

Changes at Macc (June 2015)



Like many other local voluntary and community groups, Macc is currently faced with a situation where the demand on our services is increasing at a time when key funders have significantly cut our funding whilst also advising that there are more and deeper cuts to come.

In the last 5 years we've taken responsibility for ensuring that local groups and volunteers get the support they need – developing initiatives like Manchester Community Central and Volunteer Centre Manchester, the Spirit of Manchester Awards and the Voluntary Sector Assembly. We're very proud of the fact that we've done all of this on a fraction of the budget which used to be spent across a whole range of organisations such as VAM and CN4M. You can find 8 key facts about our work last year over the page.

Like everyone else in the sector, our future is uncertain and we have to face up to the need to change the way we operate in order to continue to meet the demand for our support. Macc's income has decreased by nearly 20% this year and is set to decrease further over the coming months and years. Like most voluntary sector organisations approximately 80% of Macc's income is spent on salary costs. Savings in recent years have come from cutting overheads to a minimum. It's inescapable that funding reductions of almost 20% mean we simply can't retain the size of the staff team we currently have. This will inevitably affect our capacity to deliver services across the city. Again, we know this is true of many other organisations in the voluntary and community sector: as a sector, we've always kept costs down trying to balance budgets whilst creating maximum impact. The level of the recent cuts to funding is making a difficult situation even harder.

At Macc we've obviously been looking to increase the levels of income we generate from selling services and resources. As the majority of our customers are either voluntary and community sector groups or volunteers, this is not realistically going to be a major source of income. We are acutely aware that groups are faced with their own financial difficulties and we are committed to ensuring that volunteers should never be charged for giving their time freely. We are working on greater engagement with the private sector and ways to increase the resources they can offer to the sector: however, this too can only create marginal income for Macc and competition in this area is considerable.

So it is in this context that Macc reluctantly chose to offer a Voluntary Redundancy scheme to staff as a way of avoiding compulsory redundancies in the near future. A number of staff have chosen this route for a variety of reasons including: new job opportunities, career changes and retirement. So it is with great sadness that I have to announce that we will be saying goodbye to the following staff between now and September 2015.

- **Mike Blaney** – Organisation Development Worker
- **Mark Pritchard** - Volunteer Centre Manager
- **Jen Halfpenny** - Volunteering Development Worker
- **Beth Plant** - Policy and Influence Manager
- **John Butler** - Mental Health Development Worker
- **Mary Duncan** - Health and Wellbeing Development Worker

We are very sorry to see colleagues leave and Macc would like to thank them all for their hard work and commitment over the years. We wish them all success in the future and we know that there are many across Manchester who will miss them as much as we will: colleagues and friends in local groups, local NHS bodies, the Town Hall and other local and national organisations.

Losing these skilled and experienced staff is clearly going to have a short-term impact on how Macc operates and the services we are able to offer. Making these reductions to our staff costs creates some opportunity to reshape the organisation - so before we proceed any further, we want to invite ideas from our colleagues, funders, partners and stakeholders to inform our thinking. We want to ask you some questions about what you think you will need from Macc and how we should deliver this. This will inform how we reshape our work and our organisation for the future. We'll be putting out a short survey and having discussions with partners in the coming weeks.

Macc remains committed to encouraging, supporting and developing voluntary and community groups and individuals to have a real influence over the places and communities in which they live. We hope you will continue to support us through this transitional phase and we look forward to working with you over the coming months and years.

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June 2015
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