



# Working for the Council





# A message from Joanne

## Introduction

Working in Manchester gives you the chance to do things you wouldn't get to do in other places; this is a hugely exciting place to work – and live.

The Council's ethos drives us to make sure that *everyone* in our city can thrive and is able to benefit from the opportunities our economic growth is bringing.

That's where our workforce – we call them 'our people' – comes in. They're at the heart of delivering the Council's priorities for Manchester, and I'm determined to give all colleagues the skills and support to develop and succeed within our diverse and inclusive organisation.

Here, you'll find a quick overview of the advantages our staff enjoy in recognition of their commitment to our city and its people.



**Joanne Roney OBE**  
Chief Executive

## Our Manchester

Our Manchester is the vision that the whole city – not just the Council – is working towards.

Our vision is for Manchester to be in the top flight of world-class cities by 2025 and to be somewhere that is:

- thriving
- full of talent
- fair
- a great place to live
- connected.

The transformed Manchester that the vision aims for is so ambitious that business-as-usual approaches won't get us there.



## Our Vision

To make that vision happen for everyone by 2025, as resources shrink and demand grows, Our Manchester is leading a three-way push to:

- Nº 1** • Keep the basics on track
- Nº 2** • Prevent problems down the line
- Nº 3** • Tackle complex problems together.

The Council's own contribution to this citywide Our Manchester vision is our Corporate Plan.



## Our Corporate Plan

The Council's priorities for the next two-to-three years are:

- 1 Young people: safe, healthy, happy and successful – from day one till adulthood, via good schools.
- 2 Healthy, cared-for people: all the support – when needed – to stay well, and homelessness reduced.
- 3 Good-quality housing of every kind.
- 4 Neighbourhoods: clean, green, safe and vibrant places that make us proud.
- 5 Connections: good roads, sustainable transport and great digital networks.
- 6 Growth for everyone: a thriving economy with good jobs, and ways for residents to get them.
- 7 Well-managed Council: support our people to be the best and make the most of our resources.



## Our People

Our Manchester is such a big ambition that it will require our staff to have dedication and passion to work together as never before, demonstrating the Our Manchester behaviours in their roles every day. Council staff – 'our people' – will:

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

# Learning and development



## Our Commitment

Transforming how public services are delivered and changing the relationship between the Council and the people of Manchester are two of the greatest challenges in local government today. The Council is committed to offering its staff a high-quality work life that reflects this.

We understand how important learning and development is, so as soon as you join us you will work with your manager to create a development plan for you to get on and succeed. This will include essential training needed for your job, and other opportunities to support your personal development.

### About You

We don't believe in annual appraisals here; instead, we have something called 'About You' sessions. These give you the chance to have regular conversations with your manager throughout the year to talk about what matters most.

### Supporting your development

You'll find a range of opportunities to support your development, such as:

- coaching and mentoring
- shadowing work in other teams and services

- a formal apprenticeship qualification.
- The core skills training required for your job will be provided. In addition, you will have access to a wide range of 'open to all' courses for your personal development.

### Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships have changed a lot over recent years. They're now for people of any age and at any stage of their career who want to further develop their skills and knowledge within their current role. (The qualifications go all the way up to postgraduate apprenticeships!)

### E-learning

Our e-learning platform contains more than 200 online courses available to all staff.

# Flexible Working



There are a range of different working patterns across the Council because we do so many different types of jobs. Some staff do not have fixed start and finish times and can work their hours flexibly over the week; if they work over seven additional hours in a four-week period, they can exchange them for a 'flexiday' off – that's up to 13 days' additional leave a year.

Some teams have fixed hours because of the type of work they do. While their flexible working options are more limited, it is possible that a different working location or a change of working hours could be explored to help staff balance their commitments outside of work.

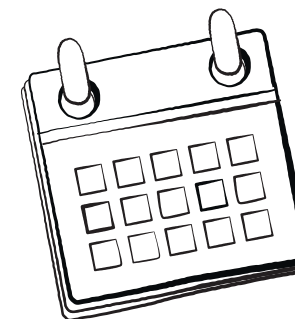
Other types of flexible working include:

- part-time or job share
- part-time+ (multiple part-time contracts)
- compressed hours (eg. for full-time workers this could be 9-day fortnights or 4-day weeks, but longer days)
- term-time working for certain roles.

If you're a carer, whatever your circumstances, we aim to provide support and flexibility when you need it, to enable you to balance your responsibilities with work

Your manager will be able to talk to you about the working arrangements in your service.

# Leave



Our leave package provides 25 days' annual leave (rising to 30 days after five years' service) plus an additional eight days for public holidays (pro rata).

## Buying extra annual leave

You can buy up to ten days (pro rata) of additional leave a year, spreading the cost over the rest of the financial year.

## How does leave work?

You can request either a full day (7 hours), or half-day (3.5 hours) (pro rata).

## Volunteering leave

We encourage staff to volunteer in our local communities so they can connect to the life of our city as much as possible. As part of this we offer three days' volunteering leave a year (pro rata).

We also offer paid leave for duties such as:

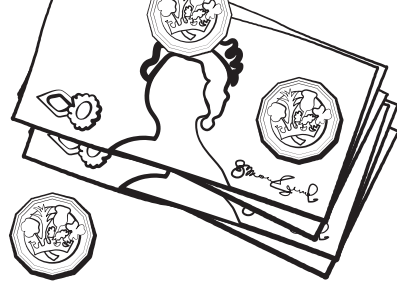
- magistrate
- armed forces reservist
- elected councillor
- school governor.

## Family-related leave

To support families we have policies that offer leave options, including parental leave and special leave.



# Pay



Jobs are evaluated based on the requirements of the role, the type of work, and the overall responsibility of the position. Based on all this, a grade will be set for the role.

Staff are paid on the 15th of each month for the whole calendar month, including days not yet worked. So on 15 December you are paid from 1–15 December, and in advance for 16–31 December. Think about it as two weeks in arrears, two weeks in advance.

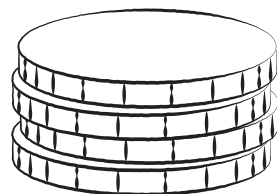
Staff are encouraged to regularly check their payslip; full information on how to understand your payslip can be found on the Council's intranet site.

## Annual increments

Each grade is split into between two and five levels, or spine points. For Grades 1–12, pay goes up in increments each year until you are at the penultimate spine point of your grade. To get the last increment in your grade you must complete a competency review.

## Manchester Living Wage

The Council is committed to the 'real' living wage and reviews the rate of pay for its lowest paid employees at least annually. From April 2019 the lowest paid Council employee will be paid £9.51 an hour, including apprentices, which is 51p more than the 'real' living wage for England.



# Pension



When you join the Council we will enrol you in a pension scheme. Most people will join the scheme provided by the Greater Manchester Pension Fund, and some people will be eligible for different schemes. Your contract will tell you which pension scheme you will be in.

All our pension schemes are career average schemes, which are sometimes called pension build-up schemes. Each year, you build up a set portion of your pay as a pension. That money is held in an individual pension account for you, then the next year – assuming prices go up – it will increase the value of your pension account.

The amount you pay will depend on your earnings, and we will write to you regularly to let you know the contribution you pay. Don't forget that when you pay into your pension, the Council also pays a contribution.

If you earn enough to pay tax, you will get tax relief on your pension contributions. So if you are a standard rate tax payer, every £1 you pay into your pension costs you only 80p after this tax relief. If you are a higher rate tax payer, you get tax relief at that higher rate.

There are options to boost your pension, including purchasing additional voluntary contributions (AVCs). The Greater Manchester Pension Fund also has an option for you to pay less for a short time; it offers lower cost membership by allowing you to pay exactly half the standard contributions in return for half the pension benefits.

For more information visit [www.gmpf.org.uk](http://www.gmpf.org.uk) or [www.teacherspensions.co.uk](http://www.teacherspensions.co.uk)

# Discounts and benefits



## **MCR+**

Our MCR+ scheme gives you access to a range of savings, discounts and rewards. Visit [www.mcrplus.co.uk](http://www.mcrplus.co.uk)

## **Retail savings**

From big national chains to local businesses, you can save on everything from eating out and the weekly shop, to worldwide holidays and high-street fashion.

## **Manchester Credit Union**

Working with Manchester Credit Union, we can help you access a range of savings accounts and affordable loans. Savings or loan repayments can be conveniently taken directly from your salary each month to make things simpler.

## **Travel: 'Get on Board'**

You can benefit from reduced-cost season tickets covering trains, buses and Metrolink trams, with the cost taken directly from your salary over 12 months.

Bike to Work loans are available through salary sacrifice, potentially saving you over 35% of the cost of a new bike and accessories. Free cycle training and cycle allowances are also available, and many of our buildings have changing facilities and showers for cyclists. If you drive to work, you can access a range of discounted NCP annual season tickets for city-centre parking.

# Trade unions

The Council enjoys a constructive relationship with the recognised trade unions, in which all parties are committed to working together to ensure that joint business is carried out efficiently and effectively. There is an established framework within which Council officers and trade unions can make a positive contribution to working relationships and enhance the conduct of employee relations in the Council through:

- better identification of and solutions to day-to-day problems
- better management decisions

- increased understanding about management decisions or the need for change
- increased levels of trust and improved working relationships.

Support from trade unions is also available to individual members, including representation in grievance and disciplinary meetings.

The Council negotiates any matters concerning collective staffing matters with trade unions via a Joint Secretary basis; the current joint Trade Union Side Secretary is the UNISON Branch Secretary.

## **GMB**

[gmb.org.uk](http://gmb.org.uk)  
Tel: 0161 908 8316



## **UNISON**

[unison.org.uk](http://unison.org.uk)  
Tel: 0161 254 7500



## **Unite**

[unitetheunion.org](http://unitetheunion.org)  
Tel: 0161 848 0909



# Equality and diversity



Manchester has been at the forefront of championing equality and diversity for decades, and here at the Council, inclusion is in our DNA. Our people – all our people – are at the centre of what we do and who we are. In a city as wonderfully diverse as ours, we know that having a workforce that reflects this diversity at all levels brings us a wider range of experiences and views, more ideas and innovations.

We're committed to providing a working environment that is respectful of everybody's identity, where individual differences are strengths, and where everyone can thrive and fulfil their own potential.

Our work on equality, diversity and inclusion is underpinned by our equality objectives:

- knowing Manchester better
- improving life chances
- celebrating our diversity.

As a result, we've won national recognition at the Excellent level of the Equality Framework for Local Government and are also accredited by the Disability Confident Employer and Timewise schemes. This shows that we're working hard to be a leader on inclusion and we're really proud of what we've achieved, but our commitments will help us to go even further. We're committed to being an

exemplar and innovator in our work on recruitment, retention, support and progression; we're committed to increasing the representation of BAME and disabled employees at all levels of the Council; we're committed to having a workforce with the skills, competence and confidence to deliver inclusion both at work and in services, and we want you to be part of that journey.

You can get involved by:

- checking out our equality employee network groups
- volunteering to support some of the best diversity celebrations around (eg. Manchester Pride and International Women's Day)
- finding out what's going on in your part of the Council through its equality forum.

To find out more about what we do and how you can get involved, visit the Equality and Diversity section on the staff intranet.



# Listen, learn and respond

We have a range of ways to keep you up to date, including regular emails, newsletters and – most importantly – through About You, as mentioned in the section on learning and development.

There's also lots of information available on the Council intranet (our internal website for staff) to help you understand how the organisation works and what is expected of you, including in policies such as our Employee Code of Conduct and Managing Attendance Policy.



## **b-Heard**

The b-Heard survey takes place each year and provides staff with the opportunity to tell us what it feels like to work here, and where we can improve. The results of the survey are used to inform the development of the **Our People** offer, and we will tell you how we are responding to this both across the Council and in your teams and departments.

## **Listening in Action**

Listening in Action is a face-to-face session involving staff from across the Council and our leadership team. It gives all staff the opportunity to hear from and put questions to our leaders, including the Chief Executive and the Council's elected Leader.

# Recognition

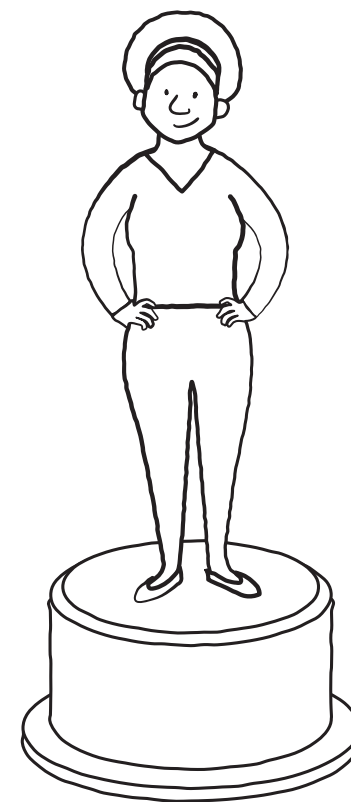
Recognising the hard work and determination of our staff and rewarding achievement is at the heart of what we do; it's something we expect of all our managers.

## **Awards for Excellence**

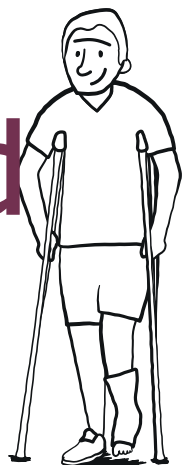
Our commitment to recognise and reward the achievements of employees is best illustrated by the annual Awards for Excellence, which culminates in a spectacular evening of celebration. This glitzy event builds on events within directorates to recognise and celebrate success.

## **Long Service Awards**

Many employees have built their career at the Council over a number of years. We show our appreciation of this dedication by acknowledging colleagues with 25 years and 40 years of continuous service at a prestigious annual event hosted by the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive, and the Lord Mayor.



# Health and wellbeing

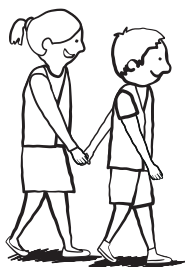


We want everyone to be their best at work every day. For us, physical and mental health and wellbeing are equally important. Our health and wellbeing strategy considers both areas, with most of the activities aimed at addressing them together.

We've grouped our priorities under two broad headings:

- high-quality working life
- mentally and physically healthy people.

We also understand that people may be sick from time to time, and our approach to sickness absence is fair and works to support our employees.



To support our employees to be their best, we have several initiatives in place:

## Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

The EAP is a 24/7, free and confidential support service for all employees and their immediate family. The EAP provides immediate access to, but is not limited to, the following:

- counselling, over the telephone and face to face
- financial advice, including debt support
- legal advice, eg. consumer issues, motoring etc
- family advice, eg. divorce, safeguarding, custody arrangements etc
- medical advice, from highly qualified nurses and practitioners.

The EAP also provides general advice about work/life balance, physical and emotional health, and nutrition etc. This can be accessed via a health portal on your PC or smartphone and is available to you and your immediate family.

## To access the EAP

Tel: 0800 030 5182

[www.healthassuredeap.co.uk](http://www.healthassuredeap.co.uk)

Username: MCC

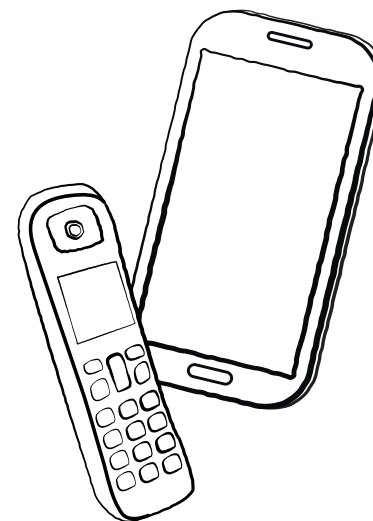
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## Occupational health

Your manager will also have access to high-quality occupational health advice, if required, to support you in your role.

## Carer's Passport

This is designed to support employees who are struggling to balance work with caring responsibilities.



## Employee-led groups

Get involved with other employees by joining one of our employee-led groups in a range of activities, including circuit training, choirs, crochet and knitting circles, or develop and start one yourself!

## Campaigns

We connect with significant national mental-health campaigns. This encourages a tolerant and well-informed atmosphere at work. See our intranet pages for details of campaigns such as 'This Is Me', which encourage more open discussion of mental health. You can also watch some of our own colleagues discuss their mental-health experiences and what helped them when they were struggling.

As a Disability Confident Employer we provide support for employees with physical or mental-health conditions, a disability or neurodiversity. Our workplaces are accessible by design and we make workplace adjustments including providing aids, adaptations and equipment. These, combined with our flexible working policies, such as disability-related leave, enable our employees to perform their role, thrive and be their authentic selves in work.

