

Breakthrough Manchester

Ending the costs of social breakdown



THE CENTRE FOR
SOCIAL
JUSTICE

BREAKTHROUGH MANCHESTER

8 November 2007

When asked by David Cameron to consider how an incoming Conservative Government could tackle Britain's most acute social problems, I felt it necessary to first better understand the nature and extent of the breakdown I was being asked to address.

We travelled the country, spending over 3,000 hours in public hearings and consulting 2,000 organisations. We listened to poverty fighters and saw what policies worked in real life, what hindered them, and listened to their ideas.

All the work we have undertaken at the Centre for Social Justice, and all that we heard back from you in Manchester, reinforces that persistent poverty is complex and deep-rooted. But in the last three years of visiting Manchester, we have seen that these problems are already being successfully tackled in this city. Breakdown is reversible.

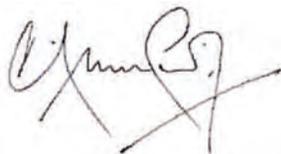
The Centre for Social Justice has given Awards to three charities that are doing exceptional poverty-fighting work in Manchester. ADAS in Stockport who do heroic work to help long term addicts get clean and stay clean; the Message Trust investing in young people, families and communities; the Langdon Foundation providing specialist education and support for children with disabilities in the Jewish community. We also arranged a 4-day placement for Alistair Burt MP to work with the Salvation Army Eden Openshaw project and gave an Award to Salford City Council for their imaginative cooperation with voluntary groups to tackle poverty. All are inspiring examples of local people taking a stand against further breakdown.

If people on the margins of society are to be given a second chance, government policy needs to work for them and the voluntary groups that save lives. If the drivers of poverty are not addressed an ever-growing underclass will be created, trapped and unable to fulfil their potential.

Today's event is an opportunity to square up to the challenges we face, and to hear how the policy proposals you've helped develop can benefit the people of Manchester.

We also invite you to the first evidence gathering hearings of our new policy areas on Asylum, Looked After Children, Prison Reform, Housing and early intervention for the 0-3s, this afternoon.

We are delighted to return to you today and look forward to continuing to work with you as we continue to work for Breakthrough in Manchester.



Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith MP

STATE OF THE CITY

INTRODUCTION – POVERTY AND PROSPERITY LIVING SIDE BY SIDE

The city of Manchester has the fastest growing economy in the UK, with levels of investment second only to London. Regeneration of Manchester's city centre has helped to make it the second most visited city in England, and the number one choice for further education students. Manchester is one of the UK's greatest cities.

However the rewards of such growth are not available to all. Beneath this glossy exterior lies a much bleaker day-to-day reality for thousands of Greater Manchester residents. Disturbingly, this is particularly the case for young people. Deprivation, family breakdown and educational failure are contributing to the creation of a generation of youths lost to gangs, guns, crime and worklessness. Current policies are failing Manchester's young people. Manchester deserves more, and the following proposals are designed to tackle the causes of breakdown to deliver a better society.



Manchester city centre is successful and vibrant

YOUNG PEOPLE – WASTED POTENTIAL

Educational Failure

- A mere 29 per cent of students in Manchester Local Authority achieved 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE (including Mathematics and English) in 2006 compared to 45.8 per cent in England.
- Of the 23 non-selected state secondary schools in Manchester, just 3 met or surpassed the national average for 5 A*-C grades at GCSE (2006).
- Manchester's truancy levels are ranked second worst out of 150 councils across the nation .
- In 2005/6 there were 4,483 fixed period exclusions in Manchester Local Authority, expressed as a percentage of the secondary school population this equates to almost 20 per cent. This is almost double the national rate, and fourth worst out of all of England's local authorities.
- The number of Manchester's young people going to university is significantly lower than the national rate – around 25 per cent progress to higher education compared to 43 per cent in England.

The quality of a child's education is central to their future life chances. Education is the cornerstone of social mobility, and will only become more so

Breakthrough Manchester



Young people, marginalised from mainstream society, are falling into youth and gang crime

as Britain's economy becomes increasingly knowledge-based. A good education identifies potential and provides opportunities to progress. Educational failure and underachievement too often means a life of worklessness, crime and addiction.

Nearly one in ten young people in Manchester are not in education, employment or training (NEET) and youth unemployment has increased by 30 per cent in the past decade. This is directly linked to Manchester's ailing schools.

Family breakdown

- The 2001 census revealed that over 40 per cent of Manchester's families with dependent children were headed by lone parents.
- Teenage conceptions amongst 15 to 17 year olds in Manchester Local Authority *increased* by over 14.4 per cent between 1998 and 2005. In comparison, the national rate *decreased* by over 11 per cent.
- The number of children in the care of Manchester Local Authority is 136 per cent higher than the national rate.

Family breakdown can, and often does, have devastating effects on the children involved. The family environment is instrumental in the physical, emotional and psychological development of a child. Committed, stable relationships are fundamental to a child's life chances, and evidence shows that without this there is a significantly raised likelihood of teenage pregnancy, worklessness, delinquency and crime, and poverty.¹

REPERCUSSIONS OF EDUCATIONAL FAILURE AND FRACTURED FAMILIES

Families and schools must provide stability, support, encouragement and positive role models if young people from the most deprived areas of Manchester are to make a positive transition into adulthood. It is in these two spheres that young people develop the tools to become fully included and contributing members of society.

A. 'Gunchester'

'Moss Side has become a byword for gun violence and gang warfare since...the 1990s. It was dubbed "Britain's Bronx" and the city was nicknamed "Gunchester".'

'Moss Side teenager murdered in suspected gangland shooting', 10/09/2006, Daily Telegraph

'This violence is about people who have been disenfranchised...'

Assistant Chief Constable Dave Jones, Xcalibre Taskforce

¹ *Breakdown Britain, Volume 2 Fractured Families*, Social Justice Policy Group, 2006

- Popular press has dubbed Manchester 'Gunchester' due to the number of gang killings and one area just south of the city centre is referred to as 'murder triangle'.
- In Greater Manchester there are seven gun related incidents every day, and the number of firearms deaths is only higher in London.
- Actual shootings increased 9 per cent in the 12 months up to May with 120 confirmed discharges in this period alone.

In 2004 Greater Manchester Police launched Xcalibre in recognition of the seriousness of Manchester's gangland situation – nearly a third of all shootings in the area are gang related – and police stated that young people who get involved with gun crime should not expect to live beyond 24. Disturbingly, children as young as 13 have been found carrying guns, and Xcalibre detectives talk of 11 and 12 year olds being recruited to gangs. Detective Sergeant Chris Downey in a recent interview for the Telegraph magazine highlighted the causes behind Manchester's tragic situation:²

'What teenager actually wants to wear a bulletproof vest...most of these boys are poorly educated and criminalised young. They have never achieved anything, and all they have to fall back on is "respect" – to be feared as gangsters.'



LA style gangs are destroying some of Greater Manchester's most deprived neighbourhoods

Greater Manchester has the highest number of ASBOs issued to 10-17 year olds in the UK. This is almost 75 per cent higher than for Greater London, the area with the second highest number of ASBOs issued. A sample of young people charged and sentenced for street crime in Greater Manchester in 2002 revealed that 85 per cent were not in education, employment or training.³

Schools, along with parents, must support young people to aspire and achieve. Without this generations will be lost.

B. Teenage pregnancy

Low expectations and aspirations contribute to the high occurrence of teenage pregnancy amongst lower socio-economic groups. Education must be a tool for raising young people's ambitions, it must inspire them to fulfill their potential.

Manchester's teenage pregnancy rate is almost double that of England, with one in fourteen girls between the ages of 15 and 17 becoming pregnant.

² 'Young Guns of Moss Side', 11/08/2007, *The Telegraph Magazine*

³ Youth Justice Trust, *Youth Crime: Perceptions and Evidence*, 2002

This is also linked to the fact that over 40 per cent of Manchester's families with dependent children are headed by lone parents. Teenage pregnancy is much more widespread among children of divorced, broken or lone parent families and, according to a 2003 study, children of divorced parents are almost twice as likely to become teenage lone mothers as their contemporaries.⁴

C. Addiction

- In 2004/05 Greater Manchester had the highest number of children under 15 (238) admitted to hospital for alcohol-related problems.
- In the period 2003/4-2005/6, the number of under 18s hospitalised for alcohol-specific conditions was 55 per cent higher than the national average.
- The charity Lifeline Project has treated children as young as six for cannabis addiction in Greater Manchester.

Broken homes and educational failure are two root causes of young people's addiction to drugs and alcohol. A culture of intoxication is spreading amongst young people, with shocking increases in alcohol and drug abuse amongst children. This in turn impacts on a young person's capacity to engage at school, and contributes to their marginalisation in society.

AN INTERGENERATIONAL TRAGEDY

Evidence for the intergenerational transmission of poverty, worklessness, educational failure, family breakdown and addiction can be found in abundance.⁵ A child's start in life is heavily impacted by the experiences of their parent/s, and as such we must tackle these pathways to poverty at every level.

- In 2006, 30 per cent of Manchester's working-age population were economically inactive. This is almost 50 per cent higher than the national average.
- In 2006, over 22 per cent of Manchester's working-age residents were claiming benefits. This is significantly higher than the national rate of 14.6 per cent.
- At the start of this year the number of working-age people on Jobseeker's Allowance was 61 per cent higher than the national average, the number on Incapacity Benefit was 63 per cent higher and the number of lone parents on Income Support was double.
- The number of people unemployed for 12 months or more in Greater Manchester has risen by 37 per cent between 2006 and 2007, compared to a 19 per cent increase nationally.
- One in five working-age people in Manchester do not have any qualifications – this figure is 43 per cent higher than that for Great Britain.

⁴ *Breakdown Britain, Volume 2 Fractured Families*, Social Justice Policy Group, 2006

⁵ See *Breakdown Britain*, 2006, and *Breakthrough Britain*, 2007

- A quarter of Manchester residents are estimated to be 'binge' drinkers, in the North West this figure is surpassed only by Liverpool and Knowsley. In 2005 Manchester topped the league table for 'harmful' drinking, with nine per cent of over 16s falling into this category. This is 80 per cent higher than the national rate.⁶
- In 2005/6, 809 per 100,000 of Manchester's male population were hospitalized due to alcohol-specific conditions. This is more than double the national rate of 340 per 100,000, and second highest in the country. Manchester Local Authority ranks 3rd worst in the country for female mortality from chronic liver disease.
- In 2006/7 Manchester ranked 3rd worst for alcohol-related recorded crime out of all 354 Local Authorities in England.
- Manchester Local Authority has the highest number of people on Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance with alcoholism as the main medical reason for claiming in England.

GUARANTEEING A BETTER FUTURE FOR MANCHESTER'S YOUNG PEOPLE

TURNING LIVES AROUND – THIRD SECTOR SUPPORT

Across the country there are thousands of examples of grassroots organisations transforming the lives of disadvantaged young people. Manchester is no exception.

CASE STUDY: The Message

The Message Trust works with young people in some of Manchester's toughest areas. The organisation's staff live in the communities they work in, providing positive activities for disadvantaged young people through youth centre hubs. As well as this, The Message Trust works with young offenders to prepare them for their release, uses dance and drama in schools to discourage young people from joining gangs, and runs community projects to regenerate deprived areas. In an average month the charity works with 5,000 young people, delivering around 2,000 hours of youth work. In some areas the charity has helped to reduce crime by over 40%. Their impact has been noted by many. One parent, Samantha, told The Centre for Social Justice

'...without the Eden project our children wouldn't get any youth provision'

⁶ Harmful drinking is defined as the consumption of more 50 units of alcohol per week for males and more than 35 for females.

CASE STUDY: Salford City Council

Salford City Council was given a CSJ award in 2005 in recognition of their outstanding support of third sector organisations. Salford Council recognises that charities are often the best deliverers of services and support for vulnerable people, and therefore actively encourages charities to work in Salford. Charities such as Emmaus and The Message Trust praise the Council's approach, highlighting the non-prescriptive nature of the support given. Andy Hawthorne, Founding Director of The Message Trust stated that

'...no other council has been more supportive in our attempts to see the city changed for good than Salford City Council.'



Third sector organisations have been praised by police for their work in engaging disadvantaged young people

Government must recognise the invaluable role that innovative third sector organisations play in helping individuals and families to rebuild their lives and achieve their potential. Increased levels of government funding are required, and crucially with less prescription and on a longer term basis, than is currently available. There should be greater indirect statutory funding through tax relief, match funding and community endowments. We also recommend using the third sector, where there is a proven track record of success, to deliver an increased proportion of public services.

ENABLING YOUNG PEOPLE TO ASPIRE AND ACHIEVE – TRANSFORMING SCHOOLS

Government schools' policy is not working for Manchester. Young people are trapped in failing schools with little hope of improvement. Disadvantaged parents are unlikely to be able to move their children to better schools and are therefore left powerless. This is not acceptable. Manchester needs policies and provision that can turn the tide of mass educational failure, and therefore deliver a schools system befitting a great city.

Pioneer Schools

Pioneer Schools are designed to hand power back to parents. Young people cannot be left to languish indeterminately in failing schools, parents must be able to act.

Pioneer schools would enable innovative and committed organisations and individuals (including parent groups) to establish new schools in the most deprived localities. These schools would be independent from Local Authority control and therefore able to implement their own recruitment and remuneration structures for employees and teachers, and be free to employ creative

and innovative ways of engaging and supporting pupils. This would give parents an alternative to their child's long-term failing school.

The best leadership for the toughest schools – rewarding success

The success of an organisation is directly linked to the quality of its leader: schools are no exception. Without a strong head teacher capable of communicating an ethos of commitment, discipline and aspiration, a school is unlikely to deliver the high standard of education we should be demanding for our children.

In order to attract head teachers to challenging schools who are capable of motivating a staff team and inspiring their pupils to achieve we must reward their work. A premium must be placed on delivering high quality education, especially in primary schools where payment of head teachers is particularly poor. Good leadership in primary schools is essential given the importance of early intervention, and we therefore recommend the introduction of a Disadvantaged Primary School Personnel Investment Fund. This fund, as well as being used to attract and reward excellent head teachers, could be used to equip schools with administrative and bursarial support and thereby reduce the bureaucratic burden currently suffocating head teachers.

We also recommend providing effective discipline and leadership training for head teachers in the form of a qualification with the status of an MA. This would tap the expertise and experience of existing 'hero heads' by using them to provide job shadowing and on the job training.

Every parent matters

Parental involvement in a child's education, and therefore a parent's relationship with their child's school, is crucial. We therefore recommend the introduction of Home-School Charters to identify the rights and responsibilities of parents, pupils and teachers; 'be a credit to your child' courses to help parents get the best out of the education system for their children; and full-time Home-School Support Champions to help parents support their child's educational development.

STRENGTHENING THE FAMILY

Manchester has a disproportionately high rate of family breakdown compared to the national level. This both reflects and perpetuates the levels of deprivation, worklessness and crime which blight the lives of thousands. Manchester is therefore in need of initiatives and policies that will strengthen the city's families.



Many young people are not engaged at school, contributing to unacceptable levels of educational failure

Delivering greater family well-being

Effective and accessible support for families must be available in the heart of our communities. We therefore recommend the introduction of Family Hubs to ensure the integration and coordination of services, and an enhanced role for health visitors in preventing dysfunction in a child's development.

Relationship and parenting education and support

Relationship and parenting education is highly valuable for both adults and children, and should therefore be available nationally through schools and third sector organisations. Particular attention should be paid to vulnerable families, targeted through appropriate access points such as Family Hubs.



A BBQ organised by a third sector organisation, providing quality time for families

Recognising and rewarding marriage

There is an overwhelming body of evidence demonstrating that the best outcomes for children are from married couple families. We must support an institution that benefits children and adults so profoundly, and for this reason we recommend the introduction of a transferable tax allowance for married couples.

Supporting two-parent family formation

The current tax credit system disadvantages two-parent families. The 'couple penalty' in the Working Tax Credit means that couples are better off living apart than together. We therefore recommend enhancing the couple element in order to allow for the second adult.

A WORKING ROLE MODEL

Positive role models are crucial in the healthy development of children, and evidence shows that having a working role model at home impacts significantly on the future life chances of children. Work is also the sustainable route out of poverty, and a child living in poverty is significantly more likely to be living in poverty in adulthood than their peers. People living in severe poverty are predominantly from workless households: in Manchester the number of workless households is more than double the national rate.

Providing personalised support to help people back to work

Programmes designed to help people to make the transition from welfare to work must be tailored to the individual if complex, and often multiple, barriers to work are to be overcome. We therefore recommend outsourcing welfare-to-work programmes to innovative and successful private and third sector organisations who can deliver a one-to-one service, with payments reflecting results.

Sustained support

Making the transition from welfare to work is one thing, sustaining work is another. Currently a disturbing number of benefit claimants who do find work are unable to stay there, instead falling back onto benefits. This is particularly true for lone parents. We therefore recommend maintaining one-on-one support for a minimum of 12 months after an individual has moved into work.

Incentivising work

Less than 20 per cent of non-pension welfare expenditure places any expectations on its recipients: the benefits system does not incentivise work. We therefore recommend reforming the benefits system in order to ensure a 'something for something' culture which supports those in genuine need of support, but ensures those who can work do so.

The Centre for Social Justice is currently undertaking an in depth study of the benefits system in order to recommend detailed reforms that will ensure a benefits system that incentivises work, strengthens the family, minimises fraud and is simplified to increase accessibility and effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

Manchester is one of our greatest cities, yet the problems identified in this paper demonstrate that for many Manchester is not a great place to live. We cannot and will not stand for this.

Implementing the policies recommended above will provide a better future for Manchester residents. These proposals will provide opportunities, and the support required to take the opportunities. These proposals will ensure that Manchester's young people are aspiring and therefore fulfilling their potential, which in turn will make Manchester society richer and safer. In short, these proposals will help mend Manchester's broken society.



The Eden Project's mobile youth club

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