South Manchester
Strategic Regeneration Framework
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Strategic Regeneration Framework
Foreword

The South Manchester Strategic Regeneration Framework, ‘The Living City’, has been developed in partnership with residents and other partners over an intensive 12 month period. The Framework sets out our key priorities and activities and will guide public and private investment in the area over the next ten to fifteen years.

South Manchester is home to some of the most successful neighbourhoods within the city. The character and heritage of the area, larger family homes and high quality green spaces are all features which have attracted higher earning households to live in this part of the city. We need to ensure that we protect and build on these assets to retain existing residents and also attract new ones into the area.

However, whilst there are many successful neighbourhoods in South Manchester, there are also some areas which experience considerable disadvantage and have not benefited in the same way. Our aim is to ensure that the whole of South Manchester is successful and attractive with thriving, well-managed neighbourhoods and distinctive, lively centres.

South Manchester is also home to a diverse range of communities, including a large proportion of the city’s student population. This diversity is a real asset but we must also address the challenges that this brings in building sustainable neighbourhoods.

Over two thousand residents have contributed their views to the development of this Strategic Regeneration Framework and I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all those who have participated and helped to ensure that we have the right priorities for the area.

We look forward to continuing to work with residents and our other partners over the coming years, which is essential in ensuring that we translate our vision for South Manchester into reality.

Sir Richard Leese
Leader of Manchester City Council
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Figure 1: South Manchester SRF Area
Part I – Introduction and Context
1. Introduction: Structure and Purpose of the SRF for South Manchester

The draft Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) for South Manchester has been prepared by Manchester City Council and its partners to guide the delivery of public services and future investment in the area. The Council has looked in depth at the key issues, challenges and opportunities found within South Manchester. An in-depth public consultation took place between January and April 2007 in order to obtain the views of people who live and work in the area. This SRF has now been strengthened as a result of these views.

The Overriding Purpose of the SRF

South Manchester is an important area of the city of Manchester and is a key contributor to the success of both the city and the north west region. While South Manchester is already home to some successful and attractive residential areas, there are many issues that still need to be tackled to meet the objectives set out in the city’s Community Strategy. The Council needs to plan to meet the Community Strategy objectives and ensure that successful sustainable neighbourhoods are put in place across the whole of South Manchester. Delivery of the SRF will lead to further economic growth and the attraction and retention of households within the city.

South Manchester is an area with a rich and diverse group of neighbourhoods, with a wide range of issues and needs. Some areas are already successful, so the SRF is needed to help continue and build on this success. Other areas, in contrast, have particular issues that the SRF will help to tackle, such as poor housing and high levels of deprivation and worklessness.

The SRF will also need to respond to more specific regeneration issues in this area, including the provision of homes for students, key workers and other residents. The Framework needs to respond to the different needs of neighbourhoods across the area and underpin the strategy with clear plans for neighbourhood management and onward implementation.

The South Manchester SRF presents a strong vision for the future of South Manchester: a vision that will be delivered through a new policy framework that will guide long-term regeneration and neighbourhood renewal. It provides an approach that responds specifically to the social, economic and physical needs of the South Manchester area, guiding the activities of the Council, other public sector agencies and investment by the private sector. The South Manchester SRF is one of five SRFs, which between them cover the entire city.

In summary, the purpose of the SRF is to:

- Provide a basis for the long-term development of the area over the next 10–15 years
- Define South Manchester’s challenges and opportunities
- Develop a vision for the future to underpin future planning
- Develop a policy framework that includes, and links up, all aspects of public service delivery, economic, social and physical regeneration, and community engagement
• Put in place a policy framework that assists the Council in delivering bespoke neighbourhood management
• Provide the basis for focused investment, both public and private sector, maximising the impact and benefit of such investment in the area
• Reflect the city’s Community Strategy and integrate with neighbouring SRFs in Central Manchester and Wythenshawe
• Set out the overarching principles for the development of District Centre plans and other specific initiatives where these are required
• Identify a set of linked programmes to promote economic growth and long-term sustainability and community cohesion.

Structure of the Report

The SRF is structured as follows:

Part I: Context – summarises the South Manchester area today and the strategic context for the SRF, including the challenges and opportunities.

Part II: Vision, Objectives and Regeneration Framework – presents the vision and objectives for South Manchester before setting out the overarching policy and Spatial Framework that will be delivered through the SRF across all policy areas.

Part III: Next Steps – focuses on the delivery and implementation of the SRF.
Figure 2: SRF Process

**Methodology**
- Inception
  - Baseline Review
    - Identification of challenges and opportunities
  - Visioning and options
    - Possible futures
    - Possible & preferred futures
    - Back to reality
- Draft SRF
  - Spatial
  - Policy

**Engagement**
- Steering group
  - Meeting
  - Site Visit
  - Identity Contacts
- Key Stakeholders Meetings
  - Public Sector
  - Private Sector
  - Community & Voluntary Sector
  - Peer review
- Visioning Workshop
  - Including a peer review
- Consultation Events
  - Consultation Summary
  - Key stakeholders
  - Community meetings
- Key stakeholders
  - Delivery
  - Performance management

**Outputs**
- Project Manual
- Baseline Review & Opportunity Report
- South Manchester Futures Report
- Draft SRF for South Manchester
- Draft Implementation plan and performance management framework

**Stakeholder and Community Consultation**
- Final South Manchester SRF
  - Feedback
  - Revision
  - Summary
- Steering Group
  - Executive / Cabinet
- Final South Manchester SRF Documents & Summaries
2. South Manchester Today

Based on the findings of the SRF baseline, this section introduces the South Manchester area and its distinctive characteristics. It also summarises the key issues, challenges and opportunities for South Manchester SRF.

South Manchester SRF Area

The South Manchester SRF area runs from Whalley Range, Fallowfield and Levenshulme in the north to the Mersey Valley and M60 Motorway in the south. It includes the ten wards of:

- Burnage
- Chorlton Park
- Didsbury West
- Levenshulme
- Whalley Range
- Chorlton
- Didsbury East
- Fallowfield
- Old Moat
- Withington

South Manchester: Rich in Diversity

The South Manchester SRF area is an area of great contrast and diversity. Having developed from a series of smaller settlements, the area has gradually expanded to become one of the most sought-after residential locations within the city and the wider conurbation.

Its historical development has resulted in a wealth of physical assets, including attractive housing areas, a good transport network and a range of parks and open space. It has also brought about diversity and character in the physical environment, ranging from traditional terraced streets to inter-war housing estates, from river valleys with a countryside feel to inner city neighbourhoods, and from areas of notable affluence to pockets of deprivation.

South Manchester is a largely residential area and is home to approximately one third of Manchester’s population (around 137,000 people). It provides a significant workforce for the city, within easy commuting of the city centre.
It contains some of the most expensive residential property in the city of Manchester, a higher proportion of affluent households than any of the other SRF areas and an above average proportion of the higher educated workforce. Yet it is also evident that the area supports a number of communities where multiple deprivation levels are particularly high.

**What Makes South Manchester Distinctive?**

Perceptions of South Manchester are typically of an affluent professional population, living in high-quality housing in leafy tree-lined suburbs, working in the city centre and making use of a network of vibrant centres such as Didsbury and Chorlton.

South Manchester is full of busy bustling neighbourhoods where development values are at a premium, and a high-density but high-quality settlement pattern has evolved over time.

While South Manchester is unique in providing this lifestyle offer within the city, the area’s distinctiveness is born of its much greater diversity and character, including:

- strong historical character and heritage
- home to a significant proportion of students and young professionals
- tree-lined streets and lots of green open spaces
- diverse communities of varying ages and from various ethnic backgrounds and cultures
- a number of centres, with a range of independent and national retailers
- popular housing across the area, including social housing areas.

**South Manchester’s Key Characteristics**

The key characteristics of South Manchester and their strengths and weaknesses are summarised on the following pages, based on:

- An attractive physical environment
- Good accessibility and movement
- Vibrant centres
- Popular housing
- Students, education and learning
- Socio-economic inequality.
Key Characteristics:
An Attractive Physical Environment
- The variety and urban character of South Manchester reflecting development over time, including 19th-century Victorian villas, planned settlements, interwar garden suburbs and post-war social estate layouts. Over the past ten years, development has been dominated by apartments – both new build and subdivision of the larger Victorian villas.
- Attractive, with significant heritage assets and open spaces. Almost two thirds of South Manchester is green space (including gardens). The area benefits from access to the Mersey Valley and many parks, such as Fletcher Moss and Platt Fields, as well as 11 conservation areas. Many streets are also tree-lined and leafy.
- Bounded by the attractive Mersey Valley, which acts as a leisure resource for South Manchester’s residents as well as the wider conurbation. However, there is also a possible risk of flooding along its banks.
- Principally a residential area with a small number of key employment locations such as Christie Hospital and Christie Fields. Most South Manchester residents travel to work outside the SRF area to major employment centres such as the city centre and Oxford Road Corridor to the north and the Airport and related sectors to the south.
- Short of space for new development, without infill or redevelopment of existing use. Recent development has been dominated by residential with few new employment, leisure or community use developments. This situation will not change in the short-term; therefore the focus of the SRF will not be on physical growth but on improving quality of the existing built form and environment.

Factual Snapshot:
- 2,619 hectares – 31% gardens, 30% parks/open space, 15% consists of roads
- 30% (55,000) of houses in the city are in South Manchester
- 30% are flats – higher than the city average of 27%
- 45% are detached or semi-detached (36.5% in the city)
- 47 residents per hectare, higher than city average of 38
- Four key parks and seven Green Flag parks
- 11 conservation areas
- Five district centres: Chorlton, Didsbury, Fallowfield, Levenshulme, Withington.
Figure 4: Open Spaces and Recreation
Key Characteristics: Good Accessibility and Movement

- Well connected and structured around key movement corridors in proximity to the motorway network and with strong radial routes, although there are issues along these routes with capacity, congestion and poor environment. These routes provide for significant movement through the SRF area and into the city centre, as well as local movements within South Manchester.

- East-west links are less well defined, illustrating that movement across this part of the city is potentially difficult and does not match the accessibility and quality of the radial routes, particularly for those reliant on public transport.

- High-frequency public transport services are found within South Manchester with particularly high levels of public transport (bus/rail) patronage, which will be further boosted with future extensions to the Metrolink network and bus corridor improvements.

- The Mersey River Valley provides a significant green corridor for pedestrian and cycle movement via the Trans Pennine Trail. This helps to link South Manchester with adjacent local authority areas. However, it also constrains north-south movement between South Manchester and Wythenshawe to a small number of busy routes.

Factual Snapshot:

- Princess Parkway is the busiest road into the city

- Kingsway, Stockport Road and Wilmslow Road are the third, sixth and seventh busiest routes into the city

- The most traffic congestion and delays are on Stockport Road and Wilmslow Road

- Wilmslow Road is also the busiest bus route in Europe

- Parking problems are acute in Didsbury, Chorlton and Withington district centres.
Bus Frequency

- 0-10 mins (QBC Route)
- 0-10 mins (Non-QBC Route)
- 10-20 mins
- 20-30 mins
- 30-60 mins

Route of Proposed Metrolink Corridor

Key District Centres

Figure 5: Public Transport Plan
Key Characteristics: Vibrant Centres

- Served by the five busy district centres of Chorlton, Didsbury, Fallowfield, Levenshulme and Withington, which are well located on key corridors. The district centres have an important role to play in South Manchester, acting as a focal point for neighbourhood activity.

- Based on historic settlements, three of the district centres are covered by conservation area designations, while the remaining two are influenced in part by historic townscape. These assets create distinctive character within the district centres.

- ‘Niche’ markets and independent retail are present in the centres, such as the antique shops in Levenshulme, the bars and cafes of Didsbury, the student market in Fallowfield/Withington and the independent retail offer in Chorlton.

- Not all the centres provide the rounded offer to fulfil their district centre function. This is particularly the case in Levenshulme and Withington.

- A range of local centres support the district centres. These include vibrant neighbourhood centres at Beech Road, Chorlton and Burton Road, West Didsbury. Local centres vary in quality and viability with action required in the weaker centres to stabilise and improve provision. Not all centres provide the same offer for residents, and accessibility to and parking at some local centres can be an issue.

Factual Snapshot:

- Five district centres

- There are ten defined local centres, although their location is not evenly spread across the SRF area

- Chorlton and Levenshulme are large district centres with over 250 outlets compared to a centre average of 100 within Manchester

- A significant proportion of people arrive by foot in Withington and Fallowfield with 39% of visitors living within 500m and 83% living within a five-minute drive (average 65%).

- The popularity of the district centres as destinations as well as places to live and work often means congestion and parking problems persist.
Figure 6: Neighbourhood Centres and Local Shops
Key Characteristics: Popular Housing

- Known for a strong housing market, with house prices increasing faster than the rest of city in areas like Didsbury and Chorlton where prices are now almost 60% higher than the Manchester average. There is evidence of a ripple effect into previously less popular areas, including areas such as Whalley Range and Levenshulme, but in parts of the area there is limited choice for affordable home ownership.

- A Private Rented Sector that has grown considerably in the past decade in part linked to the growth of the student population but also associated with increases in graduates who continue to rent and, more recently, with the influx of economic migrants to the city. One of the major issues associated with this largely transient population relates to long-term neighbourhood management and sustainability.

- Popular Social Housing estates, which transfer to new housing trusts in autumn 2007. Estates in the Southern part of the SRF will be transferred to Southway Housing Trust, while those located in Fallowfield and Whalley Range will transfer to City South Housing Trust. The Trusts will be responsible for the onward management and upgrade of properties across the area.

- Domination of students in certain areas, with a high number living around Fallowfield and Withington. As the higher and further education sector has expanded, the student population has spread into other parts of South Manchester. In parallel, the student population has become more diverse with considerable growth in the number of students from overseas, many of whom are mature students. While the student population provides many benefits for the area, the concentration of students in some neighbourhoods presents unique housing challenges.
Factual Snapshot:
• There has been a 107% growth in house prices in the past five years. Sales have fallen since 2004, but rose between 2001 and 2004 at 29% (national increase of 5%)
• The average house price is £165,000 (city average £130,000). The highest values are in East Didsbury and Chorltonville, averaging £215,000
• North Levenshulme had the largest increase in values in 2006. Old Moat average values exceeded the SRF average for the first time in 2006
• Demand is extremely high for social housing stock, the highest in Manchester
• The high price of land is resulting in higher density, with more apartments.
Figure 7: Housing Market – Spot Values
Key Characteristics: Students, Education and Learning

- Mixed levels of educational attainment, with good primary school attainment being tempered by the more variable performance of Local Authority secondary schools.

- Attainment in secondary schools is relatively good against the rest of the city, but not at the same level as neighbouring authorities, where on average, attainment at GCSE (5A* to C) is at least 20% higher than in South Manchester state schools. While the area is home to some of the best performing state schools in the city, several schools are not achieving the national average (53%) at GCSE A* to C.

- Most of the city’s Independent/Private schools are focused in and around the South Manchester area and are performing very well compared with both the national average and the state sector. Two of the South Manchester Independent schools are in the top 100 schools in England and, in both, 100% of pupils achieved five A* to C at GCSE.

- It has a number of significant higher and further education institutions, primarily in the northern part of the SRF area.

Factual Snapshot:

- Primary school performance is close to the national average and rising

- The GCSE pass rate average is 44%, ranging from 34% at St Thomas Aquinas to 59% at Burnage High and Parrs Wood/Whalley Range

- Several schools are not reaching the national average of 53%, whereas Trafford and Stockport GCSE averages are higher (70% and 55%)

- Manchester’s popularity as a primary location for study is demonstrated by 100,330 students (04/05) in Greater Manchester’s universities, many of whom choose to live in South Manchester.
Figure 8: Educational Facilities
Key Characteristics: 
Socio-Economic Inequality

- A very diverse community formed from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Parts of the area such as Whalley Range (traditionally with a significant Polish community and Asian/African-Caribbean/Somalian); Fallowfield (Asian/African-Caribbean); and Levenshulme (Asian) have traditionally possessed a large Black, Minority and Ethnic (BME) population, which has grown over the past decade. Elsewhere, areas that have historically been dominated by a white population, such as Burnage, have experienced a large increase in BME residents in recent years. Economic migrants have driven much of the increasing diversity.

- Contrasts in affluence and deprivation manifest themselves in health, education and worklessness and tend to be concentrated on social housing estates. The focus for social/economic programmes in the area will be the largely ex-Council-owned estates situated in Chorlton Park, Old Moat, Burnage and Fallowfield.

- Levels of crime and nuisance are too high, with a number of hot spots. Both actual levels and perceptions of crime are above neighbouring authorities. Crime and nuisance has a negative impact on many residents and businesses and there is a need to combat it to improve quality of life and retain people in the area.

- Levels of health are not as good as they could be, with South Manchester faring poorly on a number of health indicators such as limiting long-term illness in comparison to the national averages.

- While some of the most significant health inequalities exist within the area’s deprived neighbourhoods, there is a need to promote and achieve healthier lifestyles among all residents.

- Older people account for a quarter of South Manchester’s population, with the number forecast to increase more quickly than elsewhere in the city in contrast to recent trends. These changing dynamics present a number of challenges, including increasing the uptake of employment among older workless residents, meeting evolving housing needs, and improving quality of life.

- Close to key economic drivers, such as the universities, hospitals and airport. The area has the highest proportion of managers and professionals in the city and the highest skill levels. In a small number of neighbourhoods, there are relatively high levels of worklessness and a lack of qualifications and skills.

- The only other area of the city (apart from the city centre) that currently offers the opportunity to attract and retain a significant number of higher income groups. Their presence is critical to sustaining both the city’s economic growth and the vibrancy of the local economy. Many of the area’s assets – urban character, larger family homes, quality green spaces and so on – have attracted such households to date. These assets will need to be protected and nurtured if the area is to retain existing and attract further households.
Factual Snapshot:

- Total population is 137,000 (approximately a third of the city)
- 29,000 people are over 50 years old (24%)
- The population is due to increase by 7%, with the greatest rise among 25 to 34-year-olds
- Nell Lane estate is in the top 1% most deprived areas in England
- There is a significant number of benefit claimants across the area, particularly in Burnage, Fallowfield and Chorlton Park
- Resident satisfaction is highest in Old Moat, Withington and Didsbury West
- Burglary and personal robbery are the biggest crime problems
- Over 25,000 jobs exist in South Manchester – 9% of the city total
- Banking and finance, hotels, restaurants and public administration = 80%
- Demand for commercial office space is changing towards freehold with occupiers also increasingly seeking flexibility and smaller buildings
- 24% of people have no qualifications against 34% for the city, with concentrations in Burnage and Levenshulme (40% and 30%)
- 50% of residents in Chorlton/Didsbury have high-level 4/5 skills and above (city average 21%).

Figure 9: Indices of Multiple Deprivation in Manchester 2004

Of these 259 SOAs in Manchester, the worst SOA is ranked 2 (the second most deprived) in England. The best SOA is ranked 21,316 out of 32,482 in England.
South Manchester’s Distinctive Neighbourhoods

To understand South Manchester, it is important to look carefully at the existing communities and the distinctive neighbourhoods of the area, along with the centres. The SRF area is perhaps best described as one made up of three distinctive neighbourhood subareas:

i) a range of high-quality neighbourhoods with good-quality housing and services

ii) a concentrated area of private rented housing stock where students dominate the population mix

iii) significantly scaled social housing estates. Figure 10 defines the following ten neighbourhoods within South Manchester:

- Burnage
- Chorlton Park
- Didsbury West
- Levenshulme
- Whalley Range

- Chorlton
- Didsbury East
- Fallowfield
- Old Moat
- Withington

These are defined differently to the ward areas, recognising community boundaries. In terms of the three subareas:

The six neighbourhoods of Chorlton, Whalley Range, West Didsbury, Didsbury Village, East Didsbury, Levenshulme and the eastern part of Withington (around Withington district centre) are all high-quality neighbourhoods in South Manchester. They offer good-quality housing, a range of centres and services, and strong areas of heritage value and open space. They are also typically home to the more affluent population in South Manchester, although there are still pockets of deprivation within these areas:

- Didsbury Village and Chorlton are focused around their district centres, which are largely covered by conservation areas. They offer a mix of large traditional properties and newer apartments, set in leafy streets and close to a range of facilities and good public transport. The housing is extremely popular in these neighbourhoods.

- West and East Didsbury lie at each side of Didsbury Village. West Didsbury is set within a conservation area and has developed a popular centre renowned for its speciality shops and independent restaurants. East Didsbury offers larger interwar housing at each side of the busy Kingsway road and rail corridor. The local shops and Tesco store at Parrs Wood provide a focal point.

- Whalley Range is another neighbourhood within a conservation area, reflecting its planned layout of large detached houses on tree-lined avenues. The area has declined in the recent past with high levels of private renting and houses converted to Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO). It is however, becoming a popular housing area with visible investment and refurbishment.

- Levenshulme and Withington neighbourhoods are focused around their respective district centres and similarly to Didsbury and Chorlton they have developed around traditional settlements that are now conservation areas. They are typified by larger Victorian semi-detached homes and terraces. Although both centres are underperforming, the housing areas are becoming increasingly popular for young professionals, particularly as some of the more affordable housing in the SRF.
The private rented and student neighbourhoods are largely focused in Fallowfield and the northern part of Withington, where the housing is typified by smaller terraces and student flats. Fallowfield District Centre provides a focal point within this area and much of its retail and leisure offer is tailored to meeting student needs.

The large-scale social housing estates dominate the neighbourhoods of Burnage and Chorlton Park, as well as the western parts of both Withington and Fallowfield. The nature of these neighbourhoods is typically interwar garden suburb-style council housing, although Nell Lane in Chorlton Park is characterised by a 1960s Radburn-style layout. Although popular housing areas, these neighbourhoods demonstrate the highest levels of deprivation, crime and other socio-economic issues.

**South Manchester: Key Issues, Challenges and Opportunities**

The diagram on page 40 summarises the key issues, challenges and opportunities in South Manchester today. These reflect the need for the SRF to:

- Improve the quality of environment
- Tackle pockets of deprivation and inequality
- Manage issues related to development pressures
- Look at means of raising educational attainment
- Balance strategic transport pressure with good local accessibility
- Manage issues related to the presence of students and high levels of private renting
- Improve the quality and vitality of the centres
- Widen the choice of housing, including for families and key workers.
Figure 10: South Manchester’s Neighbourhoods
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Key Challenges and Opportunities in South Manchester</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Existing Characteristics</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Physical Environment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>South Manchester is dominated by residential suburbs, focused</td>
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<td>on earlier settlements at Chorlton, Withington and Didsbury,</td>
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<td>with later infill development along key transport routes into</td>
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<td>the city, such as Princess Parkway and Kingsway. The</td>
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<td>historical pattern of development in South Manchester has</td>
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<td>resulted in a number of very desirable and popular</td>
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<td>neighbourhoods, which are interspersed by attractive</td>
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<td>centres and high quality parks and recreation spaces. Later</td>
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<td>interwar and post-war infill development is located in</td>
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<td>pockets around the South Manchester area and tends to be</td>
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<td>more uniform in nature and dominated by social housing stock.</td>
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<td><strong>Neighbourhood Centres</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>South Manchester’s Neighbourhood Centres are central to the</td>
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<td>success and attractiveness of the areas’ neighbourhoods.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The relative success of areas such as Chorlton and Didsbury</td>
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<td>has, in part, been due to the presence and development of</td>
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<td>attractive centres, along with the availability and mix of</td>
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<td>housing stock that appeals to young professional households</td>
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<td>and families. The positive perception of these centres</td>
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<td>has helped fuel the local housing market, in turn increasing</td>
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<td>the potential spend and demand for high quality and new</td>
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<td>services and facilities in these centres.</td>
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<td><strong>Housing Choice</strong></td>
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<td>The housing market in South Manchester is booming with strong</td>
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<td>demand and rising prices experienced across the area in</td>
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<td>recent years. The economic success of Manchester and the</td>
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<td>local growth dividers – city centre, universities and</td>
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<td>hospitals corridor, and airport – have attracted an increasing number of professionals and increased retention of students. The Victorian and Edwardian stock, in particular, has proved to be adaptable and desirable to house buyers. In contrast, issues of housing affordability and low investment plague the predominantly social housing areas and student areas, in turn undermining the success of these neighbourhoods.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Movement and Accessibility</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>South Manchester benefits from a great strategic location,</td>
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<td>close to Manchester city centre, the key economic drivers</td>
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<td>in the conurbation and the strategic transport networks,</td>
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<td>including the motorway network, high frequency public</td>
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<td>transport services and the international airport. This is</td>
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<td>a key attraction for many people who live or choose to live</td>
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<td>in South Manchester.</td>
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<td><strong>Education Attainment</strong></td>
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<td>Generally good levels of primary school attainment in South</td>
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<td>Manchester are undermined by a moderate performance at</td>
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<td>secondary school level, albeit results have been improving</td>
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<td>in recent years. As well as South Manchester’s children not</td>
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<td>achieving as well as they could do, a relatively modest</td>
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<td>educational performance also acts as a contributory factor</td>
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<td>in families relocating out of South Manchester. Many South</td>
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<td>Manchester schools consequently draw pupils from a very</td>
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<td>wide catchment area.</td>
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<td><strong>Socio-Economic Inequality</strong></td>
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<td>benefited from jobs growth in the wider economy, this has</td>
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<td>not been sufficient to tackle the pockets of deprivation</td>
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<td>and worklessness that exist, concentrated but not</td>
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<td>exclusively, in the social housing estates.</td>
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Opportunity

The opportunity for the SRF is to build on and improve its assets – the distinctive, successful neighbourhoods and centres, the high quality parks and the strong heritage and character of South Manchester – and use these as a model to drive forward the future of the area. These qualities should be applied across South Manchester to raise the quality of the built environment and expand the number of successful neighbourhoods.

Challenge

The challenges for South Manchester are to overcome the issues of pockets of poor housing, particularly in social housing and student areas; to tackle the increasing levels of local and through traffic, congestion and car parking; to upgrade the areas of low quality environment; and to manage the pressures for new development in a more sustainable way.

While some district centres may be distinctive and busy, most are generally underperforming due to environmental degradation, a poor underpinning retail offer, and traffic congestion. A lack of development space and potential is undermining the opportunity for these centres to continue to grow and compete with other areas, as well as serving local needs. Local centres are also struggling, usually in the areas of later infill development in the 20th century, where accessibility to these centres is poor.

The demand for and limited supply of attractive housing stock in successful neighbourhoods has put particular pressure on South Manchester, such that the housing market is stretched in all sectors, from the availability of large family homes for sale and affordable homes for key workers, to the provision of sufficient accommodation for students or young professionals looking for rented housing. With a lack of land to create new housing development, clearly there are significant challenges in delivering a wider housing choice in South Manchester. The housing market therefore needs to be better managed to sustain the success of South Manchester.

It is also apparent that its location and relative success has also led to some pressures on the local transport networks, as the increasing mobility of the population at large and the communities of South Manchester in particular, have exceeded the capacity of the infrastructure to accommodate it. This has manifested in congestion on commuter routes, and in the district and local centres. The challenge is to retain the benefits of good strategic accessibility, while managing the impacts of through traffic.

With a significant imbalance between the performance and popularity of state schools in South Manchester, the key challenge is to create a distinctive and equal offer which gives parents a better choice and reverses the leakage of pupils and families out of the area. This is integral to achieving better links between schools and their local community and improving school organisation and management. Improving the education offer in South Manchester is critical to the aspiration of being a first choice residential location.

Getting more people into work and progressing those in low skilled jobs into better order positions is the primary challenge. Reducing deprivation and achieving stronger communities across South Manchester is also dependent on tackling a number of other issues. Crime and nuisance and poor perceptions of safety, health inequalities and access to facilities impact disproportionately on the deprived neighbourhoods, although these are important issues for all parts of South Manchester. Narrowing disparities between communities is the key challenge, at the same time as building on the success of the affluent parts of South Manchester.

Opportunity

The centres have the potential to drive forward the regeneration of South Manchester’s neighbourhoods by providing high quality retailing, services and leisure to meet the needs of the communities. More than this the centres can, through their distinctiveness and quality of design and townscape, represent the brand of South Manchester and the desirability of urban living, the heart of the successful neighbourhoods.

Although already a popular housing area, a wider choice of housing will offer the opportunity to attract families, tackle affordability issues and to support existing communities who want to stay in the area. This can be complemented by opportunities to also deliver managed solutions to the accommodation of those sectors of the population whose presence in the city may be more transient, for example students, professionals and key workers in training.

Achieving modal shift to more community- and environmentally-friendly high volume public transport solutions and enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure while discouraging local car based journeys, will help to tackle the traffic congestion problems. The Metrolink proposals, better east-west links, more attractive corridors and improvements to accessibility to the centres, all offer opportunities to tackle congestion issues on key corridors and parking problems in the area, and encourage further investment in the SRF area.

The Building Schools for the Future and Extended Schools programme offers the opportunity for new facilities and means of learning. Stronger partnerships with employers and other organisations, more curriculum options, and the new William Hulme Academy are also opportunities to make the high schools on a par or better than the best schools in neighbouring authorities. Independent schools in and close to South Manchester also have an important role to play, making an enhanced contribution to attracting and retaining higher income families.

The forecast of significant jobs growth in Greater Manchester in the medium term provides an opportunity to make significant inroads in tackling worklessness and deprivation.
3. South Manchester SRF in Context

This section of the SRF presents the strategic context within which the future development of South Manchester should be considered. Beginning with the economic and demographic changes in the city over the last century, this section then considers the wider national, regional, sub-regional and city context and what this means for the future role and function of South Manchester.

Economic and Social Change in Manchester

From the middle of the last century, Manchester has witnessed a significant restructuring of the economic base. The decline of traditional manufacturing industries has been accompanied by a major loss of population over a 30 to 40-year period. A large number of households have relocated to suburban and other locations outside the city. Over the past decade, economic growth, fuelled principally by the service sector and the development of city centre living, has contributed to the stabilisation of the city's population. People have been attracted back to Manchester, particularly the city centre.

From a handful of people in the early 1990s, there are now more than 10,000 people living in Manchester city centre. While the city centre residential market has developed into one that can appeal to the young, middle and higher income households, the housing offer in the rest of the city has, with the exception of Didsbury and Chorlton, not been sufficiently attractive to attract and retain middle and higher income households, especially those households with children. As a result, the city’s population profile has become skewed with an overconcentration of low income and workless households.

Economic and employment forecasts for the next 10 to 20 years, prepared to support the updated Manchester Salford Pathfinder strategy and the GM Economic Development Plan, show that in excess of 100,000 jobs will be created in Greater Manchester, many of which will be linked to the key economic drivers of the city centre, the Oxford Road corridor, and Manchester Airport.

This presents Manchester with an unrivalled opportunity to repopulate the city. However, one of the keys to unlocking such potential will be the provision of a housing and neighbourhood offer that can attract and retain households within the city. South Manchester has the critical mass and assets that can provide Manchester with an unparalleled opportunity to rebalance the profile of the city. A key objective for the SRF must therefore be to extend the number of popular neighbourhoods in this part of the city.

National Context

The strategic context within which South Manchester should be considered has changed significantly over the past two to three years. The further development of national, regional and local policy relating to the regeneration and future development of cities and city regions provides a canvas against which the future role of South Manchester should be considered. In looking at South Manchester, the issues that the city has to face as a whole are of paramount importance.
The City Region agenda, which essentially aims to close the productivity gap between the North of England and the south east, is now firmly embedded within national policy. Manchester is at the heart of the most successful of the three city regions in the North of England.

The ‘State of the Cities’ report published by the Government in 2006 identifies the key role that the Manchester City Region should take in driving forward future growth and prosperity within the North of the country. The State of the Cities report and other allied policy development work illustrates the interdependencies of a strong economy and a vibrant housing market.

During summer 2007 the Government published a review of subnational economic development and regeneration. This review will have significant implications for policy and implementation at the regional and sub-regional level. The review outlines new procedures for regional policy development that will see the Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Economic Strategy being replaced by a single regional strategy setting out economic, social and environmental objectives. In addition the review sets out a stronger remit for local authorities in delivering economic development, revisions to Local Area Agreements, the set up of multi-area agreements across LA boundaries and the further development of city region governance models.

The Housing Green Paper was published in July 2007. The Green Paper places a strong emphasis on the delivery of more decent, affordable homes throughout the country. More homes are required to meet growing demand with the Green Paper acknowledging for the first time the opportunity to develop new growth points in the North of the country where they can assist in delivering better communities that can attract investment and skilled workers to the area.

**Regional Context**

The current regional policy context is being shaped by the development of the North West Regional Spatial Strategy (NWRSS) and the North West Regional Economic Strategy (NWRES). Both documents need to be considered within the wider overarching framework set out within the Northern Way Strategy, which considers the future economic growth for the northern part of England.

The Northern Way points towards future economic growth within the Manchester City Region of 2.9% per annum and the creation of over 100,000 new jobs within the city region over the next 15 years, many of which will be supported by residents within the South Manchester area. The NWRSS recognises the importance of providing new homes to support the population growth forecast for the Manchester City Region.
Importantly, the NWRSS recognises the requirement to balance economic and housing development with further reinforcement of environmental quality, sustainability and transport measures to support sustainable economic growth. The NWRES further supports the principles set out in the NWRSS pointing towards the city region as an ‘economic motor’ for the north west and an area that will support many of the region’s new jobs.

**Sub-Regional Context**

The Manchester City Region has a GVA of £47 billion per annum with some 1.5 million jobs and contains the strongest regional centre in the UK. The centre of the city region is now experiencing rapid employment growth in knowledge-based business sectors, notably finance and professional services, creative and media industries, and in health and biosciences.

The economic, population and household growth forecasts are very positive for the city region and, particularly for Manchester. The City Region Development Programme (CRDP) identifies an accelerated growth scenario, which will result in 100,000 additional jobs in Manchester by 2021 (if all the actions in the CRDP are implemented). Much of this growth will be focused in key growth sectors outside the SRF area, including centres such as the city centre, the Oxford Road Corridor and Manchester Airport. This economic growth will be accompanied by an increase in the number of households over the same period – over 66,000 new households in Manchester alone.

The accelerated growth scenario presents both a challenge and opportunity for Manchester. While the level of demand is set to increase, the city faces a challenge in terms of supply, ensuring that there are sufficient housing options to attract the higher skilled workforce needed to maintain high levels of economic growth. Further, there is a two-way dependency, with higher levels of economic growth increasing demand in the housing market, and ongoing economic growth being dependent on a growing workforce able to find neighbourhoods of choice that will attract them to the city. In short, there is now not only an opportunity but an economic imperative to address housing supply at the core of the Manchester city region in order to help achieve the economic and employment ambitions needed to close the productivity gap between the North and the south east.

Capturing as much of the benefit of future business and employment growth in Manchester requires that existing low skilled and workless residents are supported to access available employment opportunities and that more neighbourhoods of choice are established across the city. While employment access, skills development and related initiatives are essential to the city’s regeneration, recent history shows that they will not alone be sufficient in achieving the successful regeneration of the city. There is a fundamental need to expand the number of neighbourhoods within Manchester that can be attractive to a mix of households and especially more affluent households, otherwise the city will find it impossible to grow its population and make it more sustainable.

South Manchester is different to other parts of the city, in that it already contains a large number of successful neighbourhoods and has not experienced, to the same extent, the out migration and changing demographic profile that has occurred elsewhere in Manchester.
Figure 11: Strategic Context
While the area has a relatively small number of deprived neighbourhoods, the bulk of South Manchester has experienced growing affluence and success, with a positive and desirable image. Chorlton and Didsbury are probably the most sought-after residential areas in Manchester, competing with locations across Greater Manchester, North Cheshire and further afield.

As such, South Manchester has a distinct role to play in retaining and growing Manchester’s population and supporting the city’s wider regeneration. In the short-term, South Manchester provides the mix of housing, education and leisure offer sought by affluent households on a scale far greater than anywhere else in the city.

However, compared with adjoining parts of Trafford, Stockport and North Cheshire, South Manchester still does not currently offer the very best quality residential environments, schools and other features that make a neighbourhood popular with middle and higher income groups. The city cannot become complacent about the South Manchester ‘offer’ simply because it is better than other parts of Manchester. Through the SRF, it must seek to further expand and improve this offer if it is to attract and retain the higher income households that are essential to the city’s onward economic growth.

This distinctive role sets South Manchester apart from other locations in the city and means that the SRF will have a different emphasis to the other regeneration frameworks. The preparation of NWRSS gives the Manchester City Region (MCR) the opportunity to develop a new Spatial Strategy for the city region, which will provide a strategic context for development of the South Manchester SRF.

This strategy will support a range of policies designed to take forward the city region growth agenda and outline in spatial terms the particular roles of the regional centre, central area and North and South Manchester locations. South Manchester in this context is a wider area than that covered by the South Manchester SRF; it includes for example parts of the boroughs of Stockport and Trafford but also Wythenshawe and Manchester Airport.

However, the general thrust of strategy relating to South Manchester is consistent. It points towards developing neighbourhoods of choice through investment in a range of services supported by a vibrant housing market and new housing where it will support economic growth.

In developing proposals for the South Manchester SRF it is important to take these themes forward as we seek to define a future for this part of the city. The combined requirements relating to sustainable housing policy, future economic growth and a high-quality environment (including sustainable movement patterns) is a clear strategic objective emerging from the Manchester City Region Development Programme and Spatial Strategy.

**City Context**

**The Local Development Framework (LDF)**

At the city level, the Manchester City Region Spatial Strategy should be considered alongside the emerging LDF for Manchester, which is in the process of being developed by the Council. As the key land-use planning document for the whole city, the LDF will be a critical policy tool. The South Manchester SRF will inform much of the development of the LDF in so far as it relates to South Manchester and therefore future planning decisions.
Manchester Community Strategy

The City Region Spatial Strategy also needs to be considered alongside the city’s Community Strategy, which sets out the following vision for Manchester 2015:

a. In 2015 the quality of life in Manchester will be second to none. The population will have grown to 480,000, with more working families, more homeowners and increased productivity. More people in Manchester will be wealthier, more content and healthier.

b. Children and young people will be safer and better equipped to reach their goals.

c. Neighbourhoods will be desirable places to live with wealth and opportunity spread throughout the city.

d. The economy will be strong and people will enjoy living, studying and working in diverse and stable communities.

e. Manchester will become the greenest city in Britain, be internationally competitive and enterprising. It will be a place of real opportunity for everybody and will be inspirational and welcoming.

f. Manchester will be a leading city for education and knowledge. It will be known as the place where you can get high-quality further education and secure jobs that use your skills and learning. Residents will have the ambition and the skills to fill the variety of jobs that are available in Manchester.

g. Manchester will be a place full of pride, generosity and tolerance where people feel respected, secure and welcome.

In summary, the Manchester Community Strategy will help drive forward economic growth in Manchester and capture the benefits of that growth for the city. Policies and actions to achieve this will be delivered within three broad spines:

a. Firstly, by taking the opportunity to harness the economic growth from the city region, neighbourhoods of choice will be created that retain the existing community and attract new residents.

b. Secondly, by delivering action that leads to self-esteem and mutual respect across the community.

c. Thirdly, by ensuring that the city achieves its full potential in education and employment.
The three spines of the Community Strategy need to be developed as the South Manchester SRF (SMSRF) emerges. It is essential that the golden thread running through national, regional and sub-regional policy finds its way into core objectives associated with the delivery of the SMSRF.

**a.** By developing neighbourhoods of choice, the South Manchester SRF will attract and retain people to live in one of the more popular parts of the city. It will improve overall living conditions in every neighbourhood across South Manchester. Residential neighbourhoods will be supported by strong and diverse centres, excellent schools, services and community facilities. Neighbourhoods will be effectively managed to ensure they meet the highest possible standards of upkeep and maintenance.

Movement and connectivity within the area and to key employment centres elsewhere in the city and beyond will be strengthened by measures to tackle congestion and the increasing use of more sustainable forms of transport including Metrolink. South Manchester will be a place where people will want to live throughout all stages of their lives; it will be a location of choice not only within the city but also within the region. Promoting Manchester’s Green City aspiration (outlined below) will also be central in creating neighbourhoods of choice.

**b.** By improving self-esteem and developing mutual respect, the South Manchester community will become safer, more harmonious and a place within which people will seek to improve their economic circumstances, educational prospects and health.

Community safety will feature strongly in this area reflecting the diversity of the population and its needs, particularly for example in neighbourhoods where students predominate. Through delivery of wide-ranging programmes that support members of the South Manchester community, the objective of improving self-esteem and respect at all levels will be met.

**c.** The Community Strategy objective that seeks to deliver Manchester’s full potential in employment and education will revolve around a number of things within the South Manchester context.

(i) Firstly, by sustaining and enhancing successful neighbourhoods and tackling inequalities within the area, out migration will be reduced, the existing population will grow, schools will improve and support the core objective of increasing population at the city level.

(ii) Secondly, the SRF will ensure that South Manchester’s workforce has better skills, and is better equipped to support the job growth forecast for Manchester City Region. This objective will take in all aspects of the lifelong learning agenda with a particular focus on improvement in secondary school performance, which will enable young people to fulfil their potential and compete for employment opportunities, and tackling pockets of worklessness.

(iii) Thirdly, through population retention, reinforcement of skill sets and investment in education, neighbouring areas – particularly the regional centre and the airport – will benefit from being able to draw on this highly skilled labour pool present in the South Manchester area.
Equality
Manchester City Council (MCC) prides itself on the diversity of the city and as such works hard to progress on equality issues. Issues addressed include disability, lesbian and gay men’s issues, gender, race, age and religion. The work on these areas is complex and cross-cutting and can often lead to multi-oppression and discrimination. As well as a mechanism to address equality issues, importance is given to the impact of geographical areas, income and the relationship to disadvantage.

It is important to embed this understanding of the city’s community in any approach to regeneration as all of the equality areas and discrimination impacts on the make up and development of the city. In order to achieve a cohesive community that works towards improvements and economic progress, differences and equality must be addressed. Residents are more likely to become involved with local government, decision-making and local initiatives if they are treated equally, and so we make positive steps to show that the city is truly diverse. The diversity of Manchester is a factor that contributes directly to the creativity, vitality and economic success of the city; addressing equality and inclusion enables people to exceed their potential and their aspirations and creates vibrant energetic communities.

In implementing the South Manchester SRF, it will take account of and be mindful of the differential impacts of Agenda 2010, the Gender Equality Scheme, Disability Equality Scheme, Race Equality Scheme and the introduction of the Goods Facilities and Services Bill, which prevents discrimination on the grounds of sexuality. Inequality on the grounds of age and religious belief, and work with newly arriving communities to improve services for people will also continue to be addressed.
**Green City Agenda**

Manchester has an aspiration to become Britain’s greenest city, which is defined as:

“A green city is a healthy place to live, work and play. It is not just a city that has an abundance of green space, but it is a modern, vibrant and resilient city with its eye on the future. Ultimately, a green city is a place that people want to be.”

Becoming the greenest city will help underpin the creation of sustainable communities as the issues being addressed cut across a range of social, environmental and economic issues. Air quality, carbon emissions, recycling rates, contaminated land, biodiversity, building standards and water quality are the areas being looked at, all of which have critical implications for people's quality of life. A key measure required to become a Green City is to ensure that ongoing regeneration and development of the city can be achieved within the context of climate change.

Climate change presents Manchester with a number of challenges but also opportunities. Due to past greenhouse gas emissions the effects of climate change are largely predetermined, for up to 50 years, so plans should be put in place for such effects to ensure that the city can adapt to them. The latest predictions suggest that Manchester will experience warmer wetter winters and hotter drier summers, interspersed with intense periods of heavy rainfall. In parallel with the challenge of adaptation, it is important that ongoing and future activities do not contribute to further climate change. Low carbon lifestyles and activities will be key to helping to deliver this with actions ranging from simple measures that can be implemented in the present through to longer-term investment looking at issues such as power to homes and businesses and modes of travel.

However, the number of jobs needed to help Manchester become a low carbon climate resilient city means that climate change also presents opportunities to benefit the city’s economy and offer new employment opportunities. In order to achieve this ambitious programme, the Council is working in partnership with Manchester’s residents, businesses, schools and colleges, environmental campaigners, the community, the voluntary sector and the media.

**Integration with the other SRFs**

The South Manchester SRF will be the fifth and final Strategic Regeneration Framework for the city of Manchester. It will complete an overarching framework that will guide and sustain improvement across the city, contributing to Manchester being recognised across the board as a dynamic city, in which to live, work and play.

It is essential that the South Manchester SRF closely integrates with the other SRFs, not least because of the strong physical and economic links it shares with the SRFs for Central Manchester (The Connected City) eg. Gorton South and Levenshulme wards are both contained within Levenshulme district centre and Wythenshawe (The Garden City) along the key road corridors to the city centre, universities and the airport.

Neighbouring SRFs provide important opportunities to capitalise on jobs and the proximity of Trafford Park and New East Manchester (Sportcity) as key economic drivers in the city region. They also share some of the same issues, such as deprivation, crime and a high concentration of students in the neighbouring areas of Central Manchester SRF, which require a joined-up approach to tackle them effectively.
Figure 12: Integration of South Manchester SRF

- North Manchester
- Salford MBC
- Salford Quays
- Trafford Park
- Trafford MBC
- Sale, Altrincham
- Garden City
- Airport
- South Manchester
- Connected City
- City Centre
- New Town in the City
- Sports City
- Oldham MBC
- Stockport MBC
- Cheshire
- M60/ Mersey valley
Part II – Vision, Objectives and Regeneration Framework
4. A Vision for South Manchester: The Living City

This section of the SRF sets out the vision and objectives for South Manchester.

How has the Vision been developed?
The vision for South Manchester has been developed in the context of the current conditions, needs and opportunities evident in the area. It ensures that the SRF both addresses the requirements and aspirations of the local communities and is founded on themes and objectives that reflect local strengths and assets of the area, thereby making it relevant and deliverable.

The Future Role for South Manchester

Based on the context for SRF, there are a number of strategic imperatives to be satisfied by the vision for South Manchester:

a. At a national and regional level, South Manchester has a key role to play in accommodating a third of the city’s population and attracting people to its high quality and successful urban neighbourhoods, ensuring that Manchester continues to drive the success and prosperity of the city region.

b. At a conurbation-wide level, South Manchester has a key role to play in helping to deliver economic development activity around knowledge-based industries, the continuing growth and development of Manchester Airport and the development of new housing to support economic growth, within an area where land availability is constrained. The key for South Manchester will be the provision of successful residential neighbourhoods that can support the wider growth agenda.

c. At a city-wide level, the South Manchester SRF must deliver the Manchester Community Strategy by developing neighbourhoods of choice, delivering action that leads to greater levels of self-esteem and mutual respect and ensuring that the city achieves its full potential in employment and education.

Many of the recent trends in South Manchester are positive – rising property values, growing affluence, and a broadening retail and leisure offer. While there are a number of disparities and challenges to address, a key aspect of the SRF is how the positive features and success of the area can be protected, reinforced and strengthened. Only by building on the area’s strengths and addressing its weaknesses will South Manchester perform its role as an area that is attractive to middle and higher income households.

South Manchester needs to compete at the regional and sub-regional level working as part of the wider city region. It will do this by creating first choice neighbourhoods that will be characterised by a high quality living environment and include excellent schools (in both state and independent sectors), vibrant centres, neighbourhood services and sustainable transport options.

Whilst also supporting a large number of quality jobs, the main focus in South Manchester will be on its residential offer and ensuring that all residents have the opportunity to benefit from and contribute to the city region’s economy – making South Manchester a residential location of choice in the sub-region.
Extending Successful Neighbourhoods

The extension of successful urban neighbourhoods across South Manchester will deliver on the strands of Manchester’s Community Strategy and add significant value to the core objectives set out in the City Region Development Programme. It will also contribute towards narrowing the gap between those disadvantaged neighbourhoods in South Manchester and the rest of the area.

Successful urban neighbourhoods, which will support the projected economic growth, will emerge within the SMSRF area, but only if a visionary framework is put in place to guide all aspects of future investment strategy in this part of the city. South Manchester must build on the success and strengths of the area in a way that benefits the existing communities of its constituent neighbourhoods; it must also benefit the wider city and region, in order to maintain wider economic growth and create the conditions for sustained success.

The key characteristics of South Manchester that shape the vision and objectives for the SRF are based on the facts that:

a. It is home to some of the most successful neighbourhoods in the city and attracts visitors and residents with a desirable mix of housing, a green environment and thriving centres.

b. It is strategically located, close to the city centre, with easy access to the airport, motorway network and high-frequency public transport services, and adjacent to major economic drivers such as the universities and hospitals.

c. Despite a strong external perception and image, there are a number of disparities in the social, economic and physical success of the certain neighbourhoods that make up the area.

d. Pressure for development and densification threatens the inherent urban character of the area that makes it attractive in the first place.

e. An education offer that needs to improve to compete with that on offer in neighbouring areas such as Trafford, Stockport and the northern reaches of Cheshire.

Recognition of these key influences on the vision will ensure that the SRF for South Manchester is bespoke to the area and complementary to the frameworks already prepared for the other areas of the city. As well as extending successful neighbourhoods, the SRF provides a clear approach to improvement in areas where social housing dominates the landscape and those areas where students make up a significant component of the population. In parallel, it must reinforce efforts to tackle worklessness, upskill residents and address the concentrations of deprivation in the area.

The SRF must therefore be multifaceted and capable of delivering changes in policy, spatial planning and delivery that will lead to the reinforcement of core objectives at all levels.
The vision for South Manchester

“South Manchester will become the Living City, comprising successful, well managed neighbourhoods, a sustainable housing market, and attractive centres which support a full range of shops and community facilities. The Living City will be made up of strong, cohesive communities, which are well connected and have access to excellent educational and employment opportunities.”

The Living City represents the desire and need for South Manchester to become the area in which people choose to live within both the city and the City Region. By strengthening its neighbourhoods, the area will encourage existing residents to stay there while attracting new residents to South Manchester.
1. Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods
The delivery of popular neighbourhoods in South Manchester will focus on ensuring the area’s housing, streets, open spaces, neighbourhood centres and transport routes are attractive, sustainable, well designed, well used and well maintained. Although South Manchester has a successful housing market, the emphasis of this theme will be to further increase housing choice and quality to attract more families and provide better quality homes for affordable ownership and renting. Stronger protection and enhancement of the area’s buildings, streets and open spaces will ensure that neighbourhoods are attractive and desirable along with more focused and vibrant district and neighbourhood centres that will offer a focal point for a wide range of facilities. Underpinning the success of neighbourhoods is the need to tackle congestion and barriers to movement by creating safe, walkable streets, easy access to high quality public transport and encouraging travel behaviour change. The popular neighbourhoods theme will also reflect Manchester’s aspiration to become Britain’s Greenest City, introducing environmental best practice and sustainability across the board in all areas.

2. Achieving Full Potential in Education, Skills and Employment
Achieving a step change in the education performance of high schools in South Manchester is crucial to its long-term success. While some improvements in attainment have been made, the area does not perform as well in education terms as it should do and compares unfavourably to neighbouring authorities. Improving educational performance will involve a mix of investment in new facilities, curriculum changes and initiatives to boost attainment. The balance of the theme will be focused on attracting and retaining talent in South Manchester, including professionals and key workers, tackling pockets of worklessness and low skills, and assisting small businesses to grow, including making better use of existing premises.

South Manchester: ‘The Living City’
South Manchester will become the Living City, comprising successful, well-managed neighbourhoods, a sustainable housing market, and attractive centres which support a full range of shops and community facilities. The Living City will be made up of strong, cohesive communities, which are well connected and have access to excellent educational and employment opportunities.

3. Successful Communities – Individuals, Families and Neighbourhoods
South Manchester is a very diverse area containing a number of affluent neighbourhoods, smaller pockets of low income and deprived households, mainly but not exclusively in the Council estates, and concentrations of students, primarily in Fallowfield and Withington. The area is also becoming more ethnically and culturally diverse. The thrust of this scheme is to improve quality of life and strengthen all communities in South Manchester. To do this, the SRF will focus on combating crime and nuisance, enhancing the cultural and leisure offer, particularly for young and older people, improving health, and assisting families who require help and support.
What does the Vision mean for South Manchester?
The Living City embodies the desire and need for South Manchester to become the residential location of choice within both the city and the city region. Residents will be retained through strengthening of the existing neighbourhoods, which in turn will also attract new residents to the area. The vision will be realised through a series of integrated and co-ordinated policy objectives that will guide the delivery of all policy areas within South Manchester by the Council and its partners.

The three themes of the vision are:
Theme 1 – Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods
Theme 2 – Achieving Full Potential in Education, Skills and Employment
Theme 3 – Strengthening Communities – Individuals, Families and Neighbourhoods

These are closely linked to the three spines of the city’s Community Strategy: developing neighbourhoods of choice; achieving full potential in education and employment; and raising self-esteem and mutual respect across the community.

The SRF will embody Manchester’s aim to become the greenest city in Britain and policies and actions associated with Green City permeate each of these three themes of the SRF.
Theme 1 – Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods

South Manchester is already an attractive destination for many and a location of choice for professionals, knowledge and key workers. Ensuring a ready supply of attractive places to live is an essential prerequisite for the continued and sustainable success of Manchester.

This theme focuses on:

- **Delivering a sustainable housing market** across South Manchester through a better choice of housing
- **Enhancing the network of district and local centres** to provide ease of access to a wide range of facilities within an attractive environment
- **Delivering and maintaining a high-quality environment** in the area’s streets and spaces
- **Maximising the potential of the limited number of key development sites**
- **Enhancing the movement network** to improve access and encourage more sustainable use of transport.

Theme 2 – Achieving Full Potential in Education, Skills and Employment

One of the key strands of the SRF Policy Framework will be to further raise educational standards in the South Manchester area. As already outlined, this will be fundamental to attracting and retaining the professionals, knowledge workers and key workers who will underpin economic growth in the city as much as it will be to ensuring young people leave school with the right skills and qualifications to access work.

This theme focuses on:

- **Ensuring that South Manchester’s education offer provides a range of choices** for parents by raising educational standards and attainment
- **Supporting and capitalising on knowledge-based economic growth**
- **Improving access to employment opportunities**
- **Addressing worklessness**.
Theme 3 – Strengthening Communities – Individuals, Families and Neighbourhoods

The Strengthening Communities theme focuses on developing cohesive, stronger communities that are safer, healthier and welcoming to people from a wide range of backgrounds. This theme recognises some of the inherent strengths amongst the South Manchester community (its diversity, active voluntary and community groups, the importance of culture and leisure to community life and so on) and aims to build upon these while also seeking to tackle some of the concentrations of social deprivation in the area. The overriding objective within this theme will be to support stronger and more resilient individuals, families and neighbourhoods in South Manchester.

This theme focuses on:

- **Supporting diversity** and encouraging greater interaction between residents and neighbourhoods
- **Integrating students** more fully into their communities and encouraging them to remain in South Manchester
- **Targeted action on crime and nuisance**, which seeks to reduce the propensity for crime and nuisance to happen as well as reduce fear of crime
- **Addressing health inequalities** and encouraging healthier lifestyles
- **Responding to the needs of older people** and the challenges of an ageing population
- **Meeting the evolving needs of children, young people and families.**

Policy and Spatial Framework

To achieve the vision for South Manchester, a series of 27 objectives will guide the delivery of policies within each of the themes. These are presented in the table shown on page 66. The South Manchester SRF Spatial and Policy Framework sets out how the vision and objectives for South Manchester will be taken forward. In developing the framework, careful consideration has been given to ensure that policies are established that directly tackle all the issues and challenges South Manchester faces, complementing relevant city, regional and national strategies and policies that will have an influence on the area.

The detailed policies are presented under the three themes, which taken together present a comprehensive agenda to build upon South Manchester’s successes and address its problems. There are important inter-relationships between individual policies and it is essential that the policies are viewed as a whole to fully understand how the vision will be achieved. The key feature of the SRF is that all the policies are mutually reinforcing. The Spatial Framework seeks to identify the neighbourhood focus or proposed location for a range of physical, economic, housing, transport and environmental policies.

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<th>Theme</th>
<th>Policy Area</th>
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<tr>
<td>Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods (DPN)</td>
<td>Housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strengthening Communities – Individuals, Families and Neighbourhoods (SC)</td>
<td>Crime &amp; Community Safety Children &amp; Family Services Health Culture Community Cohesion Older People</td>
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## Summary of Strategic Themes and the Objectives for the South Manchester SRF

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods</strong></td>
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| Achieving Full Potential in Education, Skills and Employment | **AFP 1** Increase the performance of all South Manchester state schools to be on a par with or exceed the best schools in neighbouring authorities.  
**AFP 2** Further enhance the offer provided by the area's independent schools and increase their contribution to attracting and retaining families.  
**AFP 3** Support the expansion and sustainability of the creative industries and SME sectors.  
**AFP 4** Attract and retain talent to support Knowledge Capital objectives.  
**AFP 5** Address low skills and qualifications in order to facilitate employment progression and meet future skills needs.  
**AFP 6** Reduce the concentrations of workless adults and young people in South Manchester, extending the relative success experienced across South Manchester to all neighbourhoods.  
**AFP 7** Build on the economic competitive advantages of the area for economic growth and inward investment.  
**AFP 8** Exploit the opportunities afforded by information and communications technologies (ICTs) and digital connectivity. |
| Strengthening Communities – Individuals, Families and Neighbourhoods | **SC 1** Develop cohesive and integrated communities.  
**SC 2** Maintain and increase the contribution of culture to the quality of life in South Manchester.  
**SC 3** Develop South Manchester as an exemplar for ethical and sustainable living in the north west.  
**SC 4** Target hot spots of crime and nuisance more effectively and reduce the propensity of some South Manchester residents and businesses to be victims of crime, as part of a broad approach to reducing fear of crime and improving perceptions.  
**SC 5** Maximise the contribution of the student population to the economy and community of South Manchester.  
**SC 6** Address the demand for early years and out-of-school provision for the 5–11 age group.  
**SC 7** Address the variable coverage and quality of cultural and leisure activities for young people.  
**SC 8** Ensure that family support is accessible across all parts of South Manchester, with support targeted on those locations with large numbers of families requiring support.  
**SC 9** Tackle pockets of ill health within the disadvantaged neighbourhoods of South Manchester and achieve healthier lifestyles for all. |
5. Policy Theme 1: Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods

South Manchester is an attractive destination for many and a location of choice for middle and higher income households. Ensuring a ready supply of attractive places to live is an essential prerequisite for the continued and sustainable economic growth of Manchester.

The ‘Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods’ theme presents the physical face of the SRF, combining four subthemes:

i) a sustainable housing market
ii) quality of environment and townscape
iii) a network of district and local centres
iv) movement and local linkages.

The Council has set a precedent nationally and internationally for the regeneration of the city centre. The continued delivery of popular neighbourhoods within the South Manchester SRF presents a number of opportunities from which the physical considerations of the overarching sustainable communities aspiration can be delivered. What this section underlines is the need to build on this current success to further improve the quality of the area to an even higher standard in the future.

Given its current strong platform for the development of popular neighbourhoods, South Manchester has all the necessary ingredients to develop a series of exemplary regeneration initiatives that can collectively achieve best practice in a high-profile, non-central area of a city.

The strategic importance of this with regard to South Manchester is heightened due to the impact the physical environment has on the first and last impressions of a place, to residents, businesses and investors, as many key routes and destinations run through or are within the area respectively. The quality of transport corridors and experiences within destinations, such as district centres or parks, heavily influence the impressions and memories that a place generates.

An overarching issue in South Manchester is the limited space for development, which constrains future development in the area. There are limited numbers of brownfield sites that can be used to support development. These constraints have resulted in rising land values and the onward development of high-density flatted accommodation in more affluent parts of the area. The SRF will provide the regeneration case for proposals to bring forward the limited development opportunities to accommodate growth, add choice and deliver a sustainable development framework.

In order to overcome constraints and maximise development opportunities, plans should be created that demonstrate the potential for change within the district centres, key housing and employment locations and surrounding areas. This will allow the management of future opportunities for redevelopment and the preservation of local character. Consideration needs to be given to the provision of new community, leisure and education uses, as well as housing, retail and employment development.
Key elements of this theme are:

A sustainable housing market: Maintaining a sustainable housing market is at the heart of the SRF. The framework seeks to maintain, and where appropriate increase levels of choice while protecting the character of the successful neighbourhoods.

Quality of environment and townscape: The quality of the environment and built townscape is a key part of the attraction of South Manchester to many of its residents. This subsection also considers physical sustainability and neighbourhood management.

A network of district and local centres: A key thrust behind the Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods theme will be the way in which district and local centres act as the hub and focus for community activity.

Movement and local linkages: Movement and particularly local linkages will become even more important in South Manchester as it strives to deliver successful neighbourhoods. Communications will serve local networks and combine to form a strategic and sustainable movement network for South Manchester, while accommodating high volume and high-quality radial networks serving the regional centre.

1) A Sustainable Housing Market

South Manchester is the dominant residential market in the sub-region, with rising house prices, and in some wards demand outstripping supply. This is principally a result of the strong sub-regional economy that has fuelled demand in South Manchester for high-quality housing. The SRF area attracts people because of a combination of attractive neighbourhoods and good access to a number of key destinations, including Manchester city centre, Manchester Airport and the Oxford Road Corridor. South Manchester therefore plays a key role in attracting and retaining the population and workforce to underpin the continued and growing economic success of the Manchester city region.

In terms of demand, the South Manchester wards can be classified into two groups: wards achieving high average values but low turnover of property; and wards with a high number of sales and prices that are lower in comparison to the South Manchester SRF average.

The first group: Chorlton, Didsbury East, Didsbury West, and Withington, record the highest average house values in the SRF area. These wards have witnessed steady growth in house prices for a number of years but more recently a declining sales rate. These are popular, high value neighbourhoods. In recent years, new-build activity in these wards has been mainly in the apartment sector. The buy-to-let market has been particularly active in Didsbury and Chorlton. Property is relatively more affordable in the second group of wards; comprising Burnage, Chorlton Park, Fallowfield, Levenshulme, Old Moat and Whalley Range. This is reflected in the number of sales, which have risen in recent years.
With the exception of Whalley Range and Levenshulme, these wards also have a relatively large proportion of social rented-sector properties, including the Nell Lane, Merseybank, Burnage and Old Moat estates. A significant number of properties in these wards have been purchased under ‘right to buy’ and are now being sold on.

South Manchester’s proximity to the universities is in fact one of the key drivers of the residential market. Growing demand for student accommodation in the area is satisfied either in existing purpose-built accommodation, distributed throughout the SRF area, or in converted private housing concentrated in Fallowfield, Withington and Old Moat, typically in Victorian terraced housing. This concentration of students can, by virtue of their transient occupancy and the condition of private rented student stock, create problems.

The high number of students distorts the balance of communities; not all private landlords manage or maintain stock adequately; the built environment, public realm and general image of the area suffer due to the domination of private rented student properties, particularly in Fallowfield and Withington; and the transient nature of the population makes it difficult to build community spirit. More recently the overall strength of this market has begun to price out families in some areas not historically seen as attractive to students.

Many three-bedroom homes in the north of the SRF area have been incorporated within the student rental market, reducing the supply of family homes and increasing the domination of students in particular neighbourhoods. The pressure created by the student, apartment and buy-to-let markets has limited the amount of new-build family accommodation coming to the market. Furthermore, over recent years there has been a trend for large villa/family housing conversions for flats and offices. This places a further restriction on the supply of larger accommodation. As demand for apartments has grown in South Manchester, it has been accompanied by rising land values and densities.

Failure to check this trend has also contributed to the reduction in the number of new family homes coming onto the market. The Council’s recent interim policy resolution, which includes a presumption against apartment development outside of district centres or transport hubs, will help to control the number of apartment developments.

Although the area generally benefits from relatively high-property values, there are pockets of housing in the private sector (both rented and owner occupied) that do not meet decency standards as stipulated in published guidance on levels of decency. This is a particular issue in Old Moat and Fallowfield.

Parts of South Manchester are dominated by the social rented sector particularly in Old Moat, Chorlton Park, Nell Lane and Burnage. The social housing stock in the SRF area is generally popular, with a very low stock turnover and high levels of demand. There has been significant right-to-buy activity in these areas. In the right-to-buy sector there is some evidence to suggest that maintenance and management of these properties is also an issue that needs to be addressed.
The cost of purchasing property in the area precludes many people from owning a home, therefore the demand from a wide cross-section of the community is high for social rented housing. However, following a successful ballot in March 2007, parts of the MCC-owned housing are being transferred to the Southways Housing Trust.

Residential stock owned and managed by the Council in the wards of Burnage, Chorlton, Chorlton Park, Didsbury East, Didsbury West, Old Moat and Withington transferred to Southways in October 2007. Council tenants in Fallowfield and Whalley Range have also recently voted for a transfer of their homes to a similar not-for-profit organisation, the City South Manchester Housing Trust, in spring 2008.

A key feature of the SRF is the objective of ensuring a sustainable housing market in South Manchester to attract and retain growing households within the area. The objective is integral to other parts of the SRF strategy, most notably maintaining and improving the range and quality of schools across South Manchester. Making South Manchester a more popular living area for families will have a beneficial knock-on impact on the wellbeing of local schools.

The principal issues for South Manchester are therefore to ensure a continued supply of family housing, diversification of tenure to encourage more home ownership and access to affordable home ownership, and to improve the management of private rented accommodation. The wider objective is to develop and maintain a series of successful urban neighbourhoods that are underpinned by a stable and sustainable housing market.

**Key Issues**

- **Housing choice** Providing a wider choice of housing is important for attracting and retaining residents. Future housing developments need to focus on providing high-quality family accommodation.

- **Conversion of dwellings for apartments** Conversion and redevelopment of large Victorian villas has occurred across the area, many at a time when parts of the SRF were considered less desirable and properties had fallen into disrepair. More recently this trend has been driven by rising land prices and a buoyant apartment market. The issue is that the loss of family dwellings to multiple-occupation hinders the ability to achieve a truly sustainable community. The framework must address this issue through advocating the development of appropriate planning policies.

- **Social rented sector** One of the key issues for the future is matching demand for the type of housing with the needs of tenants, for example, older people who currently under-occupy their present property requiring more suitable flatted or bungalow accommodation; larger unit sizes providing for expanding families; or accommodation for couples. A further issue in this housing sector is the condition of many of the properties. The stock transfer to Southways and City South Housing Trusts will see an emphasis on the refurbishment of homes so that they meet the decency standard by 2011.

- **Diversifying tenure** Council estates within the wards of Burnage, Chorlton Park (such as Nell Lane and Mersey Bank) and Old Moat have a limited tenure mix, despite having the right to buy. The rising prices in the housing market
exacerbated by the lack of supply of sites for development means that there is a real difficulty for many people buying a home in the area. Although opportunities for development are not widespread, sites must be identified to provide dwellings that are affordable, providing people with an opportunity to access the housing ladder. This should form part of the wider policy thrust towards creating more choice in the market at all levels of market entry.

- **Private rented housing** The private rented market is a significant component of the South Manchester offer. It has a valuable contribution to make at a number of levels in satisfying demand for accommodation across the area. Private rented housing stock in South Manchester is largely occupied by students, key workers and young professionals. The quality of stock is variable as private landlords, many of which own large numbers of properties in the SRF area available to rent for students and professionals, do not manage or maintain stock adequately. This has a negative impact on the built environment, public realm and general image of the area. In order to address this issue, a system needs to be put in place to manage stock more effectively to combat inadequate management. By improving the quality of private rented stock, the area will become more attractive to young working professionals and graduates.
Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives for addressing housing issues in South Manchester are as follows:

- **DPN 1** Deliver more home ownership and family housing to support population retention and growth, and to stem the flow of families migrating to outer districts where the availability of suitable housing is greater.

- **DPN 2** Deliver high-quality sustainable new housing developments that will meet the housing needs of the existing and future population of South Manchester. Where possible, accommodate low-cost home ownership within schemes to meet local need.

- **DPN 3** Improve the sustainability of social rented stock through investment in the quality of housing and environment and diversification of tenure, where appropriate, to increase home ownership.

- **DPN 4** Manage the private rented sector more effectively to improve the quality of housing and the environment, and diversification of tenure to increase home ownership.

- **DPN 5** Address student and related younger persons’ (graduates, postgraduates, young professionals, key workers) accommodation in a positive way.

These will link to the city’s range of housing strategies.

**DPN Objective 1:**

Deliver more home ownership and family housing to support population retention and growth and to stem the flow of families migrating to outer districts where the availability of suitable housing is greater.

South Manchester has a dynamic and popular housing market. However, large family housing is in short supply. Many larger Victorian properties have been converted into flats, which has limited the number of suitable properties available for families to stay in the area.

Furthermore, new housing development is dominated by one and two-bedroom apartments. Under this policy new sites should be dedicated principally to the supply of family housing. The policy is linked implicitly to other policy objectives designed to improve the total living environment for families across South Manchester.

**DPN 1.1**

*Use of planning system (PPS3) to ensure the construction of a high proportion of family accommodation within housing developments.*

Manchester City Council has recently adopted interim planning policy to manage the housing supply within the City. The policy states that the Council will not support apartment-led developments outside of the city centre, its fringes and in other sustainable locations. This policy, alongside the recently adopted Guide to Development in Manchester 2, seeks to reconcile the imbalance in housing density and mix.
The Guide aims to protect the character of areas, and seek justification for higher density development, consequently reverting to the provision of a range of family housing more characteristic of these parts of the city. Apartment development should be directed to sustainable locations, including being close to transport hubs, shops and facilities. Subject to the Housing Needs Assessment, the emphasis should currently be on the provision of family accommodation to support growing households with a presumption against the development of apartments and the conversion of larger family homes into apartments. The encouragement of family housing in South Manchester will support the provision of successful residential neighbourhoods that can support a wider growth agenda, support local services and attract a sustainable population.

**DPN 1.2**

*Continue to promote home ownership across South Manchester to widen the choice of housing and reduce the reliance and dominance of rented tenures.*

The framework must provide wider options for access to all forms of home ownership within the SRF area to facilitate a better mix of tenures, to contribute to more diverse, sustainable communities and give opportunities for people in the social rented sector to become home owners.

The following schemes provide opportunities to diversify tenure in South Manchester:

- New Build Homebuy scheme will enable purchasers to buy a minimum initial purchase of 25% of a newly built house with the provider holding the remaining equity. Purchasers will be able to buy further shares in their home.
- The Open Market Homebuy – purchasers maybe expected to purchase around 75% of a home on the open market. Lenders offer a regular mortgage combined with an equity loan of 12.5% of the property’s value alongside a Government equity loan of up to 12.5% of the property’s value.
- First Time Buyers Initiative – a similar scheme to shared equity as it supports first time buyers to buy a new affordable home with English Partnerships retaining an entitlement to a share of the future sale proceeds.

- The Social Homebuy scheme offers opportunities for tenants who do not have the right to buy or acquire to buy a minimum 25% share in their rented home.
DPN 1.3
Promote affordable home ownership in South Manchester to attract key workers and allow all residents to have access to the housing market. Use planning policies and an expanded menu of financial products to ensure the appropriate level of affordable provision and improved access.

The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Paper ‘Delivering Affordable Housing’ defines the sector and also the types of housing included within the sector.

The Local Planning Authority is cited as having a strategic role in terms of an approach to the provision through other providers or the delivery of housing. At a national level the limit for inclusion of affordable housing is set at 15 dwellings or more, although there is discretion to reduce this figure where applicable.

MCC is developing an affordability strategy that seeks to balance both existing need and future housing demand as well as support the wider aims of the Community Strategy. Within South Manchester, there is a need to develop innovative and flexible approaches to deliver the Council’s affordability strategy and meet the regeneration objectives of the area.

This will include the use of S106 but importantly expand pathways to housing choice through, for example, new equity products. It is important to engage with private sector partners and RSLs to provide new products and incentives, eg. for key workers. The share of affordable housing on new development will support the city-wide target for affordable provision currently being established.

DPN 1.4
Develop planning policy to curb conversion of large houses where appropriate, including policies to encourage re-conversion of large houses and the designation/extension of conservation areas where merited to provide additional controls on development.

The Local Development Framework should contain a policy that will prevent the conversion of large houses, specific to the South Manchester area. This should take into account the contribution that many large Victorian villas make to conservation areas in South Manchester and other areas of townscape value. The policy will also help control issues that can arise associated with housing in multiple occupation such as parking and service provision.

The current designation of conservation areas should be revisited to protect the character of high-quality areas. Research should be undertaken to establish if additional conservation areas can be designated to protect the overall value of the area in terms of design and the environment.
DPN Objective 2:
Deliver high-quality sustainable new housing developments that will meet the housing needs of the existing and future population of South Manchester. Where possible accommodate low cost home ownership within schemes to meet local need.

DPN 2.1
Review land supply for residential use following completion of land supply and research studies.

The limited number of brownfield sites that can be used to support development is an overarching issue which permeates across the different housing sectors. Provision of new homes has been led by rising values and the resultant development of high-density flatted accommodation. Land supply mapping and analysis in South Manchester is currently being undertaken on behalf of the Council.

The issues, opportunities and policies outlined within the SRF provide the case for bringing forward limited opportunities for effective sustainable development. Research studies and land supply mapping illustrate a very modest number of new sites coming forward for development across South Manchester.

The policy framework will be principally set out in the Local Development Framework currently under preparation. The city should take the opportunity to make more effective use of sites to drive forward the strategic objectives of the SRF. This will address opportunity sites for development within the context of the overriding objective to retain and attract families to live sustainably in the SRF area.

Other opportunities will give rise to maximising regeneration and development potential, for example in district centres. Management of opportunities for redevelopment should be undertaken through the preparation of plans/briefs, which seek to meet the vision and objectives of the wider remit of the SRF, principally to strengthen the centres.

DPN 2.2
Use the Manchester Guide to Development (2) and planning policy to achieve a high quality of design in all new housing that will ensure it is sustainable and attractive to live in and will contribute to the Council’s Green City agenda. The South Manchester SRF area will be a beacon for achieving the highest standards of design and for improving the quality of housing across the conurbation.

Utilising existing tools in the form of guidance, proactively promoting the concept of quality design within the area, and working with stakeholders and developers to understand the wider objectives of the SRF will enable the vision of sustainable and attractive environments for the area to be realised. South Manchester has a number of attractive areas that must be preserved; elsewhere the quality of the built environment must be enhanced, rather than promote mediocrity.

Policies within DPN 6 refer to the built environment generally, while DPN 6.3 refers specifically to the need to encourage partnership working with developers to ensure good design. Linked to DPN 2.1, the utilisation of the opportunities afforded by the research on land supply will be used to develop planning briefs and policies for brownfield sites.
The key objective is to raise the environmental performance of new homes while still delivering quality and high standards of design. Development areas will include the district and local centres and remaining sites at Christie Fields, Withington Hospital, the Oakwood site and Parrs Wood. The proposed Metrolink Phase 3A and 3B delivery will seek to further embed the principles and success of sustainability for Chorlton, Chorlton Park, Didsbury West, Didsbury and Didsbury East.

**DPN 2.3**
*Produce Local Energy Plans and Private Wire Networks for South Manchester.*

Manchester’s city-wide Energy Strategy is befitting to Manchester’s status as a world-class city. It is also the first immediate initiative by the Council in taking forward the agenda to promote the city’s development to become the greenest city in Britain.

Moreover, it shows the city’s level of commitment to tackling the global problem of climate change. As the number of residents increases, providing sufficient energy to meet their needs is an increasing challenge.

Ensuring that developments meet the highest energy performance standards, identifying and implementing opportunities for decentralised energy generation and district heating, and providing residents with access to energy reduction schemes are the most cost-effective means to ensure that demand does not exceed capacity.


**DPN 2.4**
*Develop policies to support choice for specialist housing needs, such as BME groups and older people, taking into account the changing housing needs of older people.*

Specialist housing in South Manchester should be promoted through working with key stakeholders to identify the type, location and tenure required by BME groups and older people.
One of the issues in the social rented sector is the lack of specialist housing available for residents with specialist or changing needs. In the case of older people, as circumstances change over time, the need to occupy a dwelling originally intended for a family diminishes.

However, without the provision of appropriate accommodation (such as sheltered housing) residents are unable to move and therefore release larger dwellings back into the social rented sector, thus creating an obstruction in the rental pipeline. Working with the RSLs and the Council Housing Department in tandem with area action plans, sites should be identified to deliver appropriate specialist housing in appropriate locations.

With regard to the BME community, access to housing has been identified as a particular issue in south Levenshulme and parts of Fallowfield where there is identified demand for larger family housing units. Where new schemes are proposed in these areas, this should be taken into account in the briefing process.
DPN Objective 3: Improve the sustainability of social rented stock through investment in the quality of housing and environment and diversification of tenure, where appropriate, to increase home ownership.

DPN 3.1 Work with Southways and City South Manchester Housing Trusts on target estates, to tackle the physical and socio-economic issues currently undermining their long-term sustainability. Strategies or plans should seek to:
- Maximise the benefits of stock transfer
- Create development opportunities for new housing and local services
- Improve the estate layout and design
- Enhance housing quality and energy-efficiency
- Improve public transport accessibility
- Increase levels of home ownership through diversification of tenure
- Attract young families and key workers
- Link to policy objectives in achieving full potential in education, skills and employment, and create employment opportunities through local labour partnerships
- The plan for Nell Lane should seek to de-radburnise the layout to improve accessibility and security.

There will be a continued need for sustainable social rented accommodation, particularly where high residual property prices predominate. The condition of housing and the built environment is intrinsically linked to the wellbeing of residents. Intervention in this sector must therefore take account of social needs in terms of tenure, access to facilities and quality of environment.

The transfer of stock into local housing companies provides the impetus for change for social housing estates that goes beyond improving condition of the social rented stock. It is recognised that the opportunities for new residential development are limited, but where infill sites can be identified in and around social housing estates the prospect for introducing/increasing low-cost home ownership and the diversification of tenure should be fully captured.
DPN Objective 4:

Manage the private rented sector more effectively to improve the quality of housing and environment and diversification of tenure to increase home ownership.

DPN 4.1

Develop the housing strategy in South Manchester to reduce the dependence on low-quality rented housing in certain locations, specifically Fallowfield, Withington, Old Moat, Levenshulme and Whalley Range.

The private rented sector is a hugely important part of the South Manchester housing market. The variable standard of accommodation, particularly in the northern neighbourhoods of the SRF area, needs to be addressed. Poor management has led to stock becoming downgraded and impacting on the overall quality of certain streets and neighbourhoods.

The issue is compounded by the relative transience of occupiers. The market for renting is set to remain buoyant as the key-worker/knowledge-worker market grows and students continue to demand property across the area. It is essential therefore in the northern neighbourhoods that more effective neighbourhood management, landlord accreditation and better quality new-build solutions are put in place to reduce the dominance of the private landlord in areas where older terraced properties currently predominate.

A new and enhanced neighbourhood management regime is required in these neighbourhoods. While current initiatives have had some impact they have failed to arrest the overall decline in the quality of the housing stock or the prevalence of antisocial behaviour in student-dominated neighbourhoods.

A greater level of enforcement aligned with landlord accreditation and environmental health legislation will be required to ensure that these areas do not decline any further.

In addition, and in line with wider policy objectives, a more proactive approach to meeting demand for new student housing is needed. The Council, working in partnership with the universities, will develop detailed plans that will lead to the following outcomes:

- Greater regulation and management of private rented stock currently occupied by students in South Manchester.
• Further development (where sustainable) of existing campus/student halls of residence to increase the quantity of bespoke student housing available on managed sites in South Manchester.
• The development of further student homes built to meet increasing demand in other parts of the city, where they can meet student needs and demands.

The latter policy approach is designed to take the pressure off a number of South Manchester neighbourhoods, but also create development opportunities in other parts of the city.

DPN 4.2
Introduce and exercise licensing/accredited landlord schemes to ensure good management of property and environs.

Poor management of private rented stock is a particular issue in certain neighbourhoods, again mainly to the north of the SRF area. Proper control of standards in private rented stock should be put in place through an accredited licensing scheme. This will ensure that properties are maintained and are of an appropriate standard.

Co-ordination between the universities and further education institutes in the city, as well as key employers (such as hospitals and the Council) should be undertaken as a first step in advocating an accredited landlord scheme. A detailed scheme could be put in place by 2009. In addition, a wider approach to the management of private rented stock could incorporate more enforcement and the set-up of a Landlords Forum through which common issues could be debated and action plans developed.

DPN 4.3
Work with universities to regulate the private rented sector geared to students. Manage student demand for low-quality private rented stock by promoting higher quality and mixed-use design in new student housing developments in South Manchester and elsewhere.

To take forward a co-ordinated strategy for student housing there is a requirement to produce an overarching strategy for students that is for the city as a whole. The strategy can then more readily take into account the needs of South Manchester. The SRF identifies a series of objectives specific to the local area. Baseline research undertaken to support preparation of the SRF clearly points to strong demand for student accommodation to continue to influence the South Manchester market. The nature of demand is reasonably well understood, principally comprising second and third-year students and overseas students. Needs vary – and current solutions (in market terms) tend to be more limited.

For example, there are emerging needs for larger units to meet demand from groups or families, but new-build solutions tend to cater only for single or double occupancy. Linked to DPN 4.2, provision of student accommodation across the city needs to
be more proactively taken forward. University-endorsed accommodation strategies should promote purpose built accommodation (which meets identified need). This will have the added impact of reducing demand for private rented stock.

Intensification of use on current student village sites such as Owens Park is an obvious first step in this process. It could be accompanied by some further development on sites close to public transport routes and the University campuses.

**DPN Objective 5:**
*Address student and related younger persons’ (graduates, postgraduates, young professionals, key workers) accommodation in a positive way.*

**DPN 5.1**
*Set up a forum of interested agencies (universities, hospitals, councils, housing providers) to prepare a strategy, and co-ordinate activity that will improve housing opportunities for students and younger persons in South Manchester and the wider conurbation.*

Linked directly with DPN 4 and specifically DPN 4.1, tracking the availability of appropriate housing stock is critical to encouraging students and young professionals to live and work in South Manchester and the conurbation. The popularity of the SRF area is clearly demonstrated from the evidence of sales and values. Opportunities for retaining a diverse tenure of stock should be explored to understand the requirements of potential tenants/owner-occupiers.

The forum should promote the principles of a sustainable approach to development and movement by advocating appropriate development for students and younger people in transport hubs and district centres. This also contributes to the economic sustainability of services and access to employment opportunities.

**DPN 5.2**
*Deliver better quality accommodation for key workers (teachers, police, nurses etc) including ‘hotel’ accommodation – high-quality serviced flats for professionals in training.*

There is a general recognition that the South Manchester area is very popular among students, key workers and young professionals as a result of a combination of accessibility, service provision, shops, bars, restaurants and an attractive environment.

The issues of demand and supply have already been explored above. Linked to this is the recognition that South Manchester must continue to provide an opportunity for owner occupation or shared ownership in affordable terms amongst this group. This is linked directly to the retention of skills, and supporting economic growth in the city.
2) Quality of Environment and Townscape

South Manchester has transformed from an area characterised by green fields and farm holdings in the mid-19th century to a suburb of the city today. It has a rich built environment with attractive residential neighbourhoods, distinctive centres, green open spaces and key transport and movement corridors. Eleven conservation area designations cover many of the former village settlements and district and local centres in South Manchester. Many areas that are not designated as conservation areas also have a townscape of historic value, often complemented by the presence and influence of greenery and the natural environment.

An emphasis on place-making and best-practice design will further enhance the environment, protecting assets and highlighting distinctiveness in the district and local centres. For example, the Council has recently responded to the development pressure placed upon conservation areas in South Manchester by recommending the extension of two designations in Chorlton: at Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane and Chorlton Green. This is a proactive response where planning controls can be used to manage change in the built environment. Capturing best practice in neighbourhood and environmental management will also be critical to the ongoing management and maintenance of high-quality neighbourhoods.

The quality and distinctiveness of the historic built environment in many parts of South Manchester is one of its key physical assets. However, this urban fabric has become increasingly susceptible to pressures from development and intense day-to-day use associated with commuting to work, travelling to university or the school run.

Conservation, enhancement and management of these built assets are therefore priorities for the SRF within the Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods theme, so that the area’s past can contribute positively to its future. This will allow the traditional character of the area to combine with the high-quality new architecture and development that is also sought within the SRF, so that a varied and interesting built environment results. A functional and attractive built environment is a key component of a ‘living’ city and a key driver behind the Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods theme.

Another key physical asset in South Manchester is the amount and quality of green open space. As well as being generally leafy and green, the area benefits from the prominence of the Mersey River Valley (which provides the southern and western boundaries of the SRF area) and its formal parks. Seven of its formal parks have achieved the accolade of Green Flag status. In addition to these parks, there are also four sites of biological importance (Chorlton Ees, Chorlton Water Park, Fletcher Moss and Hardy Farm) and three Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) at Ivy Green, Chorlton Water Park and Highfield Country Park.

South Manchester also features a number of successful events and festivals, such as Chorlton Arts Festival, summer plays in Fletcher Moss Park, and a variety of events in Platt Fields Park throughout the year. This existing level of activity must be built upon and continued throughout the area. Despite the success of many of these spaces, effort is required to ensure that this quality is equally distributed to further parks and open spaces throughout all South Manchester’s neighbourhoods.
Popular neighbourhoods must be places that have a high-quality public realm and streetscape throughout, ranging from key road corridors, to district and local centres and to the local residential street environment as a whole. A distinctive and functional public realm is one that helps support local character and one that generates pride in local communities. It is also one that strategically communicates the correct messages about the city of Manchester to wider audiences. The perception of the city to a range of parties, ranging from investors to visitors, is therefore influenced heavily by the quality of the public realm throughout South Manchester.

Sustainability permeates the SMSRF through all its themes. Physically, the Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods theme champions Manchester’s strategic aspiration to become Britain’s greenest city. Many significant step changes in approach are contained within this strategy that will be essential to the overarching long-term challenge of fighting climate change in urban areas. The strategy will aim to improve environmental, ecological and energy-efficiency standards, increase transport choice, support business efficiency, enhance the built environment and improve green spaces.

Popular neighbourhoods should also be places that are safe and clean: two primary quality-of-life indicators and essential components of sustainable communities.

Therefore, this theme also contains a policy approach to managing crime in the physical environment and to maintaining clean and high-quality streets, so that improvements throughout the SRF area are robust, sustained and not undermined.
Key Issues
The key issues associated with the quality of the environment and townscape in South Manchester include:

• Threats to the historic fabric While best practice and sustainability guidance is helping to constantly improve the standards of new development, due to its sensitive nature the historic townscape environment in South Manchester remains under pressure from development in terms of loss, damage and intrusion.

• Achieving best-practice design and sustainability in new development As with development in other parts of Manchester and nationally, many new schemes in South Manchester in recent years have not capitalised on the opportunity to install the highest standards of sustainable and innovative design. Instead, a large number of flats and standard design developments have tended to detract from the character and distinctiveness of the area.

• Poor-quality public realm and streetscape The quality of the public realm and streetscape throughout South Manchester is in many places (including the more successful neighbourhoods) of a poor quality.

• Neighbourhood Management The quality of the environment in South Manchester should be managed and maintained to a high standard. This is currently an issue within South Manchester, where in addition to general street management issues (including maintenance of landscaping, fly-tipping and litter), the influence of high concentrations of students and increased flatted accommodation has put pressure on the appearance of the street scene.

• Quality and management of parks and open spaces There is the potential to enhance under-utilised parks and open spaces in South Manchester and to review the management mechanisms for maintaining them day to day and in the future. While South Manchester has a number of Green Flag parks, their distribution throughout the area is varied. The Council is currently undertaking a Baseline Audit and understanding of community needs (based on PPG 17), leading to policy options around protection/prioritisation of improvement work to parks and open spaces and the creation of new spaces in areas of need. A number of the parks are deficient in the amenities they have available, especially when compared with the existing Green Flag parks and those found within neighbouring authorities, such as Stockport or Trafford.
Strategic Objectives

- The following two objectives have been identified to manage development, safeguard and enhance the built and natural assets of South Manchester, and to maximise its future sustainability:

- **DPN 6** Develop policies for the built environment that protect local character and support high-quality design.

- **DPN 7** Develop proposals to protect and enhance the natural environment and promote and reinforce the importance of local nature reserves, the Mersey Valley, formal public parks and informal open spaces within neighbourhoods.

Engagement with all the people who live, work and play in the area will be essential in terms of achieving a step change in the quality of the environment across South Manchester and to ensure the improvement is managed and maintained. Communicating, educating and enabling communities will be fundamental in making green and sustainable aspirations an actuality day to day.

All these factors will help reinstall people's pride in where they live in a local and global sense.

Manchester has placed culture at the heart of its regeneration strategy for many years and is increasingly recognising the specific contribution that the historic environment makes to a sense of place and as an economic driver to improve the quality of life of its residents. Protection and promotion of its heritage assets alongside quality new-build development make a significant contribution to the city's Cultural Strategy as a key component of its Community Strategy.

Policies for delivering a higher quality of environment and townscape will complement key city strategies including:

- Green City Agenda
- Parks for All Seasons: Manchester Leisure’s Parks Strategy
- The Guide to Development in Manchester (2)
- Ward Plans
- Biodiversity Strategy April 2005
- Waterways Strategy.

**DPN Objective 6:**

*Develop policies for the built environment that protect local character and support high-quality design.*

**DPN 6.1**

*Prepare policies to protect local character of the built environment in South Manchester, including full implementation and enforcement of conservation area designations and policy. Identify the need and opportunity to extend existing conservation areas and create new conservation area designations.*

The erosion of the historic urban fabric in South Manchester should be halted. This can be achieved by the preparation of policies to protect local character of the built environment, including the full implementation and strict enforcement of conservation area designations, policy and best-practice approaches.

The existing base of conservation area assessment work should be furthered with the preparation of Conservation Area Management Plans for each area.
The drafting of Management Plans will have resource implications and will need to be phased according to the areas of greatest need, such as the areas under most pressure for development or where the condition of the built stock and townscape is poor.

An important mechanism to widen the protection of heritage assets will be the identification of the need and opportunity for further conservation area designations and extensions throughout South Manchester.

Designation provides opportunities to positively benefit the character of these areas, economically, socially and environmentally, through the conservation of the existing character of the area. The formal designation of conservation areas assists in raising the historic profile of an individual area and identifying it as an area of character, which in turn makes it more attractive for investment in both existing and new housing stock from private sources. The beneficiaries of this investment are the local residents and the city itself.

Formal designation also enables more considered control over the demolition of existing buildings and ensures that new redevelopment proposals are fully justified, are of a high quality of architectural design, an appropriate layout and footprint, and commensurate with the character of the area.

In recent years, the Council reviewed its conservation area coverage following concerns raised by Members, local people and groups. Following a conservation areas review in 2004, six new conservation areas have subsequently been designated across the city and there remain some 30 areas that require further investigation.

One of the six recent designations was for the Wilbraham Road/Edge Lane area of Chorlton, which along with Chorlton Green has recently been recommended for further extension.

The SRF promotes a continuation of this process in terms of exploring the merits of extending any of the remaining conservation areas in South Manchester. Given the scale of development pressures, coupled with the extent of conservation area coverage of the existing townscape, the priority areas for extension might include:

- Rushford Park Conservation Area (Levenshulme)
- Withington Conservation Area
- Whalley Range Conservation Area.

However, the Council will identify the opportunity for new or extended conservation areas through the LDF process. Buildings, including quality public buildings, metropolitan architecture and historic housing stock must also be conserved and improved. New uses for vacant historic buildings should be explored and troublesome long-term vacancies should be acquired. There is also a need to assist private owners in refurbishing their stock, by increasing the take-up of available grants and subsidies.
DPN 6.2
Implement streetscape improvements to the public realm (paving, landscaping, lighting, trees, public art etc) throughout the SRF area to improve the aesthetic quality of the environment and reinforce its distinctiveness and character.

Streetscape improvements to install a high-quality public realm throughout all parts of the SMSRF area will reinforce South Manchester’s character and distinctiveness. This policy approach should be prioritised in district and local centres, on key transport corridors and along strategic pedestrian and cycle routes, but, ultimately, there should be no high street, shop frontage or residential street of negative aesthetic quality in the SRF area.

Public realm improvements should include a palette of materials and a scope of works that reflect the principles contained within the Manchester Guide to Development (2). Although a common approach should be used throughout the area, subtle differences per neighbourhood or character area should be encouraged to underline identity and the transition between different places.

A public realm companion guide to The Guide to Development (2) is currently being prepared by the Council for south east Manchester as part of SEMMMS (South East Manchester Multi-Modal Study). This covers an area of South Manchester to the east of Princess Parkway and will present a palette of materials and treatments that will reflect each character area. The guide will provide advice for developers on appropriate streetscape design and will also guide the implementation of future street improvements in this part of the city.

Once completed, the city will seek to widen the emerging public realm guide to cover the entire South Manchester area and to potentially become city-wide. It will be an important element of a co-ordinated approach to public realm design and maintenance in the SRF.

The use of public art will be considered along key corridors and in district and local centres to underline the distinctiveness and sense of arrival to each place as part of improvements to the street environment. The implementation of public realm guidance could also involve community engagement and consideration of the local community’s and public artists’ views on what matters are distinct to each neighbourhood.

DPN 6.3
Use the Adopted Guide to Development in Manchester (2) to encourage better design practice from all developers. Partnership working should be encouraged with developers to ensure that the Council has input into schemes beyond planning consent.

Although the scope for significant new development is limited in South Manchester, all new projects should be of the highest possible design quality in terms of their aesthetic design, layout and build quality. This will include ensuring that design is inclusive so as to enable everyone to have equal access to goods and services. Accessibility should be demonstrated within all development proposals, and residential development should also be suitable for adaptation for occupation by disabled people. Parking facilities should also take account of disabled people’s needs.
Following the adoption of the Guide to Development in Manchester (2) in April 2007 as a Supplementary Planning Document, MCC Planning will now be more proactive in using this document to encourage better design practice from developers across the city. There is the capacity to share good practice from elsewhere in the city, for example the Maine Road development brief and the East Manchester HMR developers’ panel.

For developers receiving grants, funding or non-commercial rates of access to land, commitment to minimum requirements beyond the Guide to Development in Manchester (2) should be leveraged in South Manchester. Partnership working should also be piloted and encouraged with developers in the SRF to ensure that the Council continues to have input into all schemes beyond obtaining planning consent.

DPN 6.4
*Based on the adopted Guide to Development (2) ensure development meets the highest environmental design standards by promoting better energy-efficiency, recycling and reuse of renewables, low-carbon emissions and BREAAM standards. Development must also comply with the Code for Sustainable Homes (December 2006) and the target for all new homes to be zero carbon by 2015/16.*

Future new development in South Manchester will be encouraged to meet the highest standards of energy-efficiency as part of the Green City objectives. The development of at least one zero carbon development in South Manchester by 2010 will act as a precedent for other developments throughout the ten to 10-15-year timescale of the SMSRF, helping to accelerate innovation across the conurbation and setting a regional precedent.

Developers will be encouraged to install wireless e-infrastructure. Future developments will also need to take into account the findings of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Exemplar schemes within the city include Grove Village within Ardwick and throughout New East Manchester.
DPN 6.5
Based on the adopted Guide to Development, ensure new developments and street improvements support 'secured-by-design' principles, including increased CCTV coverage, environmental improvements, lighting, target hardening and alley-gating.

Successful neighbourhoods feature low levels of criminal activity. It is essential to the attractiveness of South Manchester as a place to live, that new developments, street improvements and existing areas of need are protected from crime and support secured by design principles. Based on the Guide to Development (2), measures will be implemented including increased CCTV coverage, environmental improvements, lighting, target-hardening and alley-gating.

The Council will work closely with Greater Manchester Police to identify the priority areas for improving security and safety, with support from specialist teams such as the Alley-gating Team and Local Tasking Meetings. Section 106 funding should be used to help fund these improvements where possible.

DPN 6.6
Develop South Manchester as a best-practice exemplar in integrated environmental management and quality-of-public realm. Integrate and co-ordinate activity to manage and protect the quality of the built environment, including street management, landscaping, fly-tipping, contamination, drainage and air quality.

Clean and litter-free streets are essential in maintaining the positive appearance of an area and communicating the image of a sustainable neighbourhood. To ensure that existing street environments and the wider public realm is as pleasant as possible in South Manchester today and that future improvements are not undermined, an integrated approach to environmental management is required in the SRF area.

Co-ordinated activity to maintain and improve the built environment will be striven for between MCC departments, for example Regeneration, Street Management, Parks and Environmental Services. These will focus on targeting localised problem areas, such as the Fallowfield and Withington student area and more strategic concerns such as land contamination, air quality, drainage and utilities.

For example, once the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is complete, it will be important to use the information to ensure that the measures needed to safeguard South Manchester from flooding are fully understood and implemented. Key measures for improving and maintaining the built environment should also be delivered via the district level public service board.

In delivering management services, a new approach to environmental management is proposed within the Council on a neighbourhood basis. This approach will be delivered on the basis of local needs and will be linked with the existing ward co-ordination approach across all areas of the city. Strong links with and delivery of the city’s existing successful campaigns, such as the ‘100 Days Challenge’, will be proactively promoted across South Manchester.
DPN Objective 7:
Develop proposals to protect and enhance the natural environment and promote and reinforce the importance of local nature reserves, the Mersey River Valley, formal public parks and informal open spaces within neighbourhoods.

DPN 7.1
Develop proposals and identify resources to retain and enhance open spaces, parks and local nature reserves throughout South Manchester, as part of a high-quality green network.

The Mersey River Valley, plus an impressive network of parks, open spaces and local nature reserves, exist in the SRF area and will continue to be a strong contributing factor towards a good quality of life for South Manchester’s existing and future residents.

To establish a successful network of high-quality parks and open spaces throughout South Manchester, the SRF supports Manchester Leisure in delivering the aspirations contained within the Parks for all Seasons strategy. This seeks not only to enhance the network of open spaces throughout South Manchester, but to also increase levels of participation and use within the spaces.

The major funding bid for Alexandra Park is to be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund in April 2008 and will be supported by the SRF as a first step in implementing this policy. Other priorities for park improvements will ensure that all outstanding country parks and MCC key parks will achieve Green Flag status, as well as the majority of other parks in the SRF area.
These priorities include:
- Highfield Country Park (Levenshulme)
- Fog Lane Park (Didsbury/Burnage)
- Ladybarn Park (Burnage/Withington)
- Kingswood Park (Withington).

Further funding bids will then be explored and developed to organisations such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, Sport England and the Big Lottery Fund, as appropriate. Close working between MCC Leisure and Sport England will be a particular priority in terms of achieving physical improvements and the implementation of measures to increase participation and use of all parks and open spaces in South Manchester.

DPN 7.2
Encourage and enhance green linkages throughout South Manchester and to other parts of the city and conurbation, by connecting parks, open spaces and attractive streets as part of an interlinked, safe and accessible green network.

A network of high-quality open spaces will only be a valuable asset for local residents if the spaces are accessible and served by clearly defined linkages. Linking open spaces will not only encourage their wider use, but it will also strategically contribute to Manchester’s green city aspirations by encouraging sustainable modes of travel, such as walking and cycling, within the SRF area and to other locations beyond. Improved links will include improvements to existing dedicated routes, such as the Trans Pennine Trail, Mersey River Valley and Fallowfield Loop, as well as local streets. A series of simple measures when taken as a cumulative will have a significant impact in delivering this policy.

Such measures can include:
- Tree planting and landscaping
- Lighting
- Streetscape improvements
- Wayfinding, signage and information
- Safe Routes to School initiatives.

DPN 7.3
Improve management and partnership working measures to increase the quality and community use of all parks and open spaces. Measures should include improvements to accessibility, legibility, security and amenity (playspace, biodiversity, adventure activities, cafes etc) within the parks, as well as initiatives to develop and strengthen the role of Friends of Parks groups and park wardens, to increase engagement and the sense of ownership of spaces within the local community. A programme of educational and community events related to open-space preservation and enhancement should be supported.

To deliver the aspiration of a strong and accessible green network, it is essential that strong partnership working is established between those responsible for delivering improvements to parks and open spaces and also the community, transport agencies and the police. The Parks for all Seasons strategy states that it is the community’s use and enjoyment of public parks that will ensure their future success and their contribution to the overall success of the city of Manchester. The SRF should build on the foundation of the existing strategy at the strategic level by continuing to maximise the potential for the public to enjoy public parks, and contribute to Manchester being recognised as a dynamic city, in which to live, work and play.
A proposed new park management structure will increase the number of front-line staff in parks, and offers an opportunity for increasing the level of community involvement in the parks, with associated training and local employment measures. This should be allied with the establishment or strengthening of the ‘park friends’ system in South Manchester, such as the Friends of Ladybarn Park and the Friends of Highfield Park, to increase levels of engagement with young people and the wider community, encouraging a greater sense of ‘ownership’ and respect for the park environment.

Volunteering and community events will be important aspects of future park management in South Manchester, offering the opportunity for schools, education, training and student participation, supporting policies within Achieving Full Potential and Strengthening Communities. Community events will be used to communicate environmental policies and to place an emphasis on campaigns, environmental management, the Green City and how residents can get involved. Such community-related events could include those that focus on enhancing biodiversity or developing participative facilities, such as community orchards, walks and conservation activities. Platt Fields Park immediately to the north of the study area is a good example of local best practice.

3) A Network of District and Local Centres

The centres are at the core of the successful neighbourhoods strategy for South Manchester. They are key to the identity of the communities and should provide for local retail and service provision as well as acting as the hub for community and cultural life, a local recreation and leisure choice and a point of public transport access and interchange.

The existing centres in South Manchester play a vital role in being the focus of retail and service activities for the local population. They are integral to the attraction and wider success of wider neighbourhoods and will act as key areas of growth in the future. However, the overall quality of centres across the area must be improved to ensure that the centres play a key role in the delivery of the regeneration framework.

Not every centre can support a broad range of uses and therefore an important policy element is the concept of centre hierarchy and centre networks within South Manchester. This has been raised in national policy guidance, recognising the roles that different centres play within certain areas and the multicentre provision in main urban areas, that is city, district and local centres. This is a concept that has received recognition as being a new way of linking centres together.

DPN 7.4

Implement planned improvements to storm sewerage discharges and to wastewater treatment works on the River Mersey.

The River Mersey is currently classed as being relatively poor quality by the Environment Agency’s General Quality Assessment. Improvements to storm sewerage discharges and to wastewater treatment works upstream are planned to further improve the river. Such investment has already been beneficial to the Chorlton Brook catchment, which used to be very seriously affected by discharges from combined sewer overflows in wet weather. The majority of the problems have been resolved on the brook and a further scheme is planned to improve some of the remaining sewer outlets within the catchment.
Within South Manchester, the five district centres of Chorlton, Didsbury, Fallowfield, Levenshulme and Withington provide the higher level of the South Manchester centre hierarchy with a wide range of local and community facilities. The quality and mix of provision is variable among these centres contributing in turn to mixed levels of success in meeting local residents’ needs. Each centre therefore offers the opportunity for investment and change to improve the quality and provision of local retail and services.

At the next level down, the local centres within the neighbourhoods of South Manchester perform a valuable walk-in facility for local communities but are varied in terms of the quality and range of outlets. Some of these centres could have a greater focus on new non-retail facilities, such as community facilities.

Along with the proposals outlined in this section, the SRF aims to draw together a number of pieces of work undertaken in centres to date into a combined strategy for the future. These include:

- The recent retail market work undertaken into the needs, successes and demands of each centre for the LDF
- Ongoing improvement to the pedestrian/traffic interface through environmental improvement and public realm measures
- Transport corridor strategies through centres
- The Metrolink proposals
- Environmental Business Pledge awards scheme.

In terms of point 2 above, improvements to the physical environment have already been undertaken in many of the centres, particularly associated with the interface between pedestrians, public realm and road traffic corridors. Withington, Didsbury and Levenshulme are good examples of this. The SRF promotes the continuation of this type of work in all centres as well as continuing to strive for the buy-in and involvement of local businesses – a process that has also been instigated successfully by the city centre through the Environmental Business Pledge awards scheme.
Key Characteristics and Issues
The key characteristics and issues are outlined below on a centre-by-centre basis.

Chorlton District Centre
Chorlton District Centre is located in the west of the SRF area around the junction of Barlow Moor Road and Wilbraham Road. It is a large district centre with over 250 outlets compared to a centre average of 100. It performs well on a number of criteria compared to other centres across Manchester and operates at a higher level than the other district centres in South Manchester.

The centre has a significant independent retailing profile and this is a strong focus for its overall retail and service offer. It also retains more people for non-food shopping than any of the other centres in Manchester (excluding city centre). However, there is still a considerable leakage of expenditure from this centre. Overall, Chorlton is commercially viable as a district centre, but a number of issues need to be addressed in taking forward further development of the centre. They include:

• Increasing the amount of time people spend in the centre and consequently also increase expenditure
• Evidence from the recent retail study by GVA Grimley of quantitative need for both food and non-food retailing for Chorlton
• The mix of national and local independent traders which is a valuable asset for the centre. This mix will need to be protected to ensure Chorlton does not lose its own local identity
• Current commercial premises do not cater for the requirements of small businesses wishing to locate in the area

• Police records demonstrate a slight increase in criminal activity in the area, particularly crimes against businesses and personal robbery
• Civic and community provision is poor
• The shopping environment and public realm is in need of significant improvement, particularly at key gateways
• Although highly accessible by public transport, the centre is dominated by through traffic, which has a negative impact on the ambience and environment of the centre, although this has been in part addressed through the recent QBC traffic management scheme
• In light of the Metrolink extension, there is a need to assess all public transport movements within, from and to the district centre, in order to understand what may be required to facilitate interchange opportunities between transport modes and to support the development of Chorlton and local accessibility.
**Didsbury District Centre**

Didsbury serves the south area of the SRF and appears to be a very strong centre, albeit more focused towards leisure orientated shopping and leisure/restaurant type facilities associated with the evening economy. It has a good-quality environment and people like the atmosphere and familiarity of the centre.

However, a number of issues need to be considered as part of its future development:

- The centre does not provide the broad range of public service facilities expected of a district centre and this could be improved through further development of facilities
- The centre does not have a wide range of quality food retailing
- The modest number of comparison outlets may need to be improved upon in order to maintain the diversity of Didsbury as a shopping location. This may need to be at the expense of preventing the non-retail uses to expand further
- It is a compact centre with little opportunity to expand
- The environment is largely of good quality but this can still be improved upon, particularly with regard to streetscape design
- The high level of alcohol-related night-time activity is having a detrimental impact on crime levels in the area
- Car parking is a particular issue, with limited space available or indeed capable of being made available
- Current commercial premises do not cater for the requirements of small businesses looking to locate in the area.

- The development of a MMU campus may further impact on transport, parking and wider environmental issues within the district centre. This potential extra pressure will need to be planned for and managed effectively.
**Fallowfield District Centre**

Fallowfield performs as a strong district centre to the north of the SRF. It has a significantly lower number of units than average across the city area, but is strongly driven by the Sainsbury’s food store as a key anchor, with significant trade associated with the student population and its evening economy. People particularly enjoy the entertainment, restaurants and pub provision in Fallowfield and visitation rates are higher than average for food.

A low proportion of people have access to a car for shopping trips with significantly more people arriving on foot. The majority of visitors are within a five-minute drive or a 500m walk reflecting the major student presence nearby.

While Fallowfield performs as a strong district centre, a number of issues include:

- There is a clear lack of strong civic and community provision in Fallowfield centre
- It suffers from a weakness of diversity in the retail offer. Although the evening economy is highly developed, there is a danger that this is precluding a wider choice of comparison retail outlets to come into the centre. Opportunities to provide quality units to attract multiple non-food retailers should be explored
- The centre does suffer from poor-quality environment and inappropriate shop fronts in places, as well as issues of safety and traffic volume
- There are parking difficulties and concerns over traffic in the area. Consideration needs to be given to greater pedestrian safety around the centre and access through it.

**Withington District Centre**

Although Withington is the most central district centre in the SRF, it is not performing well in retail terms compared to its overall size and diversity. The centre performs as a high frequency ‘top up’ centre combined with a broader range of service and leisure facilities. Significant proportions of people arrive by foot and tend to use the centre frequently but do not stay long and spend little money.

The main issues that need to be addressed include the following:

- The creation of an opportunity to provide a main foodstore would be of assistance to the centre. However, it is unlikely that a main food store could be provided in the centre due to the built form. It will therefore rely more on other centres for such a facility
- Although the centre is part of a conservation area, the environment is poor and suffers from issues of poor safety, security and traffic congestion. Safety and security of the centre for shoppers requires significant improvements
- Although there is an evening economy there may be an opportunity to expand such provision to assist in bringing vacant units into use. This will require a review of the existing approach to expansion of bars and restaurants. This would particularly be the case for any units that are poorly configured and too small for quality non-food shopping operations
- It will be important to intervene in the centre with high-quality new- build of a limited scale to bring forward more quality units and set a focus for improving the centre overall. However, it will remain a smaller scale centre due to its constrained boundary.
**Levenshulme District Centre**

Levenshulme is located to the north-east of the SRF, with the district centre extending out to neighbouring Gorton South ward. It is therefore closely linked with serving parts of the Central Manchester SRF as well as South Manchester. It has a high number of outlets along a linear high street and most shoppers use it for food provision, relying on discount retail. The main issues in Levenshulme District Centre that need to be addressed include the following:

- The size of the centre is very large and elongated compared to most district centres and there are a number of vacant units running through the centre
- The centre needs to be strengthened, with a focus on the central stretch to create a stronger core retailing offer
- The absence of a supermarket is a key issue for Levenshulme. The vacant food store may provide an opportunity for potential new development. In addition, there are a number of open sites and single-storey buildings that are underutilised sandwiched between the A6 and the railway line
- While the absence of a supermarket presents one particular issue, there is a good independent retail offer in the District Centre and this is seen as a positive attribute upon which to build in the future
- The civic and community offer is poor
- A significant proportion of people rate Levenshulme positively for its car parking availability and pedestrian suitability, as well as public transport accessibility, particularly by rail. However, the quality of environment and townscape in the centre is in need of some investment
- The centre is traffic-dominated with pedestrian/traffic conflict. A safer pedestrian environment should be the goal over the medium term.
Local Centres

There are ten defined local centres in South Manchester within the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). The local centres perform a localised role in many neighbourhoods but they also have a distinct or specialist role in certain areas.

The local centres, in particular the quality of shop frontages and the types of occupiers, vary considerably. There are some centres, such as Beech Road, Chorlton, which offer high quality facilities and others which are in a poorer condition, such as Fallowfield Triangle. Most local centres offer small-scale retail provision, but in Burnage (Fog Lane) a new large-format Tesco store now dominates the retail and service provision.

Smaller parades of shops are not classified as centres. However, they do provide small-scale facilities for walk-in/pass-by trade within the neighbourhoods. They generally have limited scope for change, but there are a number of these smaller centres that offer the opportunity for improvement to the quality and provision of local retail and services within South Manchester, including:

Parrs Wood – operates as a small local shopping parade and an out-of-town centre in an area that has limited local retail provision. The centre is disjointed by the local road network but has some opportunity for new development to reinforce its function as a centre to serve local needs.

Merseybank – has a number of vacant and underused retail and community facilities, which offer the opportunity for redevelopment and the reprovision of new retail and community services.

Strategic Objectives

• The strategic objective for the centres in South Manchester is:

• DPN 8 Define and improve upon the existing network and quality of centres (district and local) across South Manchester to deliver high-quality services and increase competitiveness.

The key objective of the South Manchester SRF is to define the existing network of centres across South Manchester, in particular the differing roles that larger and smaller centres play in local areas. The centres and the overall network must then be improved to deliver high-quality services and increase competitiveness.

A network of high-quality district and local centres will be an important characteristic of successful urban neighbourhoods in South Manchester. They will form hubs or focal points for local retailing and leisure activity, as well as for community services and facilities and access to public transport.
DPN Objective 8:
Define and improve upon the existing network and quality of district and local centre across South Manchester to deliver high-quality services and increase competitiveness.

DPN 8.1
Define and adopt the network of district and local centres to accommodate a hierarchy of functions that will meet the needs of neighbourhoods in South Manchester. Through planning policy, recognise the higher role and function of Chorlton District Centre.

There is already a network of centres across South Manchester and, based on larger district centres and smaller local centres this network can be further improved upon on an area basis to provide a wider range of facilities. The strategic location and larger size of the district centres suggests that they should provide an enhanced level of services accessible to a wider network of local centres. A review of the function and role of each district centre and its boundaries will be undertaken through the preparation of the city’s LDF.

Taking account of the size, profile and growth of Chorlton District Centre, together with future investment in infrastructure and opportunity for development, the SRF policy recognises Chorlton as playing a more important role in South Manchester that will require further consideration as part of the LDF process. This network and hierarchy of centres is further defined in the Spatial Framework in Section 8.

DPN 8.2
Prepare District Centre Action Plans or strategies for all district centres to accommodate a range of retail, civic, community and leisure uses and good accessibility by public transport. These should consider the form, distinctiveness and function of each centre and include:

i) centre-specific design guides; ii) opportunities for new development; iii) crime and safety design plans; and iv) transport accessibility and parking plans.

Action Plans should be designed to achieve a wide and balanced range of uses in each centre, considering the potential and need for improved food and non-food retailing; promotion of non-retail uses and independent traders; provision of community, leisure and civic uses; provision of transport interchange facilities; opportunities for housing and management; and regulation of the night-time economy, including bars, café/restaurant and takeaways.

The review of the centres carried out to inform the SRF clearly identified the opportunity to improve all centres through various combinations of new development, physical and public realm improvements and improved access and parking arrangements. District Centre Action Plans will be prepared for the five existing centres in South Manchester, providing strategic directions and detailed proposals to take forward specific projects for each centre. This will ensure opportunities are assessed and implemented in a structured manner.

The Plans will be used to generate a co-ordinated approach to future improvement, development and service delivery in the district centres which will include considerations regarding the mix of
uses provided, the quality of buildings, the opportunities for new development, accessibility, quality of environment, crime and safety, and future management and licensing. Consideration will need to be given to all existing and potential future users of the centre, including families, older people and the mobility-impaired, to ensure that the centres are accessible to all.

Effective management of the night-time economy will also be important, to limit antisocial behaviour. This could widen the opportunities for increased community use of the centres in the evening and at the weekend that may further encourage families to stay in the area. An initial assessment of the potential opportunities in each of the district centres is summarised in the tables on page 108. The priority for District Centre Action Plans is Chorlton, followed by Levenshulme and Fallowfield.

DPN 8.3

Based on the hierarchy of centres, review the provision, condition and viability of the local centres and develop a strategy for investment and action. Local centres will provide local shops and community services that are accessible on foot and, where possible, located on key roads with good visibility and public transport access and close to schools and community facilities.

Existing local centres should be improved where possible, or added to/replaced by new facilities that can widen the range of facilities available for the relevant neighbourhood. This may involve services other than shopping such as healthcare, schools and community uses, which all act as focal points and at a scale relevant to the area. Good accessibility and a good quality of environment will also support these local centres in providing convenient and accessible local services for local residents within each neighbourhood.
Some local centres currently have a surplus of commercial property and where this is the case, consolidation or possible redevelopment should be structured to maintain the best profile and most accessible stock. Dilution of the retail and commercial frontages through ad hoc conversion to residential use should be avoided.

Burnage Lane (Fog Lane) is a priority area for local centre intervention. At Burnage the recent Tesco development presents the opportunity to further strengthen the centre and provide a wider range of uses. Although they are not defined as local centres, intervention is also a priority in East Didsbury (Parrs Wood), Merseybank and Whalley Range to improve the range and quality of local retail and community services.

It will be appropriate to take forward more specific ideas for such centres in tandem with consideration of the relevant larger district centre within the centre network. This will ensure that consideration is given to the role of the smaller local centres in providing key facilities and not lead to possible conflicts between centres where only one facility is needed within a certain area (eg. health centre). Larger facilities will need to be directed to the district centres in the first instance when they will be more accessible to the wider area.

**DPN 8.4**

*Assess the feasibility of a multicentre manager to support and promote district and local centres.*

The district and local centres experience common issues, such as congestion, environmental degradation, vacancy (at ground floor and above the commercial units) and poor maintenance. They have shared needs for skills and resources, such as business planning and development, events management and responding to development threats or opportunities.

While individual centres would not justify full-time and dedicated town centre management support, a dedicated manager can provide support across the district and local centres of South Manchester.

Alternatively, this role could be delivered through an existing Council team. The role would be to assist in identifying future opportunities to improve the centres through working on and implementing the proposed District Centre Action Plans. This will require strong connections being established with key occupiers and landowners as well as working with developers to take forward proposals. A local model for this proposal, albeit on a reduced scale, is the Manchester city centre Management Team.

The feasibility of establishing this manager should be explored as the first step in implementing this proposal. The scope of service and support will need to be defined and matched to a business plan identifying capital and revenue requirements.
DPN 8.5

Explore the feasibility of appropriate local partnerships and delivery vehicles to improve the environment and viability of the district and local centres.

A key task for those leading neighbourhood centre regeneration will be to co-ordinate appropriate local partnerships and delivery vehicles to improve the environment and viability of district centres. This can only be done by building the pride and working with the local traders and businesses. One such model for this to be done is the Environmental Business Pledge, which not only helps improve the environment but also contributes to Green City targets being met. A summary of the benefits include:

- Improving the image of business
- Recycling
- Reducing utility bills
- Understanding environmental legislation
- Implementing environmental improvements
- Communicating environmental achievements
- Free support and advice to companies setting up and running Travel Plans.

The Environmental Business Pledge is a unique initiative developed solely for Manchester Businesses. The Pledge was introduced through Manchester City Council’s 2004 campaign, Challenge Manchester: 100 Days to a Clean City, where over 250 businesses pledged to improve their local environment.

To continue this work the Council and partners, including Groundwork, Mersey Basin Campaign, ENCAMS and the Environment Agency, have got together to expand the Pledge and offer services to help businesses improve their environmental performance, achieve major cost savings and increase competitiveness.

Another potential model that may be appropriate for consideration, particularly in the district centres, is Business Improvement Districts (BID). The BID mechanism uses locally generated funds through a levy on businesses in the respective centre, to invest in shared services, infrastructure, improvements and events and marketing programmes. This will need to be a partnership between the Council and the local business community to develop and take forward projects and services that benefit the viability of local trading and work towards improvement to the street environment.

The feasibility of establishing a BID should be explored as the first step in implementing this proposal. The scope of potential activities and investments will need to be defined and matched to a business plan identifying capital and revenue requirements. This will also have a role to play in supporting centre management.

Finally, the culture sector has a role to play in the environment and viability of the centres. Traders’ partnerships, such as those evident in Central Manchester (eg. the Longsight Traders Initiative), provide a useful model. In this instance the Traders Initiative plans to work with an artist to develop local branding.
### Opportunities for regeneration through District Centre Action Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Chorlton</th>
<th>Didsbury</th>
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| Mix of uses | • Widen mix of uses including services and community facilities.  
• Attract key anchors to ensure that trade leakage is reduced, particularly in the face of competition outside the Manchester area.  
• Develop a strategy to support independent traders in Chorlton. | • Widen mix of uses including services and community facilities.  
• Develop planning controls to limit the number and activity of bars. |
| Development and Refurbishment Opportunity | • Make more efficient use of key areas of the centre, eg. shopping centre, gateways and bring forward vertical mixing of land uses – retail/office/residential to make most efficient use of land.  
• Redevelop underutilised sites and buildings and widen the range of uses within the centre, including night time uses, community facilities and leisure. | • Consider the vertical mixing of land uses to make most efficient use of land, increasing density of development. |
| Environment and Accessibility | • Prepare a public realm strategy, including shopfronts, pedestrian improvements, safety measures and landscaping.  
• Create the opportunity for high-quality public transport access and interchange.  
• Maximise the opportunities created by Metrolink. | • Prepare a public realm strategy, including shopfronts, pedestrian improvements, safety measures and landscaping.  
• Protect the character and townscape quality of the centre through conservation area enforcement.  
• Create the opportunity for high-quality public transport access and interchange.  
• Maximise the opportunities created by Metrolink. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fallowfield</th>
<th>Withington</th>
<th>Levenshulme</th>
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| • Widen mix of uses including services and comparison retail and community facilities.  
• Develop planning controls to limit the number and activity of bars in centre. | • Improve the quality of units to attract further non-food retailers. | • Seek to introduce more public service facilities in the centre such as library/leisure etc. as resources allow.  
• A joint service facility should be considered by the city and its partners. |
| • Improve the quality of units to attract further non-food retailers.  
• Redevelop underutilised sites and buildings.  
• Look at integrating the Owens Park area into the centre to provide opportunity to strengthen the centre.  
• Link to universities strategy for future development and growth, which could integrate with higher density development. | • Identify sites/premises for remodelling to provide larger retail units and to attract high-quality development.  
• Explore opportunities to bring vacant units back into use, potentially linked to expanding the evening economy. | • Explore the opportunity to strengthen the central area of the centre to create a stronger retail core. Look at potential to increase development density around the railway station and open up the main road to create an attractive focal area.  
• Identify sites/premises for remodelling and redevelopment to provide larger retail units, including large food retail, and to attract high-quality development. |
| • Prepare a public realm strategy, including shopfronts, pedestrian improvements, safety measures and landscaping.  
• Create the opportunity for high-quality public transport access and interchange. | • Protect the character and townscape quality of the centre through conservation area enforcement.  
• Prepare a public realm strategy, including shopfronts, pedestrian improvements, safety measures and landscaping. | • Protect the character and townscape quality of the centre and develop a distinct trade promotion and marketing strategy incorporating a local traders’ forum.  
• Prepare a public realm strategy, including shopfronts, pedestrian improvements, safety measures and landscaping. |
4) Movement and Local Linkages

The South Manchester area is one of the key gateways into the wider city area, with a high proportion of the city’s strong radial routes running through the SRF area. Considering the high numbers of visitors and residents using the area, the physical appearance and the performance of the transport network should reflect this importance. If South Manchester is to further develop its role as a residential neighbourhood of choice whose residents principally work elsewhere in the city, it will be vital to tackle the issue of congestion which, among other things, currently has a significant impact on travel-to-work times. Sustainable transport solutions will need to be developed that balance the strategic needs of the road corridors with the local needs of adjoining communities.

Road space in the area is a finite resource and will simply not allow significant numbers of car users to be readily accommodated, from both a congestion and residential parking space perspective. Congestion on key links into the city centre continues to be an issue for vehicles and public transport alike, creating delays at key junctions and pinch points such as the district and local centres.

In addition to strategic access within the South Manchester area, consideration needs to be given to the type of access provided to residential neighbourhoods and their feeder roads. The neighbourhoods included within this study area comprise both successful and poorly performing areas. If the SRF is going to succeed with its aim of delivering quality residential areas throughout, connectivity and permeability to and within the study area will be key to their success.

This Framework aims to redress the balance between car users and more sustainable modes of transport such as public transport (buses, light rail and heavy rail), cyclists and pedestrians. Many residents are without access to a car, particularly those in the most deprived neighbourhoods, extensive numbers of students and older people. There will be a series of key policies put in place to encourage modal shift to these sustainable modes, which should in turn reduce congestion on the key areas discussed above. This shift in people’s travel patterns should help to create a safer more environmentally attractive place to live, shop and work.

Rail and bus networks will be the focus of these solutions across much of the SRF area and the recent improvements to stations, including Levenshulme, East Didsbury and Burnage, will continue to be supported. However, the Metrolink extension – initially through to Chorlton but in the longer term potentially out to the Airport – will also present a major opportunity to improve connectivity around South Manchester and to adjoining areas. It will be important to be well prepared for the extension to ensure South Manchester neighbourhoods can both capitalise upon and manage the impact of Metrolink.

Making sustainable transport measures increasingly attractive is also a key element of the Green City aspiration. Recent improvements to bus stops and signage for cycle routes are a first step in this strategy. The SRF promotes the continuation of such measures.
Key Issues

The following points highlight the key issues found during the baseline stage of the project. These issues form the basis of the policy statements relating to access and movement contained within the Strategic Regeneration Framework.

• **Strategic v Local Traffic** There is an increasing level of competition for road space between local and strategic traffic, not only on radial links but also on neighbourhood routes, due to increasing levels of rat-running.

• **East/West Links** There is a lack of strong east/west linkages across the study area, making certain employment, community and leisure uses difficult to access by certain pockets of the community.

• **Accessing Key Services** Certain educational, employment and retail centres are not sufficiently accessible by modes other than the car, causing parking and congestion problems within the vicinity of these sites.

• **Absence of clear route hierarchy** With the exception of the key radial routes, there is an absence of a route hierarchy on the links penetrating the local communities, leading to issues relating to accessibility and congestion.

• **Parking** Overdemand and congestion surrounding certain residential locations and around district and local centres.

The following section states each policy statement relating to access and movement and contains sub policies under each section, describing in detail the aim of each policy solution.

Strategic Objectives

An effective and sustainable transport and movement network is an integral part of the SRF and a key component that makes the Living City function day to day.

Three key strategic objectives have therefore been devised to address transport and movement issues in South Manchester, and these are as follows:

• **DPN 9** Develop ‘people-friendly’ high-volume sustainable transport linkages along existing north-south and east-west corridors to help tackle congestion and improve connectivity to and through the South Manchester area.

• **DPN 10** Maximise the use of proposals for light rail, improvements to heavy rail stations and bus services to connect public transport services more effectively into neighbourhoods.

• **DPN 11** Improve sustainable access from neighbourhoods to key facilities including public transport corridors and stops, district and local centres, parks, health, schools, employment and leisure.

Each objective and the policies developed to deliver them are now considered.
DPN Objective 9:
Develop ‘people-friendly’ high-volume sustainable transport linkages along existing north-south and east-west corridors to help tackle congestion, improve air quality and improve connectivity to and through the South Manchester area.

DPN 9.1
Develop a sustainable transport and environmental improvement programme for key transport corridors that balances the strategic transport needs of the corridor with the local needs of the South Manchester communities. Recognise the role of the key road corridors as highly sustainable locations for high-density mixed use development and as high streets and focal points where communities meet, as well as routes for traffic. Along with the district centres, key junctions along the road corridors should be identified as accessible focal points for local retail and community uses and local transport interchanges, potentially as part of new or enhanced centres.

In order to reduce congestion and improve connectivity within the South Manchester study area, local residents and people travelling through the area need to be able to navigate clearly and quickly to their chosen destinations along the most convenient route possible. The key corridors within the study area run north to south, transporting people from destinations to the south or external to the area, to Manchester city centre and beyond. Provision is less well defined for those wishing to make local journeys, and those wishing to travel east to west within the study area.

As the transport network within South Manchester develops over the next five to ten years a number of corridors providing high-volume sustainable movement options will either be developed or existing corridors will be strengthened. These corridors include:

- Proposed Metrolink extensions through to Chorlton and later through to Manchester Airport, and potentially through to Didsbury and Stockport
- Heavy Rail Line through to Manchester Airport
- Oxford Road/Wilmslow Road corridor with its potential for Bus Rapid Transit
- Princess Road corridor, currently the city’s main vehicle route in from the south.

Other key corridors in South Manchester include Kingsway and Stockport Road running north-south and Wilbraham Road, Mauldeth Road and Barlow Moor Road, running east-west. These corridors have the opportunity to link South Manchester to a number of the area’s key growth areas, including Manchester city centre, Manchester Airport, Trafford Park, Salford Quays and East Manchester.
In order to reduce the dominance of the private car along the key corridors within the South Manchester area, initiatives should be introduced where possible to soften the corridors with environmental improvements, while maintaining the strategic access vital to the continuing development of the city. Initiatives should also link to the Quality Bus Corridor (QBC) programme to accommodate high-frequency and good-quality bus services along the corridors, which promote the use of buses and encourage changes in travel behaviour away from the private car. Corridors should be provided with environmental improvements, which include improved public realm and enhanced pedestrian crossing opportunities to reduce the barrier effect a number of the routes currently enforce on the area.

At key junctions where east-west links cross the more dominant north-south routes, the opportunity to improve pedestrian facilities and reduce the barrier effect of these routes should be taken. These junctions should be utilised as local hubs and interchange points between public transport modes and walking/cycling, offering ease of access to the high-frequency public transport modes.

Currently, a number of the key corridors in the study area have high levels of collisions, with hot spots occurring at key locations. The reduction of car dominance should reduce these impacts, leading to a more attractive environment for local residents to access neighbouring communities and facilities. Safety along these strategic routes is vital to provide a sense of wellbeing for pedestrians and cyclists. A way of implementing this on some of the high-volume corridors, such as Princess Road and Kingsway, is to reduce the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph, encouraging a greater sense of awareness by drivers.
DPN 9.2
Support ongoing research to consider the feasibility of measures to improve east-west linkages, including the potential development and/or promotion of sustainable orbital transport links to destinations such as Trafford Park, Salford Quays and East Manchester, through both on and off-street public transport. East-west linkages should connect to existing and proposed public transport corridors such as Metrolink and the airport heavy rail line, encouraging connections to the cities growth areas for employment, education and health.

Well-defined high-quality orbital links through South Manchester, will strengthen east-west movement in the area and complement the city’s radial routes in providing the network of pedestrian-friendly high-volume sustainable transport corridors across the city and the SRF.

Innovative modes of public transport, both on and off-street, should be explored within South Manchester. However, the form of any proposed east-west route would be likely to make use of existing highways in South Manchester, such as Wilbraham Road, Mauldeth Road and Barlow Moor Road. These could potentially provide enhanced access to sustainable modes of transport, including bus, cycle and pedestrians as part of the policy measures in DPN 9.1.

Improvements at key junctions will be important in ensuring that delays to public transport are reduced to a minimum on the east-west links and are balanced against the priorities of the radial routes.

These offer the potential for exploring innovative options for interchange and pedestrian movement. Initiatives such as improved ticketing, and links to improved walking and cycling routes will also need to be in place to encourage penetration further into communities. The east-west route(s) could be promoted further by the introduction of individual branding or environmental treatment that highlights the corridor and assists with legibility.

DPN 9.3
Maximise benefits arising from the emerging Greater Manchester framework for future transport investment, in terms of public transport improvements for the South Manchester SRF area, demand management measures and behavioural change initiatives impacting on the area.

The current Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) funding package includes measures such as major public transport improvements and comprehensive travel behavioural change programmes alongside congestion charging as a potential demand management measure. The details of the TIF bid are still emerging, and will be finalised over the coming months. South Manchester regeneration will play a critical role in the proposed delivery framework for TIF, through the Corridor Partnership structure. These cross-boundary Corridor Partnerships will provide a wide area, radial focus on transport priority projects, which will need to be progressed in order for broader social, economic and regeneration objectives to be met.

The introduction of the full TIF package, if approved, would provide benefits for local people in the form of improved public transport and sustainable access options.
The potential reduction of traffic in the area due to the introduction of any potential charging scheme will benefit the local communities by reducing the number of through trips and reducing congestion in important locations such as district centres, and reducing the environmental impacts that large numbers of cars have on the area. Prior to implementing TIF measures, there is a need to review the impact of measures already taken, for example Quality Bus Corridor in order to determine what further improvements need to be made.

DPN Objective 10:
Maximise the use of proposals for light rail, improvements to heavy rail stations and bus services to connect public transport services more effectively into neighbourhoods.

DPN 10.1
Deliver Metrolink Phase 3A and 3B, ensuring that the SRF addresses any relevant issues to enable the successful delivery of the Metrolink extension. The impact of Metrolink will need to be managed in housing and neighbourhood areas. However, proposals for new stations and infrastructure should be capitalised upon in the SRF area and should link, where appropriate, to action plans for district and local centres.

The ongoing development and implementation of the Metrolink network within South Manchester is a vital component to the area’s continuing regeneration.

The penetration of Metrolink into local communities improves their attractiveness to both potential residents and investors adding to the vitality of the local community. Access to the Metrolink network by the provision of strong walking and cycling routes will broaden the ability of the local community to access a wider variety of jobs, employment and leisure opportunities within the city and the wider conurbation.

DPN 10.2
Support existing local and regional policies and rail strategies to safeguard and enhance the existing heavy rail opportunities and emphasise their role in economic viability of South Manchester and attractive sustainable neighbourhoods.
As a fundamental aspect of this SRF plan, the ability to access crucial destinations such as education, leisure and employment opportunities by sustainable means should be encouraged, and where opportunities currently exist, these should be safeguarded for future generations.

The South Manchester area has two active heavy rail lines to the east of the study area; these lines currently access key residential areas such as Levenshulme, Burnage and Didsbury, and link them with the key growth areas of the city centre and Manchester Airport. Support to local policies and regional strategies should be provided to safeguard these corridors, with initiatives introduced to increase the density of uses around the existing stops and stations. Opportunities to enhance the rail facilities within the SRF and to explore improvements to rail frequency, reliability and capacity should also be supported.

DPN 10.3

Through the planning process, support the viability of public transport modes by facilitating high-density development around interchanges, such as new Metrolink stops, heavy rail stations and bus interchange points.

In order to encourage communities to make best use of the sustainable connections provided, densities around interchange points should be increased. These developments could be mixed use with a combination of residential, new schools or further education sites; community uses such as libraries, health centres and sports clubs; and employment and retail opportunities, creating hubs and activity centres along these important corridors. The proximity of these uses adjacent to sustainable transport modes not only generates customers’ increasing levels of patronage and therefore revenue for the transport operators, but also removes private vehicles from the roads reducing levels of congestion.

DPN 10.4

Develop interchange facilities within the hierarchy of district and local centres, to provide ease of access to and between modes of public transport. These modes would include Metrolink, heavy rail, bus services (including Bus Rapid Transit) and community transport.

In order to encourage people to use sustainable modes, they must be viewed as an easy and convenient option, providing communities with door-to-door access with a minimum of effort. Interchange facilities should be easily identified, with clear timetabling, real time and fare information, and should provide a safe and secure environment for all. In addition to improvements to interchange facilities between the previously mentioned modes, it is important that there are opportunities available for joint approaches to ticketing between all public transport modes.

DPN 10.5

Introduce measures such as CCTV on public transport vehicles and at stops, to reduce crime on public transport. Existing problem areas are easily identifiable and appropriate initiatives should be delivered to help combat antisocial behaviour.

If public transport modes are going to succeed in attracting commuters and visitors away from their private vehicles, passengers need to feel safe on the public transport options provided. Increased levels of CCTV and policing on the routes through the study area should help to discourage individuals from committing crimes against other passengers, while providing a sense of security for local people.
DPN Objective 11:
Encourage a shift in travel behaviour by improving sustainable access from neighbourhoods to key facilities, including sustainable transport corridors and stops, district and local centres, parks, health services, schools, employment and leisure facilities.

DPN 11.1
Integrate Green City policy and the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan (LTP) policy, to include a range of both ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ measures designed to encourage travel behavioural change across the SRF area, but especially on the high volume public transport corridors.

Over the next five years and the life of the existing LTP2, the promotion of sustainable neighbourhoods is one of the many key targets for the Green City policy.

The Council has a number of initiatives in place to help to facilitate modal shift, which include improvements to alternative modes of transport, with one of the key drivers being improvements to public transport and other sustainable modes of transport. It is important to support these key drivers with a number of smaller scale measures encouraging specific areas of the community into embracing travel change.

A number of targets have been put into place to achieve these aims, including achieving a shift of 3.6% to 67.6% (with a baseline of 64%) of morning peak hour trips to the city centre being made by modes other than the private car. These targets and policies should form an integral part of the Strategic Regeneration Framework for the South Manchester area, and could form a basis of any targets for what is effectively a relatively well connected part of the city.

The policies to achieve these targets should include both soft and hard measures; soft measures should include travel plan measures and improved information and awareness (Policy 11.5) and hard measures will consider cycling facilities, bus priority and parking restraints (Policies 11.3 and 11.4).

DPN 11.2
Adopt an appropriate hierarchy of routes, focusing on access by sustainable transport, within South Manchester that includes public and community transport and is strongly linked to the wider conurbation. Work to promote the area as a sustainable location by using the hierarchy to promote and encourage alternative uses to the private car.

Adopting a hierarchy of routes will establish appropriate attractive corridors for all modes of transport, with appropriate public realm and environmental improvements depending on the type of mode primarily using it. Routes penetrating housing estates and communities will have slow speeds, ideally 20mph or lower, providing a safe and attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists.
They would have high-quality footways utilising green linkages where possible, with good lighting ensuring safety and ample crossing opportunities for enhanced door-to-door accessibility. These corridors would also be well served by community transport modes, dial-a-ride and local link-type facilities, picking up passengers from locations that traditional public transport providers would not penetrate. If car trips are to be reduced and replaced by sustainable modes where possible, clear, safe networks of footpaths and cycleways need to be developed in more strategic locations, in addition to encouraging penetration of housing estates, allowing improved access into communities and developing linkages to key locations.

Proposed green linkages (DPN 2.2) should provide attractive alternatives to the private car for journeys to school, short retail trips to the district and local centres, and short trips to community facilities such as the doctor. These routes should aim to encourage leisure trips making use of existing corridors such as the Manchester cycleway and the Trans Pennine Trail.

Public transport corridors would provide priority to high-volume passenger modes, ensuring delays at junctions are kept to a minimum and that public transport flows with reduced impacts from congestion. These corridors would have strong linkages with the pedestrian and cycle corridors.

The strategic routes that link key destinations within and outside the study area will continue to carry high volumes of car-based traffic, ensuring that the area maintains its position as a highly accessible location for the region’s motorway networks and strategic employment locations.

**DPN 11.3**

*Based on the hierarchy, develop complementary access strategies for neighbourhoods to provide a strong, safe, co-ordinated and integrated network of local sustainable connections – bus routes, footpaths, cycle routes – through the study area to link communities to public transport services and local facilities, including:*

- High-frequency public transport services on key corridors and heavy rail/Metrolink stops
- District and local centres
- Local facilities, including community centres, schools, health centres, leisure opportunities
- Hospitals
- Employment areas
- Green links and open spaces.

*Ensure access for all areas of the community, including older people, the young and disabled people. It is also important to ensure these locations have appropriate facilities, such as secure cycle parking.*
The proposed route hierarchy in South Manchester should establish a series of corridors where specific modes have priority. In order to establish these corridors and address the needs of the modes using them, access strategies should be developed for each of the modes highlighting their needs and how best to address them. Issues such as lighting, public realm, crossing opportunities, parking provision and land use policy should be included in any strategy developed. Each strategy should also address the needs of all elements of the community, including older people, young people and disabled people, as they all need different types of provision with access to different facilities needed.

DPN 11.4
Encourage the development of movement and parking strategies for:

- All district and local centres, which should consider not only the size and popularity of a centre, but the availability and encouragement of sustainable modes and consolidation of existing provision
- Large employers, such as Christie Hospital and Christie Fields
- Metrolink and other transport interchange locations, with specific proposals, such as the introduction of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) and other parking restrictions, required to manage car parking and ensure that the roads around stops and district and local centres are not inappropriately used.

Any movement parking strategy developed for the centres should take into account each centre’s individual characteristics, including the economic viability and growth potential of that centre.

Care should be taken to ensure that any strategy put into place does not affect the performance and function of the centre. Each centre should be considered on merit, assessing the need for parking in particular locations, whether that is on or off street parking, the number of spaces needed and any tariffs introduced.

Where possible, driving to the centres and to other large generators of traffic, such as employers, should be discouraged, with alternative sustainable modes encouraged and where possible actively promoted through information boards and advertising.

While Metrolink will bring increased accessibility to the South Manchester area, and in turn will encourage people and businesses to relocate to this part of the city, it is important to offset any possible negative impacts associated with its presence. Due to the reliability of the services and popularity of the provision, Metrolink attracts passengers from further afield than the local areas it is predominantly meant to serve.

One of the negative impacts of this provision is the potential increase in on-street parking around Metrolink stops. The impact of this parking needs to be minimised by the introduction of restrictions, especially for those commuting and parking in these locations all day; this is especially important when considering the operations of the district centres. The management of Metrolink’s impact will need to be included in any district centre parking strategy, with the appropriate use of restrictions in the areas most affected. The implementation of a transport hierarchy should also help to provide strong walking and cycling linkages to Metrolink stops, helping to reduce the need for people to drive.
DPN 11.5
Facilitate modal shift by encouraging the preparation and use of workplace, residential and school travel plans. Initiatives could include personal travel planning, car sharing, car clubs and journey planning, through engagement with local businesses.

In order to encourage modal shift, people's perceptions of certain modes of transport need to be adapted. Perceptions of public transport would change if access was made easier by improving access to ticketing and improving the quality of the vehicles being used by operators. School travel plans should be introduced at all schools in South Manchester, alongside workplace travel plans introduced by all major target employers in the study area, setting out targets and timescales for change.

Everyone in South Manchester should have the option of a safe alternative to accessing education, health, employment and retail destinations by modes other than the private car. All travel plans should have the commitment of all key parties involved, and should be actively implemented and monitored on an ongoing basis. Manchester City Council currently provides advice for employers and educational establishments on the best-practice approach to the development of travel plans and will continue to provide assistance where possible in setting up these initiatives. It should continue to set targets for the delivery of travel plans in all schools, and continue to encourage major businesses to introduce these initiatives as early as possible, or where the opportunity arises as part of any development control procedure.

Measures should include:
- Encouraging developers to implement residential travel plans, and encourage residential communities and other partners to become more involved in their development and implementation
- Working with GMPTE to provide bespoke public transport information to support employers and sites with large levels of employees such as health centres and hospitals
- Promoting car sharing through Council initiatives such as car sharing
- Continuing to support travel awareness campaigns such as ‘In town without my car’ and ‘Bike week’
- Opportunities to implement smarter choice measures, such as facilitating a car club, which would provide access to a car for residents who choose not to own a car, allowing the opportunity for car-free developments.
6. Policy Theme 2: Achieving Full Potential in Education, Skills and Employment

The Achieving Full Potential in Education, Skills and Employment theme is concerned with ensuring that the people and businesses of South Manchester are fully equipped to maximise their contribution to the success and prosperity of the city. South Manchester lies close to some of the key drivers of the regional economy including the city centre, Oxford Road Corridor and the airport. Over the next decade, more than 100,000 new jobs are forecast to be created in Manchester, many of which will be in professional and other well-paid occupations.

This positive outlook creates opportunities at a number of levels for South Manchester – attracting more affluent households, enabling people to move into better paid jobs, as well as addressing the pockets of unemployment and worklessness existing across the area. South Manchester’s economic and business role is different to other parts of the city, given its primary function as a residential area.

The focus of the economic strategy is to maximise the opportunities for business growth, building on assets such as the strong creative industries sector, as well as making best use of existing employment locations including the business parks and the district centres. While there is no need for any major new employment locations within South Manchester, there are opportunities to grow the small business sector, creating more local jobs and increasing local economic benefit.

The starting point for the economic strategy is the Greater Manchester Economic Development Plan and Manchester: Knowledge Capital (M:KC), which set out the huge potential of the city to secure new investment and jobs in key sectors, including financial and business services, creative and media and health. South Manchester is already an important component of the M:KC framework and the SRF will seek to strengthen and enhance the area’s contribution to the city’s economic renaissance.

The first strand of the theme relates to education. While educational attainment has improved in recent years, there is a need to achieve a step change in performance in order to better equip the area’s young people to access employment or move into further or higher education as well as attract and retain more families in South Manchester. A high-performing and attractive education offer in both the public and the private sectors is critical to achieving the SRF vision.

The second strand of this theme relates to people development. South Manchester’s workforce is generally well qualified and future skill requirements provide an unrivalled opportunity to increase the retention of graduates and other key workers within the area, as well as attract new talent in what is an increasingly global labour market for professionals and other skilled individuals.

Equally, there is a significant proportion of the population in South Manchester who are out of work or who require support to access higher quality and better paid employment. There is a need to focus efforts on addressing inequalities and boost access to employment, both within the area and in the large jobs pools outside, linked to the Greater Manchester City Strategy. South Manchester’s location and its primary role as a residential area mean that there is not a need to create major new employment locations.
The area already benefits from a diverse employment and business base, with more than 20,000 jobs located within its borders, including key facilities such as Christie Hospital, as well as a number of business parks, including Towers Business Park, Didsbury Point and Parkway Business Park, and the district and local centres. Building upon and enhancing the business base is the third element of this theme.

**Key Issues**

- **First Choice Education** Analysis of the secondary state education sector in South Manchester shows that in spite of recent improvements it does not perform as well as it could do and that perceptions are variable, with some parents choosing either to send their children to schools in neighbouring authorities such as Trafford or relocate out of the area. Improving performance, and the attractiveness and image of state secondary schools is critical to the SRF vision of attracting and retaining families in South Manchester.

Poor levels of attainment are also reducing young people’s ability to access employment and other opportunities. Although the number of individuals ‘Not in Education, Employment or Training’ (NEET) and levels of unemployment in South Manchester are below those in other parts of the city, there are still too many people leaving school with few or no qualifications.

While the focus of the education theme will be upon improving performance in the state secondary sector, there is also a need to achieve high-level outcomes across the whole of the primary sector as well as meet the demand for places in specific locations such as Chorlton.

Many of the primary schools in South Manchester currently perform relatively well, so the focus will be on achieving better results and performance in those schools which underperform, many of which are linked to the deprived communities in the area. An enhanced independent sector is also a key component in achieving first choice education in South Manchester. Already high-performing schools, they can play an enhanced role in attracting higher income groups to South Manchester.
• **Knowledge-based Economic Growth** There are several issues to address in South Manchester from an economic perspective. In terms of the commercial office sector, demand in the office market in the area is slowing with an oversupply of larger floorplates (up to 3,500sq m) not meeting the current market requirements (c.300sq m). Furthermore, investor and occupancy demands are leaning towards owner-occupation, buy-to-lets and flexible leases, which the South Manchester market is gradually responding to. While South Manchester will not be a major employment destination, an opportunity exists for current employment sites to further re-profile their offer to take advantage of the knowledge-based economic growth that is seeking affordable, non-city centre accommodation.

South Manchester is already home to a large number of creative businesses as well as a broad base of professional services and other activities. If South Manchester is to build on this base and capture a reasonable share of the forecast growth, there is a need to provide a broader range of accommodation options and other support to meet the needs of entrepreneurs, microenterprises and other small businesses.

The recent rapid expansion of the universities, city centre, airport and other key knowledge sectors has been accompanied by an influx of talented people into Manchester, some of whom have chosen to reside in South Manchester. Manchester is already relatively successful at retaining graduates. With further growth anticipated, there is an opportunity to retain existing talented people within the area and attract more talented individuals from elsewhere to help deliver the city’s Knowledge Capital aspirations.

• **Access to Employment** The skills base of South Manchester is highly segmented, with a higher than average percentage of graduates and other professionals counterbalanced by a large number of residents possessing only basic or no qualifications. On the supply side, there is a need to assist residents to upskill more easily enabling progression into higher quality and better paid employment. A key challenge for the SRF is also to better meet employers’ needs, particularly SMEs and major job providers such as Christie Hospital, where expansion is envisaged, as well as address opportunities such as new sustainable construction skills for housebuilders.

• **Addressing Worklessness** In spite of the creation of a large number of new jobs in and around South Manchester and its good transport links, there are significant pockets of worklessness in the area, concentrated in Burnage, Old Moat and the Nell Lane and Merseybank estates. The causes of this worklessness are complex, including poor attainment at school and low aspirations, and a one-size-fits-all approach will not be appropriate given the diversity of support and other needs required by workless individuals.

A key focus for the SRF will be ensuring that the diversity and geographical spread of worklessness across South Manchester is recognised and acted upon by key agencies.
In developing the SRF policies, full account has been taken of existing strategies and actions being delivered by agencies seeking to address the key issues, including the Children and Young People’s Plan and City Strategy. In doing this, the SRF seeks to build upon the progress made in recent years in regard to educational attainment, unemployment and other key indicators.

**Strategic Objectives**

The strategy for achieving full potential in education, skills and employment has been designed to complement key city-wide and sub-regional strategies including:

- The Manchester Children and Young People’s Plan
- Greater Manchester City Strategy (worklessness and economic inactivity)
- Manchester Employment and Enterprise Plan (currently in draft)
- Manchester Knowledge Capital and City Growth.

The eight objectives of the strategy are:

- **AFP1** Increase the performance of all South Manchester state schools to be on a par with or exceed the best schools in neighbouring authorities.
- **AFP2** Enhance the offer provided by the area’s independent schools and increase their contribution to attracting and retaining families.
- **AFP3** Support the expansion and sustainability of the creative industries and small, medium-sized enterprises and microbusinesses.
- **AFP4** Attract and retain talent to support Knowledge Capital objectives.
- **AFP5** Reduce the concentrations of workless adults and young people in South Manchester, extending the relative success experienced across South Manchester to all neighbourhoods.
- **AFP6** Address low skills and qualifications in order to facilitate employment progression and meet future skill needs.
- **AFP7** Build upon the economic competitive advantages of the area to fuel economic growth and investment.
- **AFP8** Exploit the opportunities afforded by information and communications technologies (ICTs) and digital connectivity.
**AFP Objective 1:**
*Increase the performance of all South Manchester state schools to be on a par with or exceed the best schools in neighbouring authorities.*

The achievement of first-choice education in the state sector requires improvements to school facilities and other investments allied to a range of interventions to achieve stretching targets in relation to attainment. The focus will be on the creation of a distinctive and equal offer, which enables South Manchester state schools to provide real parental choice. Actions have been split into two subheadings:

**AFP 1.1–1.9** Investment in buildings, facilities and new provision (capital).

**AFP 1.10–1.13** Measures to improve behaviour, attendance, attainment and progression (revenue).

**AFP 1.1–1.8 – Investment in Buildings, Facilities and New Provision (Capital)**

Two of South Manchester’s community high schools, Parrs Wood and Chorlton High, have been redeveloped in recent years and the area’s remaining secondary schools are due to benefit from significant resources through the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. A future phase of BSF is also being planned for primary schools. In parallel, all schools are due to become Extended Schools, providing significant potential for schools to become hubs for the wider community as well as supporting further improvement in students’ behaviour, attendance and attainment.

**AFP 1.1**
*Strategically plan and manage schools in order to underpin activities to improve their performance and support integration with the local community.*

Schools in South Manchester vary considerably in size, often with very large catchment areas. On the one hand, very large schools can be challenging to manage and can tend towards a lack of community integration, while smaller schools can find it difficult to achieve sustainability. Recent changes such as the creation of new Academies have the potential to reinforce inequalities. There is a need to work towards ensuring that all schools achieve sustainability. In parallel, the potential for schools to act as community hubs will be prioritised in order to maximise their contribution to the local neighbourhood.

**AFP 1.2**
*Create two enhanced single-sex schools on a single campus in Levenshulme.*

Single-sex education in the area will be sustained through the reprovision of the Burnage Boys’ School and the Levenshulme Girls’ School on the site of the Girls’ School. While the roll of both new schools will be decreased, the new schools will be an important part of the school offer for parents in South Manchester. The redevelopment will also take place in Phase 1 of the BSF programme.

**AFP 1.3**
*Capitalise on BSF to transform learning and performance in the other secondary schools in South Manchester.*

The remaining community high schools in South Manchester (Barlow High School, Loreto High School and Whalley Range High) are part of a future phase of the BSF programme, while Parrs Wood and Chorlton High will benefit from ICT investment only.
It is essential that the rebuilding programme and other investment are used to achieve high-quality facilities that can underpin an enhanced learning environment and a new ethos of achievement.

It is essential that the learning transformation agenda is applied fully in South Manchester schools in relation to the attainment, behaviour and attendance activities highlighted below.

**AFP 1.4**

*Maximise the contribution of the new William Hulme Academy to improve performance in other South Manchester schools.*

While none of the community high schools are currently part of the city’s Academies programme, the currently independent William Hulme Grammar School reopened in September 2007 as a United Learning Trust sponsored Academy. While the new Academy will increase the choice of offer within the South Manchester area, its complex admissions policy means that the impact on demand is not yet certain. There is an opportunity to draw on elements of the Academy’s structure and activities to boost further the performance of nearby schools in South Manchester. Links will be created between the Academy and surrounding schools in order to share examples of good working practice.

**AFP 1.5**

*Support the development of community learning campuses within South Manchester.*

In the future, schools will be developed in clusters, where opportunities arise, in order to maximise the use of resources through ensuring that pupils and the wider community benefit from the sharing of facilities and expertise. Two new community-learning campuses are currently proposed in South Manchester:

- Acacias School in Levenshulme, which is to be rebuilt as part of the Levenshulme High School Community Learning Campus
- Burnage High, Green End Primary School, St Bernard’s and Burnage Children’s Centre.

It is essential that the potential of the community campus model to improve educational performance, including pupil transition, and meet wider adult learning and community participation objectives is maximised.

**AFP 1.6**

*Ensure that primary-school places are created in areas of demand and to support regeneration activity.*

The Primary School Review has identified demand for a reconfiguration of primary-school places across South Manchester in order to provide further places at the most popular schools. Acacias School in Levenshulme is to be rebuilt as part of the Levenshulme High School Community Learning Campus. Brookburn Primary School in Chorlton is to be redeveloped in order to facilitate an increase in capacity by 100 pupils. Given the key link
between attracting and retaining families in South Manchester and high-quality primary-school provision, there is a need to proactively assess future demand on an ongoing basis and plan accordingly.

**AFP 1.7**  
*Rationalise primary-school places in areas of reduced demand.*

Eleven primary schools in the area have surplus capacity of more than 15%, with reduced rolls already agreed in 2007 at Green End, Old Moat and Barlow Hall primaries due to changing populations. While transience is not as big a challenge as in other parts of the city, changing demographics in some parts of South Manchester are having an impact on demand. Opportunities to enhance primary provision should be exploited as part of a comprehensive approach to demand management and to support wider regeneration objectives, for example where there are opportunities to develop family housing.

**AFP 1.8**  
*Secure improved facilities and learning environments at South Manchester primary schools.*

A number of the primary schools in South Manchester are in poor condition, which acts as a barrier to learning and achievement as well as adversely impacting on demand. Several schools have been earmarked for refurbishment/redevelopment over the next five years, including Acacias, Levenshulme, Chorlton CE, and Didsbury CE. There is a need to ensure that investment in buildings is effective as possible to boost attendance and attainment at Key Stage 2, linked to proposals through the learning transformation programme.

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**AFP 1.9–1.12 Measures to improve behaviour, attendance, attainment and progression (revenue)**

**AFP 1.9**  
*Deliver a comprehensive package of measures to improve attendance, behaviour and attainment at community high schools.*

Although attainment at KS4, non-attendance and behaviour in South Manchester schools have improved, the majority of schools perform below the national average and those of neighbouring authorities. The LA is developing an Education Standards Strategy underpinned by research into parental motivations. The implementation of this strategy will help to improve pupil attainment and behaviour through changing family attitudes towards education.

This research and strategy needs to fully reflect the objective of reducing the outflow of families from South Manchester, as anecdotal evidence suggests one of the key drivers for this move is the poor performance of local secondary schools.
This policy will involve:

- Initiatives to attract the most talented head teachers and their senior management teams to South Manchester Community High Schools
- New initiatives to improve teacher recruitment and retention, which can reduce levels of staff turnover
- Providing strong leadership teams, which will enhance discipline and direction within local schools to ensure higher levels of attainment, pupil respect and behaviour
- Enhancing school governance arrangements
- Exploring flexible learning options, including extended school opening hours
- Focusing on underperformance at KS3, including specialist teachers and other targeted approaches
- Expanding the reach of Aim Higher and other initiatives to promote excellence and achievement
- Creating links between local secondary schools and the city’s Academy schools to ensure that local pupils benefit directly from the sponsorship delivered by the city’s major employers.

A key issue is establishing appropriate benchmarks for South Manchester (not the city average) and determining priority actions within a very challenging city and wider context.

AFP 1.10

*Increasing the links between schools and major employers, to ensure that all schools gain their own private sector sponsors.*

While community high schools in South Manchester are not formally part of the Academies programme, it is envisaged that schools will directly benefit through a cluster approach.

Academy sponsors will play an important role in shaping and influencing a wide range of school activities, which can help to create a more distinctive offer, and it is essential that schools in South Manchester benefit from Academy sponsors elsewhere in the city. Some links are already in place, eg. with Manchester Airport and the Central Manchester Healthcare Trust, and this policy will seek to build on these linkages.

In addition, there are significant potential advantages from establishing closer links with major employers aiming to implement their Corporate Social Responsibility agenda. Links will be established with individual corporate sponsors, which among other things could involve employees volunteering, mentoring, work experience and team challenges. Options will be explored to increase private-sector involvement in the leadership and management of schools.

AFP 1.11

*Celebrating the achievement and success of local secondary schools among parents and the wider community through a joint marketing campaign.*

The BSF developments, Extended Schools and other changes, such as new diplomas, will provide schools with new prospects to market and promote themselves, and demonstrate to parents their distinctive offer and added value.

Among other things, the marketing campaign could involve booklet and promotional activities to demonstrate the career destinations of successful pupils from South Manchester secondary schools, and other positive achievements and specialisms. Effective use will be made of local media and other communication routes. Focus will be placed on the parents of primary-school children.
AFP 1.12
*Tracking pupils between years six and seven to ensure a smooth transition.*

Primary-school performance within South Manchester schools is generally above the national and city averages. However, in line with national trends, South Manchester schools experience a decline in behaviour and attainment on transition from primary to secondary school. In order to minimise this decline further support will be provided for pupils in year seven. Primary-school teachers will visit secondary schools to observe the pupils they taught in year six in order to identify any behaviour changes. Detailed information on individual pupils will be provided for secondary-school teachers in order to ensure they are aware of pupils’ special needs and attainment potential.

AFP 1.13
*Increasing pupils' aspirations through the development of links with universities.*

The development of links with local universities, Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of Manchester, will heighten pupil aspirations. Government bodies such as Aimhigher and local secondary schools are completing work in this field. Aimhigher aims to widen participation in higher education (HE) by raising the awareness, aspirations and attainment of young people from underrepresented groups in particular.

The proximity of the city’s universities to South Manchester and the large proportion of students living in the area will be used to support opportunities to increase links between local students through volunteering programmes. Increasing links between pupils from deprived areas and students will help to increase their future ambitions and gain a greater picture of what they can achieve.

AFP 1.14
*Expand the curriculum offer so that all young people have the opportunity to maximise their potential.*

The introduction of new specialist diplomas provides an opportunity to achieve parity between academic and vocational provision in schools, as part of broader 14–19 collaboration across South Manchester. The delivery of the new diplomas necessitates the need for high-quality, post-16 learning hubs in the area. For those pupils who are attracted by the academic route, the potential introduction of the International Baccalaureate (IB) in the city can further expand options. If the IB option is pursued, its delivery should be prioritised within South Manchester community high schools.

AFP 1.15
*Increase the contribution of parents and the wider community to learning for young people.*
Parents and other residents already play an important role in supporting learning and other aspects of school life, although there is some evidence that community involvement is not as strong or as comprehensive as it could be. There is a need for the LA, schools and other agencies to develop new and build upon existing initiatives to boost involvement from across the range of families and communities that make up South Manchester.

The development of high-quality learning hubs at schools redeveloped through the BSF programme and Extended Schools agenda will support post-16 education. Further initiatives could include mentoring, role-modelling and other inter-generational activities, such as homework clubs.

**AFP 1.16**

*Maximise the integration of education and health and other services to improve outcomes for young people in South Manchester.*

The new District Commissioning approach to Children’s Services is seeking to achieve a much greater impact on the life chances of children across the city, particularly in deprived areas. It is essential that the new approach fosters close-working relationships between schools, libraries, social workers, healthcare and other professionals, including through multi-agency teams.

**AFP Objective 2:**

*Further enhance the offer provided by the area’s independent schools and increase their contribution to attracting and retaining families.*

Although attention is rightly focused on the state school sector, a strong and varied independent sector is a crucial part of the offer for affluent families when choosing to move to or remain in South Manchester. The local independent schools sector is accessed by a significant number of South Manchester families, although these schools draw pupils from a very wide catchment area.

**AFP 2.1**

*Work closely with the independent schools sector to develop their curriculum, facilities and other aspects of their activities.*

Given that they already perform well, the focus will be upon engaging with the independent schools sector to maximise their role in delivering the SRF’s objectives of attracting more higher income groups. This could involve curriculum developments to broaden their appeal and use in marketing and promotional campaigns. There may also be scope to draw upon approaches and practices in the independent schools sector to enhance the performance of community schools in South Manchester.

The development of a mentoring scheme should be considered which would provide a formal link between independent and community schools in the area. An extension to the current bursary scheme, which helps gifted children to gain places within local independent schools, would be supported.
**AFP Objective 3:**

*Support the expansion and sustainability of the creative industries and SME sectors.*

South Manchester’s economy has a number of key characteristics including a diverse SME sector and a concentration of individuals and businesses in the creative industries sector. The SRF will seek to build upon the area’s assets and potential, in line with the objectives of the Manchester Knowledge Capital and City Growth programme.

**AFP 3.1**

*Develop a premises strategy for district centres*

All the district centres have the potential to accommodate new and enhanced accommodation for small business and creative/independent activity. However, the best opportunities based upon access to premises and relative needs may be available in Levenshulme and Withington. The development of services that support home-working should be prioritised, such as printers, advanced ICT connectivity and postal services.

The creation of this accommodation will increase the area’s capacity to house additional small business/enterprise space, which can meet the needs of the growing creative industries, business services and related sectors. A bespoke strategy will be developed as a component of a more comprehensive plan for each centre, which adds value to existing activity and links with other public and private sector investment. This will complement the district centre policies set out in Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods.

**AFP 3.2**

*Enhance the delivery of advice, support and other assistance for new start and microbusinesses.*

While there is mainstream business support available for entrepreneurs and small businesses in South Manchester, this support does not penetrate sufficiently into the small business sector in the area. There are a significant number of individuals and microenterprises in South Manchester with the potential to start up and expand, and a tailored package of information and other support is required that can add value to the mainstream Business Link offer. A forum will be set up to support business networking opportunities for the smaller businesses located within the area.
**AFP Objective 4:**
*Attract and retain talent to support Knowledge Capital objectives.*

**AFP 4.1**
*Develop a promotional package comprising employment, lifestyle and other options, which can be used to attract new talent moving, or returning, to the city into South Manchester.*

The next 10–15 years will see the creation of a significant number of new job opportunities in the city and wider conurbation, presenting an unrivalled opportunity to attract and retain highly skilled mobile households in South Manchester thereby supporting sustainable living.

As well as direct actions to improve the attractiveness of South Manchester in comparison to competitor locations such as improving housing choice, there is a need to deliver an ongoing marketing campaign that links lifestyle and employment/business opportunities.

South Manchester has to proactively sell itself as a desirable place to live and do business. Such a campaign will link into the wider Manchester place marketing context, for example ‘Original and Modern’.

**AFP 4.2**
*Support networks and partnerships of individuals and organisations to increase awareness and appreciation of the South Manchester offer among talent groups elsewhere in the UK and overseas.*

Networks and relationships between individuals and organisations/businesses play a crucial role in locational choice, particularly for new arrivals to the city. There is an opportunity to build on existing academic, business and professional networks and informal connections to support actions to attract and retain talent within South Manchester. This could include creating a series of South Manchester representatives in key organisations such as the NHS, BBC and universities.
AFP 4.3
Support graduates and other talented individuals whose skills are underutilised to secure higher order jobs within key growth sectors.

There are a large number of graduates and other well-qualified individuals in South Manchester who are currently not fulfilling their potential, including those working in semi-skilled occupations. On the other hand, there are a large number of businesses in the city facing skill shortages. Bespoke careers advice, pre-recruitment support and other assistance to support South Manchester individuals to access suitable employment will be provided, thereby freeing up opportunities for less qualified individuals. Many of these opportunities are concentrated in Fallowfield and Whalley Range.

AFP 4.4
Assist talented workers from overseas with incompatible degrees or other employment barriers to access more suitable employment opportunities.

A minority of graduates and other talented individuals from overseas are in unsuitable employment in South Manchester due to incompatible qualifications or other technical difficulties. Accreditation of prior learning, qualifications recognition and information-raising initiatives will be developed as part of a broad package of assistance. Activity will need to be proactive and focused on outreach/engagement with individuals and communities. Priority will be given to target growth sectors/areas of skills shortages, eg. health.

AFP Objective 5:
Address low skills and qualifications in order to facilitate employment progression and meet future skill needs.

There are a large number of adults in South Manchester with poor or only basic skills, many of who engage in either on-the-job or out-of-work learning. Increasing participation in learning and upskilling is critical to allowing many people to progress to a higher qualified and better paid job.

AFP 5.1
Develop and enhance community-based hubs across South Manchester in order to boost participation in learning, linked to or within libraries, schools and other key facilities.

Adult learning provision across South Manchester is patchy with some facilities located outside the area – residents of Chorlton Park, Levenshulme and Old Moat are particularly poorly served. There is a need to expand the vocation and non-vocational learning offer, particularly the development of Level 3 skills in district centres. An ongoing analysis of the skills
required by local companies will be completed on an annual basis to ensure that the training provision offered meets employers’ needs.

No stand-alone learning facilities are proposed – collaborative provision will be prioritised, involving outreach higher education courses, further education and adult education, and MCC libraries among others as part of multi-agency activity. The development of further facilities should be prioritised within Levenshulme due to the low skill base in this area and the lack of current facilities. Any expansion in provision should be based on a robust assessment of viability and long-term sustainability.

**AFP 5.2**

*Extend community-learning initiatives*

While any new learning provision is likely to be focused in district centres in South Manchester, there is a need to enhance local or neighbourhood-based learning in a parallel and complementary fashion. The redevelopment of South Manchester’s schools in particular provides an opportunity to expand participation in lifelong learning. Priority will be given to ensuring that opportunities for new/enhanced learning provision are maximised in service cluster and related initiatives linked to estate action plans. The principal short-term spatial priorities are the Mersey Bank Estate and Old Moat.

There should be awareness of and access to provision elsewhere in the city so that basic skills and progression of skills levels from Entry Level to Level 2 will be increased within areas of greatest worklessness, including Burnage, Nell Lane/Merseybank and Old Moat. Links will be made with Sure Start Children’s Centres and Building Schools for the Future investment. Priority will also be given to increasing uptake of Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications in order to expand access to intermediate grade employment and support the growth of Knowledge Capital sectors.

**AFP 5.3**

*Promote and support workforce development plans.*

Participation by many South Manchester residents with Level 1 and 2 qualifications in work-based or other learning is limited. As well as promoting individual progression there is a need to better meet the skills requirements of employers.

Employers should be assisted to upskill their workforce, building on national initiatives such as Train to Gain. Emphasis will be given to organisations with a large proportion of their workforce resident in South Manchester. This policy will be pursued as part of a broader employer engagement strategy/local economic benefit framework for major employers such as the NHS and Manchester Airport.
**APF Objective 6:**

*Reduce the concentrations of workless adults and young people in South Manchester, extending the relative success experienced across South Manchester to all neighbourhoods.*

The City Strategy sets out the framework for efforts of the consortium of partners to more effectively tackle worklessness in South Manchester. While the scale of worklessness in South Manchester is lower than many other parts of the conurbation, there are significant pockets of workless residents in Burnage, Chorlton Park, Levenshulme and Whalley Range in particular.

The city aims to tackle worklessness using three methods. These include providing further support for Incapacity Benefit claimants through the development of flexible support frameworks at a community level allowing the number of access points to be increased. The delivery of support services will be improved through the development of clear paths between the beneficiaries of training courses and future employment opportunities. Support will also be provided for employers in relation to personnel practices, employment vacancies and assistance for those on long-term sick leave.

The number of young people who are NEET in South Manchester has fallen over the past three years but a significant minority remain in the NEET category. Decreasing the number of NEETs will be key to sustaining a decline in unemployment within the South Manchester area.

**APF 6.1**

*Deliver a bespoke strategy for reducing adult worklessness in South Manchester.*

There is a need to ensure that the City Strategy Business Plan and Commissioning Framework reflects South Manchester’s needs, characteristics and priorities, including overcoming limited facilities and infrastructure within parts of the area for employment support. Priority will be given to developing partnerships between key providers Manchester Adult Education Services (MAES), Manchester College of Arts and Technology (MANCAT), City College Manchester (CCM), RSLs and local community organisations in engaging with workless residents.

Increasing the number of access points for employment support is also key. This will include pre-employment learning, employer engagement and other support to increase the uptake of new jobs as they are created, eg. transport, childcare. Supporting Incapacity Benefit claimants to access job opportunities will also be a key consideration. Precedence will be given to the various social groups in the area, with high rates of worklessness and delivery concentrated in community hubs.

**APF 6.2**

*Expand the range of preventative initiatives for NEETs and those likely to become NEETs.*

There is a need to increase the penetration of Connexions and other preventative services in South Manchester, with a focus on specific schools in order to further engage young people who are NEET/at risk of becoming NEET. Areas currently underserved include Burnage and Levenshulme, and therefore activity will be prioritised within these areas. Additional activities needed include
daytime youth provision, provision for under-16s not in school and support for those who drop out of college or university in the first year. A clear link will be made with policies relating to expanding vocational options for young people set out in AFP1 and 2.

**AFP Objective 7:**
*Build on the economic competitive advantages of the area for economic growth and inward investment.*

**AFP 7.1**
*Improve the supply of property in existing employment locations through improvement/extension of the current facilities.*

Analysis compiled through the baseline report points toward static/declining demand for large floorplate office space across South Manchester but greater levels of vibrancy in the smaller scale owner-occupied sector. The SRF therefore needs to reflect likely future demand scenarios.

This will lead to the continued marketing of space on key sites and locations such as Princess Parkway and the Towers Business Park to corporate businesses. This would be undertaken in line with other inward investment activity being orchestrated by Manchester Investment Agency (MIDAS). In the district centres, while it will not be possible to directly intervene in the marketplace to bring forward smaller premises to meet demand from smaller businesses, the SRF could offer encouragement in this area as part of a promotional strategy and build in the requirement for small business space to development briefs, in places such as Chorlton and Levenshulme.

In overall terms the objective behind this policy will be to maintain the competitive position of the traditional South Manchester office market, but also enhance existing sites through a diversified strategy that meet wider employment objectives set out elsewhere in the SRF.
**AFP 7.2**
*Encourage further innovation in the marketplace to ensure that current demand can be met.*

Investor and occupancy demands suggest a change in the market for office accommodation, with buy to lets and owner-occupation becoming more desirable, as well as increasing flexibility in lease arrangements. It is essential that existing grade A office accommodation in South Manchester is more suited to the requirements of investors and occupiers alike. Further measures, including splitting floorplates on large sites, will therefore be considered so that wider objectives for South Manchester including the attraction of SMEs to grade A accommodation can be met.

**AFP 7.3**
*Consolidate existing SMEs in grade B office space in areas such as Chorlton and Didsbury into lettable and freehold Grade A office space with incentives.*

Provide attractive packages for occupiers of grade B office space above retail units in Chorlton and Didsbury to move to existing and purpose-built grade A accommodation elsewhere in the SRF area. This would involve providing the correct size of floorplates by splitting and tailoring existing vacant accommodation and providing leaseholds and freeholds, which will provide an incentive for SMEs to relocate. This process would provide new occupiers with the advantages of on-site car parking, enhanced technology, such as ISDN links, and the ability to expand in the future. This policy will be implemented by Manchester City Council property and valuations department.

**AFP Objective 8:**
*Exploit the opportunities afforded by information and communications technologies (ICTs) and digital connectivity.*

**AFP 8.1**
*Develop an ‘atlas’ of e-infrastructure to determine demand for cable and wireless connectivity.*

In order to assess the demand for future cable and wireless e-infrastructure, the current supply of these facilities will be mapped. Current providers will be contacted to determine the use of their own network or the BT infrastructure. The level of connectivity in various areas will also be assessed through engagement with providers, including their plans for future development.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that many areas in South Manchester are poorly served, which restricts ICT use. It is anticipated that this inadequate connectivity will gradually decrease the area’s economic competitiveness and productivity as demand for high-speed service continues to increase. The development of the atlas will identify areas requiring infrastructure improvements. It is also imperative to future-proof the infrastructure required in order to anticipate demand. This work should be completed through focusing on the provision of universal, affordable access.
AFP 8.2

Maximising opportunities to increase broadband connectivity within district centres to support the growth of SMEs and the Creative Industries sector.

Following the development of the e-infrastructure, atlas opportunities to meet gaps in provision within district centres will be fully utilised. The development of action plans for the various district centres will include the identification of broadband e-infrastructure improvements required. Infrastructure enhancements will be phased for completion within the same timeframe as improvements to the transport network in order to improve efficiency.

The attractiveness of the district centres as a location for creative industries and SMEs will be enhanced through these technological improvements due to their greater demand for cutting-edge technology. Investment in infrastructure development will therefore support the economic growth of these sectors and allow these areas to compete with cities such as Amsterdam. MCC will continue to work in partnership with digital industries, through Manchester Digital Development Agency (MDDA) to develop the Digital Hub network.

This will enable local SMEs in South Manchester to take advantage of enhanced digital connectivity across the city centre and city region in order to subsidise the cost of infrastructure enhancement and ensure that this is sustainable.

AFP 8.3

The development of a Living Lab pilot project within South Manchester.

The feasibility of developing a Living Lab pilot project in South Manchester will be examined. Living Labs provide a model for developing community-based ‘test-beds’ for innovation and advanced connectivity. Originally developed in Finland, there is now a European Network of Living Labs (ENOLL) supporting their further development across Europe, of which Manchester is a member, which provides an opportunity to use this model in South Manchester.

The pilot project will be developed to complement the Computers for Pupils initiative and be used to increase family learning and e-skills. The Living Lab will also be able to act as a test-bed for digital sustainability through increased energy-efficiency, eg. remote monitoring and control of energy, and more sustainable lifestyles, eg. teleworking.

There are also significant opportunities for digital inclusion surrounding the digital switchover, which will happen in the Granada region at the end of 2009.
This includes public awareness initiatives, eg. for older people and e-government developments. Increased demand for better digital services, linked to the convergence of PCs, TVs and other equipment, provides a stimulus for improved access in a variety of locations, including managed workspace and incubation locations as the boundary between home and work becomes increasingly blurred and people are encouraged to embrace more sustainable lifestyles.
7. Policy Theme 3: Strengthening Communities – Individuals, Families and Neighbourhoods

The third theme of the SRF focuses upon the development of cohesive, stronger communities that are safer, healthier and welcoming to people from a wide range of backgrounds. South Manchester’s distinctive features include a large student population, particularly in Fallowfield and Withington, a number of affluent neighbourhoods and concentrations of deprivation in, but not exclusively, the social housing areas of Old Moat, Burnage, Nell Lane and Merseybank. Sustainable communities can only be achieved long-term by building on some of South Manchester’s strengths, such as its diversity, heritage and community loyalty, and addressing its weaknesses such as concentrations of deprivation.

There are a number of strands to this theme reflecting the need to improve the quality of life for all as part of the SRF vision. Cutting across all these strands is the need for effective neighbourhood management and more joined-up service delivery at a local level. The development of estate based action plans involving a range of partner agencies to improve service delivery will be a key ingredient in this theme. More information on neighbourhood management is provided in the Delivery section.

The first strand of this theme seeks to build upon the area’s diversity and changing demographics to create more cohesive communities. While most residents live in harmony, there is a need to work with the area’s assets and people to ameliorate tensions and promote loyalty to South Manchester. Culture in all its forms, ranging from music and drama through to sport and recreation, is the second strand of the theme. Culture already plays a key role in the quality of life of South Manchester. Through this strand opportunities for new or enhanced cultural, arts, leisure and community provision and activities will be prioritised, which focus primarily on the district and local centres given their accessibility and existing retail offer and other services. Methods by which to develop South Manchester in order to support ethical and sustainable ways of living are developed in the third strand. They include increasing household recycling and energy-efficiency through targeting specific groups and developing environmental campaigns.

The fourth strand is crime and community safety. Levels of crime and nuisance are too high across the area. This has a negative impact on many residents and businesses and contributes to an adverse image. Reducing crime and nuisance is integral to stronger communities in South Manchester. The SRF will seek to build upon the work of Greater Manchester Police (GMP) and other agencies in making crime harder to commit and providing diversionary activities as well as dealing effectively with crime when it happens.

The fifth strand relates to the student population in South Manchester, which is an increasingly diverse group. While students can bring a number of positives and negatives to South Manchester, there is a need to enhance their contribution to the wider community during their studies as well as encourage more students to remain in the area post-graduation. Associated housing issues are tackled in the Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods theme.
The sixth, seventh and eighth strands involve setting out policies to ensure that the needs of the young and their families are met. Additional targeted interventions are needed to assist those children and families in deprived communities requiring support, as well as addressing broader childcare needs. Reducing health inequalities and achieving healthier lifestyles is the final strand of this theme. Although residents are healthier than the city average, there are significant variations in health and lifestyle indicators, in part – although not exclusively – linked to deprivation. A comprehensive public health strategy is required, which extends and enhances action to address health inequalities such as the South Manchester Healthy Living Network.

Key Issues

The Strengthening Communities theme is seeking to address a number of issues and challenges in South Manchester.

- **Targeted action on crime** South Manchester needs to be recognised as a safe area for residents and businesses alike – actual crime levels and current perceptions of crime and nuisance are not as positive as they should be. While South Manchester is generally safer than other parts of the city, the evidence shows that there are a number of hot spots of crime and nuisance that need to be tackled – burglary and personal robbery being particular problems.

- **Integrating and Retaining Students** For many years students have been an important part of the South Manchester community and the student population continues to grow and become more diverse. Fallowfield and Withington remain the areas with the highest concentration of students in South Manchester.

A large student population provides plus points and negative points for South Manchester – on the one hand it supports significant expenditure in the local economy, but it also adversely impacts on the housing market and neighbourhood management in some parts of the area. While housing issues will be dealt with in the DPN theme, the focus here is on increasing the positive contribution of students to the local community and encouraging greater graduate retention in the longer term.

- **Targeted health interventions** South Manchester is not as healthy as it should be, with the greatest inequalities evident in the most deprived communities. In these areas, average life expectancy is much lower and incidence of ill health much higher than in other parts of South Manchester. Even in the more affluent parts of the area the data suggests that adults could be healthier, with evidence of poor diets, insufficient participation in physical activity and relatively high levels of smoking and alcohol consumption. While addressing some of the wider determinants of health (such as reducing worklessness) will help to reduce health inequalities, there is a need to deliver a programme of targeted health interventions as well as improve access to health facilities across the area.

- **Responding to the needs of older people and the changing dynamics of ageing** South Manchester has a large population of older people who face a range of challenges in achieving a full and active life and playing a valued role in the community.

Looking forward, Chorlton is forecast to see the largest growth in people aged over 50 in the city. As the population of older people and the
relationship between generations changes, there is a need to address common issues such as crime and healthy ageing, as well as specific challenges in South Manchester, including access to facilities and services. Older people play a valued role in South Manchester’s communities. Through their involvement with local voluntary groups, as civic leaders, in their role as carers, grandparents and mentors, older adults represent a significant community resource. Our aim is to support people in later life to be active and healthy, and to be able to fulfil their potential.

As well as actions in this theme, the needs of older people will be prioritised across the policy framework, including housing and district centres.

- **Responding to the needs of the young** In parallel with improving educational performance, there is a need to improve other outcomes for children in South Manchester. There are significant numbers of children and families, many residing in the social housing estates and requiring additional support to help them develop. More broadly, reviews of childcare provision have shown that there are gaps in what is currently available – filling these gaps is essential to meeting the needs of working families.

- **Culture as a lever for quality of life** Some parts of South Manchester are already well served for culture and leisure facilities, while others such as Whalley Range and Levenshulme are less so.

While many residents are able to and choose to access activities outside the area, there is a need to increase the range of activities and facilities available within South Manchester, particularly but not exclusively for young people. This will involve exploiting opportunities for new private investment as well as enhancing the role and contribution made by the community and voluntary sector.

- **Building on Diversity** South Manchester is a large and diverse area, with a number of well-established communities. This diversity provides a number of benefits for South Manchester and is one of its strengths. The area’s ethnic and cultural mix is evolving as new people move into South Manchester, extending the area’s more established BME communities in Fallowfield, Levenshulme and Whalley Range. Over the past decade or so, the area’s BME population has more than doubled, with now more than a third of children in Burnage, Chorlton and Old Moat from BME backgrounds. Promoting cohesion between residents is essential to avoid tension and polarisation.
**Strategic Objectives**

The Strengthening Communities theme will be delivered through nine objectives:

- **SC 1** Develop cohesive and integrated communities.
- **SC 2** Increase the contribution of culture to quality of life in South Manchester.
- **SC 3** Develop South Manchester as an exemplar for ethical and sustainable living in the north west.
- **SC 4** Target hot spots of crime and nuisance more effectively and reduce the propensity of some South Manchester residents and businesses to be victims of crime, as part of a broad approach to reducing fear of crime and improving perceptions.
- **SC 5** Maximise the contribution of the student population to the economy and community of South Manchester.
- **SC 6** Address demand for early years and out-of-school provision for the five-to-eleven age group.
- **SC 7** Address the variable coverage and quality of cultural and leisure activities for young people.
- **SC 8** Ensure that family support is accessible across all parts of South Manchester, with support targeted on those locations with large numbers of families requiring support.
- **SC 9** Tackle pockets of ill health within the disadvantaged neighbourhoods of South Manchester and achieve healthier lifestyles for all.

**SC Objective 1:**

*Develop cohesive and integrated communities.*

Within a very diverse population, both ethnically and socio-economically, it is important that integration is promoted across South Manchester in order to avoid polarisation and facilitate loyalty and ties to the area. As South Manchester welcomes new people and neighbourhoods evolve, achieving stronger communities becomes an even greater challenge. This policy recognises the need to invest in community infrastructure as well as encouraging greater ownership and participation of all residents in the success of their neighbourhood.

**SC 1.1**

*Establish a set of neighbourhood agreements all residents can embrace and uphold.*

The Mancunian Agreement is being developed to foster greater individual and household involvement in the management and success of neighbourhoods in Manchester, linked to the objectives of the Community Strategy and the recent Local Government White Paper, which envisages an enhanced role for local groups and residents in the delivery of services and the management of their neighbourhoods. The potential will be explored to create a number of neighbourhood agreements across South Manchester, which could work in conjunction with the development of Estate Action Plans and the ward co-ordination process.

The agreements will increase resident involvement in service delivery and ensure that providers have greater accountability. Links will be made to existing structures such as resident associations and the work of social housing providers. Neighbourhood agreements will also be developed in partnership
with local universities, which will identify community champions through a volunteering task group.

**SC 1.2**
Expand the inclusion of older people in all aspects of community life in South Manchester.

The Manchester Valuing Older People’s strategy provides the context for ageing policies in South Manchester, with the aspiration of becoming a pioneering third-age city. Actions for older people should focus on addressing gaps in provision, eg. Burnage, Old Moat, Withington, Whalley Range, and the needs of the most vulnerable and excluded residents.

A key priority will be to extend the older people’s network across South Manchester, building on the existing groups in Burnage and Didsbury. Other priorities include:

- Building upon current community capacity, such as Chorlton Good Neighbours
- Expanding the programme of healthy ageing initiatives
- Prioritising older residents for advice and support to combat crime and antisocial behaviour
- Exploiting opportunities for improved access to learning and cultural activities, eg. libraries, schools.

Housing-related and district centre policies for older people are proposed in the Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods theme. Given the constraints on mainstream provision, priority will be given to increasing the number of volunteers to assist groups working with older people. The development of intergenerational activities will be key to the inclusion of older people within their local community. Opportunities to develop these activities are presented by the universities volunteering programmes.

The social care of older people will be considered with regard to the development of preventative activities. Initiatives will be focused on individuals, challenging them to change their behaviour and improve the complete environment within which they live. Older people will receive support to assist them to continue to live independently. Initiatives will include developing new services for older people with high-level care, constructing additional extra care housing, and increasing the availability of assistive technology, in-house homecare and rehabilitation services. Vulnerable older people will be identified early and provided with additional support.
**SC 1.3**
*Improve the economic contribution and wellbeing of older people.*

While a proportion of the older population in South Manchester is relatively affluent, there are significant concentrations of people aged 50+ who are out of work and/or on low incomes. Income deprivation among older people is most prevalent in northern Levenshulme (many of whom are Asian elders), Old Moat, Fallowfield, the Merseybank estate and Whalley Range. The majority of people aged 50+ and out of work are claiming Incapacity Benefit, demonstrating wider health issues within the areas, which need addressing. Work should be completed with claimants to allow them to take up opportunities that would support them to re-enter the job market. There is a need to boost the skills of older workers and work with employers to decrease negative perceptions of older workers in line with policies within the City Strategy.

**SC 1.4**
*Promote communication and engagement between neighbours and communities to promote a sense of place.*

While South Manchester has a number of active communities, there is a need to further build the ties between neighbours and communities. This could involve including cross-neighbourhood events, festivals, good neighbour and volunteering initiatives and maximising use of community focal points such as libraries. Emphasis will be placed on making the best use of the assets, groups and facilities within the area.

**SC 1.5**
*Expand the use of schools, community hubs and other facilities to bring communities together.*

The Extended Schools agenda will increase the role of local schools as community focal points, supporting the process of community engagement, as they are one of the first calling points for new residents. As new BSF schools are currently only planned in Levenshulme and Burnage, there is a need to better exploit a wide range of venues, facilities and spaces across South Manchester. The development of Sure Start centres and libraries will also support this activity. A focus should be given to facilities in district centres in line with other SRF policies.
SC 1.6
Enhance the capacity of the community and voluntary sector to deliver services and activities.

The community and voluntary sector already plays an important role in providing a wide range of activities in South Manchester, eg. youth provision. There is scope for the community and voluntary sector to take a greater role in service delivery, although the sector is not as strong as it could be in areas where it is most needed, eg. Old Moat. This will help to not just facilitate cohesive and integrated communities but also assist in the achievement of policies for health, culture, skills and access to employment among others.

The potential for a greater third-sector role is particularly evident in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods of South Manchester in the areas of health and learning/skills in parallel with more effective mainstream provision. This should be pursued as part of a broader principle of seeking to join up service delivery across the three SRF themes.

SC Objective 2:
Maintain and increase the contribution of culture to quality of life in South Manchester.

Developing the cultural offer of South Manchester is essential if the area is to remain attractive to a broad range of households and individuals. The area already benefits from a wide variety of clubs, groups and activities, so the key focus of this policy will on tackling weaknesses and gaps in provision, both private and public, and growing capacity in the area.

Cultural hubs currently exist within areas of South Manchester and have led to the development of neighbourhoods with unique identities. This has added to the popularity of places such as Chorlton and Didsbury. South Manchester also features a number of successful events and festivals, such as Chorlton Arts Festival, summer plays in Fletcher Moss Park, and a variety of events in Platt Fields Park throughout the year. This existing level of activity can be built upon and continued throughout the area. The overall context for this policy will be provided by the city’s Cultural Partnership and the themes of cultural economy and culture for all. Links will be made to the enterprise and business growth policies for the creative sector set out in the Achieving Full Potential theme.

SC 2.1
Address the gaps in, and enhance the quality of, leisure provision in areas currently underserved or where expectations are not being met.

Opportunities to increase the quality and quantity of leisure opportunities within the area will be supported by the Building Schools for the Future
(BSF) and Extended Schools programmes, and it is essential that the scope for wider community access is maximised. Outside of schools, priority should be given to encouraging new or enhanced leisure activity to meet need and demand, including, Chorlton, Chorlton Park, Levenshulme and Old Moat. Given high land values and market conditions at this time, the potential for major new private-sector leisure facilities is limited. New facilities within district centres as part of broader regeneration plans, eg. Chorlton and Levenshulme, should be investigated. There is also the need to work collaboratively with sports clubs, churches and other organisations to ensure that usage of existing facilities, eg. universities, is maximised and there is increased community use, and that activities/services are provided to high-quality standards.

SC 2.2
Exploit the opportunity for new or enhanced arts and cultural/community provision and activities within community hubs, including district centres, Extended Schools, childcare facilities and related initiatives.

The development of South Manchester’s district and local centres provides a number of opportunities to develop and deliver cultural provision. A co-ordinated approach will be taken that seeks to link different strands of cultural activity together with retail and other provision. The community and voluntary sector will be included as partners involved in the development of new and enhanced provision. No stand-alone facilities will be permitted.

A strategic overview of provision, which is school-based, neighbourhood-based, and district centre-based, is needed to underpin future investment decisions. The mix of any new or enhanced provision will depend on the specific needs and opportunities in each centre/locality, but is likely to involve some, or all, libraries, Sure Start, health, learning and leisure facilities. Joint planning and coordinated service delivery is a prerequisite for any new centres. The location of new facilities will be considered in detail to ensure new sites are sufficiently accessible and sustainable.

Short-term priorities include Levenshulme and Merseybank. Sites will also be assessed in relation to their proximity to local schools and the opportunities presented to develop links with these and other facilities. Methods of funding new provision will be explored, including the use of Section 106 funds and joint venture partnerships.

In developing new provision, or as a stand-alone activity, public art can play an important role in engaging people from different age groups and backgrounds through cultural activity.
It can also be used to promote the creative industries based within the area. In parallel with new or enhanced facilities, building on the current portfolio of events and festivals such as Chorlton Arts Festival is a key part of this policy. Enhancing the delivery of activities by, and links with, cultural organisations outside South Manchester, particularly those based in the city centre, will also support this objective.

**SC 2.3**
*Support community and other groups to protect and develop South Manchester’s heritage and cultural identity.*

Parts of South Manchester such as Didsbury and Withington contain a large number of community groups that have been formed to protect and enhance local character and provision. These groups and other community organisations are an important local resource.

In some South Manchester wards, high-quality open spaces are in short supply and they provide a valuable resource that requires protection. Support for the ‘park friends’ system could be increased in order to increase levels of engagement with the wider community; this will help to expand ownership and the development of events and activities. Links will be made to the policies in the Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods theme. The development of a project similar to the DIG Manchester Project developed in Moston, Northenden and Wythenshawe could increase community engagement and develop a sense of place and heritage, while utilising many of the open spaces within the area.

**SC 2.4**
*Work with the private sector and local universities in South Manchester to develop corporate social responsibility.*

There is scope to increase private companies, and the universities’ involvement in the provision of leisure and arts facilities for use by their employees and other community groups. This will help to strengthen links between large employers and the communities in which they are located.

Many of these companies, such as Siemens, have corporate social responsibility policies that should be maximised in order to provide benefits for local people. MCC will undertake negotiations with larger employers and the universities, who may attract hundreds of employees to spend their working hours in South Manchester, to develop opportunities to create and support recreational facilities. The feasibility of pooling the resources of smaller local businesses and property owners will be investigated.
SC Objective 3:
Develop South Manchester as an exemplar for ethical and sustainable living in the north west.

Manchester’s aim to become the greenest city in Britain will be supported by policies to promote ethical and sustainable living in South Manchester. The Green City framework sets out a broad agenda to reduce the impact on the environment and improve quality of life for residents as well as maximising increases in employment and prosperity. This policy will seek to build upon existing activities and features of South Manchester, including independent/ethical retail, social enterprise and sustainable energy.

SC 3.1
Develop provision of recycling services and awareness-raising activities to reduce the amount of domestic waste produced.

Pilot schemes such as Eco Diet have been developed elsewhere in the city, which support families to increase recycling of domestic waste. The schemes also promote energy conservation and a resourceful approach to water use, while residents are assisted to increase their use of public transport, enhance biodiversity and make ethical shopping choices.

The lessons learnt from this pilot and other Council awareness-raising activities will be key to inform the approach across South Manchester. Chorlton could provide an initial focus for the South Manchester approach. Ongoing initiatives will be expanded in order to reduce the amount of waste produced, maximise the amount of residual waste that is sent for recycling, and decrease domestic energy use. Eco-schools will be used to deliver environmental education to local pupils through assistance from the voluntary sector. Some of the first domestic renewable energy installations in the city are taking place in South Manchester. This innovation should be captured and used to facilitate greater uptake of renewable energy installations.

SC 3.2
Develop and implement minimum standards for energy use, microgeneration, weather resilience and access to biodiverse habitats.

This policy will involve working with the local community to develop and implement minimum standards for sustainable living across each neighbourhood in South Manchester.
There is also a need to ensure that new developments are resilient to climate change and remain viable throughout their anticipated lifespan.

Ways in which quality of life and local sustainability can be improved simultaneously for local residents will be examined. These will include the development of accessible good public transport links, expanding the number of shops selling locally produced, fresh, healthy food, and enhancing green space, which supports residents to exercise and move safely from one part of the community to another. A set of bespoke targets will be developed for South Manchester to demonstrate its contribution to Food Futures and Green City objectives.

**SC Objective 4:**
Target hot spots of crime and nuisance more effectively and reduce the propensity of some South Manchester residents and businesses to be victims of crime, as part of a broad approach to reducing fear of crime and improving perceptions.

A mix of preventative, enforcement and awareness-raising actions will be prioritised to tackle crime and nuisance across South Manchester, in conjunction with the implementation of the priorities of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and the Safer Neighbourhood agenda.

**SC 4.1**
Expand diversionary and other activities for young people.

Young people account for a significant proportion of crime and nuisance in South Manchester. Working to take young people out of the crime cycle and to provide broader support for families are key priorities. There is a need to expand diversionary activities in order to encompass a wider definition of culture, which includes all types of leisure, recreation, performance and visual arts.

The current offer for young people in many parts of South Manchester is limited, so the focus will be on greater partnership working to enhance provision and provide young people with more ways in which to make a positive contribution to their local communities, building on successful initiatives elsewhere, such as Garden City and the Respect Pilots.

The development of further leisure and recreational facilities within South Manchester will support this process, including through Extended Schools, as well as an enhanced role for the community and
voluntary sector. Additional activities and engagement will be complemented by the effective monitoring and policing of youth nuisance hot spots in order to decrease antisocial behaviour. Initiatives will be developed to tackle this problem in line with Respect related programmes being introduced across the city, eg. Respect Action Weeks and peer reinforcement. These initiatives will mirror the hot spots identified.

SC 4.2
Develop and deliver a Safer Student programme.

Students account for a significant proportion of crime in South Manchester, often due to their insufficient appreciation of crime and personal safety in the area and the poor security of the accommodation within which they reside.

Support is currently targeted at students during Freshers Week and within the first few weeks of the autumn term when crime rates are particularly high. Priority will be given to developing a more comprehensive programme involving information and awareness of personal safety, self-defence, home security and other related activities such as student guardians. A new partnership approach will be developed led by the two universities.

SC 4.3
Deliver a comprehensive programme of measures to increase awareness and understanding of crime and develop neighbourhood-based community safety.

There are a number of community-based crime and safety initiatives in South Manchester that do valuable work in disseminating information and undertaking small-scale activities. This policy seeks to maximise the effectiveness of neighbourhood policing and management arrangements through Local Action Partnerships and Local Tasking Meetings. The analysis of local crime information will be completed through the collection of data by the dedicated crime analysts and the Crime and Disorder Partnership. The development of Key Individual Networks will also take place. The Networks will be set up to seek perceptions of criminal activity from 40 residents per ward. This will support the prioritisation of crime hot spots and allow a speedy response to local problems, including the management of Police Community Support Officer activity.

This could include extended neighbourhood watch and Home Watch, wardens and community guardians. It is recognised that building and maintaining community reassurance is an essential component of this policy so marketing and publicity campaigns will be a key feature. Decreasing perceptions of crime is key to increasing the desirability of the area and community capacity building activities will be supported in order to strengthen related community links. Emphasis will be given in the shortterm to specific thematic and geographical problems, eg. reducing crime levels
in Burnage, Fallowfield and Withington and antisocial behaviour in Chorlton Park ward. Links will be made to the neighbouring and other policies proposed in SC9.

SC 4.4
*Improve the security and safety of residential properties through target hardening and other home improvement initiatives.*

A number of properties in South Manchester suffer from poor or inadequate security and a low-quality environment, which make them a target for burglary and vandalism. Building on existing activity, a range of initiatives will be developed involving information, advice, financial and other support to improve residential security. Links will be made to landlord licensing and accreditation arrangements in order to maximise the contribution to improve the security of rented properties. Where appropriate, complementary external enhancements will be undertaken, including environmental works, alley-gating and enhanced street lighting. Interventions will be focused on Burnage, Chorlton, Fallowfield, Levenshulme, Old Moat, Withington and other hot spots.

SC 4.5
*Deliver a comprehensive strategy to tackle vehicle crime.*

Thefts from and of motor vehicles are a major problem in South Manchester, with hot spots across the area, including the more desirable neighbourhoods in Chorlton and parts of Didsbury. The strategy will compromise a mix of preventative and enforcement actions, including better use of intelligence on offenders and working with drivers to deter thieves more effectively.

SC 4.6
*Equip individuals of all ages to deter personal robbery or assault.*

Rates of personal robbery and assault in South Manchester are higher than they should be with young people, students and young professionals more likely than the average person to be a victim. While these groups provide the focus of this policy, awareness of personal safety needs to be improved across all age groups and neighbourhoods in the area. This will involve working with schools, employers and other partner agencies to increase awareness and confidence in dealing with situations as they arise.
SC Objective 5: Maximising the contribution of the student population to the economy and community of South Manchester.

Students are already an important feature of the community in South Manchester yet their positive contribution to the area’s success and sustainability has not always been maximised while they are undertaking their studies. In addition, a proactive approach is being proposed to minimise some of the adverse effects on the local economy of a concentrated student population in parts of South Manchester, through better neighbourhood management of those areas most adversely affected by student behaviour, for example Fallowfield, Withington and parts of Old Moat. Policies to enhance graduate retention in South Manchester are set out in the Achieving Full Potential theme.

SC 5.1 Promote the growth of student volunteering to support the local community.

Links between the student community and their neighbourhood will be enhanced through the development of student volunteering and other initiatives.

Both Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) and the University of Manchester have volunteering programmes; however, they have previously not always had a strong emphasis on South Manchester. Strategies to develop these opportunities and provide valuable work experience for students to embellish their CVs will be created in collaboration with the universities and other partners.

SC 5.2 Encourage students to remain in South Manchester throughout the year.

A range of businesses and other services within South Manchester are highly dependent on the expenditure and economic activity of students, activity which suffers a significant downturn outside the academic terms, particularly in the summer months. In order to reduce the adverse effects of transience, there is a need to broker opportunities for students to remain in South Manchester outside term-time as part of an overall strategy designed to increase graduate retention rates across the city. This may involve developing greater links with businesses to provide work experience, internships and temporary employment opportunities over the summer months, as well as other initiatives to promote student retention in the area.

Issues related to community cohesion are discussed within policy SC9.
**SC Objective 6:**

Address the demand for early years and out-of-school provision for the 5–11 age group.

Parts of South Manchester have a growing population of young families which is placing ever-greater demands on early years provision. The area already benefits from three Children’s Centres with a further two centres to be operational by 2008, as well as a range of private provision. Ensuring that supply meets demand remains a challenge, although a clearer view on specific priorities will emerge from the current audit of early years provision. The skills shortage in this area will be tackled in partnership with local colleges, adult education provision and be linked with pathways to work for local residents.

Enhancing provision will be a key component of action to deliver the City’s Children and Young People’s Plan and the Every Child Matters framework. Links and integration with Extended Schools is a key aspect of this policy, in order that provision is taken up by those families most in need.

**SC 6.1**

*Increase sessional daycare where sustainable opportunities are presented.*

Priority will be given to providing additional sessional daycare in areas of demand across South Manchester based on the outcomes of the audit – demand for further sessional daycare within Fallowfield and mother/toddler groups/playgroups within the Merseybank Estate, Burnage and Chorlton Park have already been identified. Elsewhere, eg. in Fallowfield, additional private provision will be encouraged and supported to meet demand. It is important to ensure that the childcare places created can be accessed by South Manchester residents.

**SC 6.2**

*Expand out-of-school provision in areas of demand.*

In spite of growth in out-of-school provision across South Manchester, there remains unmet demand from South Manchester residents for after-school clubs and other provision in a number of areas, particularly Chorlton and Didsbury. Delivering this policy will involve Sure Start and other agencies supporting private childcare providers to supply provision, including encouraging the development of more independent children’s nurseries. It is again important to ensure that South Manchester residents are able to access new places.

**SC 6.3**

*Ensure that new childcare provision is integrated with other provision for children, young people and families.*

The three new Sure Start Children’s Centres to be developed within the area (Levenshulme, Mersey Bank Estate and Whalley Range) have the potential to significantly enhance outcomes for children as
well as contribute to a number of other SRF objectives. It is essential that opportunities to link new childcare provision with other services and facilities, including learning and health, are maximised. Whichever locations are chosen for these centres and any other new provision, there is a need to plan, market and promote services effectively so that uptake from the local area is maximised. In parallel, delivery of services on an outreach basis also needs to be prioritised.

**SC 6.4**

*Support the growth of childminders in South Manchester to meet the increasingly flexible requirements of parents.*

Childminders are an important part of the childcare offer for parents in South Manchester. Elsewhere in the city, initiatives to increase the number of childminders have helped to meet some of the gaps in childcare provision, as well as provide an avenue into employment for those achieving the qualification. Within South Manchester, the recent audit demonstrates that there are a limited number of childminders in Fallowfield and West Didsbury. A strategy will be developed to support and sustain the role of childminders in South Manchester, based on the outcome of the review. This will include ensuring all childminders are inspected by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and this option is promoted.

**SC Objective 7:**

*Address the variable coverage and quality of cultural and leisure activities for young people.*

Participation in cultural and leisure activities by young people varies greatly between neighbourhoods across South Manchester. Unsurprisingly, the most affluent neighbourhoods support the greatest level of participation and generally have the best-quality provision and widest choice of activity. Positive recreational opportunities are required by all young people living in the area in order to allow them to prosper, develop new skills and provide a constructive contribution to their local communities.

This policy complements the city-wide Enjoy strategy which is currently being developed and the Every Child Matters framework. This includes the establishment of a cultural entitlement, which will support local children and young people to engage in leisure opportunities.

Investment in areas with poor access to provision will be supported. Previous consultation with young people will be built upon to ensure that attractive activities are offered.

**SC 7.1**

*Capitalise on the Extended Schools and Building Schools for the Future programmes to increase the range of activities available for young people and the local community.*

The School Rebuilding programme and the development of the Extended Schools provides an unrivalled opportunity to expand the ICT, leisure and cultural offer for young people. It is essential that the potential for multipurpose facilities is maximised and that revenue and other support is
put in place to get the best use out of the physical investments. A hierarchy of provision will be created, which will determine local access to facilities.

**SC 7.2**  
*Increase provision of non-education-based leisure provision for young people in areas currently underserved.*

While outreach programmes and other initiatives are used to increase participation, there is a need for enhanced provision in a number of locations, including Levenshulme. There are also opportunities to expand the use of community centres to support youth services and increase the use of private and university-owned provision. In areas where new provision is not appropriate, eg. Merseybank, priority should be given to increasing access to existing provision. Where new facilities are developed, priority should be given to locating them in centres as part of broader investment plans. As a principle, activities should be developed for the benefit of all children not just those identified at risk of becoming NEET.

**SC 7.3**  
*Improve awareness and appreciation of activities, events and facilities for young people.*

There is a range of anecdotal evidence that lack of awareness of what is available is acting as a barrier to participation for some young people. A co-ordinated approach is required that boosts communication and awareness, including the production of a booklet promoting cultural and leisure activities and enhanced internet and media-based communication methods enabling gaps and duplication to be more readily tackled.

**SC Objective 8:**  
*Ensure that family support is accessible across all parts of South Manchester, with support targeted on those locations with a large number of families requiring support.*

While the majority of families in South Manchester require only modest or no levels of support, there is a need to ensure that universal health and other services are readily available and accessible. The focus of this policy is on ensuring that families needing substantive support receive a joined-up and high-quality service that can boost their child’s development and achievement.

The restructuring of children’s and families services across Manchester to better deliver the objectives of Every Child Matters provides the operational context for this policy. Multi-agency children and young people’s teams comprising education, health, youth work and social care professionals are being established, which can implement the local priorities agreed by the District Commissioning structures covering South Manchester. Cutting across the move to make services more effective and responsive is the desire to further alter the balance from reactive to preventative interventions.

The Children and Young People’s Plan describes how relevant services across the city will support children and young people, allowing them to reach their full potential, and describes how current services can be improved. A Positive and Responsible Parenting Strategy has also been developed, which supports the development of strong parenting skills, improving access to information and widening access to parenting courses.
**SC 8.1**
*Facilitate the use of the District Commissioning Model and multi-agency teams to focus assistance on disadvantaged families in South Manchester.*

The District Commissioning Model is seeking to understand the needs of children, young people and their families, and commission appropriate services. This will include targeted intervention on children and families in greatest need. As part of the model, multi-agency teams within South Manchester will be organised along the following boundaries, although exact locations have yet to be decided upon:

- Didsbury East and West, Burnage
- Chorlton Park, Old Moat and Withington
- Fallowfield and Rusholme
- Chorlton and Whalley Range
- Levenshulme, Gorton North and South.

The teams will bring together a range of workers who provide support to children, young people and their families. Many services will be co-located and these include school nurses, health visitors, midwives, social workers and their associated clerical and administrative staff.

There is a need to ensure that the teams achieve sufficient coverage and penetration within the most disadvantaged communities of South Manchester. This will include making effective use of outreach centres and other venues. However, a central base is unlikely to be established in each neighbourhood.

Opportunities should be pursued to achieve greater collaboration with other services and activities as part of community hubs/joint service centres in order to maximise their reach and impact.

The development of multi-agency estate action plans will assist in the targeting of services to meet needs.

**SC 8.2**
*Enhance the support and networks available to parents in South Manchester.*

The capability and capacity of parents to guide their children's development varies significantly between different households and neighbourhoods in South Manchester. At one level, there is a need to expand universal services such as peer networks of parents where learning can occur through shared experiences. Other parents and families, particularly newly arrived families or lone parents, often require more substantive support. Using the Positive and Responsible Parenting Strategy as the framework, there is a need to expand family support services in South Manchester drawing upon opportunities such as Extended Schools and the work of the community and voluntary sector.
SC Objective 9:
Tackle pockets of ill health within the disadvantaged neighbourhoods of South Manchester and achieve better health outcomes for all.

The importance of improving health across all groups and neighbourhoods in the SRF area is highlighted by the Government’s Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2004, which ranks two thirds of the Census Super Output Areas (SOAs) in South Manchester as within the worst 20% nationally. The highest levels of poor health are focused in Burnage, Chorlton Park, and Old Moat, demonstrating the clear correlation between incidence of poor health and wider deprivation.

The picture of health inequalities in South Manchester is complex and constantly evolving. Some of the most pertinent health issues are:

- Mortality rates are highest in Levenshulme and Burnage, in part due to heart disease and cancers
- Only Didsbury has a lower percentage of its residents with a limiting long-term illness than nationally
- Teenage pregnancy rates and low weight births are highest in Fallowfield and Whalley Range
- Excessive alcohol consumption is a growing problem across the area
- Smoking rates remain high across the area, with some evidence that uptake of smoking cessation services is lower than elsewhere in the city
- Childhood obesity is rising across all parts of South Manchester, not just in the more deprived neighbourhoods, as part of the growth in obesity within the overall population

- Participation in physical activity is variable with apparently low rates in Chorlton, Burnage and Levenshulme
- An increasing number of residents suffer from mental health issues, placing greater demand on psychology and therapy services.

The SRF policy will be taken forward within the Manchester Adults’ Health and Wellbeing Board and the Children’s Board led by the Manchester Primary Care Trust. Preventing coronary heart disease (CHD), cancers and alcohol misuse will all improve life expectancy and reduce the incidence of long-term illness. In addition, improving access to primary care and other health services will also lead to better outcomes in terms of early detection, diagnosis and treatment.

New commissioning strategies for public health, primary and community care and hospital provision are being developed, all of which need to reflect and address the specific needs and priorities of South Manchester’s neighbourhoods. It is evident that practice based commissioning will significantly influence how and where services are provided. There is a need to increase investment towards primary care and where appropriate bring more hospital services closer to home.

As in other parts of the city, increasing the number of people in work and learning and boosting incomes across South Manchester are crucial to reducing inequalities and achieving healthier lifestyles. There is a need to support current Incapacity Benefit claimants to access employment and training opportunities. Particular support is required to assist the large proportion of residents with mental health challenges receiving this benefit.
Cultural activities have a recognised role in improving health inequalities. The Cultural Partnership and Joint Health Unit are currently developing a Culture & Health strategy via the Cultural Strategy team and LIME, which will support the delivery of these activities. Physical activity, such as dance, can be used to reflect the wider contribution of culture within the South Manchester area, while offering significant health benefits. Creative arts can also play a role in assisting residents with low level mental health issues.

Links will be made to the AFP theme in order to maximise the contribution of education, learning, and employment initiatives to better health.

**SC 9.1**
*Support increased participation in exercise and physical activity.*

Participation in physical activity varies greatly across South Manchester, in part due to cost, accessibility and concerns over personal safety. This policy will promote activity across the community, with priority being given to the uptake of low-cost activities, such as walking and cycling, which can be facilitated by green transport routes. Exercise referral schemes will be supported, which involve providing patients with exercise activity prescriptions. Priority will be given to initiatives that boost the participation of older people and those on low incomes.

Several private and community sports clubs exist across the area and they should be supported in order to increase their capacity so that they can facilitate further community use. The BSF programme will improve community leisure provision and local sports clubs should work in conjunction with Serco to ensure that there is effective programming of activities and other provision.

**SC 9.2**
*Improve awareness of alcohol-related harm and increase uptake of services.*

Alcohol consumption and misuse is increasing in South Manchester with a growing impact on individual health and demand for health services, not to mention associated problems of crime and nuisance. In part, the challenge is linked to the growth in the number of licensed premises in Didsbury, Chorlton and Fallowfield among others.

A comprehensive Manchester alcohol strategy is in place, which aims to reduce alcohol-related problems and improve quality of life. The focus of the strategy in South Manchester will be to ensure information is disseminated effectively to all groups. Access to prevention and treatment of alcohol-related problems will be enhanced. Work will be undertaken in partnership with the alcohol industry to gain resources to enhance access to treatment.
and care. This will include supporting the Community Alcohol Team and working closely with the alcohol industry to assess and mitigate the impacts of existing and proposed on and off-licensed premises.

**SC 9.3**
*Develop and deliver a comprehensive all-ages approach to tackling obesity.*

Changes in diet and other lifestyle factors have contributed to a growing obesity problem in South Manchester, with rates of childhood obesity in some neighbourhoods significantly above the national average. The proportion of adults substantially overweight or obese has also grown dramatically.

For children, there is a need to maximise the potential of schools, Children's Centres and other venues to support children and families to achieve healthier lifestyles. A range of initiatives, such as Healthy Schools awards, already do a lot of valuable work with children in relation to diet and physical activity. There is an opportunity to build on existing activities to reinforce healthy living objectives through Extended Schools, Children's Centres and other investments.

For adults, policy SC9.1 proposes a range of actions to increase participation in physical activity. In parallel, there is a need to build upon and extend initiatives that support healthy eating, including access to fresh food and cooking workshops linked to the Food Futures strategy.

**SC 9.4**
*Ensure primary care provision meets the needs of South Manchester residents and is efficiently linked to other activity at a local level.*

Significant investments have been made in primary care provision and are still ongoing, and there will be a need to ensure that the service mix meets current and evolving needs of the South Manchester population. Appropriate service coverage is required based on a detailed understanding of need among specific groups and neighbourhoods in South Manchester. It is essential that mechanisms are established to capture localised issues/priorities that can inform commissioning of health services, as well as link with ward co-ordination and other structures that will support the SRF.

A key priority for the new Manchester Primary Care Trust is to continue to support greater local delivery of health services and co-location of health services with other providers. Priority should be given to maximising the contribution of new facilities, eg. Withington Community Hospital and the new Burnage Health Centre to improve uptake of preventative and other services and address health inequalities.

**SC 9.5**
*Maximise the potential of new facilities to tackle health inequalities, especially in deprived neighbourhoods.*

In parts of South Manchester the variable quality of the buildings that GPs and other providers operate from limits access and appropriate uptake of health services. The Merseybank estate is currently the most acute priority.

Where additional new facilities are required, priority should be given to co-location as part of community hubs/joint service centres or location within district centres. Potential synergies are evident with the Building Schools for the Future programme, providing enhanced nursing services and other health improvement initiatives.
**SC 9.6**

*Enhance the uptake of health services by students.*

The large student population in South Manchester generates a need for a number of specific services, with a recognition that student health needs are not picked up as well as they could be, particularly sexual health and mental health issues. While health services available solely for students will not be appropriate, there is a need for Manchester PCT, the universities and other partners to work together effectively, to ensure that services evolve/reflect student needs.

**SC 9.7**

*Further develop the potential and effectiveness of community development and action on health in South Manchester.*

South Manchester Healthy Living Network (SMHLN) and other organisations have spearheaded a significant expansion in grass roots involvement in health promotion and healthy living activities, particularly in the more deprived parts of South Manchester. Now that SMHLN has been mainstreamed by Manchester PCT, there is an opportunity to build upon the good practice and momentum to expand the reach and effectiveness of community-based health-related activities across South Manchester. Priority should be given to activities with the potential to generate the broadest range of benefits, such as volunteer champions and community health trainers.

**SC 9.8**

*Expand the reach and uptake of community-based mental health and therapy services.*

There are high levels of mental health need across all parts of Manchester placing significant pressures on health and social care services. To ease these pressures there will be a greater focus on people with mild to moderate mental health problems, and commissioners will seek to ensure that a broader range of provision is developed. Priority will be given to new models of working with greater involvement of the community and voluntary sector in service delivery. Potential links with the delivery of cultural activities should be assessed in the implementation of these services.
8. Spatial Framework

This section demonstrates how the key objectives of the SRF will be realised through the delivery of the spatial framework for South Manchester. The Spatial Framework provides a physical expression of the policies and projects contained in the SRF.

The vision, themes and objectives of the SRF, set out a range of policies and project proposals to ensure the future success of South Manchester. Many of these objectives, in particular those in Theme 1: Delivering Popular Neighbourhoods, which deals with the physical environment, will have a spatial dimension and be focused in particular locations in South Manchester, such as certain housing areas, district or local centres or on particular road corridors. There is therefore a need to bring these aspects of the SRF together within an integrated Spatial Framework for South Manchester.

The Spatial Framework responds to the key issues and opportunities referred to in Section 4 above and as analysed in more detail in the foregoing baseline reports. In particular, the Spatial Framework recognises the primary assets of South Manchester in the form of the popular and vibrant district centres, the attractive housing stock that meets family housing needs and the local movement networks that provide convenient access and linkages to the high-quality open space network. Equally the plan recognises that the quality of these primary assets is variable across South Manchester and that targeted investment is needed to grow the number and extent of successful urban neighbourhoods in this part of the city.

The Spatial Framework plan is shown on page 171. The components of the Spatial Framework are explored in more detail as follows:

1) Delivering Successful Neighbourhoods
2) Distinctive and Lively Centres
3) Accessible and Sustainable Movement

The priority areas for action and investment are shown in more detail on the Delivering Successful Neighbourhoods: Action Areas plan.

1) Delivering Successful Neighbourhoods

The Spatial Framework plan identifies each of the ten neighbourhood areas (not wards) in South Manchester. The neighbourhoods reflect the community networks and perception of South Manchester which, in places, departs from formal ward boundaries.

The plan illustrates the priority and focus for the application of the policies and proposals contained in the SRF, to achieve the protection and promotion of the key assets of South Manchester to underpin physically sustainable and successful neighbourhoods. The successful neighbourhoods of South Manchester will be characterised by attractive residential streets with access to high-quality centres and local facilities that contribute to a desirable urban lifestyle. To be sustainable and successful, the neighbourhoods in South Manchester will need to:

- Be desirable, distinctive, attractive and well maintained – These are qualities already experienced in some areas but which need to become evident across South Manchester, drawing upon local distinctiveness and character.
Some qualities, such as maintenance, need tackling on an area-wide basis through new forms of service delivery addressing enhanced targets.

- **Provide housing choice** – South Manchester will provide housing choice and high-quality home ownership options in the context of the city and conurbation as a whole. There is a particular need for the Spatial Framework to protect and deliver family housing and high-quality residential development where appropriate, including some denser development in the context of district centres and key transport nodes.

- **Provide sustainable and safe access to district and local centres, public transport, parks and open spaces and a range of community services such as education and health, employment and training opportunities** – These are integral components of the lifestyle offer of successful neighbourhoods and, beyond the initial effects of strong housing demand in delivering investment and regeneration in South Manchester, critical to delivering sustainable futures for urban living. This requires the Spatial Framework to identify locations for provision of such services and to protect and promote local accessibility. The Spatial Framework also recognises that many of the key employment and training opportunities lie outside the area but that these are nevertheless to be accessible in the context of the city and the conurbation.

For each neighbourhood area, the Spatial Framework therefore embraces actions to improve the quality of housing and environment, to ensure good transport accessibility and to strengthen the district and local centres and local facilities.

The Spatial Framework indicates the thrust of the SRF policy for the future regeneration of each of the neighbourhoods and highlights the focus for potential future investment. The character and make-up of each neighbourhood lends itself to:

- **Protecting and enhancing the existing urban character** – focused around the more traditional private housing areas and conservation areas within the neighbourhoods of Chorlton, Didsbury, Levenshulme, Whalley Range and the east of Withington. These neighbourhoods will also be focused around the regeneration of strong district and local centres.

- **Improving and sustaining South Manchester’s social housing areas** – focused in the neighbourhoods of Chorlton Park, west of Withington (Old Moat), west of Fallowfield and Burnage. These neighbourhoods will also benefit from policies to strengthen the offer of district and local centres.

- **Tackling student related issues** – including housing quality, private renting, crime and environmental management, focused mainly in the eastern area of Fallowfield and around Fallowfield District Centre.
The Delivering Successful Neighbourhoods: Action Areas plan supports the Spatial Framework and illustrates the actions and spatial priorities for enhancing the character and quality of the buildings, streets and open spaces within South Manchester. Alongside policy measures to raise the quality of design and environment across all the neighbourhoods in the SRF, a number of key priorities have been identified as follows:

- Housing improvements in social housing areas through targeted plans that consider improvements to streets and housing, opportunities for new development, improved public transport and access to centres and amenities. Action plans will particularly target the social housing areas around Burnage, Fallowfield, Merseybank, Nell Lane and Old Moat.

- Fallowfield and the northern edge of Withington will be the focus of a series of initiatives within the SRF to tackle crime issues; ensure good-quality housing and amenities for students and young people; and to deal with poor-quality private rented housing in the area.

- Identification of opportunities for conservation area extensions and new designations. The existing conservation areas are strongly associated with the district centres, such as Withington and most popular housing areas in South Manchester, including Didsbury. Priorities for potential extension/consolidation are considered to be:
  - Rushford Park Conservation Area (Levenshulme)
  - Withington Conservation Area
  - Whalley Range Conservation Area.

- Enhancement of a network of enhanced parks and open spaces that are locally accessible to the neighbourhoods. This will build on existing provision of award-winning parks, such as Chorlton Park and Fletcher Moss, and protect and enhance the Mersey Valley as a strategic open space asset for South Manchester.

- Use potential development areas to strengthen centres and provide the opportunity for new family housing in South Manchester, as part of exemplar developments in design and sustainability.

  Such development areas include the district and local centres and remaining sites at Christie Fields, Parrs Wood and Withington Hospital.

- Improvements to the district and local centres movement and access will also complement these policies in delivering successful neighbourhoods for South Manchester.

A Network of Parks and Open Spaces

A clear hierarchy of parks and open spaces should be established and all members of the population should have access to a network of open spaces that are of a high quality, ultimately to the standard of the Green Flag Award. The Green Flag Award scheme, managed by the Civic Trust, is the national standard for parks and green spaces. Parks must be judged to be welcoming, safe and well maintained along with the clear demonstration of strong involvement from the local community.

In 2007, the city of Manchester received the excellent accolade of securing a record number of Green Flag Awards for its parks, the biggest collection of such awards out of any local authority in the country. Twenty-one of the city’s green
spaces have been named in the list of the best parks in England and Wales. Seven of these spaces are within the South Manchester SRF study area:

- Chorlton Park
- Chorlton Water Park
- Cringle Park (Levenshulme)
- Didsbury Park
- Fletcher Moss Gardens (Didsbury)
- Manley Park (Whalley Range)
- Old Moat Park.

There are also four Sites of Biological Importance (Hardy Farm, Chorlton Ees, Chorlton Water Park and Fletcher Moss) as well as two Local Nature Reserves at Ivy Green and Chorlton Water Park. There is the opportunity to introduce a wider range of urban adventure activities. Chorlton Water Park for example used to have a summer canoeing play scheme, which introduced a lot of local children from the Merseybank Estate to the activity but also to the Water Park itself in a more direct way.

The scope for further Green Flag Awards in the future includes:

- District Parks – Alexandra Park
- Highfield Country Park
- Local parks and recreation grounds – Beecroft Road Park, Fog Lane Park, Ladybarn Park, Kingswood Park
- Sites of Biological Importance/Local Nature Reserves – Chorlton Ees and Hardy Farm.

The delivery of the Alexandra Park and Highfield Park projects will provide an equal and balanced distribution of major Green Flag awarded parks in the north, north west, north east, south west and south east of the South Manchester SRF area, acting as a strong strategic basis for a green network.

There are 12 small local parks and recreation grounds within the study area, which provide a focal point for the immediate community. Three of the parks have Green Flag status. Many of the other parks feature have serious deficiencies in the amenities available, such as play spaces and recreation facilities. To ensure an equal distribution of such spaces, Manchester Leisure will be supported in working towards obtaining Green Flag status for the other parks.

The SRF proposes that Chorlton Ees and Hardy Farm are improved to a standard that merits receiving a Green Flag Award so that they join Chorlton Water Park and Fletcher Moss Gardens with this accolade within the Mersey River Valley. The scope for further Green Flags will be guided by the political manifesto, which states that eventually each ward in the city will have at least one Green Flag park. Our view is that all other parks in the city will be maintained to a high-quality standard, without necessarily being independently accredited.
2) Distinctive and Lively Centres

The second theme of the spatial framework revolves around the provision of strong and attractive local facilities at the heart of the successful neighbourhoods. The majority of local facilities, including retail, community and leisure will be provided through a network of high-quality district and local centres.

The Spatial Framework recognises the core importance of a successful centre to the surrounding neighbourhood. The plan supports the expansion of the role of the centres to contain a wider variety of uses, including some residential elements above ground floor commercial uses, to further enliven the centres and reinforce the sense of community and ownership. The Spatial Framework recognises that some services and retail provision can only be provided in larger centres, to reflect service delivery constraints and retail capacity and catchment issues. This is already reflected in the hierarchy of district and local centres and is further reinforced in the Spatial Framework through the identification of key centres serving a wider catchment.
Figure 14: Spatial Framework

**SRF Boundary**

**Delivering Successful Neighbourhoods**

Enhancing character in Chorlton, Whalley Range, West Didsbury, Didsbury, East Didsbury, Levenshulme and West Withington (District Centre) - Protecting and enhancing the inherent character and quality of these neighbourhoods will ensure that they continue to be attractive places to live. An emphasis will be placed on managing the street environments, protecting design quality and heritage, enhancing open spaces and creating vibrant centres at the heart of each neighbourhood.

Improving housing quality in Chorlton Park, west Fallowfield, west Withington (Old Most) and Burnage - Improving housing quality in South Manchester will create better and more-desirable places for people to live. Focusing on the social housing areas, tenanted in these neighbourhoods will be targeted on improvements to housing quality and design, better street environments and improved access to public transport and neighbourhoods.

Managing and enhancing the quality of student focussed area - will create more attractive neighbourhoods for both students and local residents. Areas in and around Fallowfield, Withington and parts of Old Most will be the focus of a series of initiatives to tackle crime and environmental management issues, to better manage student and young persons housing needs and to deal with poor quality private rented housing.

**Mersey Valley** will be protected and enhanced as an open space and nature area that is a distinct and important asset to South Manchester.

**Distinctive and Lively Centres**

District Centres will be the focus of action plans to deliver physical improvements and to attract and manage a wider balance of uses to serve the neighbourhoods. As community hubs they will have a range of leisure, health and education services and will be focal point for accessibility to public transport.

Local Centres will complement the District-Centres in South Manchester to provide for the day-to-day convenience needs of local residents and that are accessible on foot.

**New or Strengthened Centres** at East Didsbury (Burndene), Burnage (Frog Lane), Chorlton Park (Kelsay Road) and Whalley Range (Withington Road), will create opportunities to improve local retail and services within these neighbourhoods.

**Accessible and Sustainable Movement**

**Existing Rail Services and rail infrastructure will be protected and enhanced continue to provide high frequency public transport services into Manchester from the neighbourhoods of Levenshulme, Burnage and Didsbury East.**

**Metrolink Extension Phases 3A and 3B** will provide a new high-quality tram service into the heart of the SRF area that will directly serve the neighbourhoods of Chorlton, Chorlton Park, West Didsbury, Didsbury and Didsbury East. There is a need to maximise the benefits of the proposed extensions as part of the wider network of sustainable transport, including the opportunities for new development and public transport interchange.

**Strategic Corridors** are existing busy traffic routes providing for high volume movements of buses and private cars through South Manchester. The emphasis will be on promoting the use of sustainable transport along these corridors through quality bus initiatives and measures to control congestion.

**Strategic East-West Links** along Wilmslow Road will connect South Manchester to wider employment and leisure opportunities in Trafford Park and East Manchester. Quality bus initiatives and environmental improvements will encourage sustainable transport movement along this link.

**Green Avenues** will provide a network of important routes through South Manchester, balancing strategic and local movement needs and connecting people to public transport services, district and local centres, employment and parks and amenity spaces. The focus will be on creating and maintaining an attractive environment for people to use and to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
Figure 15: Action Plan Areas

SRF Boundary

Action Plan Areas
- District Centre Action Plan
- Local Centres
- New or Strengthened Centres

Key Junctions, along with neighbourhood centres and rail stations, will be focus points for pedestrian movement improvements to public transport and local neighbourhood retail and service.

Social Housing Action Areas
1. Nell Lane
2. Merseybank
3. Fallowfield
4. Old Moat
5. Burnage

Fallowfield and Withington Action Area

Mersey Valley will be protected and enhanced as an open nature area that is a distinct and important asset to South.

Potential Development Areas
1. Oakwood
2. Merseybank
3. Christie Fields
4. Withington Hospital
5. Fallowfield Triangle
6. Owens Park
7. Withington
8. Levenshulme
9. Burnage (Kingsway)
10. Burnage (Tol Lane)
11. Parrswood

Movement and Corridors

Existing Rail Services

Metrolink Extension Phases 3A and 3B

Strategic Corridors

Strategic East-West Links

Green Avenues
The key physical proposals for the centres, reflected in the Spatial Framework are therefore:

**Centres at the core of successful neighbourhoods**

To define and build upon a strong network and hierarchy of centres at the heart of successful neighbourhoods:

- **District Centres** – Chorlton, Didsbury, Fallowfield, Levenshulme and Withington. These will have a range of facilities and amenities including retail, non-retail, community uses and access to public transport. The role of Chorlton as a larger centre will be reviewed.
- **Local Centres**, including Fallowfield Triangle, Mauldeth Road and West Didsbury, will meet day-to-day convenience needs.
- **Local parades of shops**, including East Didsbury and Merseybank will provide a valuable role in supporting district and local centres to provide convenient local retail and community services.

**Centre Networks**

To create a series of four centre networks, focused on district centres, which connect district and local centres:

**Chorlton** with Beech Road and centres in Chorlton Park and Whalley Range

**Didsbury** with West Didsbury, East Didsbury and centres in south Burnage

**Fallowfield** and Withington with Mauldeth Road, Fallowfield Triangle and centres in north Burnage

**A6 Centres** comprising Levenshulme and Longsight. Longsight is located within the Central Manchester SRF area.

The district centres within these centre networks will be highly accessible for residents from across South Manchester and will have a wider civic role within the SRF. The connecting local centres will complement the functions of the district centres.

Figure 16: Centre Networks
New or Strengthened Centres

• The following centres will be reviewed to provide enhanced facilities in Burnage, Chorlton Park, East Didsbury and Whalley Range neighbourhoods

• Burnage (Fog Lane) – strengthening the centre based on the axis between Burnage Station and the new Tesco store, to include redevelopment of poor-quality retail and office accommodation

• East Didsbury (Parrs Wood) – manage new development opportunities and deliver environmental improvements to this key gateway location, thus improving the local retail offer

• Merseybank – potential to rationalise and improve existing retail provision

• Whalley Range (Withington Road) – identifying this centre as a local centre will provide the impetus for further strengthening the retail and community offer of this centre to better serve the Whalley Range neighbourhood.
3) Accessible and Sustainable Movement

The third and final layer of the Spatial Framework brings together the key actions for improving the neighbourhoods as part of a co-ordinated and integrated movement network. Alongside the district and local centres, the key movement routes will be focal areas for improvement within the SRF.

Local accessibility will underpin popular neighbourhoods in South Manchester and will provide ease of movement to employment, district and local centres and community uses. Key proposals for improving movement and accessibility in the SRF are:

- Deliver Metrolink Phase 3A and 3B into the heart of the SRF area, to provide high quality public transport for Chorlton, Chorlton Park, Didsbury West, Didsbury and Didsbury East.
- Support and enhance the existing rail network connecting Levenshulme, Burnage and East Didsbury to the city centre and the airport.
- Sustain and enhance Princess Parkway and Kingsway as strategic north-south transport corridors into the city centre; increasing the frequency and quality of bus movements, managing traffic to ease congestion, and encouraging public transport use.
- Complement the strategic north-south links through South Manchester with better east-west links, particularly along Wilbraham Road. Improvements to bus movement and pedestrian and cycle routes will connect residents to wider employment and leisure opportunities in Trafford Park and east Manchester as well as improve local movements to district and local centres via public transport.
- Balance strategic transport movements and local community needs through ‘Green Avenues’, which will continue to be important movement corridors for cars and buses, while also being more attractive, tree-lined and pedestrian-friendly. Bus movements will be important along the Green Avenues to provide ease of access to the public transport network.
- Green Avenues will be implemented along:
  - north-south routes on Wilmslow Road/Palatine Road and Burnage Lane
  - east-west links along Barlow Moor Road, and Mauldeth Road.
- Measures on each of the strategic corridors and Green Avenues will include improved footpaths and pedestrian crossing points, landscaping and street environment improvements, bus service infrastructure measures (where viable), traffic management and cyclist provision.
- Use the district and local centres and other key junctions on the Strategic Corridors and Green Avenues to create hubs of public transport movement with easy access for pedestrians and cyclists. Pedestrian measures will reduce the physical barriers presented by key traffic corridors.
- Create a network of green, attractive and safe pedestrian and cyclist routes connecting neighbourhoods to essential centres, parks and transport. The Fallowfield Loop and Trans Pennine Trail will be important routes within this network.
Quality of Streetscape

Key public realm and streetscape improvements proposed in the SRF include those to:

- Key transport corridors, such as Kingsway, Princess Parkway, Barlow Moor Road, Wilmslow Road, Wilbraham Road, Palatine Road and Stockport Road, should feature improvements suitable to their scale and that integrate with the proposals contained within the Central Manchester and Wythenshawe SRFs where relevant. The environmental quality of these routes is often a key defining feature in formulating the perception of the city of Manchester as a whole and so this policy is of a highly strategic nature.

- The existing district centres of Chorlton, Didsbury, Fallowfield, Levenshulme and Withington. Where there is a significant business influence such as in district or local centres or the presence of institutional land owners, it may be more appropriate to use a more traditional Business Improvement District (BID) to deliver the improvements to the public realm.

- Local centres: Similarly in local neighbourhood centres, traders are encouraged to work together in applying pressure and pursuing actions under the Environmental Business Pledge Awards scheme or akin where appropriate to Business Improvement Districts. Section 106 funds to help deliver streetscape improvements are also seen as a catalytic and complementary benefit.

- Local residential streets: Within the neighbourhoods, particularly in areas of need (which should be identified through area assessments) the potential for Neighbourhood Improvement Districts (NIDs) should be explored.

These will seek to engender a sense of responsibility and ownership of the public realm within residential areas – taking advantage of major community activity. Investment in a NID may be in the form of participants’ time, through voluntary work or maintenance, rather than just financial backing.