

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 5 September 2019

Subject: Manchester’s Language Diversity

Report of: City Solicitor

Summary

This report provides the Committee with an overview of language diversity in Manchester, and particularly considers work undertaken by the Council to recognise, respond to and celebrate this aspect of the City’s diversity. The report aligns these considerations with the Council’s strategic equality objectives, to demonstrate the importance and relevance of language diversity as a contributor to the achievement of these objectives.

Much work in this area takes place at a local level and the report does not intend to provide a thorough assessment of all activities undertaken to respond to the City’s multilingual nature. It does however aim to give an indication of some recent key activities and initiatives that demonstrate the organisation’s commitment here. The report also considers how this work can be continued and strengthened in future.

Recommendations

The committee is invited to consider and comment on the contents of the report.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city
Not applicable.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The report briefly outlines the economic opportunities and advantages afforded to a multilingual Manchester. Language diversity as broad as Manchester’s is recognised in the report as a major attraction to international businesses, representing a diverse range of economic opportunities.
A highly skilled city: world class	The report notes the inherent value of language

and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	diversity in the City; it recognises multilingualism as a great talent for individuals to use and a valuable resource for the City to capitalise on. The report also recognises the importance of residents possessing English language skills as an enabler to engage in the City's economic opportunities.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The report highlights the contribution of multilingualism in defining the City's character and as a reflection of its diversity. Multilingualism is highlighted throughout the report as an intrinsic part of communities' identities / Manchester's identity, and presents an overview of work undertaken to recognise and respond to this language diversity, to not only unlock its potential, but to celebrate its role in defining a modern Manchester.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The City's approach to language diversity is a magnet for new residents and businesses alike, proactively working to remove the barriers that language / communication can create and using the City's multilingual nature to attract diverse communities to visit, live and work in the City.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Multilingualism is a critical facet of a connected city to communicate with, attract and accommodate international partners in the City's growth. Manchester's breadth of spoken languages presents a huge opportunity to connect the City with investment and support the 'connected city' aim of the Our Manchester Strategy.

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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.

- *Attainment and Progress 2018 Report*, Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 5 March 2019
- *Manchester Adult ESOL Strategy 2019* - available on request

1.0 Introduction and Context

- 1.1 This report provides the Committee with an overview of language diversity in Manchester. Particular focus is given to how the Council recognises and responds to language diversity in the delivery of its services, the relevance of language diversity in relation to some of the City's key outcomes and the importance to the Council of promoting language diversity in order to support some of its own strategic aims.
- 1.2 Relative to its population size, Manchester is one of the most linguistically diverse Cities in the United Kingdom and Europe. Current research by the University of Manchester's 'Multilingual Manchester' programme (see below) finds that around 200 different languages are spoken in the City, and that more than half of the City's residents are estimated to know and use more than one language. Close to 20% of Manchester's adult population declared a language other than English to be their "main language" in the 2011 Census, added to which, data from the Education Service shows that more than 40% of Manchester's primary school children speak an additional language to English in their homes. This compares favourably not only with other core cities in the UK, but also across Europe. Community languages with the largest number of speakers in Manchester are Urdu, Arabic, Chinese, Bengali, Polish, Panjabi, and Somali.
- 1.3 A journey through Manchester provides an inescapable demonstration of how present and relied upon language diversity is; shop fronts and signage, community information and adverts are routinely written in languages other than English and are intended to communicate most effectively with the diverse resident groups in each local area. Population projections based on Office for National Statistics data indicate that Manchester's BAME population is estimated to rise from approximately 30% at the time of the 2011 Census, to over 40% by the time the 2021 Census is taken. The City's language diversity can also be expected to continue to increase at a comparable rate. - This base-line position and direction of travel makes a compelling case for the importance of recognising, respecting, responding to and celebrating Manchester's rich language diversity.
- 1.4 The Council's celebration of Manchester's language diversity not only resonates with its long-standing commitment to be a City of inclusion and cohesion, but also recognises the economic possibilities that a linguistically diverse population brings. Indeed, the commercial benefits of Manchester's language diversity, opening the City up to international markets and investment, will be pivotal to realising the aims of the Our Manchester Strategy.
- 1.5 In order to harness these numerous opportunities and respond to emerging language needs, the Council needs to continue to adapt its services to ensure that they are fair and accessible regardless of residents' language capabilities. The Council has a long-standing and considerable success in this arena, and continues to diversify its 'language offer' and approach to reflect the City's increasingly diverse population.

- 1.6 In considering the Council's current 'multilingual offer', officers have identified that there are a range of good support and celebration activities already in place. The individual components of this offer though, are disparate and individually owned by separate services, rather than forming a cohesive and consolidated offer. This report therefore seeks to present the Committee with examples of the key areas of work where language diversity is being supported (i.e. in the delivery and accessibility of services), or is being celebrated. It does not present a definitive assessment of the extent to which multilingualism is supported or celebrated in every Council service area, given the volume of local community activity which this involves.
- 1.7 The report is presented in alignment with the Council's three strategic equality objectives:
1. Knowing Manchester Better
 2. Improving Life Chances
 3. Celebrating Our Diversity

This aims in doing this is to demonstrate the relevance and benefits of multilingualism in helping these objectives to be realised. This will be given further consideration as the equality objectives are reviewed over the remainder of this financial year.

2.0 Knowing Manchester Better

- 2.1 The Council's equality objective of Knowing Manchester Better states that:

"We will work together with Manchester's citizens and our partners in the public and voluntary sectors to increase the quality of the information, knowledge and understanding we have about Manchester's diverse communities and the value that we gain from this. This will allow us to work with each other to support 'community cohesion' – people from different backgrounds getting on well together in the local area and treating each other with respect and consideration – and make sure we develop policies, and provide and commission services that meet everyone's needs."

- 2.2 Clearly, developing a substantial understanding of the range of different languages spoken in Manchester and their links to people's experience of life in the City is a key component of progressing this objective. Work undertaken at the neighbourhood level responds very directly and in a timely way to local priorities, but does not necessarily contribute to a broader understanding of multilingualism at City level and over a longer period of time. The opportunity to work with partners to develop this broader understanding is perhaps best exemplified by the ongoing relationship that the Council has formed with the University of Manchester's Multilingual Manchester Project.

Multilingual Manchester Project

2.3 Based at the University of Manchester's School of Arts, Languages and Cultures, the Multilingual Manchester project provides the Council with a considerable and exciting opportunity to understand more about the variety and complexity of language diversity in the City. The project team works across academic and operational disciplines to study both the challenges and the opportunities that language diversity brings to Manchester. The project was initiated approximately 10 years ago as part of a range of opportunities for students to engage with the city of Manchester, understand its character and contribute to its fabric. The team has built on this early opportunity to profile the City's linguistic landscape, and now holds the largest body of online undergraduate research on multilingualism in both higher education and in any single city in the country.

2.4 The project comprises several strands of activity:

Teaching, Research and Outreach

Working with a range of public and voluntary sector providers, these strands aim to respond to current issues experienced by practitioners and communities, to co-design research and to share good practice. A range of resources are available online to assist, including academic studies and research outcomes, survey reports and fact sheets.

Student Contribution

Students are an integral part of the project's work, contributing extensively to research and outreach activities. Multilingual Manchester's online archive of research reports is authored entirely by undergraduate students.

Volunteer Scheme

The Multilingual Manchester student volunteer scheme engages students from a range of academic disciplines. Working in a range of different organisations across the city, volunteers gain valuable insight into service delivery in a diverse, linguistically dynamic city.

2.5 The Multilingual Manchester project's growing body of research, evidence and analysis has attracted significant interest from academics and practitioners internationally, and the project team has hosted conferences and events which positively and proactively promote Manchester's reputation as a hub of good practice around language diversity.

2.6 At a more operational level, the project has worked with public service organisations in the City. Work with the NHS in Manchester, for example, has led to the multilingual approach of the NHS's Choose Well campaign. The project has also worked with the Council's Regeneration Team to factor language diversity into the organisation's understanding of emerging communities, in addition to responding to research and engagement requests from Manchester schools and Greater Manchester Police.

- 2.7 The extensive body of evidence and analysis afforded to Manchester's public services by the project team continues to add value and insight to their undertakings. Various Council services, including the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team, M:4 Communication and Language Support Service (CALSS), Libraries, Manchester Adult Education Service and continue to work regularly with the Multilingual Manchester project team to share information and support each other's activities.
- 2.8 The Multilingual Manchester project team's considerable and growing body of information is available to review at mlm.humanities.manchester.ac.uk, and Members of this committee are encouraged to visit the site for further details.

3.0 Improving Life Chances

- 3.1 The Council's equality objective of Improving Life Chances states that:

"We want everyone living in Manchester to have a good quality of life and equal chances. We know that for some groups in Manchester this is not the case. We will work with our partners to take a positive approach to removing inequalities."

- 3.2 Considering this in relation to language diversity, a key priority for the Council is ensuring equality of access (to services, facilities, resources etc.), regardless of an individual's 'first' language. Critical to the delivery of this aim is the work of the M:4 Communication and Language Support Service (CALSS).

M:4 Communication and Language Support Service

- 3.3 Currently in its 27th year, M:4 CALSS provides a range of translation services to ensure that crucial Council services are accessible and understood by a broad spectrum of Manchester residents. M:4 CALSS aims to:
- Provide interpreters in any language including British Sign Language (BSL), to improve access to information, opportunities and services;
 - Provide translations of various information leaflets and documents in appropriate languages including Braille and other accessible formats;
 - Identify, train and create a pool of Interpreters, Translators, Linguist and Specialists in partnership with local and international academic groups and institutes and promote careers in language related profession; and
 - Identify and promote an understanding of the linguistic needs our communities and make Greater Manchester One World and Centre for Excellence for Linguistic and Cultural Equality.
- 3.4 These aims are delivered through a range of available services including:
- Face to face and BSL interpretation
 - Alternative and specialist forms of communication
 - Multilingual audio-visual production
 - Written translations (including Braille)

- Championing Multilingual Communication training
 - Consultancy on multilingualism and multiculturalism
- 3.5 The M:4 CALSS service is responsive to user needs, in circumstances where language difference potentially creates a barrier to Council services. M:4 CALSS works with other Council services such as social care or homelessness to ensure that language needs to access those services are met, as well as working directly with individuals. The service proactively advises individuals that information can be obtained from M:4 CALSS on request in an alternative language or format. This approach presents a cost-effective and flexible way of meeting language needs which avoids stock-piling information in alternative languages / formats which may become outdated and redundant without being used.
- 3.6 Of the approximately 200 languages spoken in Manchester, M:4 CALSS has been asked to provide translation or interpretation in 77 languages, which continues to form the foundation of the service's offer. In 2018-19, M:4 CALSS delivered over 13,000 face to face interpretation sessions and almost 2,000 written translation projects. The service and the expertise of its language professionals are celebrated nationally, resulting in invitations to speak on multilingualism and multiculturalism locally, regionally and even nationally at the Language Show, taking place in London on 15 - 17 November 2019.

Multilingualism in Education, Key Stages 1 - 4

- 3.7 As a logical consequence of ensuring equality of access to services that are considerate of and responsive to language diversity, it follows that Manchester is able to demonstrate encouraging equality of outcomes. This is perhaps most prominently reflected in the City's educational attainment outcomes for 2018.
- 3.8 Over 40% of primary school children speak English as an Additional Language (EAL), with up to 40 languages spoken in one primary school alone. Although this could potentially pose challenges for children and their families, it is a need that is met practically by Manchester schools. Children who arrive in the City learn English in order to access the curriculum and although attainment levels tend to be lower than average to begin with, ongoing support evens the attainment level out as children progress through the education system.
- 3.9 To support children with EAL, differentiated strategies are implemented to help children settle in school. Some children are 'buddied up' with a class-fellow who may also be newly arrived in the City and who shares the same first or other languages, in order to reduce feelings of isolation and embed a sense of belonging and community. Parents are also given support, including being able to borrow books available in different languages to read to their children, to create a learning culture within the home. Accessible English courses are available to parents and grandparents, enabling them to support their own and their children's / grandchildren's language learning.

- 3.10 Overall, the progress of Manchester pupils with EAL shows positive improvements, suggesting that the support and interventions above are starting to have their desired effect. In particular, outcomes improved in Reading Writing and Maths combined (RWM) and 'reading at the expected standard' at the end of Key Stage (KS) 2 and improved at the higher standard in all areas except for maths. Most noteworthy is that outcomes at KS4 for Manchester pupils with EAL continue to be better than Manchester non-EAL pupils for all accountability measures.
- 3.11 It should be noted that despite this progress at KS 2 and 4, there was a decline in outcomes at Key Stage 1 in 2018 and the overall outcomes for the Manchester EAL cohort remain lower than national average outcomes for the same cohort. Manchester remains committed to continuing the supportive measures outlined here to close the attainment gap with UK averages.
- 3.12 A more detailed analysis of these attainment statistics was considered by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 5 March 2019 in its 'Attainment and Progress 2018' report. Members of this committee are encouraged to visit this report for further information.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) - Ongoing Provision

- 3.13 Provision of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is well established in Manchester, with over a decade of ESOL provision being coordinated by the Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES). The Council's ESOL Strategy 2019 recognises that the city's diverse population, with its array of languages and cultures, is increasingly attractive to global businesses. It notes though, that in order to be able to access the emerging opportunities in Manchester, residents will require key functional skills, of which the ability to speak English is one. English language skills represent a contributor to community integration and cohesion, they are a means of managing everyday interactions and they promote an individual's independence (i.e. removing reliance on interpretation support). For these reasons there continues to be considerable local demand on ESOL provision.

ESOL Advice Service

- 3.14 The demand for ESOL services are such that a systematic way to maximise access to the available provision is required. To achieve this, MAES and The Manchester College successfully made a joint bid for the ESOL Coordination funding for Manchester, and have been working to establish the Manchester ESOL Advice Service which will launch in September 2019. The project aims to develop a centralised ESOL initial assessment and referral service to better coordinate ESOL provision across Manchester.
- 3.15 The project will deliver up to 10 weekly ESOL Advice sessions across the city that residents will be able to book onto by calling the ESOL Advice Service office or by speaking to reception staff in any of the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector centres running these sessions; VCSE providers will operate the sessions so that they are facilitated in ways that are

appropriate to and accessible by the diverse communities that they serve. Sessions involve a one to one assessment of the learner's level of English, their learning goals and their aspirations by a qualified ESOL teacher. Following the assessment, ESOL Advice Service staff will make every effort to identify a suitable course for that resident with one of the ESOL providers in the city.

- 3.16 The ESOL Advice Service will also work with ESOL providers with a view of considering changes to their programme offer to accommodate the unmet demand in certain Wards or for certain groups of residents. The ESOL Advice Service is funded by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) as part of the Integrated Communities Strategy. The project will run until the end of July 2020.
- 3.17 In addition, a time limited Talk English project delivered by MAES is funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government. The *Talk English* programme provides opportunities to learn English to learners of all abilities. It is staffed by volunteers who are trained to become either Talk English *Friends* or *Teachers*, and then run activities to practice English. These may include taking learners on *Create & Talk* visits to galleries or *Walk & Talk* visits to parks. Talk English also includes opportunities to engage in other forms of wellbeing like bike rides in the park or childhood storytelling picnic sessions. More information is available at www.talk-english.co.uk

A Multilingual Workforce

- 3.18 Although the Council does not monitor the language diversity of its workforce, it would be reasonable to suggest that with over 200 languages spoken in the City and circa 50% of the Council's workforce being Manchester residents, a significant proportion of the workforce is multilingual. This potentially offers an exciting range of opportunities to involve the workforce in defining and strengthening the Council's multilingual offer. As noted by the Multilingual Manchester Project:

“Multilingual staff members can prove a valuable resource within any service. As well as being easily accessible, they bring an understanding of the specific service field, which external interpreters may not possess, and they may even have specific local knowledge.”

- 3.19 Building on recent activity to increase engagement with protected characteristic groups in the workforce through the refresh of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Employee Networks, the EDI Team will engage with these groups to investigate multilingualism at work, the value that it brings to individuals, teams and the Council overall, and to consider how this can be promoted at work. This is an excellent opportunity to codesign a piece of work with multilingual employees that celebrates language diversity at work and adds a workforce dimension to the Council's 'multilingual offer'.

4.0 Celebrating our Diversity

4.1 The Council's equality objective of Celebrating Our Diversity states that:

“Manchester’s great strength is its diversity; we’ve achieved a lot for our different communities. We will maintain and build on with what we’ve achieved so far, going even further to celebrate Manchester’s diversity, telling people how this makes the city better for everyone.”

UNESCO City of Literature

4.2 In 2017, Manchester joined 27 other cities worldwide including Baghdad, Dublin, Barcelona, Prague, Melbourne, and Reykjavik to become a member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) City of Literature network. A consortium including the City Council, the universities, Manchester Literature Festival and the city's writers, publishers and literary organisations formed to make this to happen.

4.3 The network membership recognises Manchester's proud and vibrant literary history, celebrating the City's many poets and authors. Importantly though, it also notes the vital role that the City's libraries play by sharing the City's substantial body of work, by hosting spoken word events to continue the literary legacy and by evolving their approaches and content to reflect an increasingly diverse range of literary contributions.

4.4 UNESCO City of Literature network member status provides an opportunity for Manchester to celebrate the City's language diversity as it is presented through the written and spoken word. Events, projects and activities are held throughout the year with the aim of getting more people, and an increasingly diverse range of people, reading, writing and enjoying literature. More information is available at: www.manchestercityofliterature.com

International Mother Language Day

4.5 On 21 February each year, Manchester celebrates International Mother Language Day. Hosted primarily in the City's libraries, International Mother Language Day events demonstrate pride in Manchester's language diversity and celebrates its origins. Events are run for communities that include family-friendly games, crafts and performances, panel discussions, workshops and a multilingual mushaira (a poetry symposium).

Made in Manchester Poem

4.6 Manchester has recently celebrated its linguistic diversity with the creation of the 'Made in Manchester' poem. Made in Manchester was conceived as a 'living poem', with contributions incorporating 64 different languages and written mostly by Manchester school children.

4.7 Local school children and community groups were invited over the course of a year to add new lines to a poem, 'Made in Manchester', written by local poet

Zahid Hussain. Uniquely though, the young people and others were asked to contribute lines written in their own heritage language, to highlight the cultural and linguistic diversity of the City.

- 4.8 The finished poem is on display in Manchester Central Library, where it is being shown for the next year alongside an English translation of it. The two versions of the poem will be displayed on two screens next to each other, that scroll in tandem through the poem.
- 4.9 A short film featuring an abridged version of the poem, read in their own languages by some of the young contributors, has also been made and is now available online after being premiered at the launch of the poem. The online version is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xyIJAYrEpY>

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 As presented above, the Council has a range of well established approaches to ensure that language diversity is recognised and responded to, that language needs are met in the delivery of Council functions and that the opportunities afforded by multilingualism are celebrated. It is acknowledged though, that the Council does not articulate this responsiveness and celebration as a cohesive multilingual strategy or offer.
- 5.2 Officers across the relevant service areas and EDI Employee Networks, coordinated by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team and working to the Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure and Executive Member for Neighbourhoods, will continue to work to consolidate the Council's understanding of how language diversity affects and is supported by its services throughout the remainder of 2019-20. This work will aim to promote the organisation's existing 'multilingual offer' in the next financial year.
- 5.3 Following on from this, the existing offer will be assessed with consideration of how it can be strengthened. Pending the outcomes of this assessment, a plan for a strengthened multilingual offer will be produced in consultation with relevant Council service areas. Realising Manchester's multilingual potential is an objective that extends beyond the Council's remit alone, and the Council will consult with partners on the developing plan as applicable. Progress on this work will be shared with the Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure and the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods on an ongoing basis, with an action plan for a strengthened offer being developed by September 2020.