

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 11 October 2018

**Subject:** Volunteering / Timebanking Update - Our Manchester in action

**Report of:** Chief Operating Officer - Neighbourhoods

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**Summary**

Building on the Volunteering and Timebanking report that was presented to Committee in December 2017, and given the significant role both activities continue to play in supporting the delivery of the “Our Manchester” approach, this report provides a brief update on progress and the ongoing work programme.

It also includes an overview of the work that is underway on identifying & working with community based assets (people, buildings, spaces), which the whole report is predicated on, to reiterate the neighbourhood focus.

**Recommendation**

Members are asked to note and comment on the report, and for Officers to report back in Spring 2019.

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**Wards Affected:** All

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**Alignment to the Our Manchester Strategy Outcomes (if applicable)**

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	This report provides an overview of how residents, businesses, the voluntary & community sector and public sector, are all playing their part in making sure Manchester’s economy (citywide / neighbourhood level), continues to thrive.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city’s economic success	People are offering their skills / developing new ones to benefit the City and its neighbourhoods. The report outlines examples of this and the ongoing opportunities.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	People are significant assets throughout the City and in the heart of neighbourhoods. This report highlights how they are being engaged, building confidence, developing skills, and improving their health & wellbeing and employment chances.

A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	People have pride & respect for their city and where they live, by offering their time/skills. This report brings this to life and shows the impact they have on the City neighbourhoods.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The report highlights how the approach is connecting people to what Manchester has to offer, and how they are shaping the City to be what it is.

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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.

Overview of Volunteering Activity in the City- Communities & Equalities Scrutiny Committee (4th January 2017);

Timebanking- Opportunities to expand the approach throughout the City (7th December 2017)

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Set within the context of the Our Manchester Strategy, previous reports to this Committee have provided a snapshot of how residents, businesses and the Voluntary & Community Sector, were all volunteering significant amounts of their time, demonstrating a strong sense of citizenship and pride in their City. This whole approach is the “Our Manchester” behaviours in action- people working together and trusting each other, being proud & passionate about Manchester, listening to each other and building from strengths, and “owning it” & not being afraid to try new things to make things even better;
- 1.2 Over the past year, thousands of residents have continued to engage in volunteering and Timebanking activity, new ways of working have gone live to make it easier for people to get involved, and work has progressed on a more strategic approach to engage even more people. From progress, it is still very clear that people engage for many different reasons. This ranges from wanting to give something back to where they live and work, making a difference to the people around them, developing new skills to help with employment / career aspirations, building confidence, improving health & wellbeing, and making new friends. Without volunteers and the sharing of skills, it remains clear that some activities would not happen.
- 1.3 This report provides a snapshot of progress on 1) how we are embedding volunteering opportunities where we can, 2) impact of the City Council’s Employer Supported Volunteering Policy for Officers; 3) our ambition to work towards Manchester becoming the first Timebanking City of the UK; and 4) the multi-agency work on mapping / working with community assets. All with a focus of ensuring that residents, businesses, the Voluntary & Community Sector, and public services, can continue to play a major role in the City.

## **2.0 Volunteering:**

### **Progress on encouraging more Volunteering activity throughout the City**

- 2.1 The Manchester Volunteer Centre (MVC- funded by the City & operated by Macc), continues to match residents with organisations across the whole City. Since January 2018, a further 560 residents have volunteered (over 19,000 registered) in a range of areas: health & wellbeing, education, homelessness, youth activities, age-friendly, plus much more. MVC is part of the current Infrastructure (capacity building) Contract between the City/Macc and this will be subject to joint review with the Manchester Health & Care Commissioning for the arrangements in place from 2019 onwards;
- 2.2 The City’s Manchester Volunteer Inspire Programme (MCRVIP) continues to match volunteers with sports, leisure & events opportunities (3,000 residents registered/900 active this year). Volunteers have been involved in unique experiences such as the Manchester Day Parade, the new Festival of Manchester, Trees of Hope, sporting competitions+, and they truly make the activities even more memorable for everyone involved;

- 2.3 The IT developer has now been appointed to expand the MCRVIP system to cover the rest of the Neighbourhood's Service offer. This approach is all linked to what residents can actually see / the look & feel of their neighbourhood, and is about simplifying how we recruit, develop and recognise the commitment of volunteers (residents/businesses) within the Directorate given all the crossover. As well as sports, leisure & events, it will now include the offer at Libraries, Culture & Galleries, Parks/Green Spaces, Grounds Maintenance, Neighbourhood Teams, Street Cleansing, Waste & Recycling, and Compliance & Community Safety. The expectation is that it will go live by March 2019 (with testing in between). In addition, Officers have already liaised with colleagues in Children's Services, regarding opportunities to expand the system even further within the Council;
- 2.4 In the above areas, there are many residents already involved: a) Libraries- over 360 people contributed 21,000 hours over the past year (IT Volunteers, family history researchers, supporting events, digitising photographs, teenage Reading Hacks+) and some volunteers have become Library staff; b) Galleries have seen 100 volunteers/4,000 hours- event support, tours, archives, collection data & exhibition research+); c) Parks/Leisure- thousands remain involved in Friends of Parks Groups / Sports Clubs; and d) Neighbourhoods- hundreds of volunteers involved in the Great British Spring Clean weekend, litter campaigns, Keep Manchester Tidy campaign and In Bloom;
- 2.5 The Our Manchester VCS Fund went live in April 2018 (3 year funding programme) and 62 groups/organisations across the City, received funding. The focus is on providing community facilities, one to one/group support (mental health / age-friendly, befriending+) and ensure the VCS in fully involved in what happens in their neighbourhood. All 62 rely on volunteers in the governance and actual delivery, and this was a key component of the assessment criteria. Each organisation has a link Officer from the City, who liaises with the group to ensure they are linking in with the right people / activities, and they can take advantage of any opportunities;
- 2.6 Also in April this year, the Youth & Play Fund went live with groups across the whole City securing funding to ensure young people have access to high quality youth/play services in their area. Through match funding from the national #iwill Fund, young people being involved in social action & volunteering is even more embedded in the core offer. Examples relate to mentoring, addressing issues that matter to them e.g. the environment/safety, fundraising, libraries, sport, being members of the Manchester Youth Council or Greater Manchester Youth Network+. Since April, over 1,700 young people have taken part in social action in the City, and the target is 7,000 by March 2020;
- 2.7 Back in March this year, the new citywide Our Manchester Business Forum was launched with employers who are part of employment networks across the City (North Manchester Business Network, South Manchester Enterprise Network and BW3- Businesses Working With Wythenshawe)- Barclays, Bruntwood, UK Fast, Jacobs, DWF Law, Juice Academy, Price Waterhouse Cooper, Equitis Engineering, Manchester Airport+. The focus is very much on

the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) agenda and how businesses / employees can engage with the communities they are based within. Examples relate to employees mentoring young people, engaging care leavers in work placements, donating funding or equipment, helping to modernise community spaces, joining a committee/board, plus much more. The focus now is on identifying further opportunities for CSR activity at a city/neighbourhood level, and engaging even more businesses in it. Officers from the Work & Skills Team and Neighbourhood Teams, will continue to be involved with this. In addition, the City Council is well underway with a refreshed Employer Supported Volunteering policy, and this is covered below.

- 2.8 As stated above, without volunteers and the sharing of skills, the City would look different. As a Council, we are committed to continuously recognising / celebrating the energy & commitment of volunteers all year round, as this is Our Manchester approach in action. Since January, some examples relate to: a) Saying thank you as things happen, in the Manchester Evening News (every week), social media, face to face+; b) Commonwealth Summit (April) - as part of the global activities, Manchester celebrated 16 years on from 2002 Commonwealth Games, by bringing residents who volunteered at the games, together, to tell their stories of where they are now; c) National Volunteering Week (June) with events in Central Library and across the City; and d) relaunch of annual City Council award ceremonies e.g. Sports Awards (27/10), new Cultural Awards (14/11), and Be Proud (16/11), as well as those through partners e.g. Spirit of Manchester Awards (Macc- 4/10), and the Youth Buzz Awards (24/11);
- 2.9 In terms of the City Council award ceremonies, this year, a more co-ordinated approach has been progressed from a sponsorship perspective (public/private sectors- links to the corporate social responsibility agenda). However, for 2019, an overarching strategic approach will be progressed for these ceremonies (sponsors (social value links), categories, & maximising media impact), which will fully complement a refreshed “all year round” approach to recognising / celebrating the commitment of volunteers.

### **Employer Supported Volunteering Policy- Manchester City Council**

- 2.10 From a City Council perspective of playing a more direct role in the volunteering agenda, back in October 2017 through the “Our People” Strategy, the City relaunched its “Employer Supported Volunteering Policy”. This was to fully support the Our Manchester approach and social value agenda, and was focused on facilitating the Council’s diverse workforce to volunteer in Manchester’s diverse neighbourhoods (gain a greater understanding/exposure to them). The strong support for this came directly from Officers, BHeard Survey and Listening In Action sessions;
- 2.11 Officers can now take 3 days volunteering leave per year (an increase from 1), and the offer is very much part of About You discussions, as the opportunity must a) Contribute to personal development; b) Contribute to the Our Manchester approach / social value priorities; and c) Benefit the City (either directly or by building the knowledge and experience of the workforce);

- 2.12 The Council has many skills / specialisms / assets it can share (which normally communities need to find money for). For example: communications, ICT, finance, legal, project management, health & wellbeing, working with young people, HR, managing green spaces, holding events, business planning, fund raising, getting involved in clean-ups plus much more. However, this is also about Officers learning / developing new skills by working with others. To match Officers with opportunities, there is a portal on the Council Intranet (with Macc who host it), and key progress is outlined below;
- 2.13 Since October 2017, over 220 Officers have volunteered over 1,500 hours (and increasing all the time). Examples link to what is outlined in the rest of Section 2 and priority groups for the Council, and the organisations involved relate to: Manchester Mind, Factory Youth Zone, Homelessness Charities, The Booth Centre, Friends of Broadhurst Park, Back on Track, WeloveMCR Charity, Festival of Ageing, The Longford Centre, Aspirational Mentoring of 16 year olds, plus much more. Officers also engage in broader (public sector) volunteering such as School Governors, Fire/Police reservists+, and are supported in this;
- 2.14 A recent survey of Officers taking volunteering leave highlights how greatly they have valued the opportunity, with over 99% saying they would recommend volunteering to others, and 80% confirming they intend to volunteer again in the future. The survey also shows providing volunteering leave often creates longer-term volunteering relationships with 52% of people saying they will continue to volunteer for the same organisation in their own time. In October, the progress and this feedback is being used to promote volunteering to Officers to coincide with the first anniversary of the refreshed policy and encourage more to get involved. In November (2nd), the annual Awards for Excellence ceremony is held, where this year, there have been many nominations linked to Officers giving something back to the community.

### **3.0 Timebanking:**

- 3.1 Like volunteering, people engaged in Timebanking activity, is not new, and there is a difference between the two. With volunteering, in general, the person does not expect anything in return. For Timebanking, they do. As a recap, Manchester's neighbourhoods are full of individuals and groups with an amazing range of skills, gifts, hobbies and talents. Sometimes, these can often go undiscovered and undervalued, but play a huge part in helping those communities function- Our Manchester in action. Timebanking is about harnessing these and increasing "mutual support" and "reciprocity" in the heart of neighbourhoods by using the person's skills & interests, without having to find or fit in to a volunteering role, and is flexible without having to make any regular commitment;
- 3.2 It links local people, from all walks of life or circumstances, to share their time & skills by "depositing" their time to give practical help and support to others, and then "withdrawing" their banked time when they need help or support themselves from someone else. Everyone's time and skills are valued equally- 1 hour in for 1 hour back. Examples relate to gardening for a spanish lesson,

delivering leaflets in exchange for using meeting rooms, cutting hair for cake baking, painting for a drafting a legal letter, plus much more;

3.3 The benefits of Timebanking continue to be immense, as evidenced from those already operating in the City, particularly Real Neighbours- Wythenshawe and Community Timebank- South Manchester. A further two in North Manchester are now reviewing the way forward (resourcing) - Harpurhey Timetraders / Manchester Communication Academy- Harpurhey/Collyhurst. They build community cohesion, social networks of people, members gain equal access to resources that might be typically beyond their means, and people are able to solve their own challenges at particular points in their life;

3.4 To work towards our ambition of Manchester becoming the first Timebanking City in the UK, progress has focused on liaising with Timebanking UK (national charity supporting Timebanks), the Deputy Leader (Cllr Sue Murphy who will chair the Working Group), Macc and other bodies linked to funding streams:

- Developed a funding application to the Our Manchester Investment fund. Subject to approval, the focus to March 2020, is to 1) create a Timebanking Network for the City; 2) support the growth of existing and help develop new Timebanks where there is community interest (sustainability / resources); and 3) test whether the Timebanks could be underpinned by a digital currency / social coin for a secondary, non-money economy that will create inclusive, community led opportunities for self-help, mutual support and community building, as well as maximising spend in the City's economy;
- There are examples of social coins across the country- Hull Coin/ Lewisham Local, and the City will be liaising / learning from both. The Hull Coin is the world's first Loyalty Point, and coins are earned by getting involved in great things in the community (volunteering / Timebanking+), and then getting discounts with local businesses / other assets in the City;

3.5 At the previous meeting, there was a discussion on whether the Timebank for Carers in London (Westminster), could be an approach considered for Manchester. This is designed to give carers the chance to share skills, knowledge and experience, make friends and build communities. The skills offered include visiting/appointment escorts, gardening, language lessons, form filling and social/recreational events. Since the meeting, there has been significant changes in Manchester in terms of the Local Care Organisation (LCO), Manchester Health & Care Commissioning and the single Hospital Trust, as well as the OM VCS Fund going live, which has provided funding to many organisations linked to helping other people (Burnage Real Neighbours, North Manchester Black Health Forum, Age Concern, Wai Yin+). The Manchester Carers Network was also successful with this funding, and as an organisation, helps to improve carers' health & wellbeing and reduce breakdown, peer mentoring, respite/carer's breaks, plus much more. Now these changes are in place and considering the Timebanking City ambition, Officers will take stock, work with partners such as GPs, Manchester Medical

School and other public services, to determine the options (prevent any duplication).

#### **4.0 Community Asset Mapping:**

- 4.1 Across the City and in the heart of every neighbourhood, there are many community assets, and this whole report is predicated on them. This section, in a way, integrates / summarises what this paper / overall approach is about. Assets can be anything- from People- who help their neighbours / neighbourhood; Buildings- community centres, health centre, libraries, leisure centres, schools; Spaces- public squares, parks; Groups- residents associations / neighbourhood watch; Networks- neighbourhood forums / business networks; and Businesses- as employers. Officers at a neighbourhood or Citywide level (frontline/behind the scenes) and partner agencies, have an awareness of who they are, but are all different based on their particular work area;
- 4.2 The City Council engages with community assets in many different ways e.g. from conversations about what is working well, could be improved and their role in making things better; providing funding to kickstart ideas (Neighbourhood Investment Fund-NIF / Our Manchester VCS Fund+); providing capacity building support through Macc to set up new groups / sustain existing ones; and providing facilities for things to happen. From a buildings/spaces perspective, there is a separate agenda item on the "Community Asset Transfer" process the City has in place for when there are opportunities for the community to take on responsibility for them (& a number of successes here);
- 4.3 In addition to what has already been mentioned in the paper, key progress / ongoing work to understand who / work with community assets, relates to:
- *Bringing Services Together:* With all the changes, an approach is being progressed to have a stronger strategic / operational focus on place based working (& with community assets). It involves the City Council, Manchester Local Care Organisation (LCO), Manchester Health & Care Commissioning, Greater Manchester Police, Registered Providers+. Key elements relate to: a shared narrative for the neighbourhood (place / people); a more joined up approach to resident / business engagement (stronger relationships); strengthening the role of the community / Voluntary & Community Sector; and greater opportunities for the workforce to come together at a neighbourhood level;
  - *Public Information Group:* As there has been significant amounts of (separate) mapping on community assets across the City, this new group has now been established between the City / LCO (initially). Its focus is to "enable everybody to find out what's important to them about our city by improving the quality, quantity and reliability of community information in a way that works for all". This approach is at an early stage, and the Help & Support Manchester website (Children's & Adults), has provided a good starting point for the approach.

## **5.0 Next Steps:**

5.1 Overall, the significant contribution of people to make Manchester and its neighbourhoods, even stronger, is Our Manchester in action. The City will continue to fully support this and there is a clear work programme over the next 6 months:

- Keep facilitating more and more people to get involved / volunteer;
- Continue to encourage more City Council Officers to volunteer;
- Progress our ambition of becoming the first Timebanking City in the UK, and the Social Coin opportunity (sustainability focus);
- Build on the Bringing Services Together approach to strengthen place based working and links with community assets; and
- Continue to engage in the work of the Public Information Group on community assets at a neighbourhood level.