

Our Manchester Framework: Narrative, Principles and Behaviours

In 2015 people were asked what their dream Manchester would be like, to help shape the Manchester Strategy 2015-25. Could the whole city agree a joint ambition that residents, businesses, public services and voluntary groups would get behind and work together on over the next ten years?

The consultation – which reached tens of thousands – gave the clearest ever picture of what matters to Manchester. People called for a city that is:

- **Thriving** – creating great jobs and healthy businesses
- **Filled with talent** – both home-grown and attracting the world's best
- **Fair** – with equal chances for all to unlock their potential
- **A great place to live** – with lots of things to do
- **Buzzing with connections** – from world class transport to brilliant broadband.

Characteristic of Manchester, these ambitious responses go beyond usual expectations. On top of having all the basics right, Manchester's people, businesses, volunteers and public services want their city in the top flight of world cities.

The strategy – titled 'Our Manchester' – fleshed out these ambitions into 64 priorities, known as the 64 'will-do' actions, that Manchester's people and organisations (not just the Council) have agreed we're all working towards, together.

Now that we have that strategy, setting out **what** we all want Manchester to be, we now need to work out **how**, together, we can all make it happen.

But it's a fierce challenge to keep Manchester growing and working, even without the spending reductions of recent years. Even with every pound spent on public services channelled towards Our Manchester's goals, we can't get past the barriers without a total re-think of how we work and who we work with. Collectively we have to do our best with less, and no one person or organisation can do this alone. Everybody and every organisation that cares about Manchester has to pool resources and play their part. So it's going to need radical change both to the way we all work, and the way we work together.

The power behind Our Manchester

Manchester has an incredible, unique set of strengths growing out of our industry, creativity, determination and innovation. Imagine us all coming together to get those strengths working for Manchester. Imagine what we could do with the collective knowledge, skills and efforts of even just this sample:

- Half a million Mancunians
- 20,000 businesses
- Thousands of NHS staff
- 3,000 voluntary organisations, large and small

- Our police, fire and emergency services
- 7,000 council staff
- World class universities
- 100,000 active volunteers
- 96 Elected Members

That's where Our Manchester comes in.

Our Manchester – our way of doing things

The Our Manchester approach puts people at the centre of everything we do – *people* are more important than processes or procedures.

Across the city organisations and individuals who care for Manchester are joining a continuing conversation about what this approach means for them. We're asking ourselves and each other how we can use the four basic principles of Our Manchester to change what we do and how we do it, so we play our part in making Our Manchester happen.

These four Our Manchester basics are:

- **Better lives** – it's about people
- **Listening** – we listen, learn and respond
- **Recognising strengths of individuals and communities** – we start from strengths
- **Working together** – we build relationships and create conversations.

These phrases explain the basics further:

1. Better lives – it's about people

- We look at all aspects of the lives of each person we work with when that's needed. We work with whole families on underlying causes, not on patching problems.
- We make our work count for the whole neighbourhood or for a community of people spread across many neighbourhoods.
- We work with each other and others so that people get the right services in the right place at the right time.

2. Listening – we listen, learn and respond

- We listen to people and communities so that everything we do is exactly what people need.
- We have open minds not pre-conceptions. We base decisions on what we see and hear, not on what we bring to a situation.
- We change and adapt when something doesn't work.

3. Recognising strengths of individuals and communities – we start from strengths

- We understand people's strengths and see the positives in their life and their relationships.
- We understand communities' strengths and recognise their diversity.
- We work with many different sets of people and communities.
- We understand what matters to people.
- We build on what's already in a community.

4. Working together – we build relationships and create conversations. And they're ones that we've not had before. They give an equal say – and an equal role – to those who need services and those who provide them.

- **We have conversations – we don't just 'consult'.**
So we start by asking not telling, we don't push our own solutions.
- **We're frank, open, honest and realistic.**
So we don't over-promise – we risk disappointing and can take flak – but we say no when it's no.
- **Our relationships are long-term.**
So we don't just make contact in crisis or when we need something – being there already pays off.

Our Manchester behaviours

Working well by using those basic principles takes a certain kind of person behaving in certain ways.

Organisations working for Manchester have joined a conversation about which 'behaviours' would best make them into the people needed to deliver Our Manchester.

Four of the top answers have been:

- We work together and trust each other
- We're proud and passionate about Manchester
- We take time to listen and understand
- We 'own it' and we're not afraid to try new things.

Moving Our Manchester on

Organisations, businesses and voluntary groups who work for and care about Manchester must now decide how putting these top five 'behaviours' into action will change the work they do – both day-to-day and in the longer-term.

The wider public must now ask: what will we as residents do to make where we live better? How do we want public services to support us to do more, in new ways? How will we build on what our area already has going for it?

Everyone who cares about Manchester must now act, in our own way – at work, in our neighbourhoods, families and free time – to change something to help make Our Manchester happen.