

## ▶ Greater Manchester Devolution

**Deciding Priorities Together**

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**Salford's Local Sustainability Plan  
Engagement**

# Greater Manchester Devolution

## Deciding Priorities Together

Salford's approach to engagement is about developing relationships between agencies and communities in a way that fosters empowerment and enables citizens to be true partners in decision making. Our model for engagement as described in the Local Sustainability Plan is a movement from 'consultation' and short term relationships with communities to true engagement that takes us on a journey together to develop joint solutions, shared responsibilities and ultimately empowering citizens to take control.

The beginning of this journey is described below.

### Developing a joint vision

Between September and October 2015, partner agencies began conversations with a wide range of communities including the voluntary and community sector (VCS), people with long term conditions, people with disabilities, patient participation groups, carers and citizens' panels. The aim was to develop a shared vision for Salford and decide key priorities together.

### How we did it

A number of activities took place, including a Citizens' Panel Event with over 100 members of the public in attendance, online and face to face surveys (over 100 responses), an event for the voluntary and community sector led by Salford Council for Voluntary Services, discussions with the Joint Health and Wellbeing Board and visits to key community groups.

We talked to communities about the overall vision for GM Devolution and the need to develop a Local Sustainability Plan that met the needs of Salford's

population. The focus was on three key themes (in line with the Joint Health and Wellbeing Plan for Salford), *starting well, living well and ageing well* and we asked communities what we could do to make this a reality in Salford. We also took the findings from previous engagement activity around the JHWS to help inform priorities.

Discussions then took place around what our responsibilities should be including that of public sector services, providers, the voluntary sector and communities themselves. This would enable a conversation about how we shift the balance of power to create healthy and resilient communities that rely less of services.

### What people told us

Citizens agreed with the overall vision of the LSP and wanted to see clear links to other strategies such as the JHWS. They also wanted to see outcomes described in 'short' medium' and 'long' time frames. This should include outcomes for all priorities including citizen empowerment and creating resilient communities.

We analysed the key themes coming from all engagement activity (below). Priorities have been themed in accordance with frequency of comments.

### Consider the wider determinants of health

Citizens said there is a need to consider the wider determinants of health e.g. housing, environment, welfare etc. This includes the impacts of recent welfare reform and the potential impact on people's health in the future

"We need access to affordable/accessible workplace childcare"

### Prioritise mental health

Mental health was a cross-cutting theme from all engagement activity. This included a need to focus on low level mental health, such as anxiety, depression and children's emotional wellbeing as mental health across the life-course. The discussion at the VCS

event raised a considerable number of responses around the need to improve provision around children and young people’s mental and emotional health

#### Educate and inform

The need to educate and provide information to citizens came across very strongly in the feedback. Citizens thought this should be a key theme of the plan with a focus on working closely with schools and education. They also thought it was important to educate parents and communities to promote health and wellbeing. This included the need to prevent long-term conditions such as type 2 diabetes.

“Join up health and social care with education – this would be better use of money and better outcomes”

#### Work in partnership to support wellbeing

The need to promote healthy lifestyles, starting at an early age was a common and recurring theme. This included the role that schools, parents and other settings e.g. Sure Start Centres . Developing and maintaining partnerships with schools and parents to work jointly on health and wellbeing was central to conversations.

“Help parents to be good parents”

#### Empower Citizens to take control

Throughout the engagement there was a strong sense of citizenship and recognition that communities could help each other. Citizens thought that this could be achieved with the right help from agencies including developing peer to peer support.

The JHWS engagement, revealed citizens thought it was important to promote and enable communication and support between individuals in the population, thereby increasing community support and reducing isolation and risk.

Participants at the Citizen Panel event expressed a strong desire for actions to improve citizen engagement and empower communities to take action themselves. This included the need to promote long term behaviour change by working with communities to take control themselves.

The Healthwatch survey suggested that citizens should be encouraged to take more responsibility for their own health – particularly by exercising more, smoking less and being involved in ‘active citizenship’.

“With training communities can make projects that help themselves.

At the Citizen Panel Event, participants thought this needed to be underpinned by supporting and strengthening community assets including voluntary groups and the third sector. Some community groups struggle to keep going due to financial constraints e.g. paying for room hire.



They also said that engagement should reach all citizens equally including vulnerable groups.

“Public sector do less and learn from community groups”.

### Focus on the vulnerable

There is strong recognition that vulnerable and isolated communities experience poorer health and wellbeing and the importance of reaching these groups was prioritised. This includes carers, older people, refugees and asylum seekers, people with disabilities and learning difficulties.

There was also recognition of the link between isolation and mental health including for people with sensory impairments and older people. The need to address the issues of neglect and the emotional wellbeing of children and young people was also seen as important including speech and language development

Developing better links with carers to support them and those they care for was also a cross-cutting theme.

### Improve access to health services

Both the JHWS engagement and the Citizen's Panel Event highlighted the need to improve access to health services and in particular GP services and urgent care.

Improving access and experience of healthcare should be addressed by creating ways to listen and respond to patient feedback.

### Reduce the barriers to wellbeing

Reducing the barriers to wellbeing is a key concern for citizens. If communities cannot access support and services when they need it then this will impact on wellbeing. A number of ideas were suggested to achieve this.

There was support for extending influence on licensing of alcohol outlets and food takeaways, so that there are fewer of them concentrated in certain areas. Suggestions included forcing take-aways to close at least one day a week.

Other respondents suggested that there should be more cheap and simple access to social interaction and low level exercise.

Improving perceptions of community safety is also seen as important, particularly for older people who do not use green spaces due to fear of being unsafe.

“End age poverty – heating allowance – bus passes – if these end how do we cope?”

Transport was seen as a key barrier to enablement, particularly older people and people with disabilities. Being able to get to services or community assets is a barrier for some communities, particularly the most vulnerable.

### What happens next?

The LSP will be developed taking into account the above findings and will reflect the needs addressed above. We will produce a summary of all feedback and describe how we have incorporated this into the plan. Where we have not been able to address any issues we will explain the reasons for this in an open and transparent way.

In relation to continuing discussions with communities, we will begin to develop actions working in partnership to identify priorities for implementation plans.