



Plenary

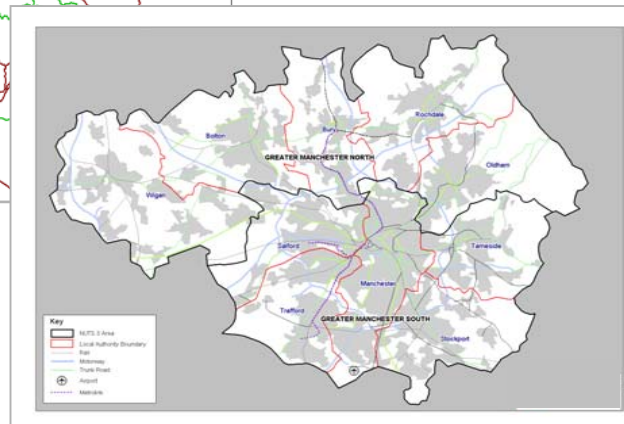
Speaker:

Mike Emmerich

Chief Executive, Manchester Enterprises

Worklessness and Child Poverty in Manchester

Mike Emmerich
Chief Executive



Manchester Enterprises

- Manchester Enterprises is the economic development agency for Greater Manchester
- Public and private sector board
- Strategic remit to deliver economic growth and to improve the prosperity of local people
- Economic analysis, economic development strategy, and programme management.

Manchester City Region compared with London

- **MCR largest and fastest growing economy outside the Greater South East**
- **Critical concentration of economic assets and a dynamic and growing private sector**
- **Potential for accelerated growth**
- **But**
- **Structural weaknesses – worklessness, skills, exclusion**
- **Concentrations of deprivation / ‘sifting effect’ in cities**
- **Competition for jobs in the conurbation core**

Child Poverty

- **Standard measure of child poverty (children living in families with an income of less than 60% of the national median) not available to a sub-regional level.**
 - DWP's Households Below Average Income dataset not robust at this level
- **However, 25% of GM children are in families receiving workless benefits (London:29%, GB:20%)**
 - 47% of these are receiving Lone Parent Income Support (London:63%, GB:53%)
 - 33% receiving on Incapacity Benefit (London:21%, GB:28%)
 - 8% receiving on Job Seekers Allowance (London:9%, GB:9%)
- **And 9.9% of GM's super output areas are in the worst 5% in England for child poverty (London:10.6%)**
 - Both GM and London have twice the expected level of child poverty using this measure

A similar approach?

- Similar issues, even if London's are on a larger scale and more intense
- Do we have sufficient awareness and understanding of
 - what we mean by child poverty?
 - what it entails?
 - how we can tackle it?
- Our primary approach to reducing child poverty is to reduce worklessness and enhance progression in work
- ME coordinating the delivery of the Greater Manchester City Strategy

Greater Manchester City Strategy

- **Aims**

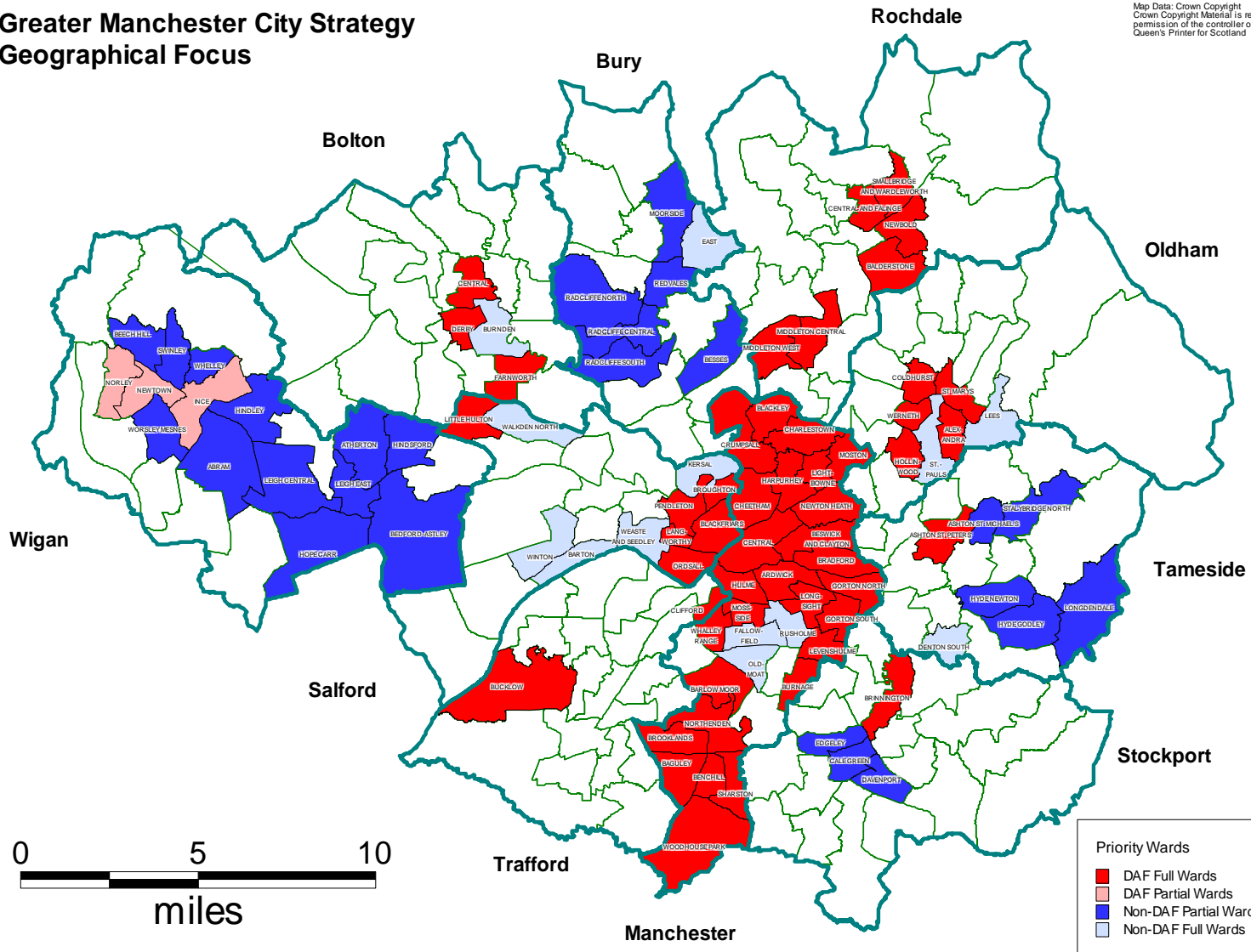
- To increase the number of residents entering, retaining and progressing through work
- Prioritising activity in 93 wards, and enhancing programmes for our key target groups – BME communities, over 50s, people without any qualifications and ex-offenders.
- To reduce the number of residents claiming key out-of-work benefits by 8,887 in our 93 wards over the two years to May 2009

- **Challenges**

- Ensuring flexibility to meet local needs, including securing further enabling measures from government
- Improving contracting - reducing duplication, complication and confusion in provision
- Integrating services to provide high quality, tailored and co-ordinated support to families facing multiple disadvantage

Greater Manchester City Strategy Geographical Focus

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Three key strands of activity

- 1. Increasing the number workless residents **engaged** in employment / training programmes
- 2. Improving workless residents' **employability** to enable them to compete for local jobs
- 3. Engaging with **employers** to increase the recruitment, retention and progression of our target groups

Engaging with more clients

- **Health services** – Working with GPs and primary care workers to integrate employment and skills interventions with wider health and wellbeing support programmes to support Incapacity Benefit clients into work
- **Community based services** – Enabling housing, childcare, welfare rights and Local Authority partner staff to make suitable referrals to mainstream agencies and IAG providers. Supporting family learning and employment projects.
- **Advice services** - ensuring both that clients are aware of the impact on the household income of accessing work, as well as being able to manage any debt repayments once in work.
- **Targeted engagement strategies** – developing locally-tailored engagement / marketing strategies to engage our priority groups in priority neighbourhoods, including accessing individual client level data to enhance targeting of parents

Improving clients' employability

- **Integrating mainstream and discretionary funding** - improving referral mechanisms and protocols across different agencies / providers and improving complementarity / reducing duplication
- **Automatic referrals** to skills checks and skills support for Jobcentre Plus clients
- **Account management** of clients through a range of employment and skills support
- **Enhanced Labour Market Information** to shape pre-employment training programmes
- **Expanded pre-employment and employability programmes**, ensuring they are demand-led
- **Removing client barriers** such as childcare, transport and debt

Engaging with employers

- **Recruitment**
 - Reviewing recruitment practices in order to increase diversity
 - Working with employers to capture vacancies, secure guaranteed interview agreements and broker local workless residents into employment
- **Retention**
 - Increasing access to Train to Gain and other workforce development programmes to reduce the vulnerability of low skilled workers to unemployment as well as improving productivity
 - Reducing the on flow to IB by supporting employers to manage sickness and provide rehabilitation programmes
 - Working to speed up the processing of in-work benefits and providing post-employment support to both workless residents and employers in order to smooth the transition from benefits to work
- **Redundancy**
 - Developing coordinated and effective responses to redundancy situations

Still much more to be done through a MAA.....

- GM Partners to
- Integrate LA-managed housing, welfare rights, education and employment services to offer tailored support to families
- Provide appropriate volumes of good quality, flexible, affordable childcare
- Target parents who want to / have a realistic incentive to work
- Identify income levels which would incentivise parents into work
- Encourage the creation and identification of part-time and flexible working opportunities
- Clarify training entitlements for parents both in and out of work – supporting second L2s and progression from L2 to L3s where appropriate
- Invest in areas that children and young people perceive as identifying them as being ‘in poverty’

Still much more to be done through a MAA.....

- GM Partners to work with government to
- Improve the level of in-work benefits (as per London). To include local flexibility around HB/CTB, free school meals and prescriptions
- Increase subsidised in-work progression support for parents
- Improve the accountability of public services and integration across statutory agencies under the new MAA framework. Review the need for premiums to be paid to public sector staff in challenging areas
- Develop an Every Child Matters-type framework for parents / adults to improve the coordination of statutory services
- Clarify the appropriate balance between encouraging parents to stay at home and enter work
- Improve overall approach to poverty – ie including pensioner poverty as well as child poverty
- Identify priority areas for tackling poverty as a means of tackling community cohesion issues (eg 7/7 Taskforce)