

Manchester

Area Assessment

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oneplace

for an independent overview
of local public services

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Manchester at a glance

This independent assessment by six inspectorates sets out how well local public services are tackling the major issues in Manchester. It says how well they are delivering better results for local people and how likely these are to improve in future. If, and only if, our assessment shows that the following special circumstances are met in relation to a major issue, we use flags to highlight our judgements. We use a green flag to highlight where others can learn from outstanding achievements or improvements or an innovation that has very promising prospects of success. We use a red flag to highlight where we have significant concerns about results and future prospects that are not being tackled adequately. This means that local partners need to do something more or different to improve these prospects.

Green flags - exceptional performance or innovation that others can learn from

 Green flag: Tackling gun crime and gang violence

Red flags - significant concerns, action needed

 Red flag: School absence

The local area

Manchester is the UK's fastest growing City economically, and is the regional powerhouse of economic growth. New highly skilled jobs are being created in sectors such as creative, media and financial services. Manchester is part of Greater Manchester, and has a total population of 464,000 people, which after decline is now growing and changing.

Manchester primarily has more people of working age, and fewer younger and older people. It is becoming increasingly diverse, with nearly a third of the population belonging to an ethnic group other than white British.

The City has experienced extensive regeneration to the centre and residential areas, however many residents still suffer from significant levels of poverty, which is widespread across the City.

In the poorer neighbourhoods, the quality of life for local people is much worse than in other parts of the City. Manchester's public services have agreed an ambitious set of priorities that they are concentrating on to reduce these inequalities.

The next section tells you how Manchester's public services are doing in each

of their local priority areas.

How is Manchester doing?

Sustainable Economic Growth

Manchester is a thriving City and a crucial location for jobs and prosperity. Over the last decade, the number of people employed in the City, and the number of businesses, have both risen. But not all Mancunians have benefited from this increasing prosperity - in some parts of the city, too many people remain out of work.

Local partners are responding strongly to the recession, and remain focused on their ambitions for the City. The Council is leading the work to help residents and businesses cope during these difficult times.

Public transport is improving. This is needed as people make too many journeys by car, congestion is high and air quality has suffered. The Council has played an important role in helping to agree a further £1.5bn to be invested in improving transport across Greater Manchester. This will include an expanded Metrolink tram network and better bus services.

The naming of Greater Manchester as a city-region pilot has strengthened transport and other ambitions. Manchester played a key role in setting up the Manchester Independent Economic Review, and developing the impressive Greater Manchester strategy. This outlines ambitious plans up to 2020 - including improving transport connectivity into and within the City Region.

Carbon dioxide emissions are falling, and local partners are committed to reducing them further. The Council's 'Climate Change: Call to Action' is the latest step in reducing Manchester's annual carbon dioxide emissions by one-third by 2020.

Reaching full potential in education, skills and employment

Resident's wages are too low and raising them remains an important issue for the Manchester partnership.

The quality of Manchester's schools is mixed. Not enough of the provision is good. It is much better in nursery schools and primary schools are satisfactory. However, the quality of secondary schools is inconsistent - despite some exceptions, too many schools are just satisfactory. This restricts parents' choices when seeking to choose good schools for their children.

Most children and young people achieve as well as those living in similar areas, but not as well as national averages. School results have shown recent improvements. Over the last few years, GCSE results have improved faster than nationally.

Across the city, school standards are inconsistent. There is still a big gap between the areas of the city where results are poorest and the best performing areas. Some groups of pupils do not achieve what they should. Behaviour in secondary schools and levels of persistent absence remain key weaknesses. Action to improve absence from secondary schools has been ineffective. We shall look next year to see whether there is any improvement here.

Too many young people are leaving school without any qualifications at all - in some parts of the city, more than 1 in 7 and this is rising. The issue remains a concern for the Council, and hampers young people's ability to get on in life.

Residents' health is improving from a low base. Deaths from cancers and heart disease are falling. Although the number of smoking-related deaths is high, more people are quitting smoking than in most other places. The gap in life expectancy is slowly getting closer to the national average but big differences still exist across the city. The Council and Health services know they've got a lot to do and they must continue to work closely together. Particular issues include reducing the number of teenage girls who become pregnant, tackling obesity and dealing with the causes and effects of excessive drinking.

A significant number of people in Manchester have mental health problems and services have not been good enough to help them. The quality and availability of Manchester's mental health services has not been good enough for some time. The, Primary Care Trust, the Council and others are now strengthening these services. We shall check next year whether the improvements that have been put in place are beginning to have an impact.

Individual and Collective Self Esteem / Mutual Respect

An increasing number of residents are happy with their lives, but fewer think they belong to their local neighbourhood.

Developing a good community spirit among residents is a priority for partners. This is important given how much Manchester's population is changing. The Council has a good awareness of the needs of different communities. More residents feel they get on well with one another than is the case in other big cities - partners are working to further improve this.

Older peoples' contribution to society is well recognised in Manchester. Partners have concentrated on improving aspects of life that older people say are important to them. They have ambitious plans for making further improvements to older people's quality of life.

People are getting better support from NHS and Council services. This is helping them to live independently and stop them going permanently into care.

Neighbourhoods of Choice

Previously run-down areas are being transformed. Extensive public money and joint working is helping to revitalise areas like Beswick in East Manchester. Much remains to be done although there are signs of success, including greater resident satisfaction and better housing. Much of the success is down to strong civic leadership. The recession is slowing ambitious plans, but partners are responding well to this and rethinking their approach. We shall look next year at progress to improve the quality of Manchester's housing.

Partners are working well together to provide good quality schools, health services, access to jobs and more attractive neighbourhoods. Manchester's civic leaders are ambitious for the city, aspiring for it to become world-class.

People are more likely to be the victim of crime in Manchester than in many other places. Overall crime levels are down from last year, but the number of burglaries and violent crimes has increased. Those living in the North of the City are more likely to suffer. Anti-social behaviour, drink and drugs are still seen to be big problems by residents. We shall look next year at whether crime levels are improving in North Manchester and for specific community groups like students.

Working with organisations, the Council and Police have carried out excellent work to tackle gun crime and gang violence. During the last year, the City has seen a reduction of more than 90 per cent in gang-related firearms used, and only one fatality. They have kept safe those most at risk from gang activity, and persuaded local communities to work with the authorities against gangs. Although gun crime has fallen dramatically, it has not stopped completely and further use of guns is set to continue.

Recycling levels fell last year. This was a surprise as rates have been rising in recent years. This is disappointing as Manchester's rate was already significantly less than in similar places. The Council knows that it must improve this and is introducing new waste and recycling facilities.

More remains to be done to improve cleanliness of streets and open spaces. Graffiti and litter have been increasing in some parts of the City. And although the amount of fly-tipping is down, it remains a problem. Partners remain committed to improving Manchester's appearance. Thirty of Manchester's parks and green spaces have been named among the best in the country - but not all residents share this view.

About Manchester

A recent survey shows that in Manchester 70 per cent of people are satisfied with their immediate local area as a place to live. This is lower than the average for similar areas and lower than the national average of 81 per cent.

Manchester is the UK's fastest growing City economically, with levels of investment second only to London, transforming it into the regional powerhouse of economic growth.

The City covers 117sq. km, with a population density that is seven times the average for the region. Manchester's population is rising faster than the national average. After falling through the 1980s and 1990s, the City has

been growing by 1 per cent a year between 2001 and 2008. In 2008 the population reached 464,000 and is set to reach around 501,000 by 2015.

As the City's population is increasing, its profile is changing. Between 2001 and 2008, the working age population increased while the proportion of children aged under 15 and adults aged over 65 has decreased. Over recent years the population has become increasingly diverse, with nearly 30 per cent of the population belonging to an ethnic group other than white British.

Manchester suffers from significant levels of poverty and although it is improving, the area is now ranked as the 4th most deprived area of England. Poverty is widespread across the City, with more than half the City's areas in the most deprived 10 per cent in the country. The poorest areas are in North and East Manchester and in parts of Wythenshawe.

The City faces some big challenges. There are too many people not working. Schools' results are improving but lag being the national average, making it less likely that Manchester's young people will have the skills needed to support the future economic growth of the City. Too many residents still live in social poverty including low incomes, unsuitable housing and high crime. Many Mancunians suffer from ill health, with poor lifestyle choices a key reason for people dying too young.

There is still a significant gap between Manchester's life expectancy and the England average. People born in the poorest areas are likely to die 9 years earlier than those born in the wealthiest parts of the city. Regeneration is helping to improve the quality, location and choice of housing but it does not currently match the levels needed to attract and keep residents.

Manchester's public services have agreed and are tackling a comprehensive set of priorities to achieve better outcomes for residents. They recognise that, to deliver these improvements, sustaining the success of the City's economy is vital. Through focusing on three major areas, local partners aim to turn the wealth generated from economic growth into better outcomes for residents. These areas are:

Reaching full potential in education skills and employment

Individual and collective self-esteem/mutual respect

Neighbourhoods of choice

Partners have agreed priority targets for the City with central government within a Local Area Agreement (LAA). Manchester Partnership, the body that brings together public bodies and other organisations, has a vision that Manchester will become a world-class City by 2015. More information about the priorities for Manchester is available at www.manchesterpartnership.org.uk/.

How well do priorities for Manchester express community needs and aspirations?

Partnerships across Manchester work with local people to understand what they want and these opinions are embedded in the locally agreed plans such as the Community Strategy 2006 to 2015. While there are many opportunities for residents and community groups to have their say (under the umbrella of a Community Network for Manchester), there isn't an organisation which brings together all members of the Voluntary Sector in Manchester. This restricts the ability of partners to use the full potential of voluntary and community organisations.

The City's changing population highlights issues that partners must respond to. Manchester needs to develop neighbourhoods where people can get on well together. It must build long-lasting communities, which do not damage the environment. It must tackle areas where poverty is deep-rooted. It must strive to improve the health of everyone. Finally, it must provide better and more affordable housing that meets local need and improves the local economy.

Local partners understand that residents across the City want different things. There are different issues in the poorer neighbourhoods to the north and east of the City compared to some more affluent neighbourhoods in the south-east. The City's annual 'State of the Wards' report spotlights particular areas within the city and this helps to show poorer outcomes and things to improve. Partners are committed to getting better information on different communities within the City, and have produced their first 'Communities of Interest' report. More attention to poorer parts of the City, such as East Manchester, has led to some improvement such as reducing benefit claimants, but narrowing the gap in quality of life across the City remains a stern challenge for Manchester's public bodies.

Partners understand that it is important to involve local people in setting priorities and directing resources, but know that they need to do more to improve the views of local people about the services they receive. There are good examples of partners working with local people, such as quality of life surveys, young people's forums, working with community champions during the annual 100 days challenge events and taking forward the views of Black and Minority Ethnic groups' through the City's Agenda 2010 Partnership. But the Manchester Partnership is aware that an uncoordinated approach to working with local people across partners currently exists.

The views of children and young people have shaped plans for services across the City. The Council listens to the views of older people and carers, and in turn uses this to improve social care and other services. But partners are not consistently gathering the views of people with mental health needs, which means there is not enough information to help plan how to improve these services.

More people than the national average believe they can influence local decisions. There are opportunities to involve people in making decisions, but more Mancunians would like greater involvement. Also, comparably fewer residents are involved in volunteering.

Partners are ambitious for the City and its people. They have improved the way they work together, and are exploring ways to improve it further, such as making residents healthier. This is reflected in the aim that everyone should benefit from the City's economic success and addressing the causes and

effects of poverty is the way to achieve this.

Partners want to make Manchester a world-class city by 2015 - a place that meets the needs of all residents, and where neighbourhoods attract and keep successful people. Chances of success are good as leadership is strong, both within the partner organisations and across the partnership, with the City playing an important role regionally and nationally.

Sustainable Economic Growth

Manchester is a thriving City and a crucial location for jobs and prosperity. Over the years, the increase in the number of people working in the City reflects what a thriving place Manchester has become. In 2007, there were 309,000 people employed within the city, up 8 per cent on 2000. The City's business base is also thriving; in 2007 there were over 17,000 businesses located within the City, an increase of nearly 5 per cent in just under a decade. But not all Mancunians have gained from this increasing prosperity - in some parts of the City, too many people remain out of work.

The response of local partners to the recession is strong. The Council and other local public bodies are not losing sight of what they want to achieve for Manchester people. The Council is playing a leading role in helping these organisations work together to tackle the recession's impact on local residents and businesses. This is being achieved through putting in place services that will help people through these difficult times and also trying to keep momentum in the economic growth of Manchester City centre. This includes initiating schemes to encourage older people to take up benefits and access new services and others to attract businesses into the City centre.

The Council is leading the way through new initiatives such as the Helping Hands website. This focuses on five clear areas - jobs, money and debt, homes, business and 'free stuff'. Also created is Timebank, a scheme providing organisations with free business advice from professional consultancies and support agencies.

Much needed improvement to public transport is taking place. Local public bodies know that Manchester (and Greater Manchester) needs better public transport. People make too many journeys by car, congestion is high and air quality has suffered. Better public transport will improve access to jobs and services like hospitals and schools. It will reduce congestion and contribute to goals to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Partners use their influence well. The Council played an important role in helping to agree a further £1.5 billion to be invested in improving transport across Greater Manchester. This is a long-term project, but good progress is being made despite difficulties along the way. Manchester will benefit through an expanded Metrolink tram network, including lines to East Didsbury, Manchester Airport and better access to many poorer areas. Bus services will also be improved.

Future transport ambitions have been strengthened by Greater Manchester being named as a city-region pilot area. This could lead to greater devolution of powers and funding. With Manchester taking a leading role, Greater

Manchester bodies also took the bold step to undertake the Manchester Independent Economic Review and have followed this up with an impressive Greater Manchester strategy. Manchester Council played an important part in developing this strategy, which outlines ambitious plans up to 2020 - including highlighting the importance of improving transport connectivity into and within the City Region.

Manchester City Council is displaying local leadership through its role in the City Region Pilot. Manchester aims to deliver economic growth through public service reform. It is doing this by focusing on improving the city's productivity by working through difficult decisions to improve co-ordination at all levels of government. Key issues addressed through the pilots are long-term economic growth and improving citizens' life chances - including children's services, skills, young people, housing, science and research. We will watch this carefully to see the outcomes locally and its influence nationally. Of particular interest is whether it helps to create a more responsive and co-ordinated approach across all levels of government.

According to the most up to date figures, carbon dioxide emissions are falling. Local public bodies know they must continue to improve this to give business a competitive edge. The Council has launched a 'Climate Change: Call to Action'; this will involve local businesses and the public in tackling the issue. It is the latest step in reducing Manchester's annual carbon dioxide emissions by one-third by 2020.

Reaching full potential in education, skills and employment



Red flag: School absence

The numbers of young people absent from secondary schools remains too high, although there has been a steady reduction in absence and persistent absence over the last three years. This is despite attention from public bodies such as the Council and schools. Partners know that performance is not acceptable, but so far initiatives have not had the needed impact. Local targets to reduce absence are being missed - with absence higher in poorer areas - in the most affected areas, Ancoats and Clayton, secondary school absence amounts to nearly one in six sessions missed.

Partners have not made enough impact on reducing school absence, despite help from others. There has been some work in specific schools and this shows that vigorous approaches can make a difference. But, learning from this is not shared quickly enough and agreed processes need to be embedded more consistently across the City.

School absence affects so many other issues and it must receive more attention. Partners must work closer together to better understand and tackle the root causes of absences. Inspections by Ofsted confirm that Manchester's secondary schools could do more to help support children and young people in gaining the skills needed to benefit from Manchester's economy.

Why is this important? Poor attendance often means that children will get

poorer schools results. They are more likely to become involved in anti-social behaviour and crime, of which Manchester has some of the highest levels in the country. Children who are absent from school are also less likely to find employment and take part in further education and access suitable training.

What's being done in response?

Discussions are taking place about the improvements which are needed. This will include the Manchester Partnership talking to Government Office and Regional Improvement Organisations.

Reaching full potential in education, skills and employment

Local people earn less than those working in the City, despite the City's economic success over the years. Improving the prospects for residents to access higher paid jobs is an important issue for the Manchester Partnership and they know that innovative thinking is needed. A project is in place in three parts of the City - Collyhurst, Benchill and Ardwick - looking at how they can bridge this gap. The main focus is to increase participation in education, training and employment in areas with high levels of worklessness. Everyone knows this isn't going to be achieved overnight. Extra funding has been allocated to this initiative, but it is yet to have a noticeable effect.

According to external inspections, secondary schools are not doing enough to promote economic well-being. This is a key weakness and can affect the ability of young people to get employment, training or education. There are slightly more young people who do not secure this route compared to other areas and significantly more than nationally. Partners are taking action to improve this key aspect.

Many young people find it difficult to secure jobs or work based training. Vulnerable groups are most at risk - with those leaving Council care and young offenders finding it especially hard to find suitable opportunities. The Council, Job Centre Plus and other public bodies know that young people need to have the right skills so they can secure employment. This is even more important now, given the impact the recession is having on job opportunities for young people.

Also, child care services are mixed. Good levels of lower income families use formal childcare facilities - suggesting they have been able to secure employment - however, there are weaknesses in the quality of the services available.

The quality of Manchester's schools is mixed - meaning there are some weaknesses in the quality of services for children. Not enough of the provision is good. It is much better in nursery schools and primary schools are satisfactory. However, the quality of secondary schools is inconsistent - despite some exceptions, too many schools are just satisfactory. This restricts parents' choices when seeking to choose good schools for their children.

Very young children and those at Manchester's primary schools achieve as well as those who live in similar areas. But by the age of 16 standards fall below those across the country - but close to the standards achieved in similar

areas. This means that most young people achieve as well as those living in similar parts of the country, but not as well as national averages. School results have shown some recent improvements, including for those children and young people who are in the care of the Council, and for those from minority ethnic groups. Over the last few years, GCSE results have improved faster than nationally. The capacity to improve further is being strengthened by the opening of 4 new Academies, with 3 due in 2010.

Weaknesses remain in the standards of behaviour in secondary schools and levels of persistent absence. Absence from secondary schools has been too high for too long and action to improve this has been ineffective. This again affects parents' choice at secondary level and the absence rate has an obvious effect on attainment. In addition, schools take longer to come out of special measures than in similar areas or nationally. This indicates that some children are attending inadequate schools and they are not improving quickly enough. We shall look next year to see whether there is any improvement here.

There is too much inconsistency between schools in the standards achieved. For example, there is still a big gap between the areas of the city where results are poorest (such as Miles Platting and Newton Heath) and the best performing areas. There are some groups of children and young people who are not achieving what they should - Black Caribbean primary pupils are not doing well enough, and white working-class boys are achieving below the City average.

Too many young people are leaving school without any qualifications at all - in some parts of the City, more than 1 in 7 and this is rising. The issue remains a concern and hampers young people's ability to get on in life.

Residents' health is improving from a low base. Partners in Manchester are making some progress to improve the health of local people. Deaths from cancers and heart disease are falling. Although the number of smoking-related deaths is high, there are more people quitting smoking than in most other places. The gap in life expectancy is slowly getting closer to the national average. However, big differences still exist across the city and this remains a difficult issue to solve. The Council and Health services know this issue is important and are now working closer together to prevent ill-health rather than treating the effects of it.

Partners are placing more emphasis on working with local doctors and pharmacies to stop people becoming ill in the first place. For instance, by encouraging adults to have free health checks and this is helping to lessen heart disease. Partners are learning lessons but everyone agrees the scale of the challenge is huge. One problem is the fact that official data is published many months after initiatives have been put in place making it difficult to know if they are working.

Services have not been good enough to help people in Manchester with mental health problems. Manchester's population is changing and liable to place even more demand on these underperforming services. Particular groups likely to need extra support include rising numbers of older people suffering with dementia; more international migrants, refugees and asylum seekers; and people with a high-level of drug and alcohol dependency. The impact of the recession can also have a harmful effect on residents' mental

health, because of more people losing their jobs and, sometimes, their homes.

The quality and availability of Manchester's mental health services has not been good enough for some time. The Council, Primary Care Trust and others are now strengthening these services, which currently cost about £100 million a year. We shall look next year at whether the improvements that have been put in place are beginning to have an impact.

Reducing the number of people in Manchester with mental health problems is important as many of them are unable to work and are therefore not helping to improve the city's prosperity.

Healthy lifestyles are supported and promoted in most schools and settings. More young people have school lunches than in the country as a whole. There are some weaknesses. This includes in childcare where the provision for healthy lifestyles is only satisfactory and the private fostering service where it is inadequate. So, for some young people this is not good enough.

Too many young girls become pregnant in Manchester and partners are not making enough progress to reduce this. Pregnancy rates are higher now than 10 years ago. Despite much attention and an improved understanding of why the conception rate is still so high, this remains a complex issue to address successfully.

The Primary Care Trust and the Council are using extensive research to target those most likely to become pregnant - for example, 16 to 17-year old girls and areas with higher rates such as Harpurhey, Clayton and Beswick. They are also focusing more attention on working closer with schools and NHS colleagues to offer advice and contraception. New dedicated services and staff are in place such as contraception clinics and specialist nurses.

Partners agree that tackling teenage pregnancy is an important issue. But they acknowledge that many interventions they have put in place have yet to demonstrate real impact. They know that teenage mothers are less likely to finish their education, less likely to find a good job, and more likely to end up both as single parents and bringing up their children in poverty.

Nearly one in four children in Manchester are overweight. This is higher than other similar areas and plans to address this are not agreed. The weight of many children is rising and NHS, Council and partners now want to halt this rise. This is becoming a higher priority as previously other issues such as teenage pregnancy have taken precedence. Recent 2008/09 figures show some improvement, but reasons for this are unclear.

Partners are starting to look for best practice and spend more time understanding the causes and solutions to obesity. They are placing increasing attention on healthy eating and exercise, such as the Healthy Schools Programme and free swimming for children. Detailed partnership plans to help people keep a healthy weight won't be in place until 2010. This offers an opportunity to reassess funding and staffing levels.

Too many people in Manchester drink alcohol to excessive levels. Manchester has high levels of alcohol related hospital admissions and dependent drinkers compared with other areas. The Primary Care Trust, the Council, Police and

others are placing increasing emphasis on advice, treatment, prevention and enforcement. They are spending extra money and time on advising those most likely to drink excessively of the effects. This is having some impact - the rise in alcohol related admissions is slowing - however, the scale of the challenge remains large. Partners are continuing to increase the number of alcohol treatment services, but also encouraging residents to drink more sensibly. Excessive alcohol not only affects peoples' health, but also contributes to city centre violence and disorder.

Individual and Collective Self Esteem / Mutual Respect

More Manchester residents are happy with their lives than last year; and minority ethnic communities are on the whole as satisfied with their local area as others. More people feel they can influence decisions in their local area, than elsewhere in Greater Manchester. But fewer people feel they belong to their local neighbourhood. Local partners know the importance of local people being happy with their lives. Innovative work is going on exploring how to improve people's sense of well-being; results so far show a clear link between well-being and improved school results, skills and satisfaction with neighbourhoods.

Making sure residents develop a 'community spirit' and get on together is a constant challenge for the local partners. This is important as Manchester's population is changing more than most - it is growing fast, there are more people of working age, and it is also becoming more ethnically diverse. The Council works well with other public bodies to bring about a better community spirit. More residents feel they get on well with one another than is the case in other big cities - partners are working to further improve this.

The Council and its partners are leading the way in their approach to older people and ageing. Their Valuing Older People (VOP) strategy has proved effective over a number of years. It has focused on those improving aspects of life that older people say are important to them. This includes crime and safety, benefits, housing and neighbourhoods, sport, cultural activities and lifelong learning. Local partners have ambitious plans to further improve older people's quality of life. This is reflected in their strategy 'A Great Place to Grow Older'. Older people's representatives are increasingly participating in the design and evaluation of services.

People are getting better support from NHS and Council services. This is helping them to live independently and stop them going permanently into care. More people who need care are being given the money to pay for it themselves (called 'direct payments'). This can lead to more people being satisfied and lower costs. Over the last year, the take-up of direct and other payments has gone up by 35%, and is higher than in most other places This fits with the local priority to develop more services that better meet peoples' needs.

Local services are helping more people to live at home - including those who are older and disabled, people with mental health illness, and those with disabilities. Manchester has fewer adults going into residential or nursing care

than similar places. Social care services have successfully introduced a 'reablement service'; this provides extra support for adults to remain in their own home and live independently.

Neighbourhoods of Choice

Green flag: Tackling gun crime and gang violence

Greater Manchester Police, Manchester City Council and Trafford Council are working together and have had an excellent impact on the levels of gun crime and gang violence.

During the last year, Manchester has seen a reduction of more than 90 per cent in gang-related firearms used, and only one fatality. This is unprecedented in the recent history of gang violence.

Partners have shown real commitment and determination in tackling this problem. Gang violence, often using guns, had become a serious problem. About 400 people, many of them under 18, were thought to be involved. Competition between drug dealers was part of the driving force. Partners have invested much effort to protect young people and the wider community.

Since 2007, Trafford and Manchester Councils and Greater Manchester Police have run a major joint project to tackle the problem. It started with good planning to identify what they were trying to achieve, and how to go about it.

Partners have focused on those young people at risk of getting involved with gangs and who might have access to guns. The police and council workers have successfully engaged the community. They have succeeded in getting local adults to work with them and bring them information that could help stop further violence. Partners have worked closely with Mothers Against Violence, a local organisation supported by women whose sons had been the victims or the ones committing the gang violence.

A dedicated team tackles the problems of street gangs involved in firearms use. Its work has included keeping those identified as at risk safe, sometimes by relocating the individual or families. Police and council staff have contributed to lessons in primary and secondary schools in the area. Initiatives like the Intensive Intervention Project works with 50 children across the city identified as being vulnerable to gang activity. In the most direct challenge to gang conflict, trained counsellors have mediated between local gangs.

There has also been effective work with young people. Young people in the affected areas have carried out research into gangs and recommended changes - changes by the government, the Council, the police and young people. With the help of adults, young people have also made a DVD "Living to Die". This has been used to prompt discussions among other young men and women affected or at risk.

At the beginning officers went to Sweden and the USA to learn from others. Now countries such as Denmark are inviting Manchester staff to share their expertise.

Gun crime and gang violence in Manchester and Trafford has not stopped completely and further use of guns is likely to continue. But local organisations have made a difference.

Neighbourhoods of Choice

Previously run-down areas are being transformed. Extensive public money and joint working is helping to revitalise areas like Beswick in East Manchester. This and other similar areas did not benefit from the recent economic good times. Instead they're feeling the impact of 50 years of population decline driven by poor job opportunities and poor quality housing - 100,000 people left East Manchester between 1951 and 2001.

Partners have spent over 10 years trying to improve East Manchester and they have learnt a lot. Much remains to be done although there are signs of success. Residents are happier about living in the area and are more likely to stay; replacing poor quality houses is helping to transform estates and school results are improving. Much of the success is down to strong civic leadership and a greater focus on tackling poor areas mainly through strategic regeneration frameworks - which set-out how partners want to work with local people to change the area.

The recession is slowing ambitious plans, but partners are responding well to this and rethinking their approach. Partners know that people will only choose to live here if there is the right choice of housing (including family homes) and other services. Partners are successfully working together to provide good quality schools, health services, access to jobs and more attractive neighbourhoods. They want more people to own their own home, and have set challenging targets for this. But they are unlikely to reach the goal of 60% home-ownership by 2015.

Manchester's civic leaders are ambitious for the City, aspiring for it to become world-class. It will need to continue to improve areas like Beswick if this goal is to become a reality.

People are more likely to be the victim of crime in Manchester than in many other places. Overall crime levels are down from last year, but the number of burglaries and violent crimes has increased. Firm action taken by partners has led to a fall in burglaries over the last few months, particularly in South Manchester.

Levels of crime in the City centre and to the North of the City are high. Here crime levels are some 50 per cent higher than the City average with burglaries a particular problem and up significantly in the last 12 months. In South Manchester, burglary levels are high among the large student population, but recent falls are encouraging. Many students live in poor-quality rented accommodation with inadequate security. The Council, Police and Universities plan to promote better personal security to students during the autumn term. We shall look next year at whether crime levels are improving in North Manchester and for specific community groups like students.

Anti-social behaviour, drink and drugs are still big problems in neighbourhoods. But residents are more confident in the action taken by the Police and Council to tackle local crime. The Respect Action Neighbourhood initiative is a good

example of this. Partners have worked alongside the community in areas like Gorton and they have been successful in reducing crime and improving the area's appearance. The Fire and Rescue Service, Police, Council and others are also working well together to steadily reduce the number of deliberate fires.

More young people in Manchester commit crimes again than similar areas, although this rate is falling. More people convicted of criminal offences complete Community Orders. This is seen as an important way for reducing reoffending.

Manchester's Youth Offending Service performs less well than similar areas. The HMI Probation Inspection of Youth Offending in June 2009 found the Youth Offending Service could do more to reduce the risk that young offenders in its care have on local communities. If the recommendations in the inspection report are followed, prospects for the future should be good.

Recycling levels fell last year. This was a surprise as rates have been rising in recent years. Less household waste was recycled or composted in 2008/09 - meaning that Manchester is falling behind other areas. This is disappointing as Manchester's rate was already significantly less than in similar places. The Council knows that it must improve this and is introducing new waste and recycling facilities. Following a major public consultation, the new waste and recycling facilities are due to be in place by the end of 2009. This should see recycling rates rising again.

More remains to be done to improve cleanliness of streets and open spaces. Graffiti and litter have been increasing in some parts of the City and although the amount of fly-tipping is down, it remains a problem. The Council has successfully involved local people to improve the appearance of their neighbourhoods. Its 'Challenge Manchester: 100 Days' campaign led to over 16,000 people volunteering or attending over 280 local events; and 40 tonnes of waste were removed.

Greener spaces have been promoted through planting 2,500 trees and their 30 parks and green spaces are among the best in the Country. But a national survey showed that not all residents are happy with the City's parks; this result is in contrast with the Council's own on-line survey findings.

Manchester continues to struggle with the high rate of empty properties and low levels of people who own their home. The high level of empty homes in the private sector remains a concern. Plans to improve it are not having enough impact. This includes loans and accreditation schemes for landlords. Take-up is low, limiting their contribution to improving conditions. Also, the Council and partners are unlikely to meet their targets to increase owner occupation.

Manchester has had a significant growth in new housing. But, it is unclear if this will meet housing need in the City. The bulk of new homes are city centre apartments. There remains a shortage of larger affordable properties in a number of popular areas of the City.

Some residents live in poor quality housing. 3,000 homes will not achieve national standards for 'decent homes' for a few more years - missing original

targets. However, the Council has a clear strategy and ambitious investment plans to improve housing standards. The Council currently manages these homes and its performance in doing so has been weak. Poor re-letting of homes, repairs and gas servicing and rent collection coupled with uncertainty about when improvements would begin have all contributed to poor resident satisfaction. The Council has responded by rearranging some services, improving gas performance and improving monitoring arrangements - performance and resident satisfaction is improving as a result. We shall be looking carefully next year at progress in this area.

Homelessness services are improving with particular success in reducing overall acceptances and the use of temporary accommodation. However, those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds are significantly over represented in homelessness admissions. The Council recognises it needs to improve this area and a range of projects are starting to show encouraging outcomes. Continued focus in this area will be needed however.

Services for vulnerable people are generally considered to be good. But waiting lists for major adaptations to accommodate a person's disability are lengthy, taking an average of 158 days to complete. However, waiting times are consistent with and sometimes significantly less than other large cities. And the average waiting times are in fact reducing.

Manchester City Council
Audit Committee

Appendix 1 - Item 6
11 March 2010

CAA looks at how well local public services, working together, are meeting the needs of the people they serve. It's a joint assessment made by a group of independent watchdogs about the performance of local public services, and how likely they are to meet local priorities. From 9 December you will find the results of Comprehensive Area Assessment on the Oneplace website - <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/>

Alternative formats - If you require a copy of PDF documents in this site in large print, in Braille, on tape, or in a language other than English, please call: 0844 798 7070

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