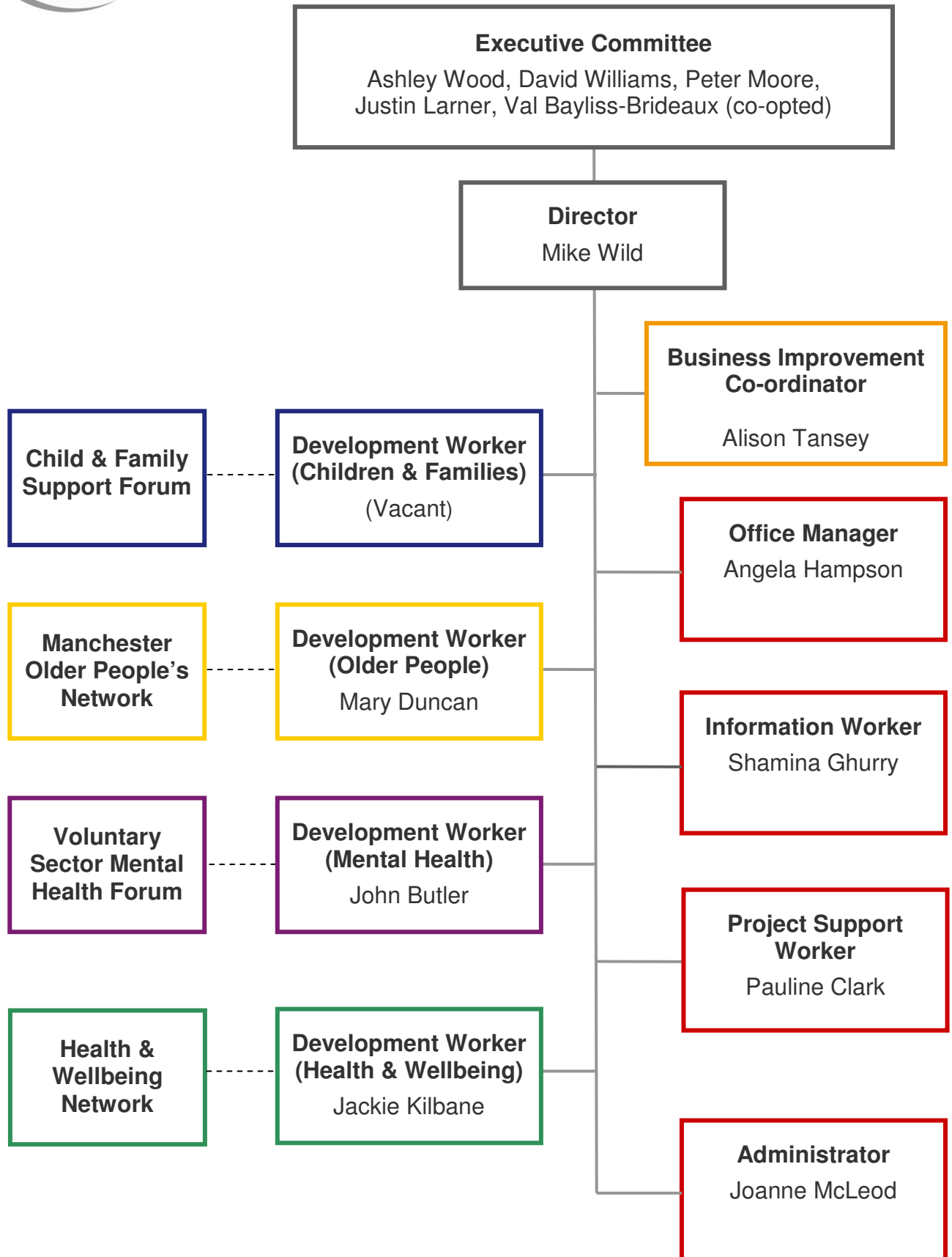




Organisation chart March 2009



Adult Social Care

MACC continues to engage voluntary sector groups in setting the agenda for Manchester City Council's Adult Social Care Briefing Sessions. This includes identifying issues which are of concern to local groups, providing an update on developments in the voluntary and community sector and facilitating workshops in partnership with Council officers.

MACC began a new strand of work focusing on the "Personalisation" agenda introducing self directed support and personal budgets into all social care from summer 2008. We launched the work with a discussion document which outlined the policy context and some concerns from the perspective of service users and voluntary sector service providers. The response to this has been extremely positive and MACC is continuing to build on the work with events and further briefings set for 2008/9.

Health

Following the merger of the three Manchester Primary Care Trusts in October 2006, there has been a long period both before and after the actual date of the merger in which partnership working was difficult. Recently, there we have begun working more closely with the PCT's community engagement team around their "Talking Health" programme and their patient and public engagement approach.

Adults Board

MACC was invited to have a place on the new Adults Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board which addresses health, social care, wellbeing and inequalities in Manchester. As part of our commitment to participatory working, MACC made clear to the board that the voluntary and community sector participant must be selected by (and accountable to) a stakeholder group of organisations – which was acknowledged and written into the "core document" for the Board. In the event the MACC Committee decided that the MACC Director should submit his name as a potential participant and was ultimately selected by an external panel process.

Safeguarding Adults

MACC was invited to take part in a new Safeguarding Adults Board in 2007, along with other participants from the voluntary and community sector: Manchester Race & Health Forum, Age Concern Manchester and the Manchester Carers Forum. In agreeing to take part, we emphasised to the City Council that it raised issues of accountability, the diverse nature of the sector and the need to acknowledge the key role which voluntary sector organisations have to play in delivering the safeguarding agenda. MACC was asked to take the place on the Board and though we do not 'represent' the sector we have ensured that views from the Health Inequalities Pool and the Older People's Network are heard at the Board and those views contribute to the action plan.

We aim to develop resources for voluntary sector groups around safeguarding and to ensure, along with members of the Board, that Safeguarding becomes everybody's business.

Children & Families

Engagement of the voluntary and community sector in the Child & Family Support Forum has continued to grow and it is acknowledged by statutory partners as the key mechanism for engaging voluntary and community sector groups in the children's services agenda. MACC's Development Worker has a significant profile in the local sector and at a strategic level as well as continuing to develop and support the Forum.

Voluntary and Community Sector Strategic Lead Role

A brief for the role of voluntary and community sector participant on the Children's Board was developed with Forum members and circulated across the sector. Interviews were held and Kathy Brown from Barnardos was appointed, working under a subcontract from MACC. The role was supported by a Reference Group which included Forum members, MACC and City Council officers. The group identified key priorities for the role and the issues which needed raising at Board level. This focused predominantly on the need for a transitional funding strategy for the voluntary and community sector. This achieved a significant response from Children's Service to conduct an audit of all voluntary and community sector funded projects and ultimately led to the Transitional Funding project. The role was in

place for 6 months to the end of March at which point a review was held: it was agreed that MACC's team could be redesigned to enable the Development Worker to increase the balance of strategic work in her role and bring in additional support for the day-to-day work of the Forum.

The Children's Board has approved an increase in funding for 2009/10 which can be seen as an acknowledgement that MACC and the Forum's work are greatly valued.

Commissioning

A significant number of contracts being delivered by voluntary and community sector organisations under various funding streams were due to come to an end in their current form in March 2008. In response to our presentation to the Children's Board, MACC was involved in a funding group set up under the Children and Young People's Partnership to progress transitional funding arrangements. We secured recognition that it would be critical that a clear review procedure be in place by end of November 2007 and groups are informed of funding decisions by end of December 2007. Through consultation with the voluntary and community sector, we proposed a series of principles which would be essential to the transitional funding process. These included:

- A full audit of all voluntary and community sector provision currently funded through statutory funding sources Where possible 12 month extensions (in line with inflation) on existing contracts should be offered unless:
 - the organisation is clearly not fulfilling their contractual obligations
 - there is clear evidence that there is no longer a need for the service
- Voluntary and community sector partners to be fully involved in the developing and implementing the review process
- A risk assessment of the impact of not renewing contracts must be carried out
- Capacity building work to be carried out over the next 12 months in conjunction with a more comprehensive review process to develop organisational sustainability within a commissioning environment

In response, a "re-contracting" process for those groups was established by the City Council - covering a total amount of roughly £8million worth of projects which were at risk. It was

accepted that the situation needed addressing and the response has been to establish a three month process to review, update and improve contracts with voluntary sector organisations. While welcome in principle, the problem was that this actually created a further three month period of uncertainty and additional work for organisations with little identifiable benefit. MACC worked with the project team to try to ensure a smooth, equitable and realistic process but it is indicative of the state of contracting and commissioning processes in the city that there is no standard model for doing this kind of work. For MACC, this has provided (and continues to do so) a major challenge but also an opportunity to develop and promote improved practice in the contracting relationship between the sectors.

District Commissioning

With the City Council moving to a district based commissioning model, we made engagement in this new process a priority. Through the Forum 12 voluntary and community sector representatives have been selected to sit on the six district panels, with commitment from the City Council's District Working Project Board to pay £150 a day for their involvement. MACC has been facilitating the training and support of these panel members, bringing them together as a group to provide peer support and develop a voluntary and community sector 'position statement' which highlights key concerns and issues as well as identifying what needs to be in place to enable providers to engage with the process.

Safeguarding

A voluntary and community sector subgroup of the Manchester Safeguarding Children Board has been established by Forum members. MACC will be increasing the support it provides to this area of work in 2009/10.

Voluntary Youth Manchester

We continue to work closely with VYM, holding joint meetings and having a number of discussions about developing the partnership between the two organisations. It has been recognised that combining the two networks in the long term is may be beneficial. However at this time; it feels like there is still value in having the two as separate entities, albeit with shared

areas of work and agreed leads on specific priorities such as workforce development.

Workforce Development

MACC supported the creation of a proposal to the Children's Workforce Development Council for a project on voluntary and community sector engagement around workforce issues. This would be delivered by a part time outreach worker post based in Voluntary Youth Manchester. We worked with VYM and the Learning and Development Team within Children's Services to obtain a three year block of funding. The first main activity was to carry out a workforce profiling exercise of the children, young people and families voluntary and community sector, aiming to gather an accurate picture of issues such as key skills gaps and training needs.

Annual Conference

This was held at the Town Hall on 21st April 2008 and was once again a very well attended event.

Older People

Engagement

MACC continues to facilitate engagement by developing partnerships between older people, the voluntary, community and statutory sectors. Our main vehicle for this area of work is the Manchester Older People's Network. This is steered by older people but is a partnership between communities of older adults and the local voluntary and community sector. It has a particular focus on health and social care services and is a means for older people and their organisations to have an impact on the planning and delivery of services. The core group of older people sets the network's priorities which this past year have included the implementation of the Social Care Reforms, Mental Health services and the care of people living with dementia.

This happens through informing members of policy and practice changes (in health and social care), giving people the opportunity to debate issues between themselves and organisations representing older people and feeding people's views and experiences into national and local planning systems.

Greater Manchester Older People's Reference Group

MACC continues to provide development and administrative support to this group which brings together older people who have been involved in the implementation of the National Service Framework at the strategic level, across Greater Manchester (now referred to as 'Experts by Experience').

The group operates in a similar way to the Manchester Older People's Network but provides useful opportunities to compare practice from other areas. General activities have included open meetings to share information and gather views on a range of issues for older people, regular policy briefings and updates on practice developments across the Region and contributions to National campaigns that address age discrimination, such as ensuring that the Equality Bill banned age discrimination in the provision of goods, facilities and services.

In September 2007 the Reference Group published their audit of older people's involvement in the implementation of the National Service Framework across Greater Manchester. One of the aims of the report was to gather evidence from members on their experiences of being supported in the process by MACC. The report, entitled, "Genuine Partners Revisited" is available on the MACC website. The report and its findings have been presented at two national conferences by its authors as evidence of good practice.

The Reference group only receives a participation budget from the GM Association of PCTs. MACC will work with them this year to secure their own budget.

National Service Framework

MACC has continued to provide support to maximise older people's involvement in the implementation of the NSF for Older People, the Department of Health's framework for improving health and social care services for older people. This has been achieved through the support and development of the Network and the Reference group. Both were developed to ensure the genuine involvement of older people in planning, development and delivery of health and social care services, using the NSF as a catalyst for the work. During the last two years, engagement in this work has been a challenge with the restructuring of the health service (and now adult social care) dismantling of many

joint locality structures to take forward issues around health and social care of older people and the development of new structures, such as the LINK.

Safeguarding and Advocacy

The development and provision of independent advocacy in safeguarding work - in a preventative capacity through the Personalisation agenda, and the more specialist role of advocacy to support individuals involved in safeguarding investigations- is increasingly recognised as an essential part of safeguarding provision. Through the Manchester Safeguarding Adults Board, MACC has continued to raise awareness for the need to sustain existing advocacy services and build on their skills to use advocacy as a tool in preventing abuse. An advocacy working group was commissioned by the Board and endorsed by the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee. MACC (along with Link-Age) has played a significant role in the group in developing an Advocacy Toolkit and a draft proposal for an Advocacy Development Post which will be considered by the Safeguarding Adults Board at their meeting in May 2009.

Mental Health

Last year Manchester Joint Commissioning Team (Older Peoples Mental Health) commissioned a needs assessment and review of older people's mental health services in Manchester. MACC was part of the Multi-Agency Steering group (July-October) and played a positive role in the involvement of older people in the work through the Older People's Network.

We also worked together with other voluntary sector organisations to raise concerns with the consultants about the impact of the Social Care Reforms on voluntary sector providers of mental health services. Dementia Care has been a priority area of work for the Network who have made a significant contributions to the National and Local strategies and through members views and experience being fed into the review.

Valuing Older People

We have continued our working relationship with Manchester City Council's "Valuing Older People" initiative. Manchester Older People's Network has a representative on the Valuing Older People Board. Her involvement is supported by MACC's

Development Worker. MACC was involved in establishing the initiative and continues to be a member of the Officers Group which brings together those who deliver the work. We have continued our support to the Positive Images work stream (which was nominated for a Health Service Journal award) and the City Council developed our suggested initiative to celebrate individual older people who have been inspirational to the local area.

Partnerships for Older People's Projects

The Manchester POPP programme finished in September 2008. From the beginning there was a challenge faced by the programme, with Projects lasting for, at most, two years and with many starting from scratch, there was a concern that there would be relatively little time to gather real evidence of the improvements and achievements of preventative services. Perhaps the most important point established in the evaluation is that it is possible to measure the impact of prevention and that this can be used to inform commissioning processes, using quality of life tools and routinely collected data. The evaluation – nationally as well as locally- did prove that there was a reduction in hospital costs after receiving a POPP service. The challenge now is to shift resources from the acute sector to the community. Another key message was the recognition of the value of involving older people themselves and the voluntary sector in service planning and delivery.

At the time of writing, the 19 POPP projects in Manchester who were waiting for a decision about their future have finally been informed that they are to receive funding after the end of March 2009, for six months from the City Council.

Dignity in Care

MACC has been working with older people around the national agenda now known as "Dignity in Care". This work has ranged from an open forum discussion on the End of Life Strategy attended by over 40 older people from across Greater Manchester. Along with Age Concern Manchester, MACC was invited to send a member of staff to the Dignity in Care Strategy group: as an example of our policy of developing accountability to the voluntary and community sector, we circulated a letter to the sector explaining MACC's protocol for identifying participants in these kind of structures in order to generate a mandate from the sector to bring their views to the table. We also sought to ensure consultation and engagement of the sector in this work

and facilitated the sector's contribution to the production of a Dignity in Care toolkit for care homes. Our collective comments were considered and amendments included.

Mental Health

As with all the MACC networks the Voluntary Sector Mental Health Forum brings together local mental health agencies in the sector to network share information and develop a shared approach to service development as well as being a mechanism for facilitating dialogue with statutory commissioners and service providers. MACC's Development Worker sends out regular email information bulletins and contributes to the Connections newsletter.

During this year, the Forum continued to act as a means for voluntary sector organisations to build a collective relationship with commissioners with meetings held around:

- The impact of commissioning policies and practice on voluntary sector provision.
- The Joint Commissioning Team's priorities for the year in order to enable organisations to identify potential areas for influence at policy and strategy level or delivery of services.
- The continuation of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund programme as the new Working Neighbourhoods Fund using a transitional "emergency reconfiguration" approach.
- Identifying mechanisms to raise the awareness of practice-based commissioners and others about the role and services of the sector.
- The capacity building needs of the sector.

National Service Framework for Mental Health

We continue to participate in and support the development of the Local Implementation Team through involvement in the Stakeholder Engagement Forum and specific aspects of the NSF agenda such as the establishing of the Community Development Worker service, the review of commissioning strategies and the future provision of primary and day care services.

Service User Network

Manchester has traditionally had a number of mental health service user groups: these groups identified a need to coordinate better and requested support from MACC to develop their

activities and build their capacity to have influence at the decision making level. As with our work with the Manchester Older People's Network, it is fundamental to MACC's approach that service users themselves are supported in articulating their views and securing their rights. We continue to work with the various user groups in a number of different ways: providing informal support to key individuals, brokering meetings with key decision-makers and assisting with administration of meetings and production of newsletter when required. With the development of the Manchester Local Involvement Network (see "Improving Community Engagement" below), there will be new opportunities for further development over the coming year.

Building Capacity in the BME Voluntary Sector

Because of our involvement in the "Delivering Race Equality" policy implementation group in 2007 the Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP North West) MACC to develop proposals for building the capacity and sustainability of Black and Minority Ethnic community organisations in relation to delivering race equality in mental health care.

We worked in partnership with Manchester Social Media, (formerly the "Having a Voice" media project) to produce a film and, a report, which captures the views of users, staff and volunteers from six organisations in Greater Manchester regarding their sustainability.

The film and report were presented and discussed at events held in Manchester, Liverpool and Preston during November 2008. The report summarises the recommendations and key messages from this work; includes additional comments from the events and; is intended to stimulate discussion between stakeholders and guide local action.

The overarching message is that if we are serious about delivering race equality we must first secure the existing assets: the groups, whose existence is under constant threat. The importance of this has been underlined by the loss of some of the services and posts featured in the film.

This engagement process took a considerable amount of time but enabled a more diverse range of perspectives to be gathered and provided useful learning for MACC in bringing in other experiences from outside Manchester. A copy of the report can be found on our website and copies of the DVD are still available.

The Delivering Inclusion Network (DIN)

DIN is a collaborative venture involving 3 local mental health agencies that aim to enhance joint working. This work was undertaken to address the need of organisations to enhance their capacity and sustainability. In this case, the work sought to develop a model of collaboration and capacity release which would hold onto the benefits of small local organisations while developing a portfolio of services which meet the needs of the local community and can be purchased by commissioners. As well as the 3 agencies and MACC, this has involved commissioners from the local NHS and the City Council, Public Health Development and Primary Care Mental Health services.

In July 2008 The VSMHF and DIN held an event to create an opportunity for Manchester's voluntary sector and commissioners to consider the ways in which the independence of the voluntary sector has been or might be compromised by a shift to commissioning; what the implications of this are for the people and communities we work with and; what might help minimise risks to independence. A copy of the report can be found on our website

Voluntary Sector Development

We delivered a number of pieces of work aimed at scoping and building the capacity of the voluntary sector around mental health, including:

- Producing a discussion paper on "The State of the Sector" presented to Forum members, Mental Health Commissioners, the Joint Health Unit and the City Council's Voluntary Sector Policy & Grants section.
- Commissioning Manchester Carers Forum to produce a mapping report on the capacity of the sector in relation to services for older people with mental health needs.
- Working with the Primary Care Mental Health Team, we helped to plan and promote a training event around mental health issues aimed at the wider non-mental health sector.
- Producing a discussion paper with Having a Voice, Manchester Metropolitan University, the Care Services Improvement Partnership and others to stimulate a local debate about the role of social enterprise.

The **Health Inequalities Pool** is a network which was established by MACC under the banner of the Community Network for Manchester, as a means for voluntary and community sector organisations to contribute to the work of the Health Inequalities Partnership (a subgroup of Manchester's Local Strategic Partnership). At the end of this period, the Pool decided to adopt a new name as the "Health and Wellbeing Network". This was felt not only to be simpler, but also reflects the title of the Adults Health and Wellbeing Partnership which has replaced the Health Inequalities Partnership.

Adults Health and Wellbeing Partnership

The previous incarnation as the Health Inequalities Partnership effectively ceased in October 2006 and during 2007 we were awaiting the establishment of the new structure. We maintained contact via the Joint Health Unit and ultimately wrote a formal letter from the voluntary sector setting out concerns about the gap in the partnership working structures. An initial "stakeholder event" about a new structure was held in July 2007 and MACC's participation in this helped make the case for voluntary sector participation in the proposed "Adults Board". Ultimately, the new "Adults Health and Well Being Partnership Board" was launched in December 2007 with a place for a nominated participant from the Health Inequalities Pool. This participation protocol (developed by MACC in 2006 and adopted across the Manchester Partnership and the Community Network for Manchester) was included in the Board's Core Document. A selection process was established by the Pool with members forming a panel, devising a role description and inviting applications from people interested in taking on the role. MACC's Committee gave approval for the Director of MACC to submit an expression of interest. The panel members selected lead and deputy participants (the Director of MACC and the Chief Executive of the Lesbian and Gay Foundation, respectively). This selection process was an important demonstration of MACC's commitment to our core organisational values of integrity and accountability.

By the end of 2007/8 the Board had established regular meetings and the renamed Health and Wellbeing Network had begun to identify areas for future contributions to the agenda.

While the Health Inequalities Partnership was in abeyance, we continued to focus on some of the “wider determinants of health” working around our established strategic connections:

Alcohol and Health

We produced a position paper on the issues around alcohol and health in Manchester. This includes comments on the apparent lack of progress in delivering the Manchester Alcohol Strategy. This was circulated to the Drug & Alcohol Action Team who welcomed our offer to work with them to increase the contribution (and profile) of the voluntary sector around these issues and we held discussions with Manchester PCT Public Health Development Service to respond to issues raised in the paper, focusing on the tone and style of health promotion/social marketing material and how to make this more accessible across Manchester’s diverse communities. A draft of the second Manchester Alcohol Strategy (2008-2011) was also released for consultation and addressed some of the issues raised in the paper. We built on this by giving additional feedback on the draft strategy and added new information and perspectives where possible. To develop this further, we established participation from the Network on the education and prevention sub group of the Alcohol Strategy team.

Food and Health

During 2006/7, MACC had undertaken some work with a number of black and minority ethnic community organisations in collaborating on a project funded through the City Council’s Food Futures programme. This ended in May 2007 with feedback that the support the groups had from MACC was very useful.

Building on this approach as a model of good practice, the Health Inequalities Pool developed a series of recommendations to the Food Futures Steering Group along with four priorities for their commissioning strategy for 2007/8. These were: BME, homeless people, vulnerable adults (particularly around mental health, learning disability and older people) and allotments. Our recommendations were accepted in full: and it was noted that this relatively small piece of commissioning activity provided useful learning for the development of commissioning practice in Manchester. Capacity building support was to be delivered by a small team of consultants selected through a basic tender process which MACC helped design and facilitate and informal supervision and mentoring for the team was provided by MACC’s Development

Worker. An event to launch the commissioning programme was held in December 2007. This brought together a range of voluntary sector organisations into clusters around the commissioning priorities. From MACC's point of view, the most significant outcomes of the session were that:

- while many of the groups present were initially sceptical about the collaborative process, by the end of the session there were strong commitments to delivering projects together
- some groups simply valued the networking opportunity, learning more about each others' services
- some of the groups present were ones receiving support from the Business Improvement Service (see Supporting Voluntary Sector Sustainability below) and saw this as a chance to develop their services further.

Overall, this work gave MACC an opportunity to bring a number of approaches to strategic engagement, commissioning and capacity building together and therefore represented a considerable success in implementing a range of good practice which we have developed in recent years.

Our work with Food Futures also includes supporting participation in the Food Futures Board which leads the programme: we have been supporting representatives from People First (a local user-lead organisation working around learning disability) in participating in the Board and their presence and influence led to learning disabilities being included as a specific agenda item at one of the Board meetings during the year.

Recognising that there remains considerable interest and energy around the Food and Health agenda, we ended the year by developing a subgroup of the Health and Wellbeing network to focus specifically on this agenda: the need to do this is a good indicator of the growth of the network's engagement of the voluntary sector and our developing influence at a strategic level.

Sexual Health

Following a number of discussions at Network meetings around strengthening voluntary sector contributions to the commissioning and development of sexual health services in Manchester, it was agreed that MACC's Development Worker would start to build up strategic connections around the sexual health agenda. Initial meetings were held with the Primary Care Trust's Public Health Development Service and the multi-agency Sexual Health Forum. Work on this agenda will continue in the coming year.

Wellbeing

Because it is so broad, the concept of “wellbeing” is sometimes difficult to place in the strategic agenda in any measurable way. MACC has sought to approach this by promoting the involvement of local communities in the development of wellbeing indicators and contributed this view to a North West a ‘Wellbeing Hearing’, the work being done by the Care Service Improvement Partnership and in discussions with the Joint Health Unit and the Public Health Development Service. In order to provide a practical demonstration of how engagement could be made to work by working with the voluntary and community sector, MACC commissioned People First to hold an event for people with learning disabilities to give their views on wellbeing, with the results being recorded in a report which can be used both as a model of good practice and as a contribution to the Adults Board agenda. The event was delivered on 24th April 2008.

Voluntary Sector Development

Business Improvement Service

This project, part of the which Manchester Partnerships for Older People’s Projects initiative (see Older People above) began in September 2006 and was aimed at established, small to medium voluntary organisations delivering (or planning to deliver) preventative, low-level wellbeing and social care services for older people in Manchester. There was a particular focus on working with groups that supported BME communities, carers and older people with mental health needs.

The Project delivered a training programme of 16 courses and workshops, which attracted a total of 50 different voluntary organisations, training 120 of their staff, volunteers and committee members. The training that was found to be most useful included Business Planning, Full Cost Recovery, How to Win Tenders, Sustainable Fundraising Plans and Implementing an Outcomes Focus. On average, 12 groups attended each training session and 40% of all attendees were from BME-led organisations. 95% of the BME-led organisations participating attended 3 or more training sessions.

The Business Improvement Service also worked with 24 separate groups on an individual and in some cases “cluster” basis,

completing organisational “health checks” and following this up with a ‘package’ of support to each group or cluster. Each package was tailored to their needs - around planning, governance, financial management, staff and volunteer management, and other issues which needed to be addressed if the groups were to improve their effectiveness and chances of long-term sustainability. The groups were all very aware of the need to develop and thrive, but did not have the time or capacity to do this work alone.

A team of experienced consultants worked with the Project, advising the 24 organisations around a variety of themes – such as strategic planning, development of policies and procedures, financial management and quality assurance. Consultants took a very ‘hands-on’ approach and worked at the group’s pace. In some cases, the Business Improvement budget was used to purchase items which would help groups to improve their performance, such as accounts software or IT equipment.

Evaluation interviews conducted by the MMU have revealed that 100% of groups strongly agree that this has been a good model for supporting the development of voluntary and community groups. 72.5% reported that, as a result of Business Improvement support, they had made a lot of progress in agreeing a clear vision and aims for their organisation, and in producing a usable, written plan. 81.9% reported that it had helped them make some or a lot of progress in improving the way their organisation was managed and in their management committees becoming more effective.

- 75% of groups felt they had made some or a lot of progress in understanding the principle of full cost recovery and how to implement it. 60% said they were now more aware of how to achieve financial stability as a result of the support received.
- 72.8% of groups have made some or a lot of progress in improving their policies and procedures relating to the management of staff and volunteers. 72.7% had made similar progress in improving the way they monitor activities and outcomes.
- 90.9% reported that the project had helped them to make some or a lot of progress in improving the way they planned and designed services for older people. 63.7% felt they had made similar progress in involving older people themselves in this process.

A number of key messages have emerged from the experiences of groups and consultants involved in this project:

- A lack of clear strategic direction from the Local Authority and Primary Care Trust has made it difficult for groups to plan strategically
- Statutory agencies need to engage more appropriately with voluntary sector providers
- Some capacity issues are deep-rooted and have not been solved by the intervention of consultants – groups need longer term financial support and investment in their infrastructure.
- More progress could be made around partnership working and quality assurance
- Business Improvement support should be longer term and available to a wider range of organisations

The Business Improvement Project received an extremely positive final evaluation report and has been widely recognised as an effective and useful model for building capacity in the voluntary sector. In planning the organisation's work programme for 2008/9, the MACC Committee took the decision to integrate Business Improvement work into its MACC's standard development programme model across all of its themes for 2008/9. This enables MACC to increase the "intervention" it makes into the local health and social care economy – building quality in the voluntary and community sector in terms of the way organisations plan and manage their activities and increasing the potential for the sector to be commissioned to deliver services.

From September 08 to March 09, the Business Improvement Service delivered a Partnership Working Project, which supported organisations across all MACC's themed areas of work to develop partnership approaches. This short-term intervention supported the development of two significant mergers and enabled a BME Consortium to tender for a PCT-led Health Outreach Service.

The success of MACC's Business Improvement Service has led to a number of requests by our statutory partners to carry out specific pieces of Business Improvement work with named voluntary sector providers. We have received funding via the Learning Disability Development Fund and Carers Grant to deliver bespoke support to individual carers' organisations.

Commissioning

As a cross cutting theme in all our work, MACC took the decision during the year to develop a clear organisational position and strategy around the commissioning agenda, with particular reference to its impact on the voluntary and community sector.

This work involved:

- Analysing the various strategic projects in which MACC was involved which covered different aspects of commissioning (e.g. membership of panels in Children's Services, informing strategic priorities in the Food Futures Programme and meeting the development needs of voluntary sector organisations through the Business Improvement Service).
- Engaging a researcher to provide us with a literature search and an objective and independent briefing on local and national commissioning policy and guidance.
- Increasing our collective knowledge and understanding by taking part in training and briefing sessions (e.g. around procurement, children's commissioning, etc.)
- Engaging a consultant to undertake to produce a report on the current state of commissioning in the Manchester. This was conducted through interviews and discussions with key individuals identified by MACC as part of the "commissioning community". The final report will include a series of recommendations for both commissioners and voluntary sector organisations and further actions by MACC.
- Participating in a range of other discussions with a variety of groups about their expectations, concerns and preparedness for the commissioning culture including Manchester City Council, Manchester Primary Care Trust, Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisations, Manchester BME Network and other colleagues in all sectors. MACC's inputs into these discussions included both presentations and facilitation of discussion groups: feedback gathered through the work done on the current state of commissioning report was that MACC had done much to promote this agenda in the city and was strongly identified as having developed expertise.
- Identifying policy gaps and "unanswered questions": a key issue emerged in the absence of any analysis of the relationship between the commissioning and personalisation agendas. MACC sought to address this by publishing a discussion document on the implications of "Self-Directed Support" from a range of perspectives including users and carers as well as commissioners and service providers.

Infrastructure and Partnership Development

MACC is involved in a number of initiatives which address broad development of the local “Third Sector” agenda.

MACC is also a member of the **Partnership Working Group** which is a forum for collaboration on several key aspects of joint working between the City Council and the voluntary sector. It sits within the Manchester Partnership structure and provides us with an opportunity to have some contact with Voluntary Sector Policy and Grants and the Scarman Trust. The group has looked at a number of themes: the Compact, Volunteering, Small Grants and Commissioning (on which MACC has been taking the lead). This work has grown in significance because of the two new national performance indicators on “increasing regular participation in volunteering” and “enabling the third sector to thrive”. Along with others, MACC has used this forum as a place to develop new leadership in addressing Manchester’s inadequate and disparate voluntary sector infrastructure: an initial meeting was held in January 2008 to start afresh on this agenda and led to the formation of the **Third Sector Strategy Group**.

For some years, MACC was a member of the Manchester Voluntary Sector Support Agencies Network (VSSAN) which was subsequently re-launched as the **Manchester Change-Up Consortium** in order to align with national and regional work on the voluntary sector “Change-Up” agenda established by Central Government. This group was theoretically the voluntary sector infrastructure network for the city and should have provided leadership for the development of the much-needed capacity building and sector support services which Manchester lacks. Despite repeated requests from MACC, this group failed to meet during 2007/8. The establishment of the Third Sector Strategy Group in early 2008 fills this gap. MACC prepared a position paper challenging the members (including ourselves) to work together to produce a cohesive Third Sector Strategy for Manchester. Working with CN4M and other partners, this is now well under way and an outline paper was circulated to local organisations early in 2009.

In a sub-regional context, the **Health Partnership Steering Group** supports an initiative being delivered by Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisations (GMCVO) and which links with the Association of Greater Manchester PCTs. MACC is a member of this group and has made a number of presentations on our work in Manchester around commissioning, with further work planned

for 2008/9. This has enabled useful comparisons and sharing of experience between Manchester and the surrounding boroughs.

Developing Advocacy Services

MACC continues to promote the development of local advocacy services and collaboration between local advocacy providers. Although we receive no direct funding for this work, it is a long held view that a strong advocacy sector in Manchester will greatly improve people's experience of using services and exercising their rights and wishes. Our work this year has included:

- Commissioning a two day training and practice development course for local groups.
- Hosting a meeting of advocacy groups to contribute to research by the Older People's Advocacy Alliance into the commissioning of advocacy services.
- Facilitating discussion groups on policy developments affecting advocacy providers: the introduction of an Independent Mental Capacity Advocate service in the city and the impact of the Personalisation agenda and the emerging new role of "brokerage".
- Working with the Manchester Safeguarding Adults Board to develop the role of advocacy in both prevention of abuse and in supporting people in making their voices heard during investigation processes.

There is strong demand from local groups that MACC should continue to support and develop collaborative working during the forthcoming year. We will therefore be looking at ways to bring in additional resources to create the capacity needed to undertake this work.

Improving Community Engagement

Community Network for Manchester (CN4M)

MACC is an active member of CN4M, not just in supporting a number of key networks and developing good practice, but in the development of the Network as a whole. Good practice developed by MACC and shared within the Network includes a protocol for

participation by members from voluntary sector organisations working at the strategic level. One of MACC's key aims in supporting the network is to ensure a balance is maintained between communities of interest and communities of place so that all voices are reflected equally within the Network.

During this 2007, CN4M established itself as independent of its original host organisation Voluntary Action Manchester. As a long-standing member of the CN4M Executive (Board) and Treasurer of the new organisation, the Director of MACC was called on to help steer the organisation through this difficult period and the MACC Committee agreed that this should be made a priority and in doing so agreed to invest a considerable amount of staff time and energy in supporting CN4M's development. Using practice developed within MACC, new financial and Board governance procedures were established which enabled CN4M to maintain the confidence of the City Council during the crucial first year as a new company with the result that the contractual relationship was maintained and developed in time for 2007/8. Early in 2008, the Committee reviewed the position and it was agreed that with CN4M back on track with its long term development, MACC should scale down its support in order to enable the Director to bring his full attention back to MACC's main agenda and development needs and he therefore stood down as a Trustee of CN4M in February 2008. MACC continues to participate in and promote CN4M and to share its core values of engagement and empowerment.

Local Involvement Network

Since 2006, MACC has been working with the Patient and Public Involvement Forums and the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement on establishing a pilot site for the new Local Involvement Network, which will replace Patient Forums (the statutory mechanism for public involvement in the NHS) from 1st April 2008. As an organisation with a history of working across health and social care and with strong track record in developing voluntary and community sector networks, MACC is acknowledged as a key partner in establishing this new structure. The "Early Adopter Project" formally ended in September 2007 with the establishing of the LINK Transition Board of which MACC is now a member.

This work has involved supporting the delivery of a pilot engagement programme to identify how a LINK might work using the national consultation on stroke services as a testing ground for the new approach. As well as contributing to the consultation,

MACC's input ensured that this exercise provided valuable learning about how engagement could work in an issue-based rather than process-driven way.

As the opportunity to tender to deliver the LINK's "host organisation" role became available, MACC's Committee took the decision not to submit a bid: choosing to focus on contributing to the growth of the wider LINK and our complementary role in stimulating service development within the local voluntary sector. We continue to take part in developing and promoting the LINK as a new means of engagement within both the community and to strategic partners.

Talking Health

MACC has long called for the consolidation of the various management initiatives which take place around health and social care since we believe the endless stream of unconnected "consultations" generate a disjointed and sporadic approach which fails to engage people in any meaningful or useful sense. It was therefore pleasing to be invited to contribute to the development of a new programme from the Manchester Primary Care Trust entitled "Talking Health" early in 2008. This aims to bring together the whole range of engagement and consultation activities under a single "brand" so that not only do they have a regular profile, they will also have shared themes, a consistent approach and feel much more like a conversation with the community than has previously been the case. MACC was invited to join the Programme Board for this work which also enabled us to continue to strengthen our new relationship with the PCT.

MACC Operational Improvement

MACC's Business Plan sets out a programme of development for the organisation which covers all aspects of our work. In previous years, we have focused on updating policies and procedures. During 2007 much of this work was put on hold due to the amount of the Director's time working with Community Network for Manchester during its difficult transition period to independent status over the summer and autumn of 2007. During 2008, we began to focus on developing team working. A challenge for us was to break out of our habits of working exclusively on particular themes. Our main achievements include:

Team development

We continue to find ways to improve the way our staff team delivers MACC's programme of work. Key changes this year include

- Revising the range of internal meetings to cover operational issues, policy development and management.
- Developing a system of pair working between staff undertaking projects to improve connections across our team
- Carrying out a detailed workload review of the team
- A number of activities for the whole team including away days and training sessions.

IT

After a difficult period bringing in a server network in 2006/7, the emphasis during 2008 was not to change or add new systems but to make better use of group working and secure a new IT support provider. Following a short tender process, Axiom Ltd. have provided us with a very supportive approach and are assisting us with the development of a long term IT strategy.

MACC Website

During 2008 we expanded the range and flexibility of the MACC website to reflect the full range of MACC's work. We are frequently complimented on our website and continue to promote it as an index of the work we do and a resource for the groups we're involved with.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Like many other groups, MACC has found the development of a rounded monitoring and evaluation process difficult. We approached this by wanting to be able to show how the organisation works towards the aims set out in MACC's Manifesto. We've undertaken a number of activities in this area:

- Training for the staff team on outcomes monitoring approach
- Engaging an independent consultant to conduct a "credibility check" through interviews with stakeholders
- Developing outcomes frameworks for each of our areas of work.

In the coming year, we will be looking at ways to build a quality-based approach into this work using NAVCA's Performance Standards for Local Infrastructure Organisations as a guide.

MACC Committee Development

Towards the end of 2008, the MACC Executive Committee established a subgroup to identify ways of increasing participation in MACC's Committee. We used NCVO's toolkit to review the skills and diversity of the current membership and developed a recruitment process to encourage applications from new members with the interests and skills we felt would add to the Committee's ability to drive the organisation. New members will join the Committee formally during 2009.



MACC staff team with delusions of being a samba band at the team away day in June 2007

Back: Jackie Kilbane, Mike Wild, John Butler, Ruth Craven, Angela Hampson
Front: Alison Tansey, Shamina Ghurry, Mary Duncan, Joanne Mcleod

The Last Word

One of the nice things about my job as Director of MACC is that I often get to have the last word.

Except of course I don't because there never is a last word. As this report shows, there is always more to do, more to say: whether it's supporting service users in having a direct voice in shaping services or working with voluntary sector organisations to help them improve their ability to deliver services.

Sometimes in the seemingly endless procession of meetings, subgroups, strategy documents, it can be quite hard to keep a focus on the real purpose of it all: to bring about a more inclusive society which supports and increases the health and social well-being of people in the many communities across Manchester. It's such a big goal to be aiming towards and it takes an awful lot of small steps. Every step counts, though, no matter how small.

As an organisation MACC works with a range of partners to promote a critical perspective, rather than just share information and arrive at a consensus view. In trying to move things along we work with voluntary sector groups, statutory bodies, service users, carers and local people. We don't always agree with each other on the details and the processes and the paperwork, but we do agree about the big goal and it's still true that if we can take more and more of those small steps together, then we'll get there a good deal quicker. I sometimes think that's what MACC's real value is – trying to bring those people, their ideas and their energy together and all facing in the same direction...and not giving up when it doesn't quite work.

In a few weeks' time, it will be forty years since one famous "small step" was taken. I still tend to think that if people are clever enough to work together to have someone walk on the moon, then all this other stuff shouldn't be too difficult, should it? "Idealism" is an unfashionable term these days, but if it's a belief that we can improve things, then that's what makes us keep trying.

Mike Wild
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