected by dementia.
- ◆ Enhance digital support at libraries to be more dementia friendly.
- ◆ Identify opportunities to expand access to activities for those with dementia and their caregivers.
- ◆ Pilot new activities in three library sites and their associated buildings.
- ◆ Use successful strategies to extend improvements across all libraries and shared spaces.

**The Family Arts Campaign Age Friendly Standards**, developed with input from older arts attenders, experts, and cultural organisations across the UK, are

supported by The Baring Foundation and Arts Council England. Several major cultural organisations in Manchester have already adopted these standards.

The **Age Friendly Culture Working Group** is creating a campaign to encourage more cultural venues to adopt these standards, offering peer support in the process. Before launching the campaign, the group will collaborate with partners across the UK to update the standards. Additionally, the group is updating the culture champions model, with a focus on engaging communities in Manchester that are less likely to access cultural venues.

AFM has guided the development of the **Supporting Communities Fund (SCF)**, a program running alongside Our Manchester Voluntary and Community Sectors (OMVCS), catering to grassroots and smaller community organisations. £100k was allocated for Kickstarter projects in areas with limited voluntary sector activity, prioritising support for older residents. AFM assisted WHM in accessing this fund for the social connections project. Other successful projects include befriending and volunteer driver schemes in North Manchester, a good neighbours initiative in Ardwick and Longsight and the Cheetham and Crumpsall Guidance Hub. The team will remain involved in planning year two of the program.

A year's worth of data is being analysed for the new Our Manchester VCS fund that will reveal where older people are accessing services (at ward level), what kind of support they have received and what activities they have engaged with. This will help reveal where older people are taking part in funded projects and where there may be gaps.

The **Ardwick and Longsight Good Neighbours Scheme**, funded by SCF and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, builds upon the Age Friendly Network and Covid Mutual Aid Group efforts. Led by Inspired Taskforce, the project, co-produced with various organisations and older people, focuses on support, social activities, and befriending. Unlike traditional befriending services, it involves multiple delivery partners to ensure cultural diversity and accessibility.

MCRactive works with Leisure Centres and the Physical Activity Referral Service (PARS) to **enhance activities and support for the over 50s**, partnering with age-friendly groups for movement, strength, and balance improvement. Collaborating with AFM and others, MCRactive aims to deliver movement activities alongside the Social Connections Programme. PARS offers over 60 weekly activity sessions, directly referring individuals from NHS services and GPs.

AFM, MCRactive, and GLL (Greenwich Leisure Ltd) are working and in discussion with the Centre for Better Ageing to develop age-friendly service standards for Manchester leisure centres, a first in the UK. MCRactive supports enhancing conditions for walking, running, and cycling in parks, promoting independent activity. The MMF Physical Activity Kickstarter model is being developed with MCRactive to address barriers for over 50s, with implementation expected in the autumn.

A review at Hough End Leisure Centre led to changes in session times and widened activity offerings for older adults, resulting in increased attendance and

additional dedicated sessions. Similar sessions are rolling out across all leisure centres, with ongoing setup at East Manchester Leisure Centre and plans for additional sessions at Ardwick Leisure Centre to meet demand.

AFM is working with Manchester's Integrated Care Partnership to enhance age and disability friendliness in **GP surgeries**, starting with Chorlton Family Practice. The Patient Group is involved in a joint audit to feed into the Manchester Integrated Care Partnership's Workforce and Estates work informing the development of service standards and a toolkit for broader implementation across primary care settings.

Neighbourhood colleagues, partnering with GM Mental Health Foundation and the Big Life Group are working to **increase awareness and access to talking therapies** among older people. Printed materials have been developed, targeted at older adults, focusing on areas with overlapping socio-economic and cultural factors that impact therapy uptake. Collaboration with age-friendly libraries and local networks will facilitate reaching relevant groups and individuals, including carers.

### 3.7 **Theme 4: Age-friendly work, skills, and money**

3.7.1 There are high levels of unemployment and under-employment in Manchester's over-50 population. Coupled with this has been a sharp rise in pensioner poverty, made worse by the cost-of-living crisis.

#### 3.7.2 **Age-friendly work & skills: progress headlines**

- ◆ **Influencing and guiding age friendly employment and business cultures**
- ◆ **Co-producing a later life planning programme, linked to 'real life' local research**
- ◆ **Promoting volunteering as a way back into work**
- ◆ **Shaping Making Manchester Fairer's commitment to supporting people who are out of work due to ill health**
- ◆ **Ensuring the 50+ focus and commitment is embedded across employment support providers**
- ◆ **Planning the 'Olderpreneurs' self-employment and enterprise support programme for those 50 and over**
- ◆ **Supporting Manchester libraries in their ambition to become an age friendly employer**

#### 3.7.3 **Age-friendly work & skills: in more detail (table 6.)**

Table 6:

##### ***In more detail***

Several business networks have been visited this year, specifically to raise the profile of **age-friendly employment practice** and facilitate discussion on how best

to incorporate age-friendliness into business culture. For example, the North Manchester Social Value Network, Our Manchester Business Forum, and the south Manchester Business Network - Smashing, where links to the range of resources available to support this work were provided. This has been well received with several follow-up conversations made. The Christie NHS Foundation Trust is exploring this more closely and are now in liaison with Manchester City Council's personnel department on developing their thinking further.

A leaflet is being developed for use at employer networks and events that contains a QR code that links to the vast range of resources available to employers when looking at developing their age-friendly employment practice. The leaflet will also be used to seek further age-friendly employer pledges, which makes a specific commitment for an employer to become an age friendly employer.

Work will soon start on co-producing a **later life planning programme** with employee networks and employers to better support older workers in considering their later careers and retirement options.

"Uncertain Futures" is a unique art and research collaboration addressing intersectional inequalities facing women over 50 in the workforce. Developed by artist Suzanne Lacy in association with Manchester Art Gallery and the Work & Skills Team, supported by an advisory group of women from Manchester's communities, the project is also backed by research teams from the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University. The 5-year project is in its third and final phase which includes the promotion of the report and manifesto which can be found at [Uncertain Futures Project](#). Conversations have begun with key policy makers within the City Council to ensure that the recommendations are considered and embedded within the City's' strategies. This work has also been highlighted in the UN (United Nations) Decade of Healthy Ageing report 2021-2023.

A new leaflet has been produced **promoting volunteering as a route back to employment** providing case studies of Manchester people that have successfully used volunteering to develop their career. Over the next 6 months plans will start to maximise benefits of events, including volunteer week and attendance at volunteering fairs to promote volunteering as a route to employment or career development.

**MMF Fairer Work and Health Kickstarter** focuses on how best to support those falling out of work, due to ill health, back into work and training as quickly as possible with the right kind of wrap-around support. This Kickstarter is currently being redesigned and work will be developed with Manchester Foundation Trust over the next 6 months exploring how to develop a simpler system that enables clinicians to make referrals across the work and skills system.

All work and skills providers now have a **50+ commitment in their work**, making sure that their offer responds to people's needs as they grow older. Work is underway to secure a recommitment to this focus across the works and skills provider partnership. The Greater Manchester Support to Succeed programme, delivered by the Growth Company has a 50+ focus and is working with key

employment providers in Manchester and providing tailored interventions and Manchester workers.

Planning is underway to re-run the '**Olderpreneurs' self-employment and enterprise support** programme for those 50 and over later in the year, in partnership with the BIPC following last year's successful webinar and in person events. Manchester's Work Club have been recommissioned for 2 years, subject to year 2 funding being place, these clubs already have a high number of people over 50 using their services.

Libraries are actively striving to become **Age Friendly Employers**, fostering a culture of value and support for older staff. Initiatives at Manchester's Libraries include promoting flexible retirement for older staff to retain their skills while maintaining a work-life balance. Support is provided for older staff with caregiving responsibilities who need to adjust their hours. Training and development opportunities are available to all staff regardless of age or other characteristics.

Recruitment methods were revamped in 2020 to be more inclusive and age-positive, with Open Evenings at community venues replacing traditional application processes. This has enabled the hiring of individuals in their 50s and 60s, including retirees from other professions, former library volunteers, and individuals returning to the workforce after long-term caregiving.

The Age Equality Network contributed to the development of Manchester's Workforce Equality Strategy, aligned with the goal of becoming an age-friendly employer. The initiatives in Libraries provide valuable insights for this strategy.

#### 3.7.4 Money and anti-poverty work: progress headlines

- ◆ **Supporting and promoting Pension Credit and entitlements uptake**
- ◆ **Developing a peer-to-peer approach to improve benefit uptake**
  - Sharing the learning from the approach to support partners efforts to address poverty for older people

#### 3.7.5 Money and anti-poverty work: in more detail (table 7.)

Table 7:

##### ***In more detail***

AFM has been supporting and promoting the National **Pension Credit uptake** campaign in Manchester and the Greater Manchester (GM) Financial Hardship and Older People's Steering Group. Currently it is estimated that there is £24 million unclaimed pension credit in Manchester and as passport\* benefit that links people to others the impact of increased claims would be much higher. *\*Passported benefits are benefits or schemes which some people are entitled to because of their entitlement to certain other benefits or Tax Credits.*

Working together with Independent Age, Age Action Alliance, and GM Ageing Hub to **reduce pensioner poverty and support income maximisation** for older

people in Manchester identified peers as an effective way to share information, given the challenges around benefits uptake with older people.

AFM has commissioned Inspired Taskforce to undertake an older persons Peer Ambassador pilot project to promote take up of pension credit and attendance allowance in Gorton and Levenshulme. The Ambassadors are being trained and will meet older peoples' groups in the neighbourhoods alongside benefits advisors to share their experiences of accessing entitlements over the coming months with the expectation that this will increase uptake. The learning from this initiative will be shared and spread into other parts of the city and supports the Poverty Strategy objectives around income maximisation for older people.

### 3.7.6 Further activity underway to support Manchester: a city for life 2025-8: Progress headlines

- ◆ **Reviewing our governance to support delivery through clear leadership**
- ◆ **Guiding and sharing local research so that it can be translated into real change**
- ◆ **Supporting our diverse communities with pride and action**

### 3.7.7 Further activity underway to support Manchester: a city for life 2025-8: in more detail (table 8.)

Table 8:

#### ***In more detail***

A review of the existing governance arrangements in place to support and sponsor delivery of the age friendly strategy has been undertaken. A new set of arrangements are being put in place that are designed to provide greater senior leadership towards the ongoing development of delivery plans, direction and contribution to performance management, evaluation and reporting, and greater input into the development of the neighbourhood coordination group for frontline workers and place-based services.

The '**Developing Age-Friendly Communities to Support Healthy Ageing – The role of faith spaces as social infrastructure**' Report was published in April 2024. This is a culmination of a one-year partnership project between AFM, University of Manchester (Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group) and Manchester faith communities looking at the role of faith and faith spaces and links to place and neighbourhoods, health and wellbeing and social infrastructure.

Key recommendations for policy makers, service providers and funders included:

- ◆ Working collaboratively to understand and enhance the role of faith spaces in supporting the health and wellbeing of older people building on experience and good practice established during COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis.
- ◆ Thinking together with faith spaces more strategically and practically to support older people through transitions and change as they age.



- ◆ Proactively looking at sharing funding information and disseminate criteria that have often been misunderstood.
- ◆ Using faith - 'the F' more proactively in 'VCFSE' as and, when appropriate, and recommend to other funders to be more inclusive.

This year marks the 5-year anniversary of the **Pride in Ageing** program, celebrating the contributions of LGBTQ+ individuals over 50 and ensuring their voices are heard in ageing policy and planning. Launched by Sir Ian McKellen in June 2019, the program addresses concerns of isolation and discrimination among LGBTQ+ individuals over 50.

Aligned with the AFM strategy, the program supports diverse activities including Digital Inclusion (Over 50s Digital Café), Physical Activity (LGBTQ+ Physical Activity Sessions with MCRactive), Intergenerational Projects (photography project with The Proud Trust), Age Friendly Service Benchmarking (Pride in Ageing Accreditation for Social Care and Housing), Equalities training and consultation for services (LGBT Foundation Training Academy), Co-Production and Co-Design (Pride in Ageing Advisory Group).

Pride in Ageing ensures older LGBTQ+ voices are represented on the AFM Board, providing intelligence and insight

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

- 4.1 The new age friendly strategy has provided the impetus and focus required to achieve a greater sense of age friendliness in the everyday lives of older people living in Manchester. Solid foundations are now in place to drive delivery with strengthened partnerships and working arrangements supporting this.

#### **5.0 Recommendations**

- 5.1 To consider and comment on the progress reported
- 5.2 To agree to receiving future progress updates and set a schedule for this

#### **6.0 Appendices**

The Age Friendly Manchester Strategy can be found [here](#)

[https://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/7601/manchester\\_a\\_city\\_for\\_life\\_2023-2028](https://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/7601/manchester_a_city_for_life_2023-2028)