MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

REPORT FOR INFORMATION

COMMITTEE: Citizenship and Inclusion Overview and Scrutiny Committee
DATE: 21 May 2008
REPORT OF: Chief Executive
SUBJECT: Community Welcome

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Committee with a progress report on how partner agencies from across the public, voluntary and community sectors are working together to develop a joined up approach to welcoming new residents to Manchester and a framework, which helps to clarify the collective rights and responsibilities of residents living in the city.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and provide comments on any additional priorities in relation to community welcome, which need to be considered by the Welcome and Communications Task Group.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Community cohesion file, Room 221, Town Hall.

WARDS AFFECTED

All.
### IMPLICATIONS FOR:

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<th>Anti-Poverty</th>
<th>Equal Opportunities</th>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Employment</th>
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 At its meeting on 14 November 2007 this Committee received a report on the impact on community cohesion of new residents and how they might be supported by being welcomed in a way that helps to clarify their rights and responsibilities. The Committee asked for a further report on the development of welcome packs and the role of Mancunian Agreements in promoting community cohesion. This report responds to that request.

1.2 The work on welcoming new residents is part of a wider package of measures being developed by a multi-agency steering group on community cohesion chaired by Councillor Val Stevens. The context for this work is the changing nature of the City’s population. Manchester is a very diverse city. Our history is one of migration and, in many ways, diversity makes Manchester dynamic, which makes us successful. Currently Manchester is becoming even more diverse. As the core of one of the UK’s major conurbations, new people come to live here all the time. These include economic migrants, particularly at the moment from eastern Europe. Asylum seekers and refugees are also attracted to Manchester, either because they have family or community connections here or because they are placed here by government. With over 57,000 full time students attending the City’s universities, there is an annual influx of new young people to live in the City.

1.3 The Manchester Community Cohesion Steering Group has developed a number of priorities for further development during 2008/09. These are being developed by Task Groups under each of the following specific themes:-

1. Welcome and Communications
2. Citizenship
3. English for Speakers of Other Languages and Translation
4. Performance managing community cohesion and managing community change

1.4 This report concentrates on the work of the first task group. The Committee may wish to receive reports on other workstreams or the work of the Steering Group as a whole at future meetings.

2. EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY WELCOME AND THE ROLE OF MANCUNIAN AGREEMENTS

2.1 At its meeting in November the Committee looked at three examples of community welcome in practice in Manchester. The first was a welcome pack for students in Fallowfield, Rusholme, Withington and Levenshulme. This pack and the process of producing and distributing it is being improved for this year’s arrival of new students. The second example was the process used to help a rapidly expanded Somali community to settle and integrate into the Hulme and Moss Side area.

2.2 The third example was the New Moss Brook Agreement in Harpurhey. This demonstrated how community welcome depends most of all on good neighbours. This example developed into a Mancunian Agreement and has been promoted as an example of the role of Mancunian Agreements in
promoting community cohesion. The residents of this neighbourhood wanted to develop a pack for people who moved into the area including those from other countries who came to work or join their families. The residents wanted to start from the idea that good neighbours will make the effort to welcome new people to the neighbourhood. The work was led by the New Moss Brook Residents’ Association who welcomed new people moving into the area, distributed welcome cards inviting new residents to contact the Association if they had any problems and developed a welcome pack setting out the aspiration for the area, how residents treat each other and how they can do their bit to make life in the neighbourhood better.

3. WHAT THE TASK GROUP IS PROPOSING

3.1 The Welcome and Communications Task Group has been working on developing an action plan focused on the development of a joined up approach to welcoming new and existing residents to Manchester and a framework, which helps to clarify the collective rights and responsibilities of residents living in the city. The Manchester Primary Care Trust is leading on coordinating this work through the task group and reporting on progress to the Manchester Community Cohesion Steering Group.

3.2 The Task Group has identified that there is already a lot of good practice on welcoming new and existing residents in the city and nationally. Therefore, Manchester’s approach and the development of tools to support staff working across the public, voluntary and community sectors should build on this and seek to address the impact of the current challenges being experienced through migration in Manchester. The role and support to and from existing communities will be of paramount.

3.3 It is recognised that the approach we take and the way in which we communicate with our new and existing residents will need to be flexible and targeted to suit different audiences and neighbourhoods. However, our diverse communities will need to be at the heart of any welcoming framework along with the development and communication of key messages that promote the positive values of being a Mancunian and living in the city. The Sense of Place work and the development of Mancunian Agreements focussed on bringing people from different backgrounds together and supporting new people to settle have already provided valuable information to form the thinking of the task group. At the same time we will also need to develop and strengthen effective mechanisms for communities to feedback to us on their experiences, perceptions and social injustices. Elected members, ward coordinators, regeneration managers, neighbourhood policing, Key Individual Networks, school heads, places of worship, community organisations etc. all provide valuable networks for such mechanisms for communication and feedback to be developed within.

4. WELCOME AND COMMUNICATIONS ACTION PLAN 2008/09

4.1 At the last meeting of the Manchester Community Cohesion Steering Group in February 2008, the following actions were agreed for delivery over the next twelve months for the Welcome and Communications Task group.
1. Identify the target residents and neighbourhoods who are likely to need welcome type information to support their settlement or promote community cohesion in the city.

2. Identify through good practice and through engagement with our communities the information that would need to be included in a ‘welcome package’ for new residents and the supporting information for existing communities.

3. Develop a common approach to community welcome (for new and existing residents) in the city, which builds on existing good practice and is relevant and appropriate to all partners agencies across the public, community and voluntary sector.

4. Produce a ‘Manchester Welcome Pack’ template that is owned by all key organisations in the city.

5. Develop a communications and engagement plan to launch the welcome pack.

6. Identify opportunities to embed the welcome pack into existing key strategies, plans, initiatives etc.

7. Undertake a review of national and local initiatives and publications aimed at promoting shared values through integration and community cohesion – linked to the work of the Citizenship Task Group.

8. Develop a set of Mancunian Values, which set out shared values. These values will need to be local, easy to understand and follow along the lines of the definition of community cohesion in the city developed by the Manchester Community Cohesion Steering Group. The idea builds on what Manchester residents have said makes a good Mancunian – people who are proud of their City, are friendly and welcoming, passionate and creative and have a good sense of humour.

4.2 The next meeting of the Welcome and Communications Task Group in June will focus on producing a more detailed action plan with timescales and costings. The Committee’s views will be fed into the Task Group.

5. **MONITORING PROGRESS**

5.1 The work of the Welcome and Communications Task Group will contribute towards achieving Manchester’s LAA headline indicator for community cohesion “the percentage of people who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together”. This means that a target will be agreed with government and that the Manchester Partnership will have a statutory duty to have regard to the target in the way in which they deliver their mainstream functions.

5.2 The baseline is 77% in 2006/07. The proposed target for 2010/11 is 77%. The baseline performance compares well to national levels – 82% in 2007 and is significantly better than other parts of Greater Manchester. We expect continuing migration in the city, particularly from Eastern Europe and Africa. This will present a significant challenge to Manchester to retain current levels of cohesion. The target is currently being negotiated with the government.

5.3 In addition to the headline indicator for cohesion included in our Local Area Agreement, the new set of National Performance Indicators include a range of indicators to measure the sense of community cohesion. They will also be
used to map, monitor and measure community cohesion by the Community Cohesion Steering Group and include the following:

- NI 2 – % of people who believe they belong in neighbourhood
- NI 3 – Civic participation in the local area
- NI 4 – % of people who feel they can influence decision making
- NI 5 – Overall / General satisfaction with local area
- NI 6 – Participation in regular volunteering
- NI 7 – Environment for a thriving third sector
- NI 23 – ‘People in the area treat one another with respect and dignity’
- Overall satisfaction with life as a whole nowadays. A locally adopted indicator devised with the Young Foundation as part of the national wellbeing projects, which recognises the holistic aspect of happiness and well-being.
- Measures of Transience and Diversity will also be developed. However this will form part of the work of the LAA Performance Mapping and Monitoring Task Group.

5.4 The quantitative information resulting from the collection of the above indicators along with softer information from ward coordination, regeneration, Key Individual Networks, schools etc. will help build a better picture of how cohesive our communities are along with provide early warning about where potential risk for tensions could be, why (community resilient factors) and what range of interventions would be effective.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 A citywide approach to community welcome and a set of Mancunian values owned by our diverse residents will begin to identify and address the current challenges migration in the city has the potential to cause along with contribute towards wider integration and community cohesion issues. Whilst this is a challenging priority for the city, there is real commitment from the key partner agencies and stakeholders to make this happen in Manchester.