Communities of Identity Report 2023

Contents

1. Introduction

A key priority for Manchester has always been tackling inequality of outcomes, disadvantage, and discrimination. We're nothing without our people, who have always dared to be different and think differently. After all, it's the people that make Manchester one of the greatest cities in the world. Our diversity has made us a successful, growing and connected city. We know that without aiming for equity within our public services, we will continue to incur unnecessary excessive costs to our citizens and system resources. We therefore need to ensure that our services meet the needs of our increasingly diverse city and that we take action to address known inequalities for different people in our city.

Manchester was ranked the sixth most deprived local authority in the country in the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation. Figures from the End Child Poverty Coalition in June 2023 show that 44.7% of children in Manchester live in poverty. Of the 282 neighbourhoods (lower layer super output areas or LSOAs),159 were among England's 20% most income-deprived, and in Manchester, 28 wards were in the top 20% least income-deprived. We also know that some communities in Manchester are more severely affected by poverty,

Manchester remains committed to tackling inequalities and to work to reduce or eliminate discrimination. Equity is a core theme of the Our Manchester Strategy because there was a recognition that more needed to be done to support groups most adversely impacted by poverty. A focus on equity asks that we take a step further to not only improve outcomes for all residents across all of Manchester compared to other parts of the country, but we also need to do more targeted work with certain groups or communities who may need further support to improve outcomes. Taking a targeted approach for specific groups most severely affected by poverty also has positive knock-on effects for all groups in the city.

By supporting those who need it most, we continue to raise the standards and aspirations for all groups in Manchester, to make the most of the city's opportunities. This equity approach is in keeping with the spirit of social justice that is alive in Manchester.

2. Defining our 'Communities of Identity'

The definition of communities of identity that is used in this report is:

> *'people who share particular characteristics connected to their heritage, belief system or identities, that contribute to interactions in their day-to-day lives: for example, they could be racially minoritised communities, faith groups, disabled people, older people, trans and nonbinary people.'*

For this report, we are focusing on those communities where data has shown experience greater or more entrenched inequalities in key areas of policy and practice. They are:

- communities experiencing racial inequalities
- disabled people

- older people (people aged over 50)

We recognise that other communities of identity also experience inequalities but have not been included in this report, for example LGBTQ+ communities – for these, other work is progressing, including an in-depth report to be presented to Scrutiny in October 2023.

In identifying certain groups to focus on in a report like this, we want to highlight some of the systemic reasons behind the barriers faced by communities of identity within the city.[1] In addition, we wanted to outline some specific issues and opportunities where further consideration can be given to 'due regard' in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty which includes:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low

This duty also requires public authorities to publish equality objectives and report on them. Manchester City Council's equality objectives are: Knowing Manchester Better, Improving Life Chances and Celebrating Our Diversity.

This report outlines how specific groups access and are supported by Council services and workforce to improve their experience and outcomes. The report aims to complement the data and insight in the State of the City annual report and the Making Manchester Fairer action plan. The report is structured around the Council's three Equality Objectives. This report is one aspect of our commitment to understanding our communities better by providing examples of how communities of identity interact and engage with Council services and their partners.

In the report, you'll find examples of how communities in the city are informing and influencing our policies and practices. You'll read about small and large-scale initiatives being driven and delivered by the Council, the voluntary sector including grass-roots organisations and other public service providers to address our specific challenges in Manchester. We must acknowledge the vital importance of the community infrastructure within Manchester and Greater Manchester, which exists to highlight and support minoritised and marginalised communities in the city. The examples shared here are built on strong relationships with such organisations and could not succeed without them. This report presents some of the ongoing work happening in the city which ranges in scale from local projects undertaken by very small organisations or even individuals, to citywide programmes of investment in services.

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[1] systemic: where there are laws, institutional practices, customs and guiding ideas combine to harm certain populations in ways not experienced by those who are not part of those populations. Marginalised populations can be those who have protected characteristics under the 2010 Equality Act or those deemed to be priority groups e.g. those experiencing homelessness or carers

Each section in this report describes many initiatives and approaches that demonstrate:

1) how the city is progressing outcomes against each equality objective
2) how these approaches impact communities of identity within the city, in general and in particular

The report uses examples of good practice from across the city to help readers understand what's going on in Manchester regarding making the city more equitable.

3. Strategic context

Continued economic, political and climate volatility will impact poverty levels across the city. We are currently living through multiple crises including the ongoing impacts of Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic, the level of inflation affecting food, fuel, rents and mortgages are contributing to the worsening inequalities in the city. Health and financial inequalities have deepened in recent years across different geographies and demographic groups across the city. It is expected that in the short term the problem of poverty may worsen, so the demand for support and services will likely rapidly increase. Ultimately, our control over some of the causes of poverty are limited. Still, Manchester's vision for the city is one where poverty is unacceptable and collectively, we are committed to doing everything within our power to reduce and eliminate poverty in Manchester.

We know that poverty in Manchester is distributed unevenly, with certain groups and communities likely to be disproportionately affected. Groups most disproportionally affected include, but are not limited to:

- communities experiencing racial inequalities, particularly Black, Bangladeshi and Pakistani residents
- disabled people
- older people

The following subsections briefly summarise the key strategies and plans that aim to make Manchester more equitable, to help situate what this report seeks to contribute to.

3.1 Our Manchester Strategy

The Our Manchester Strategy was refreshed in 2020 to provide a renewed focus on young people, the economy, health, housing, the environment and city infrastructure, through an analysis of five focus areas for the city. Community engagement was embedded into the development of the refreshed strategy: the consultation in 2020 reached almost 3,700 people through a mix of universal and targeted engagement. It asked respondents what priorities Manchester needs to focus on over the next five years to achieve Manchester's vision for being in the top flight of world class cities by 2025. The Our Manchester Forum, a partnership between the Council, other institutions, businesses and other stakeholders, oversees the Strategy. The five themes are:

1) A thriving and sustainable city
2) A highly skilled city
3) A progressive and equitable city
4) A liveable and low carbon city
5) A connected city

These themes are reported annually via the State of the City report (see the 2022 dashboards). The OMS is supported by several other strategies which deliver on the specific strategic priorities of the city. For example, these include:

- Work and Skills Strategy
- Housing Strategy
- Climate Change Action Plan
- Children and Young People's Plan
- City Centre Transport Strategy
- Locality Plan
- Culture Strategy
- Digital Strategy

3.2 The Council's Corporate Plan

The City Council's Corporate Plan sets out how we will make the Our Manchester vision a reality. It is focused solely on the work of the Council, rather than the work of our partners, and identifies nine corporate priorities that we will focus on. These priorities are underpinned by the Our Manchester Behaviours and an inclusive approach:

- Zero carbon Manchester
- Growth that benefits everyone
- Young people
- Healthy, cared for people
- Housing
- Neighbourhoods
- Connections
- Equality
- Well managed Council

3.3 Making Manchester Fairer

Making Manchester Fairer is the city's new action plan to tackle health inequalities - the preventable gap between people with the worst health and people with the best health over the next five years, and with a view to the long-term. The plan is based on what Manchester's residents and staff from various organisations and agencies have told us in recent years and the evidence of what works from research and experts on health inequalities. Its eight themes are:

1) Giving children the best start in life
2) Addressing poverty
3) Good work is good for your health

4) Preventing ill health and preventable deaths
5) Homes and housing
6) Places, environment and climate change
7) Tackling systemic and structural racism and discrimination
8) Communities and power

<u>3.4 Manchester's Anti-Poverty Strategy</u>

Manchester's Anti-Poverty Strategy sits within the Making Manchester Fairer plan, focusing on delivering positive changes to tackle poverty in the medium to long term. There are four priorities for Council services:

1) Preventing poverty – what we can do to prevent residents experiencing poverty
2) Mitigating poverty to make life easier for people experiencing poverty and ensuring their basic needs are met
3) Pathways out of poverty – raising people's incomes so they can move out of poverty
4) Inclusive and effective delivery ensures that people with lived experience of poverty have a voice in anti-poverty work and that interventions are targeted to ensure we consider inequalities and inequity in how poverty is experienced.

4. Our Equality Objectives 2020-2024

The Council has set three Equality Objectives for our services to support the city in becoming more progressive and equitable. These will be refreshed in 2024.

The objectives are:
1. *Knowing Manchester Better*
   - working with partners and citizens to improve the data we hold about our residents
   - using this data more effectively to build relationships and support community cohesion
   - delivering policies and services which meet everyone's needs

2. *Improving Life Chances*
   - ensuring that everyone living in Manchester can access the services and opportunities they need
   - proactively removing disadvantage and reducing inequalities

3. *Celebrating Our Diversity*
   - using events and initiatives to showcase our city's diversity and the strengths that come from our commitment to equality and diversity

<u>4.1 An intersectional approach to our Equality Objectives 2020-2024</u>

Intersectionality as a concept was designed by Kimberlé Crenshaw to examine how systemic issues and power structures make women of colour in general and Black women in particular more susceptible to marginalisation because of the overlap between their race and gender. It is now more commonly used to probe beyond the

most clearly visible dimensions of inequality to recognise multiple and intersecting disadvantages which influence how people experience particular inequalities.

An intersectional approach asks that we pay attention to how particular identity markers interact with other identities to marginalise particular groups further. This approach avoids group generalisations and attend to within-group differences. To provide a practical example, an intersectional approach will consider how Council services can better support a Pakistani woman with learning disabilities, aged 24, to improve her life chances. Identifying the impacts of inequalities in this intersectional manner is key to removing barriers and advancing equality.

We are committed to using the Census 2021 and other data about our residents in an intersectional way. This data analyses needs to be reinforced by ongoing, culturally competent approaches to ensuring that communities of identity influence the design and delivery of services. This data and lived experience evidence will provide the information necessary to support action to tackle the inequalities experienced by the specified communities of identity. Some examples of this work will be referenced throughout the report. Further information can be found on the Council's census data tool and in the 2022-23 State of the City report.

5. What do we know about our Communities of Identity?

2021 Census data indicates that the city's population has grown by 48,900 (9.7%) between censuses, from 503,100 people in 2021 to 552,000 in 2021, in 214,700 households. Population growth from 2011-2021 was faster in Manchester than in England as a whole (6.6%), and the north-west (5.2%).

It is important to note that Manchester's Census results are a significant undercount of 33,000 people. The Census officially recorded a population of 552,000. Manchester City Council's Forecasting Model (MCCFM) has a much higher number of 585,000. MCCFM brings together a wider range of statistics to give a more accurate prediction of the real population of the city, such as council tax records, housebuilding, university places and GP registrations. Of particular concern is the apparent reduction in 20–29-year-olds in the city since 2011, which is contrary to local intelligence. We estimate that Census 2021 captured information from 94% of residents.

However, the Census demonstrates the further increases in the diversity of the city's population during a decade of rapid change and unprecedented challenges. For example:

- *Ethnicity*: The non-white population has increased from 33.4% to 43.2%, including an increase in all Asian ethnic categories from 17.1% to 20.9%, and an increase in all Black ethnic categories from 8.6% to 11.9%.
    - Within this, the number of people identifying themselves as being from a Pakistani group has increased by 54% and those from a Bangladeshi group by 50%.
    - The African ethnic group has nearly doubled from around 26,000 people in 2011 to 48,000 in 2021 (an 86% increase).

- o The rise in the Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups category indicates that more residents feel they identify with more than one ethnic group.
  - o Just under 61% of children aged 0-18 years in Manchester overall identified themselves as being from a non-White ethnic group
  - o We can also use Census data and other sources to explore where communities experiencing racial inequality live, and where that is changing, for example: West African communities moving into previously predominantly white working-class areas of north Manchester such as Moston, or the transition of a proportion of Moss Side's population from people with Caribbean heritage to East African communities
  - o As more data emerges, a more nuanced picture of identity can develop, including where communities facing racial inequality are flourishing (such as in some educational statistics), but this also poses challenges when grouping households into broader ethnic groups to be able to understand and identify inequalities
- *National identity*: 77.2% of residents most identified with one of the various British categories, down from 83% in 2011
- *Language:* 89% (191,800) of households have at least one person who can speak English as their main language. Around 4% (21,400) of residents said they cannot speak English well or very well. Across the city, 94 languages are spoken with the highest numbers being Urdu, Arabic and Polish
- *Disability*: the proportion of residents who were classed as being disabled under the Equality Act fell from 14.7% to 11.4%, and the proportion of residents aged 16 and over who are economically inactive due to long-term sickness or disability has fallen from 6.4% to 5.9%
- *Older people*: The proportion of Manchester residents aged 55 and over has grown slightly from 17% in 2011 to 18% in 2021 - an increase of around 15,100 people in total (2021 Census). Between 2011 and 2021, the number of people aged 75 and over living in Manchester has fallen by around 4% (or just over 900 people). In contrast, the number of people aged 75 and over living in Greater Manchester has risen by 14%. In England it rose by 17% (2021 Census)

For our residents, we know that in particular:

- Disabled people face systemic barriers in finding paid work and accessing reasonable adjustments once in work
- Certain racially minoritised communities are less likely to be in work (Pakistani and Bangladeshi people), or are in more precarious work and receive lower pay than white British people
- The impact of poverty and cost of living increases on people trying to get around the city is disproportionate on communities experiencing racial inequalities and disabled people.

Below is a snapshot of data from various sources which highlight some of the ways in which these communities of identity are most affected by inequalities.

5.1 Housing

We know major differences exist in access to good quality housing, green growth, infrastructure, and culture across our neighbourhoods. For instance, people identifying themselves as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh have the highest number of households that are understood to be overcrowded due to insufficient bedrooms. This ethnic group also has the highest percentage of overcrowded households (Census, 2021). 16% of Black African households are overcrowded in England, the third highest after Bangladeshi (24%) and Pakistani (18%) households.

Black African communities are also at disproportionate risk of homelessness (921 homelessness presentations in 2021/22, equivalent to 15.2% of all presentations) which is 6.5% points higher than the percentage population in Manchester (8.7%). 71% of the community lives in the top 10% most deprived neighbourhoods, compared to 49% of Bangladeshi residents, 42% of Pakistani residents and 42% of white British residents. After housing costs, 39% of Black African residents are in the lowest median annual household income quintile.

According to the GM Big Disability Survey carried out in 2022, 64% of disabled people said they were worried about their housing situation, double the proportion from the first survey in 2020. 43% said their housing only partially (29%) or did not at all (14%) meet their housing needs, up from 37% in 2020. 48% said they feel safe and included in their neighbourhood, but 18% did not and 35% felt that only partially.
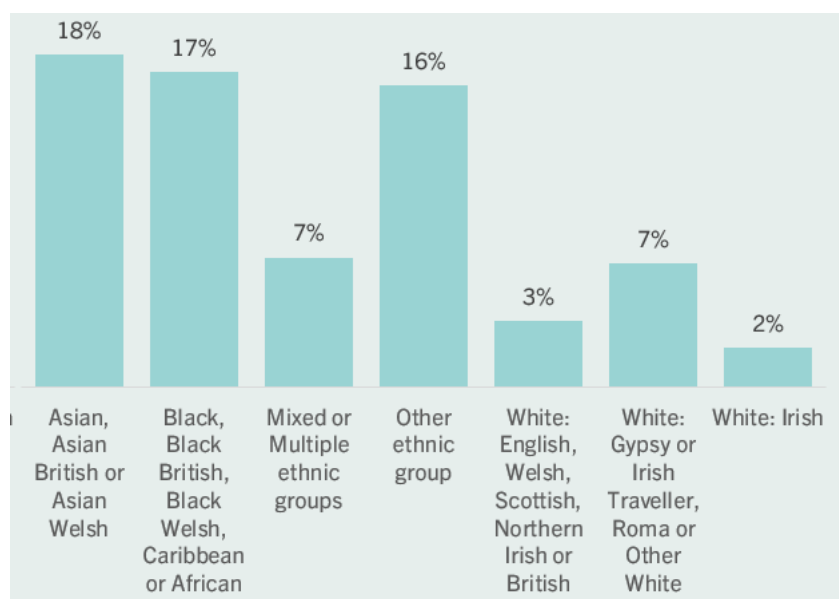

Figure 1: proportion of households with overcrowded occupancy rating, by ethnicity: Census 2021 (Office for National Statistics).

5.2 Employment

Access to good quality education, work and skills is a key driver of continuing inequalities. In 2020, half of Manchester's residents with no or low qualifications were unemployed. According to Census 2021 data, 259,288 people (54.3% of the population aged 16+) were economically active, 21,621 were full time students (4.9%) and 178,670 people (40.8%) were economically inactive. The largest industry

sectors in 2021 were health and social care, retail and education, all foundational economy sectors.

14.4% of those residents who were economically inactive (25,709, or 5.9% of the total population), attributed this to long-term sickness or disability. Proportions of economic inactivity due to disability mirror the pattern of deprivation in the city as a whole.

Analysis across England and Wales of economic activity by ethnic group showed that:

- People who identified themselves as 'African', 'Caribbean', 'White and Black African', and 'White and Black Caribbean' were twice as likely as the whole population to say that they were unemployed
- Those who identified with a 'Gypsy or Irish Traveller', or 'Roma' ethnic group were most likely to have no formal qualifications
- Among younger people aged 16 to 24 years, the highest level of self-reported unemployment was among people identifying as 'Caribbean'
- Women were more likely than men to say that they were economically inactive (not working and not seeking work or being available to work) due to looking after home or family. Bangladeshi and Pakistani women are more likely to be economically inactive (Census 2021)
- Disabled people earn less and have higher costs of living than those who are not disabled, so, unsurprisingly, the cost-of-living crisis has had more of an impact on disabled people
- 27% of disabled people responding to the 2022 GM Big Disability Survey said they had left a job because of disabling barriers in the workplace
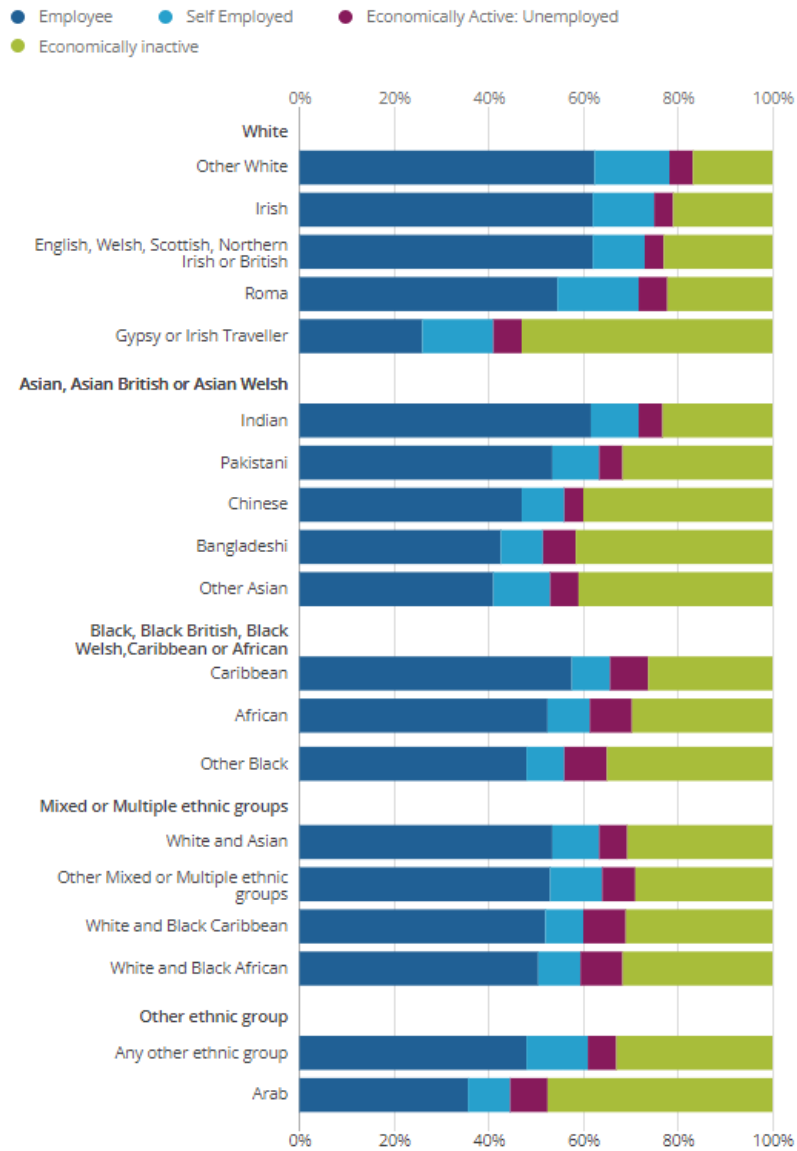
Figure 2: economic activity, by ethnicity: Census 2021 (Office for National Statistics).
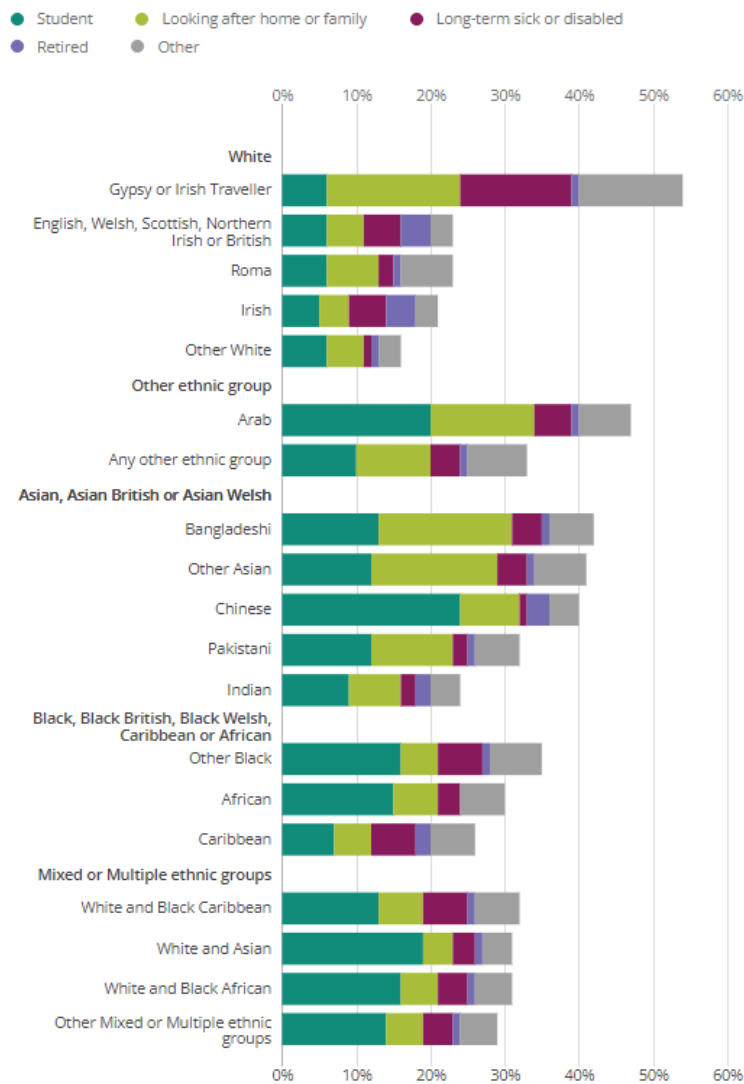
Figure 3: breakdown of economic inactivity, by ethnicity: Census 2021 (Office for National Statistics).

5.3 Health

Data from Census 2021 reveals those groups reported as having poorer health outcomes. There are differences in health between ethnic groups and between ethnic minority group and white groups, the patterns vary depending on the aspect of health being measures. People who identified as Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Bangladeshi and Pakistani have the poorest health outcomes across various indicators. Women were more likely to report having 'bad' health across most ethnic groups, highlighting again why an intersectional approach to addressing inequalities is key.
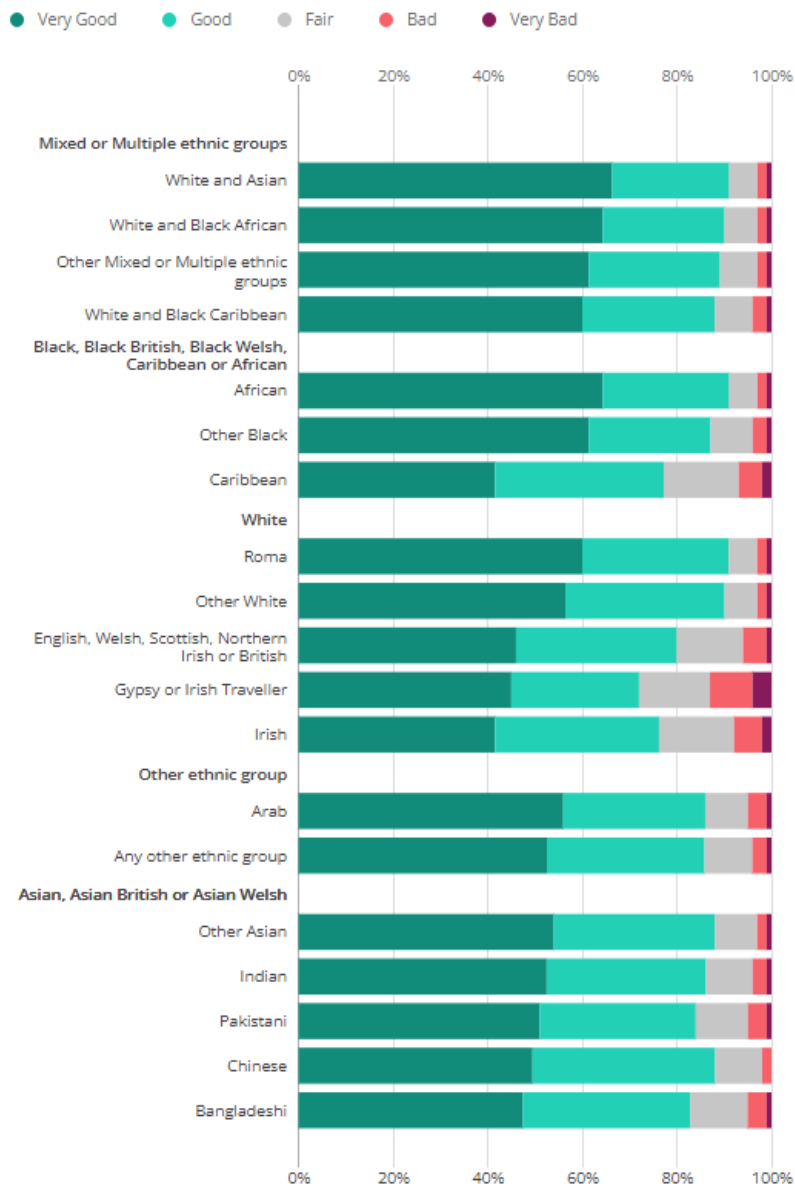
Figure 4: self-assessment of health, by ethnicity: Census 2021 (Office for National Statistics).

A recent report from the NHS Race and Health Observatory found that people from communities experiencing racial inequalities with a learning disability experience worse care. The Learning Disabilities Mortality Review (LeDeR) in 2020 suggested that people from ethnic minority groups die at a younger age: males from an Asian/Asian British background with profound and multiple learning disability had a median age at death at around 30, the lowest median age at death of all groups. In comparison, for white British males with profound and multiple learning disability, the median age at death was 59.

Compared with the white group, the rate of women dying in the UK during pregnancy was 3.7 times higher for Black women and 1.7 times higher for Asian women. Deprivation and pre-existing medical problems are significant risk factors for maternal mortality. However, amongst ethnic minority groups, structural racism can reinforce inequalities, for example in housing, employment, and the criminal justice system - which can negatively impact health. Kings Fund research shows that racism

and discrimination can also have a negative impact on physical and mental health of people from racially minoritised groups.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission's report on the state of equality and human rights in 2018 highlighted that health inequalities and barriers to accessing healthcare are a significant reason why disabled people are four times more likely to die of preventable causes than the general population. 2014 research from the Deaf health charity Sign Health showed that Deaf people are twice as likely as hearing people to have undiagnosed high blood pressure and are also more likely to have undiagnosed diabetes, high cholesterol and cardiovascular disease. Health promotion and prevention activities may miss opportunities to reach disabled people and don't put in specific targets to reach them. For example, disabled women receive less screening for breast and cervical cancer than non-disabled women.

5.4 Education

In asking how the cost-of-living crisis has affected residents in different ways across the city, we can look at the implications for our young people's access to good jobs and sustainable lives in Manchester. We know that children from non-white backgrounds (eg Black Caribbean and Pakistani pupils) consistently perform as well as, or better, than their white British counterparts until the end of primary school, after which gaps in attainment start to emerge.

The most recent results available, for the 2020/21 academic year, show comparable results at KS4/GCSE level.

Percentage of pupils getting a grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE in Manchester

	All students	Asian students	Black students	Chinese students	Mixed students	White students
England	575,863 51.9%	63,704 60.6%	34,911 48.9%	2,101 83.8%	31,772 51.5%	421,995 50.9%
Manchester	5,743 44%	1,385 50.9%	1,125 47.4%	50 84%	476 36.3%	2,257 39.5%

Attainment 8 score (out of 90.0) in Manchester (average results in 8 GCSE-level qualifications)

	All students	Asian students	Black students	Chinese students	Mixed students	White students
England	575,863 50.9%	63,704 55.8%	34,911 50%	2,101 69.2%	31,772 51.3%	421,995 50.2%
Manchester	5,743 47.7%	1,385 51.6%	1,125 50.3%	50 66.4%	476 44.5%	2,257 44.7%

Breakdowns by ethnicity and local authority for younger age groups have not been made available.

Nationally, compared to the white British group (32.4%), higher proportions of degree-educated people are seen in most ethnic minority groups, with the exception of people from Roma (5.9%), Gypsy/Traveller (18.8%) and 'Any other Black' (26.8%) ethnic groups. Significantly lower rates of being degree-educated compared to the White British group are only seen for Roma (27 percentage points lower),

Gypsy/Traveller (14 percentage points lower) and Mixed White and Black Caribbean (12 percentage points lower) ethnic groups. The published statistics do not allow for an intersectional analysis as they are based on summaries of performance by individual categories. The focus on measures of attainment in both the regulation of schools and media reporting of educational outcomes ignores aspects of pupils' lives that are equally important.

Of Manchester's working-age population, 50 to 67-year-olds are the worst affected by low level skills, with a much higher proportion of residents aged 50–64 in the city with no or low qualifications (32.2%) compared to the England average (21.6%). Those who identified with a Gypsy or Irish Traveller, or Roma ethnic group were most likely to have no formal qualifications. People identifying with a mixed White and Asian ethnicity had the lowest percentage of people with no qualifications at 9%.

5.5 Questions to consider

This section has provided the evidence of some of the known inequalities, challenges, and concerns for communities of identity. If we are to make Manchester more equitable and achieve the Council's equality objectives, we need to be guided by the following questions:

- What are our communities' experiences of accessing services, what impact and what outcomes do we hear about from these different communities?
- How does the Council, both in delivery of services, and strategy and policy development, hear and reflect what communities of identity tell us are their key issues?
- To what extent does the Council understand the specific needs of our communities, and how is intersectionality understood and incorporated into service delivery?
- How do communities of identity share their lived experiences and what are the current options for collaboration, co-production, and co-creation, what are the successes and challenges?
- What barriers to engagement exist, what are levels of trust and confidence?

In the following sections of this report, we outline how the Council is addressing its equality objectives and where we can develop our approach to support our communities of identity. We provide examples of actions and interventions that can advance equality and inclusion including through community engagement and involvement. This report identifies areas of good practice which we hope will enable delivery of services in a more targeted, effective, and culturally competent way.

However, this report does not examine the extent to which the wide range of mechanisms, boards, groups and surveys used by services across the Council have been effective in enabling residents to have their voices heard, have services be co-produced in culturally proficient ways, and enable the development of real dialogue. Further work is underway to evaluate the effectiveness of our approach to community engagement.

6. Delivering on our Equalities Objectives – examples

6.1 Objective 1: Knowing Manchester Better

Key indicators were also developed in identifying the Equality Objectives for the Council. The indicators for Objective 1 include:
- stronger approaches to community engagement, including co-production built into service development.
- targeted and effective services, with a clear evidence base and shared work with partners
- capacity building for the city's VCSE sector, particularly for disabled people's organisations and those supporting communities experiencing racial inequalities.
- a focus on partnership working to support and improve community cohesion

These indicators fit with the Our Manchester strategic theme of a progressive and equitable city, where 'everyone can thrive at all stages of their life, and quickly and easily reach support to get back on track when needed'.

Manchester can point to several examples of community and public engagement that have made real impact. Access to services, to support with cost-of-living increases, and to help individuals and families live well together can only be delivered effectively if residents in our communities are aware of what is available and are confident that their needs will be met. Good practice examples provided highlight different approaches to co-production, capacity building and delivery of targeted services.

Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Assembly and forums
Working with: residents aged over 50 to make Manchester an Age Friendly City

Why: high levels of deprivation and ill-health in some areas of the city lead to worse health and well-being outcomes as people age; our social approach to ageing asks services to consider the lens of age, beginning interventions in mid-life to support older people

How: The Age Friendly Manchester team facilitate regular forums for older people who are 'experts by experience', set up in 2003
- Council teams present proposed policies and initiatives for feedback and ensuring an age-friendly approach in any service changes, for example the commitment from Manchester Libraries to ensure all sites are Age Friendly

Learning: Consistency and long-term nature of the forum allows for flow of information between experts by experience and council teams.

Our Manchester VCSE Grants Programme funding 2023-26
Working with: a wide range of community organisations in the city looking for funding and capacity-building

Why: Council grant funding ensures a varied and sustainable VSFCE sector which works in targeted, supportive ways tailored to residents' needs

How: the programme team was looking to develop their grant process to explore improvements, lessons learned, and issues brought up by the pandemic. The views and ideas of VCSE groups and organisations of all shapes and sizes were invited to participate via 8 in-person and online sessions, plus an online survey and further co-design sessions
- 94 groups participated including faith groups, culture, disability groups, carers groups, age friendly, homelessness, and LGBT organisations

Learning: A variety of engagement techniques are available to reach a wide range of groups.

Gypsy, Roma, Traveller communities Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, 2023
Working with: primary care and hospital data, community organisations, ONS data

Why: Health inequalities result in differences in life expectancy between the most and least deprived in society, with people from poorer backgrounds dying sooner than their richer counterparts. Following on from the census in 2021, and the commitments under Making Manchester Fairer, a joint strategic needs assessment that explores the current and future health and social care needs of historically marginalised groups in Manchester, such as the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities, is therefore both timely and important.
How: exploring behavioural and social determinants of health and access to services, eg data on smoking, mental health, quality of accommodation, cultural barriers, and GP registration. Though GRT communities are considered a minority ethnic group, there is no morbidity or mortality data looking at the COVID-19 outcomes of GRT communities. There will also be a creative co-produced engagement programme delivered with a community organisation.

Learning: Even with mechanisms to share information across public health and other partners, we do not consistently have enough data to be clear about the totality of challenges faced by some of our marginalised residents.

Community cohesion: developing the Building Stronger Communities Together Strategy

Working with: residents and elected members across the city, to understand the challenges they experienced and things they needed to help improve social cohesion in their neighbourhoods

Why: The Building Stronger Communities Together strategy is Manchester City Council's first social cohesion strategy, launching in Dec 2023. Whilst it is distinct but complimentary to the Council's other Our Manchester strategies aimed at building cohesion through education, employment, housing, equalities etc, this strategy is focused on people. It has three key aims, which were identified through a programme of community engagement and consultation. These are:

- Relationships – 'It's about all of us' – getting to know one another and bridging difference between communities. More people doing things to help them and others to belong to their community; those who are newly arrived as well as those who have always lived here, engaging, being trusted and trusting others around them, including those from different social and ethnic backgrounds
- Participation – 'We get involved to make a difference' - helping all communities to feel empowered to act to improve their neighbourhood and address shared challenges together building on the strengths and advantages of Manchester's rich diversity, cultures and histories
- Belonging – 'Making an effort' to make ourselves and the people around us a part of our local neighbourhood and the city; valuing diversity and difference, celebrating what we have in common. Being proud of the places we live. Knowing that all together we belong to Manchester. Whether a new arrival to the city or someone whose family goes back generations we celebrate what we have in common, the ties that bind us together, shared values of welcoming and inclusivity.

How: combining quantitative and qualitative information on community priorities and experiences, via an online survey, a series of face to face and online focus groups, 121 interviews and phone interviews, reaching over 240 people. The focus groups included sessions with schools, youth clubs, mosques, the Manchester BME Network, Elected Members, South Asian Women and other community focused groups or settings.

Three questions were used as discussion points, however we allowed participants to steer the conversation and talk about the things that mattered most to them in their community. This approach encouraged open and honest feedback and got participants to think about the role they could play in creating stronger communities.

Similarly, we have continued dialogue with groups, such as the Disabled People's Engagement Group Sounding Board, after the formal consultation process was finished to reflect and sense check our findings and adapt recommendations based on feedback.

Learning: Allocate enough time to plan, deliver and regularly review community engagement (be flexible and adapt), identify and use community assets (people and places) to help engage and build confidence and participation, do not be afraid to go out and talk to everyday people outside of office hours.

Covid/Community Health Equity Manchester Sounding Boards
Working with inclusion health groups; Black African and Black Caribbean communities; Pakistani, Bangladeshi communities and Disabled people

Why: CHEM was established in July 2020 as a direct result of the disproportionate impact of the coronavirus pandemic on communities experiencing racial inequalities, disabled people, and inclusion health groups. The group's purpose is to narrow the equity gap that they have struggled with in the past due to many reasons including:
- Systemic racism and discrimination
- Lack of trust
- Untargeted approaches

How: targeted engagement via sounding boards, which brought together local people acting as a voice for their communities. A targeted fund was developed initially by the COVID-19 Health Equity Manchester Group - a group of health, local authority, and VCSFE representatives working to improve the experiences and outcomes for ethnically diverse communities disproportionately impacted by Covid-19.

Some of the themes that came out of the evaluation of both funding rounds were:
- The need for more long-term sustainable funding to allow organisations to have longer interventions with communities.
- Building of trust with communities is integral to any work that the statutory organisations are doing with communities.
- Involving communities in decision making and service design from the beginning rather than consulted at the end of a process.
- Engagement with communities should be continual and not just in times of crisis
- Community voice is integral to the reduction of health inequalities

The work of CHEM takes place alongside the valuable localised work that has taken place with community groups through the neighbourhood teams across the Council and Health who deliver much of the face-to-face engagement work in the city. This engagement work also requires its own bespoke communications support to provide messaging in the right way, for the right audiences, so that we help people to live well, where they live. There has been a very successful cycle of listening to community feedback to create communications that complement and help with engagement work.

These sounding boards set up to address disparities in risks and outcomes of Covid within racially minoritised communities are now moving to a broader Community Health Equity remit, to enable delivery of public health messages in culturally competent ways.

Learning: Trust communities to know their needs and involve them in decision-making.

CHEM Targeted Grant Fund Programme
Working with: a wide range of community organisations in the city working with targeted communities, looking for funding and support to deliver projects and activities.

Why: To provide funding and support to smaller grassroots organisations who may not always be able to access funding, to provide much needed activities in the aftermath of the pandemic.

How: Designed and implemented simple funding and application. The process provided opportunities for organisations to engage with commissioners to give clarity and support for proposed projects and activities.
- 83 VCSE organisations applied for grant funding.
- 43 successful applications with a diverse spread of projects and communities.

Learning: Providing simple but robust process creates more accessible opportunities for smaller/grassroot VCSE organisations to apply and receive funding.

Highways Access Group
Working with: disabled people living or working in Manchester

Why: highways development projects must be accessible for all citizens; the Highways Access Group enables staff to design out infrastructure which affects the ability of disabled people to travel freely around the city

How: a monthly online session attended by around 10-20 disabled people, paid for their time
- each session looks at two proposed highway scheme designs in detail, to ensure that disabled people are not disadvantaged by any project or change to infrastructure in the city
- as the group has shared their expertise, common issues have been designed out from project proposals and the group is beginning to look at wider issues of accessibility (moving to a social model of disability-oriented workflow)
- the Highways Access Group contributes to making Manchester an accessible city for everyone, and won the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation National Awards 2022 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) category

Learning: Recognising the value of experts by experience in all aspects of city life.

6.2 Objective 2: Improving Life Chances

Commitments under this objective align with the Our Manchester themes of 'a thriving and sustainable city', 'a highly connected city', 'a highly skilled city', and 'a liveable and low carbon city'. Indicators of progress include:

- providing high quality economic opportunities for all within a strong, inclusive and innovative economy with diverse growth sectors
- inclusive skills development opportunities and education which narrows gaps between different communities within the city
- accessible transport networks and digital infrastructure
- improved housing stock

How can working towards this objective impact those in our communities of identity:

- to what extent have Council services ensured that access to 'the life of the city' and to our economic development is equitable across our communities and neighbourhoods?
- What transport infrastructure do we need to ensure our residents have equitable access to diverse jobs and growth, from our city centre to the districts?
- What does being work-ready look like for young people with SEND, and how can they access opportunities?

While some of the answers to these questions are outside the Council's direct control, asking ourselves these questions can help keep equity at the forefront of discussions on economic and skills development opportunities, transport and digital infrastructure, and improved housing stock. As part of the Our Manchester Strategy, the Council has committed to improving physical and digital infrastructure and ensuring residents can access the right opportunities locally and nationally.

Manchester Disability Collaborative

Working with: Manchester Disability Collaborative (MDC), a multi-agency partnership comprising disabled people, DPOs, VSCE organisations and public sector organisations including Manchester City Council.

Why: Manchester as a city has a long history of disabled people's activism and has an active Disabled People Organisations (DPOs) sector, including several organisations that continue to receive funding and support from the Council. MDC brings partners together to hear from and remove barriers for disabled people across a number of areas of work.

How: Coordinated by Breakthrough UK, MDC went through a co-production process (discussions, group workshops and a survey) to develop new objectives for the collaborative, which the Council is committed to supporting. Four workstreams have been set up to tackle these priorities, with Council involvement in each one.

Learning: Co-production can be done in partnership, takes time and commitment.

Supporting unpaid carers through the Carers Manchester Network
Working with: community organisations supporting carers in their area

Why: census data showed that there are over 37,000 carers in Manchester. Unpaid carers are often isolated and are not aware of available support or resources, such as the Carers Manchester Pathway

How: establishing a network of three locality partnerships for north, central and south Manchester, including 18 separate community organisations
- local organisations are ideally placed to identify, listen to and respond to carers' needs and map unmet needs and promote carers' voices to feed into the development of the ongoing Carers Support Pathway
- partnership organisations have specialist experience and knowledge of supporting and working with diverse communities, ensuring culturally appropriate services, information, and advice sensitive to the needs of carers
- eg the Carers Manchester Central network includes workers from the African Caribbean Care Group, African and Caribbean Mental Health Services (ACMHS) and LMCP (South Asian carers support), alongside Himmat, Alzheimer's Society, Stroke Association and Together Dementia Support
- unpaid carers engaging with staff within the CMC partnership immediately feel at ease as they are being supported by individuals from their communities and background with an understanding of their cultural needs such as language, cultural dynamics, diverse needs and nuances.

Learning: The importance of having visible and clear access points to support which are culturally relevant and able to lead partnership working.

Care Consultants

Working with: care leavers across the city who want to influence policy and practice for other cared-for young people

Why: we know that care leavers face significant barriers to positive outcomes and benefit from ongoing support from our service

How: the Cared For Children's service has developed the role of Care Consultants, which are paid opportunities for care leavers to focus on an area of policy or practice they want to see improved, at sessions with other care leavers sharing their experiences. Care Consultants commit to supporting at least four sessions over a year, where they can develop projects, give feedback to different service managers and build up their networks. There are also social opportunities, residentials and skills development sessions. For example, the group raised the issue of communication and access to offers – do all care leavers have an awareness of their rights and entitlements? Based on this feedback, the service now offers an app for care leavers and a regular newsletter to ensure young people could find out opportunities and updates on a regular basis.

Learning: Offer the chance to develop additional skills through engagement opportunities.

Tackling digital exclusion

Working with: community organisations to offer support with capacity building for digital skills and hardware.

Why: People who are digitally excluded are also likely to suffer from other types of social exclusion and can be disproportionately affected by not being online. There is a very close link between digital exclusion and levels of deprivation. Grassroot organisations are already doing so much to offer essential support which includes tackling the digital divide.

How:
- targeted donations from social value partnerships.
- donating laptops to build capacity for organisations to support with access to the internet, particularly those working with older people, people facing racial inequalities, disabled people, homeless people and refugees.
- identifying area of need via the Digital Exclusion Risk Index, as this indicates the areas of the city which are most at risk of digital exclusion.
- trial of two device lending libraries with North Manchester Community Partnership and Rainbow Surprise in Crumpsall. This area of the city scores highly on the Digital Exclusion Risk Index and we know there is demand at these organisations.
- linked 17 Manchester libraries to the National Databank so residents can request a free SIM with 6 months' calls, texts and data; using these SIMs, we have given over 1000 Manchester residents free data.
- given free MiFi dongles to residents, so they can access the internet for free at home using these donated SIM cards. In the past 2 years, we have provided over 1400 Manchester residents with free data to access the Internet

Learning: The Digital Inclusion Team continue to evaluate the work that is being delivered. Working with community groups is key, as not only do they have their ear to the ground across our communities, they are also intimately familiar with the needs and challenges of their communities. One of the pieces of evaluation that Open Data Manchester have been commissioned to facilitate is to identify from community organisations and volunteers what they feel best practise in helping people to get online looks like. The work that has been taking place in the City is being recognised Nationally and the development of a Digital Inclusion Steering Group and a refreshed Digital Action Plan is strengthening scaling up impact and creating a number of toolkits that can be shared across systems.

Co-production of summer offer with parents and carers of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Working with: parents and carers, children and young people, community partners

Why: local families engaged with the SEND service needed opportunities to build networks and friendships, access excellent quality information and build their confidence

How: co-produced through online meetings and collective conversations with parents and carers, meeting with Greater Manchester Youth Network and community organisations. The parties involved included:
- Parent Carer Forum/Parent Champions – involved from the beginning in ideas and design, as well as delivery and evaluation
- Voluntary Sector partners – worked across the partnership to make ideas happen
- Young people (Changemakers) – involved in codesign, evaluation and later in grant making projects to commission their own provision
- SEND Engagement & Local Offer team – coproduced with parents and carers and lead on the delivery and promotion of the offer through the Local Offer Newsletter
- The Short breaks team, who introduced the offer to all parents making enquiries about short breaks and talked the through what was available in their local area supporting families to remove any barriers to accessing the offer.
- Social Care colleagues and schools – publicising the offer to families

Feedback tells us the key impacts of this project have been:
- Forging positive networks and friendship and peer to peer support through the offer, and the family approach where everyone is included has strengthened family relations
- Improved access to places they would not have ventured to by themselves but have done so knowing there is the support of other SEND families there
- Young people with SEND having increased confidence, friendships, independence and aspirations, knowing their rights
- Young people with SEND feeling a sense of belonging and knowing their city

Learning: Early engagement with those who benefit from the service provision and strong collaboration between residents, voluntary sector and Council services minimised barriers to access.

6.3 Objective 3. Celebrating Our Diversity

For this objective, progress indicators include:
- supporting and delivering events that promote the achievements and contributions of our diverse communities
- achieving and maintain the highest standards in meeting the needs of key stakeholder groups such as achieving the Disability Confident Leader

Some examples of this work include:

Neighbourhood Community Development team

The Council's NCD team (previously known as buzz) provide funding and support for local community projects. They explore impact of their work by engaging with people where they live or socialise on the basis on protected characteristics, for example identifying a gap in offering support to LGBTQIA+ people, which then led to work with the LGBT Foundation. NCD Officers carry out opportunistic engagement – a key distinction of their role is that it is their job meet people where they are and to focus on turning conversations (engagement) into activity (projects or connections).

"*The massive role that buzz played in the community during COVID-19 has been enormous. Not only their ability to connect with local people on a very human and compassionate level but to also connect the dots and bring people together. The success of the mutual aid group in Ardwick and Longsight sits largely with the magnificent buzz employees*" Cllr Amna Abdullatif, Manchester City Council councillor for Ardwick

"*Matt has been fantastic working with BAME elders in the community, and our beneficiaries are always happy to see him. He has gone out of his way to check in on our sessions, making sure everything is running well and as it should be. He is a very kind man, coming to speak to our elders, empowering and inspiring them to prioritise their mental and physical wellbeing*" Bola, CeeBee Gold and Openshaw resident

Learning: The importance of neighbourhood engagement for building trusting relationships between the Council and communities.

Community recruitment project
Working with: The Council's Talent & Diversity team have been working with local communities to ensure we are attracting local diverse talent.

Why: By working with these organisations, we have been able to share our job opportunities directly with our communities which has resulted in an increase in diverse applicants and appointments.

How: The team have engaged with a range of our local communities and organisations which includes Manchester BME Network, British Muslim Heritage Centre, Wai Yin Society and the T.A.P Project (The African Pot) to promote our ambition of building an inclusive and diverse Council and to share job opportunities. For example, the Early Help service were looking to recruit Early Help Practitioners - line managers were keen to ensure that the team attract local diverse talent to undertake these roles. The roles entail working closely with and supporting families in communities across the city. The Talent & Diversity Team engaged with local community organisations to discuss and promote the opportunities and encouraged residents to apply:
- The service received 51 applications of which 31 were shortlisted for interview.
- Of the 31 shortlisted, 11 of the applicants were from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background.

Following interviews, 11 positions were filled of which 5 of the successful candidates were from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background

Learning: Listen to partners to get our approach right.

Diversity events run by Manchester City Council
Working with: Community members and organisations to provide Council recognition of and support for different communities within the city

Why: Manchester is a welcoming city and delivering community events such as International Women's Day, Black History Month, Holocaust Memorial Day, Pride, Windrush 75 celebrations are all-important ways to honour and commemorate our diverse communities

How: Celebration and commemoration events are organised by a number of teams within the Council and include input from our councillors as well as community representatives and external organisations.

Learning: Council support for our communities of identity has to be visible and inclusive.

7. Forward Focus

From the examples and data covered in this report, it's clear that several ongoing projects and mechanisms support the implementation of our commitments under our Equality Objectives. Several services have strengthened our overall approach to advancing and embedding equality and inclusion through community engagement practices and using data more effectively.

We are improving our ability to know our communities in greater depth through a place-based approach. We know that a deeper understanding at ward-level of what helps people feel connected to and well-served by the place in which they live can help advance and embed our equality objectives. Some of the examples showcased here offer a truly place-based approach. We recognise that we are on a journey and there is more to do because barriers still exist in engaging with some of our marginalised communities across the city, and thus the influence those communities can have in sharing their voices and developing a trusting relationship with an institution like the Council.

Through the examples provided in this report, we have identified areas where further work needs to be undertaken to support our workforce to lead high-quality, culturally competent co-production and community engagement projects – with confidence:

1) digital inclusion, particularly as we are increasingly relying on digital engagement and surveys to gain feedback making it harder for some of the identified communities to have a say
2) targeted engagement, in particular younger people (16-25), Gypsy, Roma and Traveller and other racially minoritised communities
3) better use of data both quantitative and qualitative in how teams leading consultation and engagement align their engagement plans and service delivery
4) tracking the impact of our engagement longer term, whether qualitatively through deepened and trusted relationships, or quantitatively through data collection of who we are reaching, or through other accountability mechanisms
5) integrating and embed approaches to intersectionality and the social model of disability effectively into how we design, develop, and deliver work for and with our communities
6) ensure this report is a 'live' document to inform further work and deep dives going forward
7) developing a framework for how we engage with communities more effectively which aligns with the work underway through Making Manchester Fairer actions and Community Health Equity Manchester. The elements of the framework will be:
   a. Build and maintain trust
   b. Data and intelligence
   c. Embed across our services and workforce
8) further develop our workforce through initiatives and development programmes such as: the leadership pathway programme for racially minoritised staff, the workplace adjustment hub to support disabled staff and their managers, the MMF system-wide Race and Health Equity education

programme, discussions with members of the senior leadership group and their teams about how their services can better engage communities using the framework outlined above

The sample of examples provided in this report is not an exhaustive list, however they will contribute to developing our next set of Equality Objectives for 2024 -2028 and support the Communities and Power work delivered through the Making Manchester Fairer framework.

8. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- consider the progress made to date on delivering our Equality Objectives and comment on the information provided.
- support the approaches to working with communities and areas for further development outlined in the report.

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