Manchester in 2040 should be the best it can be, to inspire its population to be the best they can be.
Executive Summary

A part of the GM 2040+ work funded by GoScience, young people from Manchester engaged in a consultation exercise to create a vision for a ‘Greater’ Manchester; one that would thrive and prosper in a turbulent and challenging future. They identified the city as possessing the potential to become a global economic leader, with every individual contributing towards its growth.

The participants had a good grasp of the city-region’s current strengths and where it could develop by 2040. This included capitalising on the creative and sport heritage, looking to areas such as MediaCity and Spinningfields as successful new areas that should be grown.

Their enthusiasm for the city was evident and they came up with a vision that was both aspirational yet achievable by Manchester as a place. Not surprisingly, the vision focused on elements which affect them – education, transport and inequality. A theme running through the vision was about Manchester as a place – one where we do not have siloes between policy areas and different sectors. Their vision looked at the interconnectivity between people and place and the importance of community-linkages to achieve results.

Six significant dimensions for this vision were identified as follows:

- Growth Education
- Connected Communities
- Responsible Businesses
- Bridge-Building Equality
- Vibrant Environment
- Friendly Transport

Within these dimensions the young people identified six key actions for policy makers and the new Mayor to consider:

**ACTION 1**
Creating a revolutionary “GROWTH” education system

**ACTION 2**
Establishing connected community hubs and innovation spaces

**ACTION 3**
Developing an employer pledge & talent retention strategy for young people

**ACTION 4**
Creating a new generation of bridge-builders who connect businesses and communities

**ACTION 5**
Bringing more colour to Manchester through the creative use of art and green space

**ACTION 6**
Develop a ‘car-less’ city centre
I can be... you can be... We can be....

Multi-cultural
Anything
Noticed
Connected
Healthy
Equal
Skills
Traditional
Environmentally
Represented
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1. Process

This report highlights the findings from three focus groups of young people who participated in a consultation day at Loreto College, Hulme*. The groups consisted of a diverse cultural mix of students aged 17-18 years, all of which had volunteered their time to take part in the consultation day.

The young people engaged in a range of interactive tasks and activities ranging from issue mapping and personal visioning, to the creation of posters for policy makers. Throughout the process a portfolio of illustrations were created to capture the insights and imagination of the young people involved.

The young people were asked a number of questions which stimulated them to create an inspirational vision for Greater Manchester. This being one in which they felt they had a part to play; one which would thrive and prosper in a turbulent future and one that will see Greater Manchester becoming a leading city for the UK, Europe and globally.

The session was facilitated by Windmills, a creative social values organisation committed to inspiring young people to discover, create and realise their potential in life.

* Loreto is a sixth form college located in Hulme on the outskirts of Manchester City centre, see http://www.loreto.ac.uk/content/about-us for more details.
2. Vision
2.1 GROWTH Education

A striking 2040 vision shaped by all those young people involved was a complete reframing of the educational system for 5 to 18 year olds. They spoke of a totally transformed curriculum which focused on the growth of all individuals’ personal potential and everyone’s unique contribution towards creating a ‘Greater’ Manchester. Within this vision for growth, young people illustrated an education system which embraced:

**Giving**
giving something back, connecting to local community

**Resilience**
discovering, creating and realising personal potential

**Opportunity**
learning outside the classroom and outside the box

**Workwise**
going beyond work experience

**Talents**
enabling a personalised pathway for growth

**Hope**
raising aspirations and creating real hope
EDUCATION

HEAD-UCATION

PATHWAYS + WELL BEING

WORK EXPERIENCE

EDUCATION FOR

ENTERPRISE + CREATIVE THINKING

CONNECTED MENTAL

PERSONAL HEALTH + WELL-BEING

YEAR 9 + 11

PEOPLE NEED PATHWAYS INTO

THE WORLD
Young people stressed that business and economic success will only be maximised where individuals have the opportunity to connect and find their own personalised pathways for growth.

The focus for this radical new education for life included:

- Equipping individuals with effective life-management skills from the beginning of primary school
- Enabling young people to “fail” in a supported environment to be able to develop entrepreneurial risk-taking aptitudes, creative thinking skills and resilience
- Improving career and life opportunities through embedded work experience and community based learning
- Expanding language opportunities in order to place Greater Manchester as a global leader economically. According to the University of Manchester, the city has the densest multilingual population for its size in the UK, with up to 200 languages spoken.
- Creating greater scope for the development of personalised pathways for personal, social and economic growth
- Equipping individuals with a ‘tool kit for life’ which sustains personal well-being and character together with growth.

Young people called for the dismantling of an ‘educational–machine’ that reproduces ‘facts’ in the ‘fact-ory’ of learning and instead, the creation of an inspirational growth learning pathway.

Comments from the young people on the above issues:

“Educate young children to become responsible citizens and be a genuine community force.”

“Focus should be on ‘life management learning’ and not just on academic knowledge”

“Help plan a personal route for life at a young age.”

“A city full of opportunities for young and old to discover and develop skills and talents.”

“Inspire young people to be what they want to be and not keep young people in a box of conformity.”

“See education as a ‘path for life’ not just a ‘route’ for career.”

In summary, young people challenged policy makers to integrate disconnected policies around education, business, growth and economic development.

They called for all stakeholders to be brave enough to turn the education system upside-down and inside-out.
2.2 Connected Communities

At the forefront of all the conversations in the sessions was a strong, consistent message that a connected community should form the heart of any vision. Young people saw that a ‘Greater’ Manchester would only be realised when like-minded people were inspired to come together to combine their collective skills, talents, motivations and energy to make Manchester a better place to work and live.

In order for this to be achieved creative spaces were needed for people to meet and come together to strengthen their personal links and connections. These spaces may range from green environments to sit and meet, through to modern day community centres where learning, well-being, health, social enterprise, business, arts, culture and entertainment meet together.

Whilst technology and online communication had a part to play, greater emphasis was given to the development of personal relationships and the fostering of positive human interaction and connection. It was the view of many that one of Greater Manchester’s real strengths is its vibrant, multi-cultural community. This ‘connected community’ was regarded a unique facet compared to London, where many transient people are disconnected.

A ‘Greater’ Manchester is a place where people, communities and businesses grow. Participants reinforced that this sense of community and responsibility should be taught at an early age, through an education system that grows generations of compassionate, caring, responsible individuals who have the ability to care for others, not just themselves. Consideration should be given to urban planning, buildings and open spaces to encourage social interaction and sharing rather than isolation. Comments from the young people on the above issues:

“Create a strong sense of community, a hub where multi-cultures can connect and benefit from life-opportunities for all.”
“Reduce ‘online communities’ and encourage ‘physical community’ again”.
“We need more community events to encourage cohesion and strengthen communities”.
“More sustainable communities, building on the success of ‘Spinningfields’ in Manchester”.

Young people urged policy makers not to see stronger communities as a ‘nice-to–have’ addition but a central platform, in partnership with Growth Education, to foster the creation of a ‘Greater’ Manchester. Innovation was felt to lie in creating new ways for people to come together to make a greater difference than they would do by themselves.
2.3 Responsible Businesses

The third dimension identified by the groups in the vision for a ‘Greater’ Manchester was the genuine authenticity of engagement of businesses in helping individuals and communities realise their potential.

Their 2040 vision included every employer in Greater Manchester, both large and small, committing to a ‘pledge’ to develop, utilise and retain the emerging talents of future generations.

Many young people viewed the ‘world of work’ as a labyrinth of decisions, responsibilities, pathways and complex routes to take. They called for employers to help provide a wide range of rich learning opportunities, ranging from taster sessions to exploring careers opportunities, through more intensive experiences of work such as apprenticeships.

Responsible businesses should be encouraged to take a more leading role in supporting young people by enabling them to realise their personalised pathways. Developing coaching and mentoring relationships with individuals from the earliest ages possible, young people wanted the opportunity to create work portfolios which they felt empowered them as opposed to being boxed off into professions at too early an age.

It was recognised that for many businesses connecting with the education system proved complex and time-consuming for many. However, young people urged policy makers to drive a coordinated employer-pledge and support brokerage services which inspire future generations to play their part in creating a ‘Greater’ Manchester. One example could be the creation of a ‘Graduates for ‘Greater’ Manchester Growth Strategy’.

Comments from young people on the above issues:

“Manchester – build on its positive employment levels and excellent graduate retention levels to be some of the highest in UK and globally.”

“A ‘Greater’ Manchester - a global hub of international business and enterprise – about people, diversity, multiculturalism, languages and a skilled labour force that has been given the opportunity to be whatever you aspire to be through growth.”
WORKS-PERIENCE

PROFESSIONS

OPPORTUNITIES

INCENTIVES

SKILLS

??

PUTTING PIECES TOGETHER

NAVIGATING THE Labyrinth

WILL THE DOORS OPEN?

WILL BUSINESSES HAVE INCENTIVES TO OPEN DOORS

PROFIT OR LOSS?

BUSINESS CHALLENGES NO MORE JOBS FOR LIFE
2.4 Bridge-Building Equality

Young people saw that there is a bridge-building task needed to overcome the widening fractures in society and reduce the inequality gap. People are needed who can vision, design and build sustainable bridges to reduce the gap between those facing challenge and poorer life opportunities and those who have the resources, skills and connections to thrive in a modern-day society.

“Focus on reducing all aspects of inequality in society, creating better life opportunities better for all.”

“A world stage city creating pathways for people from every background, an equal opportunity for all.”

These bridge-builders may be located in schools, linking learning and curriculum to the needs of local communities; they may be situated within high-growth areas in Greater Manchester ensuring opportunity for all; or in community hubs that connect arts, culture and social-enterprise with opportunities for people to connect.

Young people saw a ‘Greater’ Manchester that was known as a city that cares – a positive place where better aspirations and opportunities are provided for every person to progress in life no matter what race, background or disability. They called for a generation of ‘bridge-builders’.

Comments from young people on the above issues:

“Focus on reducing all aspects of inequality in society, creating better life opportunities better for all.”

“A world stage city creating pathways for people from every background, an equal opportunity for all.”
SOCIETY IS FRACTURED
WHAT CAN BE DONE??

AMERICANO £4.25

EDUCATION?
WELFARE?
TAXES?

FOOD FOR THE WEEK £4.25

BUILDING BRIDGES

BRIDGE BUILDERS NEEDED.....
2.5 Vibrant Environment

The young people envisaged that Greater Manchester needed to build on its current strengths as a vibrant, colourful multicultural city. They saw the student population, music, innovation, football and the arts as real beacons to attract global interest. Manchester was pitched with Barcelona in relation to its status, look and feel.

Young people challenged the city as a whole to become more colourful and attractive to visitors through the effective use of green space, creative art and cultural events as well as building on its tradition and heritage no matter how quirky e.g. ‘Manchester Tart.’

Their vision for a ‘Greater’ Manchester is a city that gives a ‘voice’ to its multi-culturalism and diversity which makes it vibrant and colourful, expanding creativity and enriching the lives of its people.

Comments from young people on the above issues:

“Manchester should be known for ‘vibrancy’ and regeneration on a global scale. Regarded as ‘power hub’ of north. The UK capital city, without the expense of London”

“Colourful city – good for wellbeing, to include commissioned graffiti areas of colour and green, open spaces – using art in positive way!”

“Manchester’s diverse and vibrant culture attracting people and investment from around the world – the ‘place to be.’
CARELESS CITY (NOTHING CONNECTS) → CAR-LESS CITY

EVERYTHING CONNECTS IN REAL PLACES FOR REAL COMMUNITIES
3. Actions

Six key actions were highlighted by young people to ensure the vision they explored and discussed became a reality…

ACTION 1
Revolutionise the education system to create a personalised pathway of GROWTH for all (Giving, Resilience, Opportunity, Workwise, Talents, Hope)

ACTION 2
Create connected community hubs. Innovative spaces where people from different cultures and backgrounds meet to take collective responsibility for a ‘Greater’ Manchester

ACTION 3
Develop an employer pledge and co-ordinated strategy for young people to grow, retain and maximise future generations of talent

ACTION 4
Create a generation of bridge-builders who connect individuals, communities and businesses

ACTION 5
Bring more colour to Manchester through the creative exploitation of art, green space and community spirit

ACTION 6
Develop a car-less city centre which genuinely cares about the lives of everyone in it

Final comments from participants:
“I have learned how much I want Manchester to be renowned for the things that I am proud of it for – the buzzing innovation to continue, its diversity celebrated and identity solidified and appreciated.”

“This has been an insight into how to change our communities….That as individuals we can change our environment through small steps that benefit the majority.”
Thank You

Windmills and Manchester New Economy would like to thank the Principal, Staff and Students from Loreto college for going the extra mile and being such an inspiration. We would also like to thank Joe Ravetz, Co-Director from Centre for Urban Resilience and Energy, for providing enlightening illustrations which captured the learning from the young persons’ focus groups.

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