

## Manchester City Council Report for Resolution

**Report to:** Executive - Friday 14 March 2025

**Subject:** Our Manchester Strategy 2035

**Report of:** The Chief Executive

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### Summary

This report presents the final draft of the new Our Manchester Strategy 2035, a summary of activity undertaken to develop the strategy, and information regarding next steps for the strategy's launch and implementation.

### Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to endorse the draft Our Manchester Strategy 2035 and recommend it to Council for adoption as part of the Council's formal policy framework.

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### Wards Affected: (All Wards);

<b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b> -the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city	None directly – however the new strategy will include themes and priorities relating to the city's zero carbon target.
<b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments	An equality impact assessment (EqIA) has been completed for the development and engagement process as part of the Phase 1 engagement with supportive feedback from the Equalities Team. A second EqIA has been developed which assesses the finished Our Manchester Strategy 2035. The EqIAs are discussed in the report.

<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the Our Manchester Strategy/Contribution to the Strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	This report outlines the work completed to date for the new Our Manchester Strategy 2025 to 2035 and therefore covers all five themes.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	This report outlines the work completed to date for the new Our Manchester Strategy 2025 to 2035 and therefore covers all five themes.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	This report outlines the work completed to date for the new Our Manchester Strategy 2025 to 2035 and therefore covers all five themes.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	This report outlines the work completed to date for the new Our Manchester Strategy 2025 to 2035 and therefore covers all five themes.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	This report outlines the work completed to date for the new Our Manchester Strategy 2025 to 2035 and therefore covers all five themes.

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):**

- *Progress update on the development of the Our Manchester Strategy 2025-2035* report to all 6 Scrutiny (CESC, CYPSC, ENCC, ERSC, HSC, RGSC) Committees (December 2024)
- *Progress update on the development of the Our Manchester Strategy 2025-2035* - report to CESC, CYPSC, ENCC, ERSC, HSC, RGSC Committees (July 2024)
- *A new Our Manchester Strategy 2025-2035* – report to Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee (February 2024)
- *Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025*, Full Council (March 2021)
- *Manchester Strategy 2016 – 2025*, Full Council (January 2016)

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This report is an update to the reports presented to all six Scrutiny Committees in July and December 2024 and includes an overview of the draft strategy. A copy of the draft full strategy document is included as Appendix 1.
- 1.2. The Our Manchester Strategy 2016-2025 was a ten-year strategy for the whole city. It showed where we want to get to and how we will get there. The next Our Manchester Strategy has been developed through comprehensive engagement with residents, businesses, partners and staff and will look ahead for the next ten years to 2035. This report provides an overview of the strategy, how it has been developed, and how it will be taken forward to implementation.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1. The Our Manchester Strategy (OMS) was originally developed in 2015 and launched in 2016. It sets out the city's overarching 10-year vision and strategic priorities. The development of the OMS was overseen by the Manchester Leaders' Forum, now the Our Manchester Forum (OMF), a partnership board of 40 leaders from Manchester's public, private and voluntary sector. The Our Manchester Forum remains in place today to provide governance around the implementation and progress of the strategy.
- 2.2. In May 2020, the Executive agreed to undertake a reset of the Our Manchester Strategy 2016 – 2025. This was to reflect upon progress made in the first half of the Strategy's implementation, and to assess new and existing challenges. This work was also undertaken as part of COVID-19 recovery planning. The reset strategy, known as Our Manchester: Forward to 2025, was adopted by Full Council in March 2021. The main changes were a renewed focus on inclusion, diversity and sustainability, and clear priorities relating to the existing five themes.
- 2.3. Since its adoption, Our Manchester: Forward to 2025 has guided the city's overall direction including the development of new strategies and action plans, and delivery of all the Council's work. As the strategy is now approaching the end of its life, work has begun on the next Our Manchester Strategy with our partners, stakeholders, residents, and communities to create a new vision for the city for the next ten years to 2035.

## **3. Approach to developing a new Our Manchester Strategy**

- 3.1. Development of the new Our Manchester Strategy began in January 2024 and involved working closely with a range of internal and external partners. The timeline of development was:
  - **February to May 2024** - large-scale and open-ended engagement activity across Manchester, consistent of both universal and targeted approaches (engagement phase 1).
  - **June to August 2024** - Processing and analysis of engagement data, testing results with stakeholders and development of an initial set of draft

priorities for the new OMS.

- **September to October 2024** – A second, smaller scale round of engagement to gain feedback on the draft priorities (engagement phase 2).
- **November to December 2024** – Drafting of the final strategy wording and testing it with key partners and stakeholders.

3.2. An important part of the process was our engagement with people and organisations in Manchester. Our approach to doing this was to:

- Draw on the resources that were already available to us and our partners, including reviewing recent consultation and engagement work
- Have conversations directly with residents, partners and stakeholders in different settings and locations around the city. This included sessions that were offered to Councillors in all 32 wards, as well as a conversation at each of the Team Around the Neighbourhood (TANs) multi-agency meetings with partners to support engagement in those areas
- Make use of activities that were already planned, including those of our partners, to help us speak to more residents
- Equip our partners and stakeholders with the tools to have conversations on our behalf
- Make use of a universal online survey so that anyone could respond to at any time, alongside paper copies and translated versions.
- Commission Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations with trusted relationships within communities to have Our Manchester conversations with residents
- Recruit volunteer Our Manchester Ambassadors
- Develop a range of a range of branded merchandise to support engagement activity, including water bottles, tote bags, pin badges, cups, and selfie frames and props.

#### 4. Phase 1 engagement

4.1. Between February and May 2024, officers undertook a mixed methods approach to engage people who live, work in and visit Manchester, supported by other research including analysis of responses to other recent strategies and consultations.

4.2. All engagement activity was supported by a multi-channel communications campaign. Officers undertook universal and targeted engagement with people who live, work in and visit the city to making it as easy as possible for people to respond, whilst acknowledging that we need to work harder to engage with those communities who would otherwise be under-represented. This included attending 157 face to face engagements and hearing from more than 10,000 respondents.

4.3. The universal engagement campaign consisted of:

- A universal survey made available online, with additional paper copies and translations in Manchester's top five spoken languages other than English (Arabic, Urdu, Polish, Farsi, and Kurdish).
- An extensive social media campaign was conducted across platforms such as Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), Nextdoor, Instagram, TikTok, and LinkedIn, utilizing both organic content and paid advertisements.
- Advertising boards were placed in high footfall areas, including the city centre, shopping centres, supermarkets, and universities.
- The survey was promoted through Business Rates mailouts to 6,200 businesses and Council Tax billing letters to 205,000 households.
- An internal communications campaign encouraged Manchester City Council staff to participate in the survey and share it within their networks.

4.4. The targeted engagement campaign consisted of:

- Officers attended over 150 locations and events across Manchester, engaging directly with 1,091 people.
- Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations were commissioned to engage with underrepresented communities.
- Volunteers were recruited to advocate for the engagement process within their communities.
- Collaboration with faith-based organisations ensured that diverse religious communities were reached.

4.5. Additional Methods:

- Post boxes and postcards were placed at key community locations to facilitate easy participation.
- Officers engaged with partnership boards and networks to gather views from a wide range of stakeholders.

4.6. The phase one engagement campaign was one of the most effective ever in terms of the reach and quality of responses. The breakdown of responses is as follows:

Engagement activity	Total number of responses
Universal survey (including paper and online responses)	7,625
In-person engagement with residents and communities	1,091
Responses received through the VCFSE commission	365
Networks	285
Internal events	164
Social media comments	594
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,124</b>

#### 4.7. In terms of demographics:

- 59.2% of respondents provided Manchester postcodes, and 84% identified as Manchester residents.
- Sex – 43% Male, 52% Female, 2% Non-binary, 2% other
- Disability – 21% identified as having a disability or long-term health condition
- Age – 21% under 35, 37% aged 35-54, 43% aged 55+
- Sexual orientation – 80% heterosexual, 16% LGBTQIA+, 4% other
- Religion – Respondents identified as Christian (36%), Muslim (7%) Jewish (1%), Sikh (1%), Buddhist (1%) and Hindu (1%) and No Religion (42%).
- Ethnicity – Respondents identified as White (79%), Asian (8%), Black (4%), and Mixed (4%).
- Similar numbers of responses from North, Central and South Manchester

4.8. While there was under-representation of some groups, the high total volume of responses means that we were able to weight the responses accordingly and identify the priorities for particular groups and communities.

#### 4.9. Some of the main themes identified in phase one responses included:

- Pride in Manchester's people, diversity, and community spirit.
- A strong desire for improved public transport, including expanded routes, better safety, and more affordable fares.
- The need for more green spaces and better maintenance of existing ones.
- A cleaner city, with suggestions for increased street cleaning and stricter enforcement against littering.
- Improving safety was a key concern, with calls for more visible policing and better crime prevention measures.

4.10. The engagement activity successfully captured a wide range of views and insights from Manchester's residents and stakeholders. It identified common themes and the insights gathered from the engagement activity were used to build an initial draft of priorities.

4.11. Full details of the first phase engagement were reported to Scrutiny Committees in June 2024 and informed the design of the second phase engagement, detailed below.

### 5. Phase 2 engagement activity

5.1. Following the completion of phase 1, analysis of all the feedback informed the development of 12 draft priorities for the new strategy. The phase 2 engagement campaign then took place in September and October 2024. Phase 2 involved further testing the 12 draft priorities to ensure they reflect people's priorities and check if any key issues have been missed.

- 5.2. The 12 draft priorities consulted on were structured under the themes People, Neighbourhoods and City and were:

**Our people will:**

- Be as healthy and happy as they can be.
- Be free to be who they are, feel valued, included and respected.
- Be supported to participate, engage and influence decisions about their communities and neighbourhoods.
- Have the best start in life and the chance to learn new things.
- Be able to get a good job and earn more money.
- Be safe in person and online.

**Our neighbourhoods will:**

- Be attractive places with good homes, facilities and green spaces.

**Our city will:**

- Become zero-carbon and protected from the harmful effects of climate change.
- Have brilliant things to do, showing our talent for sport and culture, both here and on the global stage.
- Have transport that gets you where you want to go quickly, cheaply and cleanly.
- Have a growing economy that provides opportunities for everyone.
- Use technology effectively to improve services and make life better

- 5.3. The survey asked people whether they agreed or disagreed with the twelve proposed priorities. If they disagreed, they were invited to provide a free text comment to explain why this was the case. An additional free text question asked if anything important had been missed and this has been coded into themes. Respondents were also invited to complete several optional questions about themselves.
- 5.4. As well as the online survey, four in person engagements events took place in Gorton, Crumpsall, Wythenshawe and the City Centre. These events were attended by officers from the Council who spoke to a large number of residents.
- 5.5. In addition, a series of 'pop up' information stalls were available in community venues and libraries as set out below. The details of the in-person events and 'pop ups' were shared on the online survey page and via email with stakeholders. These stalls included printed surveys, leaflets, posters, QR codes to the online survey, summary leaflets, and easy-read documents. Nine pop ups were located in North Manchester, 7 in Central Manchester and 12 in South Manchester. Translated leaflets were provided in a number of commonly spoken languages (Cantonese, Polish, Punjabi, Spanish, Arabic, Bengali and Urdu) as well as a British Sign Language video and easy-read version.

- 5.6. Officers also carried out engagement with various partnership boards and stakeholder groups in Manchester.
- 5.7. Phase 2 received a good number of responses given it was intended to be smaller scale than phase 1 and test the priorities that were developed following phase 1.

Engagement activity	Total number of responses
Online Survey	2,309
In person events and pop ups	382
Social media survey feedback in comments	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,706</b>

- 5.8. In terms of demographics:

- 75% of respondents provided Manchester postcodes
- Sex – 42% Male, 52% Female
- Gender same as at birth – 94% yes, 1.5% no
- Disability – 9% identified as having a disability or long-term health condition
- Age – 19% under 35, 33% aged 35-54, 48% aged 55+
- Sexual orientation – 72% heterosexual, 14% LGBTQIA+, 2% other
- Religion – Respondents identified as Christian (39%), Muslim (7%) Jewish (1%), Sikh (1%), Buddhist (1%) and Hindu (1%) and No Religion (40%).
- Ethnicity – Respondents identified as White (77%), Asian (9%), Black (5%), and Mixed (3%).

- 5.9. Between 75% and 85% of respondents agreed with 11 of the 12 priority statements and the percentage of respondents disagreeing with these were very low. The most popular were the priority statements on transport, neighbourhoods and best start in life. The only statement with less than 75% was the one on climate change, which has subsequently been redrafted based on the feedback received, to be more specific about reducing carbon emissions in Manchester and the steps that can be taken to adapt to a changing climate, rather than global climate change..
- 5.10. Respondents had the opportunity to say what they felt had been missed. The top five themes of these free text responses were as follows, but there were fewer than 100 responses for each:

- Comments about the survey and the drafting of the priorities
- More and higher quality green spaces
- Cleanliness, litter, graffiti and similar issues
- Comments about the Council and delivery of the previous strategy
- Affordable housing

- 5.11. Mitigating actions were undertaken in phase 2 to address the demographics of respondents, with under-representation of young people, those from African and Pakistani backgrounds, and those of Muslim faith. This included targeting locations for pop-up activity, identifying areas of interest for these groups, and analysing the differences in results for these groups to make sure their voices were heard.
- 5.12. Key considerations from the phase 2 consultation together with testing of the priorities with partners and stakeholders resulted in some changes to the wording, order and structure of the new priorities. Changes made were usually to ensure that priorities more clearly articulate their purpose using language that makes sense to most people. In particular, the housing priority has been rewritten to give housing more focus and prominence, and the zero-carbon priority has been re-written as described in paragraph 5.9.

## **6. The new strategy**

- 6.1. The proposed new strategy is available at Appendix 1. It has been drafted based on all the feedback from phase 1 and phase 2. The language is intended to be meaningful, accessible, concise and Manchester specific, avoiding technical and policy language. The structure is based on the three themes of the city, neighbourhoods, and people. This thematic structure is intended to make clear the primary focus of each group of priorities.
- 6.2. The new strategy reflects on progress made over the last ten years, noting the large number of responses where people were proud of Manchester, but is also clear about our challenges. It considers some of the major challenges that the city faces, as well as the strength of that partnerships that we enjoy in Manchester that will be the foundation of meeting these challenges.
- 6.3. The twelve priorities for the next ten years are:

### **Our people will:**

1. Be happy, healthy and active from childhood to adulthood.
2. Have a great education and be able to learn new skills as they grow older, so they can get the best jobs.
3. Be proud of our diversity, feel valued and included, knowing they belong.
4. Participate, engage and influence decisions about their communities and neighbourhoods.
5. Be safe in person and online.

### **Our neighbourhoods will:**

6. Have enough good quality, genuinely affordable homes.
7. Be attractive and well-kept with good facilities, services and green spaces.

## **Our city will:**

8. Have a growing economy that provides jobs and equal opportunities for everyone.
  9. Adapt to a changing climate and rapidly reduce its carbon emissions.
  10. Enjoy world-renowned things for everyone to see and do, showcasing our talent for sport and culture.
  11. Have reliable transport that gets you where you want to go, quickly, cheaply, safely and cleanly.
  12. Embrace technology to achieve our aims, safely and ethically.
- 6.4. After introducing the twelve priorities, the Our Manchester Strategy explains each in more detail in the section “What our priorities mean in practice”. This section expands on each priority and presents some examples of activity that will be taking place to support their delivery. It is not intended to form a delivery or implementation plan, but to help make it clearer to the reader the type of intervention that they can expect to see taking place over the next decade.
- 6.5. The strategy closes with a short section regarding tracking progress. The main public facing document that fulfils this requirement is the annual State of the City report which will be refreshed to align to the new OMS. Other products will be developed internally within MCC to support this.
- 6.6. The overall look and feel retains many of branding features of the current strategy, which are widely recognised, and have been updated with a new set of characters.

## **7. Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)**

- 7.1. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed for the development of the strategy. This resulted in officers making changes to the phase 1 engagement process in order to listen to people who would be underrepresented. This resulted in some of the highest numbers of responses ever recorded for these groups. We also made changes to the wording of the sex/gender reassignment question for phase 2 to better reflect how this question should be phrased.
- 7.2. As well as the EqIA completed to assess the engagement and development of the new strategy, a separate EqIA has been completed to assess the impact of the new strategy itself.
- 7.3. The EqIA shows that the Our Manchester Strategy is a high level and universal strategy for the city. It sets the overall direction of travel rather than setting the specific details of service delivery. Its specific focus on community engagement and equalities should feed through into all areas of the Council’s work over time. Further, the Our Manchester Behaviours will remain through implementation, including the behaviour ‘we show that we value our differences and treat people fairly’.

- 7.4. Following consultation and completion of the EqIA, the wording around equalities and inclusion has been strengthened and given prominence as one of the 12 priorities, as well as being cross-cutting.
- 7.5. One of the priorities in the new strategy will be to support people to participate, engage and influence decisions about their communities and neighbourhoods. There will be a separate piece of work on this across MCC and with partners. The engagement principles outlined above will be followed for the launch event in April with a focus on communities, partners and our staff. On the implementation plan, boards responsible for each priority will need to consider the EqIA for the duration of the strategy.

## **8. Child Rights Impact Assessment**

- 8.1. A Child Rights Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of Manchester's UNICEF Child Friendly City commitments. The process of how to complete this assessment is still in development between colleagues at MCC and UNICEF, as it has not been done before in Manchester.
- 8.2. Officers are working to collect the necessary data so that child rights issues can be examined as part of the implementation process as soon as possible. Learning from this work will inform how MCC carries out Child Rights Impact Assessments in the future.

## **9. Next steps**

- 9.1. Subject to any comments received from the Executive, the strategy will proceed to Council on 19 March 2025, where the Council will consider it for adoption as part of the policy framework.
- 9.2. An implementation plan is being developed to sit alongside the strategy and which will identify actions, milestones, measures and stakeholders for each of the twelve priorities. This implantation plan is intended as a product which will be used by MCC and our partners and stakeholders rather than being a public facing document.
- 9.3. The strategy will be formally launched on 30 April 2025 (subject to change at the time of writing). The launch event is intended to begin a series of activity around the city that raises awareness of the new strategy. It will be both collaborative and celebratory in nature and will bring together many of the people who contributed to the strategy's development.
- 9.4. There will also be extensive engagement internally within MCC. Officers are working to identify and update the many existing products and documents, which includes everything from staff induction and training materials to committee paper templates, to draw on the new strategy. Staff will have the opportunity to attend events and other activities to build their awareness and understanding of Our Manchester 2035. The Our Manchester behaviours will not change, but the launch of the strategy will provide an opportunity to remind staff about them and raise their profile.

## **10. Recommendation**

10.1. The recommendation is set out at the beginning of the report.

## **11. Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Draft Our Manchester Strategy 2025 - 2035