



## Consultation paper: Future role of the Manchester Board

---

### 1. Context

- 1.1. The Manchester Partnership has been operating within an evolving policy and governance context for some time, and there are now a number of issues which together merit a review of the role of the Manchester Board and how this sits within the wider partnership arrangements.
- 1.2. Partnership working has changed considerably over the last few years, and whilst we continue to have the flexibility to set partnership arrangements according to our local needs, there has been a move away from a statutory framework with national targets. The nature of partnership working has also moved on from coming together to agree shared priorities towards ensuring that the right mechanisms are in place to ensure their delivery.
- 1.3. Both Manchester and Greater Manchester partnership arrangements have evolved further since the last review of the Manchester Partnership in 2011. In particular at a Greater Manchester level a number of levers of delivery have changed. The Greater Manchester Combined Authority, set up in 2011, has now become established, and we are taking forward the implementation of a package of measures of devolution to Greater Manchester as agreed through the City Deal. We also have a focus on work around public service reform, including the Greater Manchester Community Budgets pilot. It is important that we are mindful of the links between partnerships at both Manchester and Greater Manchester levels, and that the Manchester arrangements are providing added value.
- 1.4. We also recognise that in the current economic and fiscal environment we need to focus our efforts both on investment in growth and reducing dependency through early intervention and integrated delivery and commissioning. To reflect these changes the Community Strategy has been refreshed during the past year to reaffirm our shared vision for the city and our three overarching priorities around Growth, People and Place, underpinned by the delivery plan. Linked to this it is also crucial that within the current economic and financial climate our arrangements make the best use of the expertise and capacity of partners across the city.

### 2. Current arrangements

- 2.1 The Manchester Partnership brings together the following boards;
  - Manchester Board – brings together the Manchester Partnership, overseeing the high level issues impacting on the city.
  - Manchester Investment Board – drives the delivery of the Manchester Board and Community Strategy priorities. Focuses on public service reform,

Community Budgets, integrated delivery and commissioning and new delivery and investment models.

- Health and Wellbeing Board – the lead local accountable body charged with improving the health and wellbeing of Manchester residents and reducing health inequalities.
- Neighbourhoods Board – brings a place focus for the delivery of the Community Strategy, including housing and environment.
- Children’s Board – has overall strategic responsibility for improving outcomes for children and young people and their families.
- Work and Skills Board – drives the delivery of the economic, employment and skills priorities for the city.
- Community Safety Partnership – leads on crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Strategic Education Partnership – leads on key educational, skills and employment priorities for the city.

2.2 Membership of the partnership boards includes Executive Members of the Council with the most relevant portfolios, and the Manchester Board is chaired by the Leader of the Council. Partnership boards are also aligned with appropriate Council Scrutiny Committees, with members receiving agendas and minutes of meetings in order to assess which issues should be addressed at Scrutiny.

### 3. **The role of the Manchester Board**

3.1 The Manchester Board was established to act as a non-executive body overseeing the Manchester Partnership and to enhance the focus on the Community Strategy. As a front-facing board it brings together the Manchester Partnership, overseeing the high level issues impacting on the city and ensuring that the wider partnerships maximise their focus on the city’s key priorities.

3.2 Now that statutory requirements around the Local Area Agreement no longer exist, thematic partnerships have taken on a quasi-autonomous role, accountable to the Manchester Board through the annual State of the City report and regular dashboard indicators rather than through formal reporting lines. This has meant that the more formal and directive aspects of the board’s role have changed.

3.3 There have also been several changes to governance structures across a number of sectors, resulting in a situation where there are no longer the same number of non-executive roles across the city. This has led to a number of vacancies on the Manchester Board and suggests that retaining the current format and size of the board may not enable the representation which the board needs to carry out its wider role.

3.4 During the last few years, the Manchester Board has played more of a responsive role in following key issues arising from the delivery of the Community Strategy. At the same time, some of the broader responsibilities of the board – for example advocating on behalf of the Manchester Partnership on a national level – have not been prioritised.

3.5 This therefore leads to two possible options for the future role of the board:

1. Disestablishment of the board

It could be argued that the enhanced role of the wider partnerships in driving forward the delivery of the Community Strategy and the more limited, responsive role of the Manchester Board may mean that the board is no longer required. The skills and expertise of existing board members could instead be deployed across the existing partnership arrangements within the city, thereby focusing their time and contribution in those areas where they would most add value. However, the main limitation with this approach would be that this would remove the overview function for the Community Strategy as a whole and other arrangements may need to be explored to hold the Manchester Partnership to account on delivery.

2. An enhanced role for the board

A different interpretation is that the current context serves as a rationale for an enhanced role for the board, which brings greater added value for the city. Restructuring the board with a sharper focus could also strengthen partnership arrangements as a whole without undergoing a wider restructure.

3.6 An enhanced role could include some or all of the following roles and responsibilities;

- Strategic overview of the Community Strategy and delivery plan
- Leadership on the priorities of Growth, People and Place for Manchester
- Holding the Manchester Partnership to account on the delivery of the Community Strategy by overseeing performance
- Supporting and challenging partnerships on the delivery of the Community Strategy priorities, informed by the annual findings within the State of the City report.
- Leading on a specific aspect of the Community Strategy, for example economic growth or innovation and reform.
- Advocating on behalf of the city as required to support the delivery of the Community Strategy, ensuring that the relationships with Greater Manchester and government work for Manchester.

**Consultation question 1:**

**What should the roles and responsibilities of the Manchester Board be in future?**

**Consultation question 2:**

**What relationship should there be between the Manchester Board and the wider partnership?**

**4. The format of the Manchester Board**

- 4.1 There are a number of ways in which the Manchester Board could be structured in future, in order to effectively deliver its agreed roles and responsibilities. Some potential models are outlined below, with a more detailed summary in Annex A. It is intended that these options serve as a starting point for discussion, and it may be that a different format is preferred.

- Manchester Leader's Advisory Board
- 4.2 An independent advisory board would guide public services on difficult issues, working across the priorities of Growth, People and Place. The board would be consulted early in the decision-making process, providing a sounding board for public services across the city to test difficult issues. This would be a different role to the existing Manchester Board and would require buy-in and engagement from partners. The board would have a clear contribution to the delivery of the Community Strategy, but as this role would be reactive it could distract from the wider strategic overview.
- 4.3 Manchester Leader's Board  
A leadership board would take a more proactive approach in identifying and driving priorities for the city, supporting and challenging public services and partnerships on delivery around Growth, People and Place. Individual board members could lead on key themes. The board could make more use of external thinking to inform policy, research and intelligence and be more outward facing in advocating on behalf of the city. As a strategic body, board meetings may be less frequent (for example meeting once per year to review the State of the City and set priorities) but with more frequent support from an executive group.
- 4.4 Manchester Board  
A different interpretation would be a board that provides leadership on a key issue such as economic growth (including skills) or innovation and reform (promoting progressive ideas). This would enable board members to focus on a particular area where they could add value to the existing partnership landscape and focus on the most pressing issues around growing the economy and improving the lives of residents. However, this approach might not be compatible with a wider strategic view and could overlap with existing structures.
- 4.5 Each of the models suggests that a larger membership would be required across a wider range of sectors, and members would need to take on a more proactive role on key issues in and around meetings.

**Consultation question 3:**

**Which format should be adopted in order to enable the Manchester Board to deliver on its role?**

**5. Appointment to the Manchester Board**

- 5.1 The current membership of the Manchester Board (including those memberships which have recently lapsed) is listed below;
- Councillor Sir Richard Leese
  - Councillor Andrew Fender
  - Councillor Paul Murphy (GMPA has been replaced by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Greater Manchester)
  - Evelyn Asante-Mensah (PCT has been dissolved)
  - Lorraine Gradwell
  - Phil Korbel
  - Right Reverend Nigel McCulloch (retired)
  - Sue Woodward

- Atiha Choudry
- Scott Fletcher

Members have been appointed over a series of years, and the board comprises both co-opted representatives and individuals appointed as the result of an open, competitive process.

5.2 All of the options outlined above for a future board suggest that a larger membership would provide a broader representation to the board and thereby enhance its role. It is suggested that increasing the membership to 12 – 15 members would provide sufficient capacity, but that a Leader’s Board model may require a larger representation meeting less frequently. Membership could include some or all of the following sectors;

- Local authority
- Private sector (including major employers and a balance of economic sectors)
- Voluntary and community sector
- Transport
- Crime and disorder
- Health
- Faith
- Equalities
- Education (including higher education)
- Culture
- Employment and skills
- Housing
- Low carbon

5.3 In order to expand the membership of the board, the existing membership could be retained and further recruitment undertaken to appoint additional members, complementing the existing areas of expertise represented. This would ensure continuity in the membership and expertise of board members as a whole. If this option was taken then it is recommended that a term of appointment is agreed (for example three years) for all members (including existing members) in order that membership can be reviewed on a regular basis in future.

5.4 A different option would be to run a new appointment process for the board as a whole. If this included a competitive process it would be likely to take several months but could be in place by April 2014. However, the limitation of this approach is that the continuity in membership may be lost and that it may require the determination of board priorities to be delayed until the new board is in place.

5.5 Members are invited to discuss the method for appointment which could entail:

- All members to be invited to join and co-opted in respect of the skills and expertise which they could bring to the board
- All members to be recruited through open competition
- A combination of the above.

Using a combined method as currently would ensure that whilst key sectors are represented there is also an opportunity for individuals who are leaders in their field to contribute their expertise to the leadership of the city as a whole.

5.6 Irrespective of the process of appointment of board members, new terms of reference and a board member role description would be developed once arrangements are confirmed.

**Consultation question 4:**

**Which sectors should be represented within the membership of the Manchester Board?**

**Consultation question 5:**

**What would be the best approach to the appointment of board members?**

**6. Views of the Manchester Board**

6.1 The Manchester Board discussed the future role of the board at their meeting on 9 July 2013. Based on the options outlined in this consultation paper, board members agreed on a number of principles as set out below.

- The Manchester Partnership has a need for a board at the top of the structure which has an overview of the delivery of the city's priorities. The board should not serve as an additional layer of bureaucracy but should have a defined role and add value.
- It is important that future partnership arrangements, including the Manchester Board, are designed in a way which is right for Manchester and that provide a strong link to Greater Manchester priorities and structures.
- Membership of the Manchester Board is a significant commitment and should involve active engagement both at and in between meetings. It is important that there are mechanisms in place to support this capacity.
- The Manchester Board should postpone the setting of new priorities to enable future members to contribute to the process, but there is a general consensus that the board may wish to address the critical link between growth and people.
- A consultation on the future of the board should engage with those partners who are involved in delivering the Community Strategy, so that a future board can be shaped in a way which adds value across the city.
- The consultation and subsequent recruitment process for the Manchester Board will take some time and in the interim it is agreed that the board will continue to work in the current format and on the existing priorities of private sector growth, worklessness and aspiration and wellbeing.

**7. Consultation process**

7.1 Partners are invited to comment on the issues outlined in this paper, either through partnership meetings or by submitting a response directly to the Partnership team at [manchesterpartnership@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:manchesterpartnership@manchester.gov.uk). The deadline for responses is Friday 11 October 2013.

## Annex A

Name	Role	Format	Advantages	Disadvantages
<b>Manchester Leaders' Advisory Board</b>	A flexible, independent advisory board guiding public services on difficult issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An independent board</li> <li>• A larger board, representing a wide range of sectors</li> <li>• A flexible and responsive approach</li> <li>• Working across priorities of Growth, People, Place</li> <li>• Sounding board for public services leaders across the city to test difficult issues</li> <li>• Enhanced role for board members in between meetings to advise on key issues.</li> <li>• Up to 4 meetings per year plus subgroups and one-to-ones between meetings according to individual member capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positions the board as an advisory body with a strategic overview across the city's priorities</li> <li>• Provides focus to board's role</li> <li>• Enables the board to influence at a crucial point in decision-making process</li> <li>• Clearer impact of the board's contribution to delivery of the Community Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A different role to that which partnerships have played to date – may take some time to become established</li> <li>• Requires buy-in from public services across the city to bring forward difficult issues.</li> <li>• May be a more reactive board and could therefore distract from the wider strategic overview</li> </ul>
<b>Manchester Leaders' Board</b>	A leadership board taking a more proactive approach in identifying and driving priorities for the city, supporting and challenging public services and partnerships on delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A board of leaders from a wider range of sectors</li> <li>• Stronger, more proactive and creative leadership approach.</li> <li>• Identifies major themes from the State of the City under priorities of Growth, People and Place, and drives forward delivery</li> <li>• Supports and challenges partnerships and public services</li> <li>• Role for board members to lead on individual issues</li> <li>• Promotes the delivery of the city's strategy, representing and advocating for Manchester with GM and government.</li> <li>• Enhanced use of external thinking to inform policy, research and intelligence for the city</li> <li>• 1-2 meetings per year plus subgroups and one-to-ones between meetings, supported by an executive group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positions the board as a proactive group of leaders driving forward delivery of the Community Strategy as an early influencer.</li> <li>• Gives the board more ownership over its priorities.</li> <li>• Enables the board to play a stronger role on advocacy and influencing national policy.</li> <li>• Strengthens the relationship between the board and other partnerships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would require an enhanced approach to work planning to manage the programme of the board's work so that there was still flexibility to be responsive.</li> <li>• Requires an increased time commitment by board members</li> <li>• A new way of working and would take some time to become established across the partnership arrangements</li> </ul>
<b>Manchester Board</b>	A board providing leadership at a Manchester level on a key issue, eg economic growth or innovation and reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A board focusing on a key issue rather than all three partnership priorities.</li> <li>• Economic growth: complements GM partnerships on growth; identifies some of the major growth issues during the current economic climate as priorities, such as skills.</li> <li>• Innovation and reform: promoting progressive ideas and innovations that will accelerate delivery of our priorities of growth and better lives for Manchester people.</li> <li>• A larger board, bringing in a wider range of sectors</li> <li>• Up to 4 meetings per year plus subgroups and one-to-ones between meetings according to member capacity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a clear focus for the board, filling a gap such as the strategic overview for growth in Manchester or the driver for progressive ideas.</li> <li>• Enables the board to focus on the most pressing priorities around growing the economy and improving the lives of residents within a difficult economic climate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focusing on one main issue may detract from the board's potential to oversee the city's priorities overall and to address related issues on people, place.</li> <li>• Elements of growth and reform are addressed by several partnerships and by mature GM structures.</li> </ul>