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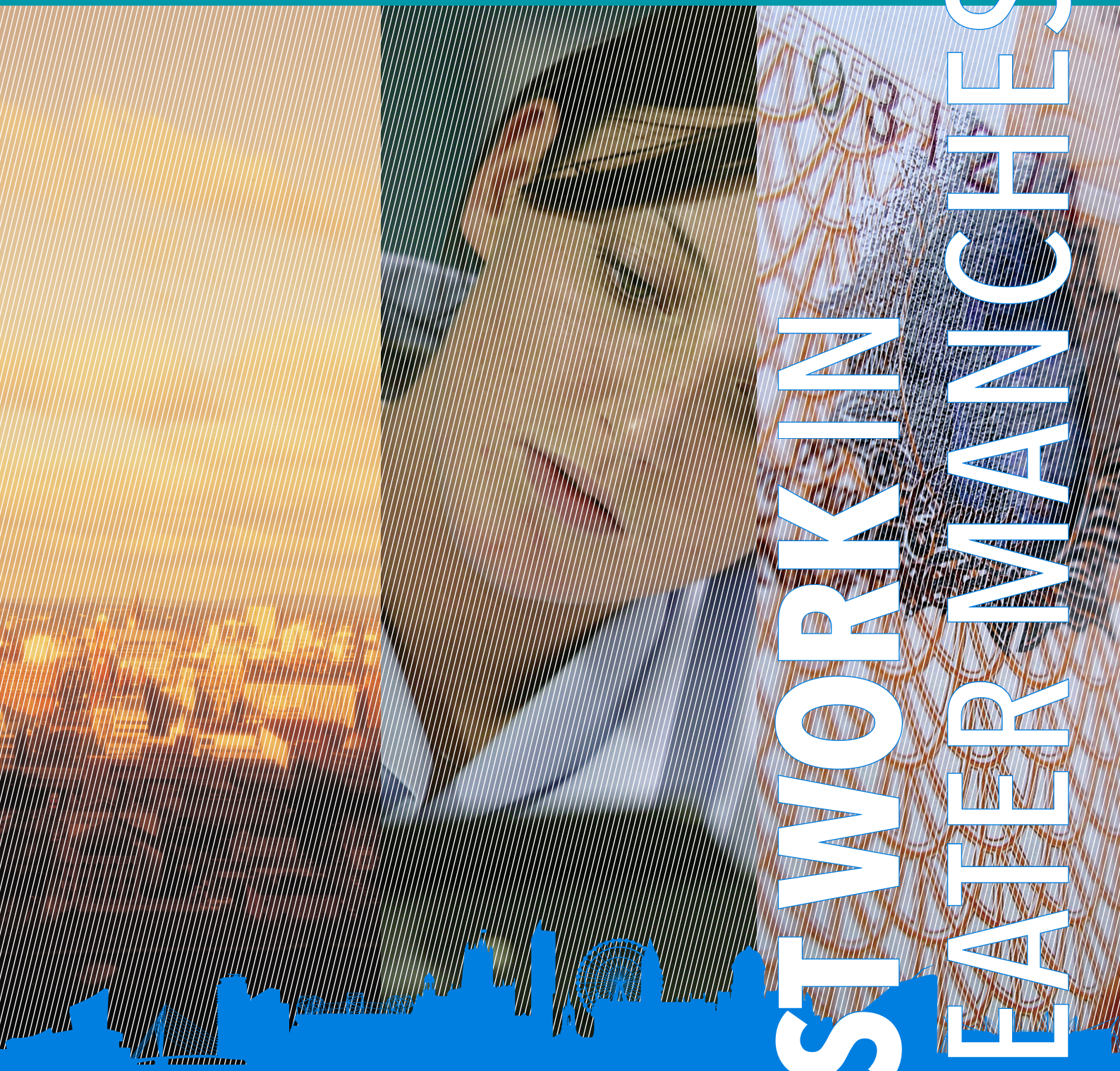
JUST WORK IN GREATER MANCHESTER



FairWRC

European Work & Employment Research Centre

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Foreword

This is the first in a series of reports for the research project **'Just Work in Greater Manchester'**, involving a team of researchers at **The University of Manchester's European Work and Employment research centre** and the **Fairness at Work research centre**. With funding from the Alliance strategic investment fund, the project was motivated by an ambition to understand the challenges and opportunities facing people in work across Greater Manchester, to investigate the varied obstacles facing those on 'the margins' of the labour market, and also to contribute to new ways of making work more equal, more inclusive and more rewarding.

A focus on 'just work' responds to national (and international) evidence that there is a growing gap between on the one hand people's different expectations of fair and just treatment, income security and fulfilment during their working life and on the other hand the kinds of conditions and possibilities on offer in today's labour market despite the promise of new technology. The report offers a preliminary 'scene-setting' analysis of issues. How has the economic and political environment of Greater Manchester changed? What kinds of jobs have expanded in recent years in Greater Manchester? What are people's aspirations towards paid employment today and how do these relate to views of just work? Which groups of workers are more or less disadvantaged? What happened to the traditional roles played by the public sector (as a good employer?) and trade unions in protecting standards? Does Greater Manchester provide sufficient numbers of jobs with decent pay and career prospects?

Just Work in Greater Manchester is an ongoing 30-month project with multiple stages of empirical data collection and analysis planned. This first report is based on analysis of documentation, statistical data and a series of discussions with key stakeholders to whom we are very grateful (see Appendix).

We hope this report sparks more discussions and debate about just work both in Greater Manchester and elsewhere. The analysis serves as a springboard for a second stage of research which involves case studies of large and small employers, networks of subcontractor organisations and various types of organisations that influence pathways into employment. We will investigate key issues, including those relating to the use of platform technologies, the experiences of older workers, workplace injustice, subcontracted work, and the potential for regulatory instruments, trade unions, anchor institutions and other actors to influence just work.

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Just Work: Against Inequality and Precarious Work

Developing a new approach and narrative

The challenges of providing decent employment opportunities for all appear to be at a high point. Across the city region of Greater Manchester, in common with much of the UK, a combination of factors have conspired to widen inequalities in the labour market, increase the incidence of precarious work and create new pockets of social exclusion. Labour market reforms since 2010, when the Conservative-led coalition government was elected, have played a major part in changing the overall balance of power in the labour market by reducing the security of employment and imposing new costs on those seeking legal redress.[1] New technologies have lowered thresholds for labour substitution in a growing number of occupations and industries, and platform ('gig economy') business models are testing traditional norms of worker and self-employed status leading to a polarisation of workers with and without employment rights and social protection. Women at work struggle to enjoy fair treatment in a context where many female-dominated workplaces lack trade union representation, public sector organisations face ongoing spending cuts and welfare reforms reduce supplementary tax credit income for the household. Evidence of multiple forms of conflict and harassment in UK workplaces means workers still experience discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, age and disability. Moreover, businesses continue to seek new cost-cutting strategies by unbundling production structures and using outsourcing and offshoring, but may also face increasing uncertainties themselves due to their fragile positioning in global value chains.[2]

There is a real need therefore to undertake a critical assessment of today's employment opportunities and their changing character. On the one hand of course, there is no doubt that the UK economy performs very well in creating jobs; the share of working-age people in paid employment is currently at a record high level. And for some people, work can open up new possibilities to develop skills, professional careers and fulfil long-held ambitions. On the other hand, however, access to paid employment is not a panacea. For too many people, there is mounting evidence that paid employment injects uncertainty over the scheduling of their days and nights, provides insufficient earnings to lift the household out of poverty, limits access to social security protection, denies the scope for purposeful activity and undermines individual dignity.[3] Positive change requires first of all new knowledge about how these inter-related challenges and problems influence management practices and worker experiences, as well as a wider appreciation of the responses of public sector organisations, trade unions and civic society institutions. Together, these different viewpoints and experiences can shape a perspective on the prospects for enhancing 'just work' in Greater Manchester. The aim of this report is to develop a new approach and narrative that better reflects the way different social actors can develop and sustain more ethical employment strategies and experiences in the face of a fragile and fast-changing environment.[4] With new knowledge and concerted, coordinated actions the institutions and residents of Greater Manchester will be in a better position to develop the long-term capacities that enable productive, dignified and sustainable work, namely 'just work'.

Uncovering precarious work and identifying vulnerable workers

Among the academic and policy community there is no agreed definition of what constitutes precarious work and conversely nor is there a consensus on what constitutes decent work or 'just work'. Recent undercover investigations into working conditions within the care sector, retail, and warehouse work within some of the UK's largest firms have uncovered troubling evidence of oppressive working conditions, bullying and non-compliance with legal regulations such as the national minimum wage.[5] But this leaves open the question of what we can and should aspire to in terms of creating and sustaining decent work.

On one level, the quality of a job may be measured through observable characteristics such as wages, working time, and job security, but the presence and functioning of mechanisms of staff engagement and worker voice are also important dimensions of what might be considered good jobs or good employers.[6] There are also the more subjective issues of job satisfaction and worker wellbeing gathered through self-report surveys.[7] Sociologists have examined the rich and varied experience of work itself and the strong relationships which workers develop with each other even in the most trying of circumstances.[8] 'Jobs with justice'[9] have been described as those built around the dimensions of fit, freedom, and fulfilment, which reflect: the extent to which jobs reflect workers' skills, preferences and personal circumstances; the extent to which workers are free to accept/decline work or to move between jobs; and the degree of fulfilment and intrinsic rewards workers derive from their jobs.

Technology has the power to simultaneously 'liberate' workers by automating the most routine and mundane tasks on the one hand, and to 'enslave' workers by increasing the scope and depth of managerial surveillance at work, and blurring the divide between work and home life through 24/7 email

communication. Some have argued that the role of technology threatens the survival of 'work' altogether in certain sectors such as retail and manufacturing where humans could be replaced by automated, self-service and online modes of production and consumption within a generation.[10] Similar bold claims have been made in the past but have not yet come to pass, perhaps owing to the relative cheapness and disposability of labour in the UK (compared to high fixed costs of machinery). Nevertheless, it seems likely that complex trade-offs between the amount, type and quality of jobs will have to be negotiated, which carries implications for different groups of workers.

While there may be no commonly accepted definition of what constitutes precarious work, it is often presented as including one or more of low wages, irregular hours, weak union representation, uncertain job security, exposure to poor treatment, risk of outsourcing and limited social security protection (Figure 1).[11] The international evidence suggests that while other countries are also witnessing a rise in precariousness, the problems are more severe in the UK due to its lightly regulated labour market and weak mechanisms for worker voice.[12] The persistently high share of low wage jobs in the UK, combined with various forms of contingent and on-demand work such as casual, temporary agency and zero hours contracts, underline the adverse consequences of the UK's mode of labour market governance. A growing share of workers are in 'second-choice' jobs, involuntarily accepting part-time rather than full-time work and temporary rather than permanent.[13] Also, the recent expansion of self employment (genuine and bogus) and freelance work in the 'gig economy' raises further questions about workers' access to basic employment rights and social protection, and, more generally, the quality and sustainability of job creation since the turn of the century.

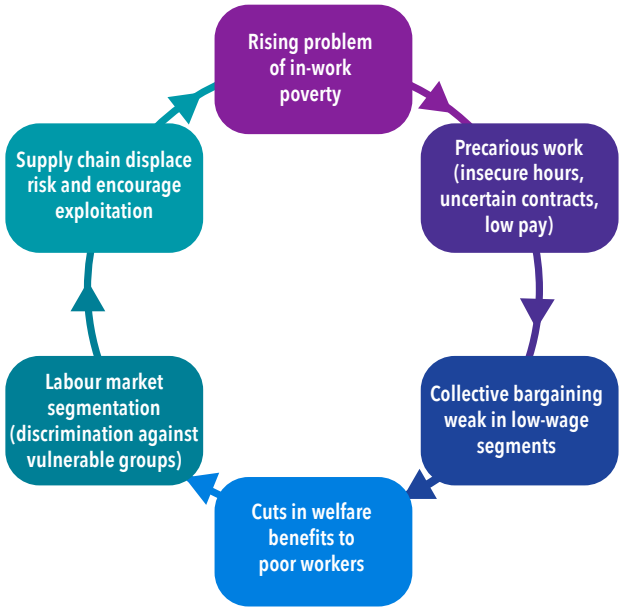


Figure 1. Features of precarious work in the UK

A further key challenge is that the struggle to address precarious work and promote just work must confront the high levels of inequality in the UK. Divisions between good and bad jobs are less of an issue when everyone shares a regular experience of transitioning through bad to good forms of employment. However, there are dangers to social cohesion if workers from certain population groups face a higher risk than others of becoming trapped in precarious work and experiencing limited access to decent jobs. The evidence suggests the UK labour market does segment good and bad jobs unevenly and unfairly across workforce groups. Workers at most risk include women (who are over-represented in low-wage part-time jobs[14]), young people (who are often held back by irregular temporary work and false self employment[15]), older people (who often work in low paid jobs because they offer more flexible part-time work that fits with their health conditions and caring responsibilities[16]), individuals with few formal educational qualifications, specific ethnic groups (black Africans and Bangladeshis face especially large pay penalties for example[17]) and migrant workers (many of whom are crowded into marginalised forms of subcontracted work as well as forced labour[18]).

A focus on Greater Manchester

Given the key role Greater Manchester played in the industrial revolution, it has been absolutely central in historic debates about the nature of industrialism, industrial and modern work and the politics of work.[19] In the present day, the new politically configured city region of Greater Manchester once again has the potential to play a critical role in the future growth and rebalancing of the national economy. With the devolution of powers, a new mayor in May 2017, and a long-term plan for 'a competitive, dynamic and sustainable economy[20], Greater Manchester offers a promising landscape for investigating the factors that enable and hinder just work. Of course Greater Manchester has a powerful legacy and today's narrative is strongly tied to its long-term trajectory of deindustrialisation, growth of the service sector, and ability to adapt to continuous restructuring in the public and private sectors.

From a methodological perspective, a focus on Greater Manchester facilitates a detailed investigation of local labour market dynamics, assisted by local knowledge and experience of many of the key stakeholder organisations, local patterns of employment and the difficulties and opportunities of life and work in the region. Fundamentally, the world of work is socially, culturally, politically and institutionally embedded and this calls for a 'contextualised approach' to understanding the relationships between the many social actors, such as employers, trade unions, civic society organisations and government agencies, and their influence on the nature of work and employment.[21] Other studies provide useful comparators for the charting of the sociological dynamics of work, communities and place in the north of England.[22]

Of the ten local authorities that make up Greater Manchester's population of 2.7 million, Manchester city is the largest with over 500,000 residents; the other nine local authorities accommodate between approximately 200,000 and 300,000 residents. The population of Greater Manchester grew by 7% (183,100) between 2004 and 2014 roughly in line with the national average of 8%, although the city of Manchester experienced double this rate of growth at 17%. In broad terms Greater Manchester at present has a relatively young population (with an average age of 37.8 years compared with the England average of 39.3 years), but the population is ageing; the number of people aged 65 and over is expected to grow by 44% by 2028.[23]

Towards a Post-Industrial City Region?

How has Greater Manchester's economy changed?

The 1960s marked a key turning point for Greater Manchester when manufacturing suffered a steep decline, followed by the cumulative loss of around half of all industrial jobs by the early 1990s. A key policy issue has therefore been to ensure the replacement of jobs in the service sector, public and private.[24] Since the 1990s, Greater Manchester has undergone a further transformation, especially in Manchester centre, with extensive redevelopment of the city centre retail and commercial areas. In common with the rest of the country, services have been the driver of job growth, with manufacturing accounting for less than one in ten jobs by 2015 (9.6%).[25]

Looking ahead, the representatives from different stakeholder organisations (see Appendix) have great ambitions for the region (and the city of Manchester specifically) to strengthen its position on both the national and international stage through various investment opportunities and collaborative projects drawing down both public and private funds, including attracting new investors from China and the Middle East. Efforts are underway to promote the area as an attractive location for company headquarters by creating a well-connected 'business friendly' environment; the Co-operative group, Umbro, and PZ Cussons already have their headquarters in Greater Manchester (Appendix).

Two economic developments are strategically important for the Greater Manchester economy, Airport City and Media City. The airport establishes connections with overseas businesses (trade and investment), local business spill overs, logistics and tourism.[26] It is the largest airport outside the South East and brings further local benefits because the local authority retains a stake in the controlling company, the Manchester Airports Group. 'Airport City' is under development (Box 1) and promises to offer 'a new commercial district for high-end logistics, advanced manufacturing and European Headquarters'.[27]

At Media City in Salford, while many of the first wave of jobs in 2009 were high-wage individuals who transferred from BBC offices in London, the development has since been an important driver of creative industry jobs in the local economy, as well as low skilled service-related jobs. Notably, the BBC has a graduate trainee programme which recruits one in five of its graduates from Salford University, contributing to retention of graduates in Greater Manchester (see below). An interviewee at one of the city region's welfare advice centre reflected on the changes in the area:

> ***'When I came here to work in 1996 Salford was just a pig sty, absolutely horrendous, there was police chases everyday past here, gangs, and then the council started putting in bids, they got a load of money for the Imperial War Museum, they started developing Salford Quays and Media City, it's incredible. It shows it can happen. The problem has been a lot of the jobs don't go to the people in Salford….[but] when some of them came up they discovered they could sell their house in London for £750,000 and buy a mansion here for £150-200,000….. So although those people didn't necessarily come from Salford they now live in Salford and that's good.'***

Box 1. Airport City Manchester

Airport City Manchester is a £650m development for advanced manufacturing, logistics, offices, retail and hotels which aims to stimulate the Greater Manchester economy. It is a joint venture partnership between the Manchester Airports Group (MAG), Beijing Construction Engineering Group (BCEG), Carillion PLC, the Greater Manchester Pension Fund (GMPF) and Argent. Building started in 2012 and is expected to be finished for 2030. The government granted the area Enterprise Zone status, which provides financial incentives for businesses operating in the area (e.g. reduced business rates). It is hoped 16,000 jobs will be added to the 19,000 already in employment at the airport, with many in high value-added and high skilled areas such as logistics, digital and creative, and advanced manufacturing. It is notable that the development has fixed a target of 50% of all vacancies to go to Greater Manchester residents. The global online retailer Amazon and national delivery company DHL have already opened warehouses in the area, providing job opportunities for local residents, for example in Wythenshawe. A further key aim is to attract inward investment from China, with a direct flight to Beijing and a 'Chinese cluster' included as part of the development.

Sources:
http://www.airportcity.co.uk/about/;
http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/1665/manchester airport_master_plan_to_2030;
http://www.manchester.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/20106/8_manchester_airport _city_enterprise_zone_update;
http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/business/business-news/amazon-warehouse-manchester-airport-city-10543349;
http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/business/business-news/manchester-airports-group-launches-130m-10321318.

In terms of political developments, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the collaborative working relationships between the ten local authorities represent a distinctive feature of Greater Manchester that sets it apart from other city regions. In the context of political devolution, stakeholders agreed that the GMCA represented a key opportunity to harness collaborative working relationships and to address labour market challenges. In particular, they felt political devolution promises an opportunity for those geographical areas that have not experienced sufficient growth in high skilled employment. Devolution could mean all local authorities enjoying a fairer level of policy influence and distribution of resources as part of an effort to achieve shared goals for the city region':

> *'There is clearly a polarised society [in Greater Manchester] where a lot of people are left behind and that is now impacting on everybody and therefore it cannot be ignored as it has in the past. In the past it's been very much 'your problem' and now it's not, it's 'our problem' because it affects everybody in what they want to do'. (GM Growth Hub representative)*

This indicates the potential risk of focusing economic development on the high tech digital and creative industries, since many of workers in the relatively deprived boroughs do not yet have the skill sets to take advantage of these better paying jobs and instead, are concentrated in the low-wage service sector economy, which perpetuates the cycle of disadvantage.[28] The argument here is that more needs to be done to upgrade the large swathes of regular service sector jobs, as well as increase investment in the high tech industries as part of a more inclusive economic development strategy in Greater Manchester.

Poverty and uneven growth

Recent analysis by the Joseph Rowntree foundation underlines the extent and severity of deprivation across Greater Manchester, and argues that the election of a mayor provides a crucial opportunity to ensure that more residents benefit from the 'Northern Powerhouse'. However, despite optimism surrounding the 'Devo Manc' and 'Northern Powerhouse' agenda[29], there is evidence of uneven growth across Greater Manchester. The old policy approach assumed that 'de-industrialised' cities could be revitalised through simple agglomeration economics – that is, by accelerating growth in the city centres of Birmingham and Manchester, say, at the expense of dynamic economies in neighbouring localities and smaller towns – while also assuming that the negative externalities created by growth such as rising costs could be eased by further supply side deregulation.[30] This approach was the object of critique among most of our interviewed stakeholders. Several observed that Greater Manchester has still not fully recovered from the loss of the engineering and textiles sectors. They argued that whilst there may have been growth in some of the high productivity sectors

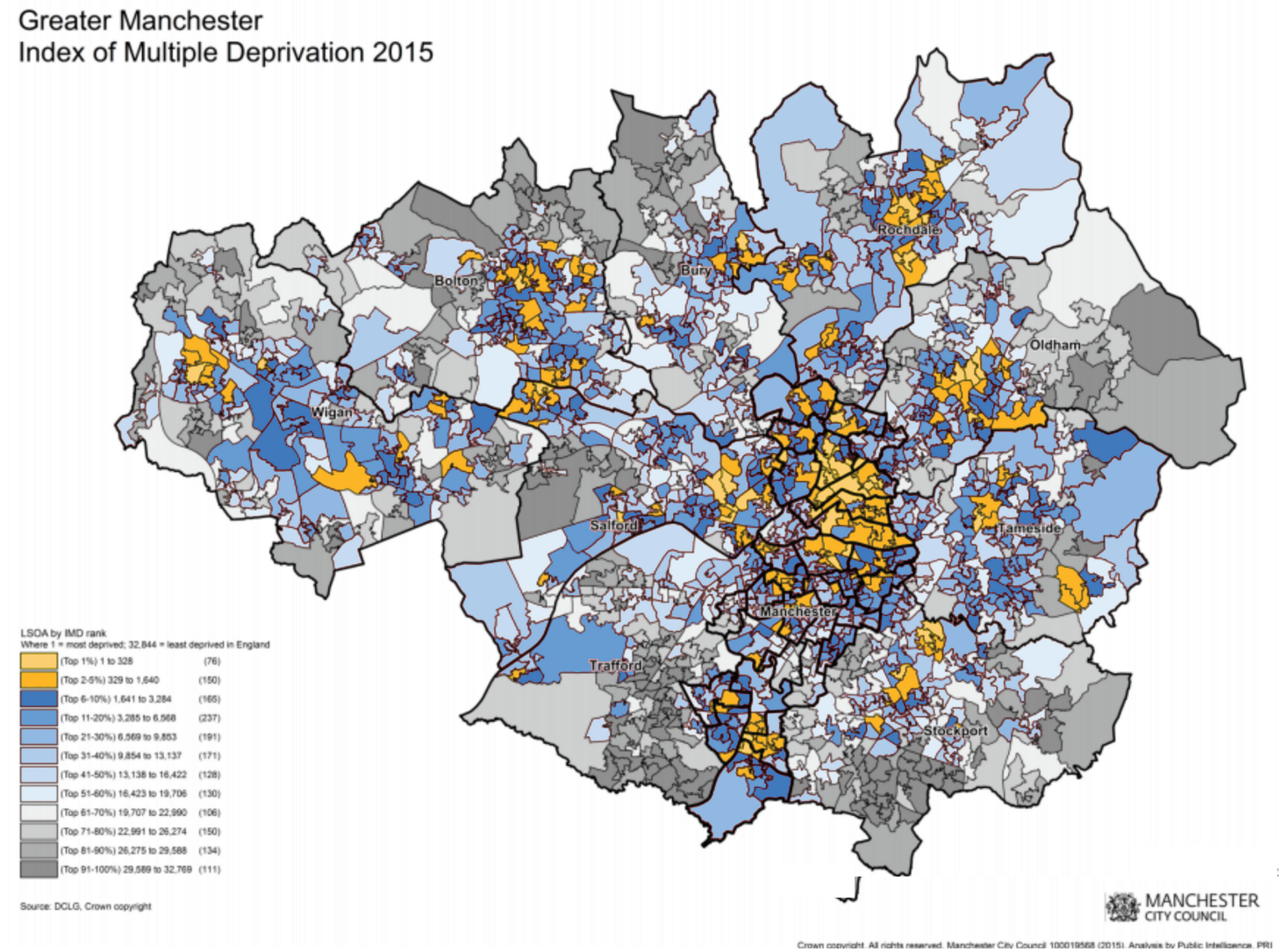


Figure 2. Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 with local authority boundaries

this has not created the same number of regular jobs lost to deindustrialisation.

An important headline indicator of uneven growth is the level of poverty and deprivation for Greater Manchester and for its many local areas. Many stakeholders expressed concerns about the apparent persistence of poverty and deprivation despite the significant regeneration efforts across the area. This is confirmed by the data. Levels of deprivation across Greater Manchester are high relative to the rest of the country; it is the third most deprived Local Enterprise Partnership area in the country and Manchester local authority has consistently been in the top five most deprived local authorities since the IMD was first calculated in 2007. Moreover, deprivation is unevenly distributed with high levels of concentration to the east of Manchester city centre and Salford, and in some of the outlying urban areas such as Wigan, Bolton, Rochdale, and Oldham (figure 2).

Although the city of Manchester has been the focal point of much redevelopment, other boroughs within GM have not automatically been able to capitalise on this success and benefit from the 'trickle down' in terms of investment and business growth. For example while the city of Salford has benefited from significant regeneration efforts, the developments are very close to the centre of Manchester and risk being disconnected from the rest of the Salford borough which is made up of a number of smaller towns interspersed with large areas of social housing. Physical gaps can of course be bridged with good, affordable transport. However, despite investment in tram routes, public transport remains expensive and provision is patchy in key areas, especially regarding east-west routes across the region. The data show that the bulk of commuters live and work within Greater Manchester and most work within their own borough. There is evidence that some workers travel up to 90 minutes each way to get to work because of the lack of choice over jobs in the local labour market. Also, the cost of bus fares for those on the minimum wage means more people are walking long distances to their place of work.[31]

A polarised private services economy?

The role of services in driving the economy raises two important questions for the future employment landscape of Greater Manchester:

1. Can job growth in the service economy keep up with job destruction in the manufacturing sector?
2. Is there evidence of an upgrading of jobs with more people benefiting from high-wage opportunities, or a polarised distribution of low-wage and high-wage jobs?

Evidence of low and falling unemployment, coupled with a seemingly balanced shift in numbers of jobs from manufacturing to services, suggests at first glance the answer to the first question is yes. Following the ruptures caused by the 2008-09 recession and then the start of public spending cuts in 2010, unemployment for both men and women began to steadily fall from 2012; dropping to 6.9% (men) and 5.6% (women) by 2016 (figure 3a). Moreover, over the 12 year period between 2004 and 2016 it is clear that employment has shifted from manufacturing to services: the data in figure 3b show that net job growth in Greater Manchester was recorded in the public sector and the

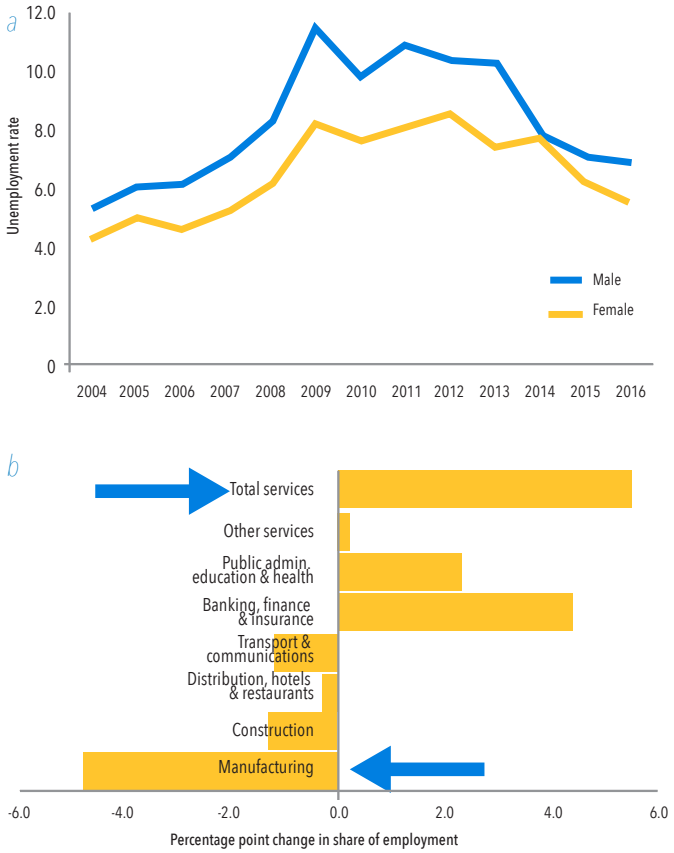


Figure 3. Changing patterns of labour market activity in Greater Manchester, 2004-2016

a. Male and female unemployment rates
Notes: U/E rate 16-64
Source: Annual Population Survey

b. Change in services and manufacturing employment
Notes: SIC 2007 codes
Source: Annual Population

banking and finance sectors, and relatively similar net job losses in the manufacturing and construction sectors. This pattern broadly follows trends for the UK.

However, further interrogation reveals a more nuanced picture. Unemployment has fallen at least in part due to the growth in non-standard forms of employment, especially self-employment and temporary work, an issue we pick up below. Also, while the risk of unemployment has fallen it remains very high among youth and is unevenly distributed among Greater Manchester local authorities:

- there are significantly higher rates of unemployment in the localities of Manchester (8.2%) and Salford (8.5%) compared with 6.7% for Greater Manchester overall; and
- unemployment is twice as high among young people aged 16-24 years old at a rate of almost one in five (17%) in Greater Manchester compared with 14% nationally.

With regard to the second question posed above, the evidence points to a combination of both upgrading and polarisation of jobs (figure 4). In the 12 years since 2004, the city region has enjoyed a substantial expansion in the share of people working in professional occupations, which rank among the highest paid jobs. At the same time, Greater Manchester has experienced a major reduction in the share of people working in jobs paid at or slightly below the middle of the wage distribution, namely those associated with skilled trades, administrative and clerical jobs in particular. Among the lowest paid jobs, by contrast, employment has tended to expand - in caring,

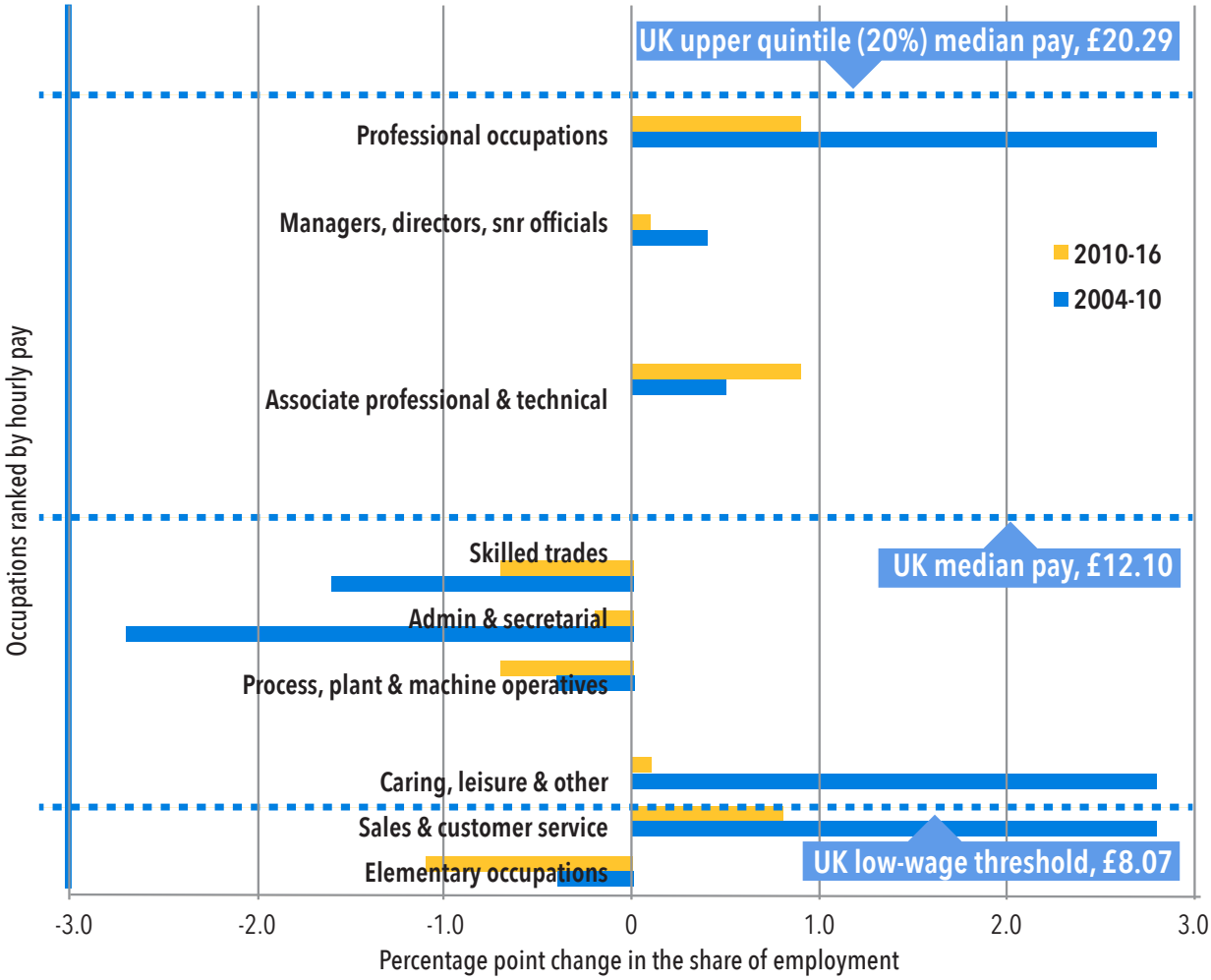


Figure 4. Change in the share of employment in the nine major occupational groups ranked by gross hourly median wages, 2004-2016, Greater Manchester. Source: ONS Annual population survey and ASHE data, SOC 1-digit categories of occupations.

leisure, sales and customer service occupations – although with a fall in the share employed in 'elementary occupations' (which include cleaning for example) especially in the more recent 2010-16 period. Figure 4 ranks these occupations by level of earnings using 2016 data. This highlights both the gap between low paid and high paid jobs and the fact that many of the large occupational groups in Greater Manchester are paid significantly less than the UK median wage of £12.10 in 2016. Indeed, it is worrying that growth in jobs in the caring, leisure, sales and customer service occupations does not generate a level of pay (at the median level for each occupation) higher than the low-wage threshold.[32]

What is 'Just Work'?

A key dimension of the current research is to explore contrasting perceptions of what constitutes 'just work', how 'just work' can be measured in both relative and absolute terms, and what can be done to maximise the chances that employers across Greater Manchester create and sustain such jobs. What constitutes a 'good' or a 'great' job is difficult to pin down, reflecting individual needs and preferences, relative standards in both the local and national labour market at a particular point in time, and changing expectations about what work (and what employers) should 'offer'. Nevertheless, there is close to a broad consensus among Greater Manchester stakeholders that in terms of observable characteristics a good job combines fair reward, fringe benefits, security, and opportunities for progression, and a good workplace provides respect and dignity for all workers, along with effective mechanisms of worker engagement and voice. Taken together, these factors have a strong potential to contribute positively to overall job satisfaction, productivity and worker wellbeing which is to the benefit of Greater Manchester as a whole.

Benchmarking Just Work

The quality of work within Greater Manchester is a key concern among all stakeholders. Quality work underpins sustainable economic growth since it reduces pressures on government to finance subsidies such as tax credits for workers employed in low wage, low hours and/or insecure jobs. Also, while low levels of unemployment signal a buoyant labour market, this does not necessarily mean workers can exercise free choice over the type, location, or quality of the jobs they undertake.

> ***'People are glad to have a job so they don't look at where their job falls in the spectrum of good to bad…' [TUC representative]***

There are further good economic reasons to promote secure employment. The experience of unemployment has a 'scarring effect' on future prospects and increases the risk of repeat spells of unemployment, low wages and precarious employment, aggravated by the UK's system of weak employment protection rights.[33] Rational supply-side choices exercised by individuals are moreover distorted by the discipline and sanction model of the welfare regime, as Ken Loach's film dramatically portrayed. Poor work has profound social costs. One stakeholder reflected

on the 'drudgery' and lack of fulfilment from work experienced by too many. All stakeholders interviewed were concerned about the proliferation of hidden forms of precarity such as self employment, involuntary part-time and agency work, and the lack of job security experienced by younger workers, particularly in key growth sectors such as media and creative industries where freelance contracts were common (even at large institutions such as the BBC).3

Against these common concerns, and drawing in more detail on the interview data and documentary evidence, the following analysis derives five key features of 'just work':

i) Job security
ii) Decent pay and fair pay
iii) Careers and skill development
iv) Voice, silence and dignity
v) Public sector employment

i) Job security

In terms of the defining features of decent work, UNISON were unequivocal:

'Good work is secure work first and foremost…'

One of the hallmarks of the national jobs recovery since 2010 has been the shift away from full-time permanent employment to more irregular employment forms, including temporary agency work, self-employment, casual employment (particularly zero hours contracts) and fixed-term employment.[34] This pattern is true for the Greater Manchester city region also (Figure 5). This partially bears out the suggestion that the economic recovery has been partly driven by a growth in non-standard work.

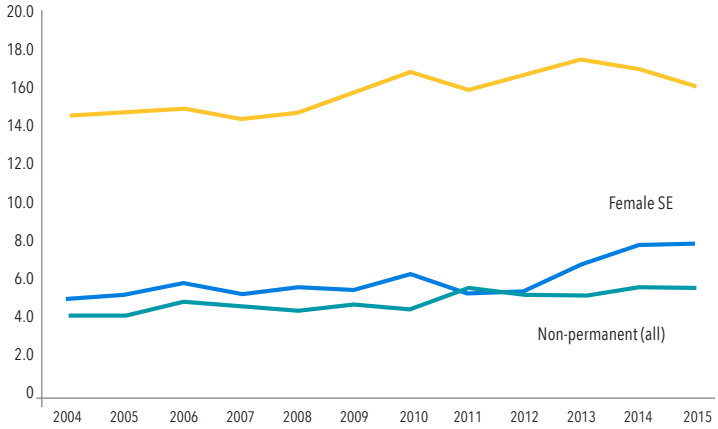


Figure 5. Self employment and non permanent employment as % of total in employment in Greater Manchester, 2004-2015
Note: 'non-permanent' refers to fixed-term, casual or temporary agency workers. Source: Annual Population Survey, accessed at Nomis web

Here we examine three key forms of insecure work and address the risks each form poses for workers and the Greater Manchester economy. Considering firstly self employment, compared with the UK pattern, Greater Manchester has a comparatively high share of 'employees' (87.3% compared with 85.7%) and a lower share of self-employed workers (12.3% compared with 13.8%). However, the share of self-employed workers has grown at a faster rate since the recession in 2008 (16% proportional increase compared with 11.3% nationally). While men are much more likely to be self-employed, the rate of growth in female self employment since 2008 has been much sharper – with a 40% increase in Greater Manchester compared with a 27% increase across the UK, possibly because it provides more opportunities for flexible working, although this deserves further scrutiny (figure 5). Pay tends to be lower for the self-employed, with an estimated 51% paid below the low wage threshold, which may be because the statutory minimum wage does not apply to this group nor do they benefit from contracted hours of work.[35]

There is a higher share of workers who are 'non-permanent' (e.g. fixed-term, casual or temporary agency) in GM compared with the UK (5.7% vs. 5.2%), and this share has risen (proportionally) by over 25% in GM since 2008 (compared with 13% across the UK). Data for Manchester (unavailable for Greater Manchester) suggest around one in 25 workers are employed in a temporary agency job (4% of total employment), which is roughly in line with the national figure. Moreover, the scale of temporary agency work has not fluctuated substantially, even during and immediately after the economic crisis. Whilst these data are for Manchester as opposed to Greater Manchester, the number of 'low wage' agency jobs is smaller than anticipated; most are full-time and pay above the Living Wage. Indeed it is notable that

Box 2. Precarious temporary work in a Greater Manchester university ('GM Uni')

Nearly one in three academic staff at GM Uni are employed on some form of temporary contract. The practice varies across departments with social work and education for example routinely using casual hourly paid contracts to fill Associate Lecturer positions; staff are engaged for the semester or academic year to deliver the specific lectures and seminars needed and paid for the contact and preparation time only (far lower therefore than would be the case for someone in a salaried position). This resulted in a rather fragmented system of payment for teaching staff who, according to a union representative, experienced significant variations in earnings from semester to semester and in some cases from month to month, with a marked drop during the summer. The complexity of the system and its perceived 'unfairness' to fixed-term hourly paid staff was exacerbated by the strategy of 'splitting' academic roles into broad groups of tasks and rewarding them at the rate of comparator jobs within the organisation such as clerical roles:

'So they [managers] say we'll pay you at this rate for this aspect of your job such as teaching and at this other rate for supervision, marking or tutorials….'

Not only did this drag individual earnings down but it meant that temporary, hourly paid staff were treated fundamentally differently to permanent staff who would be paid at a single (and typically higher) rate regardless of the task.

Source: Grimshaw, D., Johnson, M., Keizer, A. and Rubery, J. (2016) Reducing Precarious Work through Social Dialogue: An Analysis of 'Protective Gaps' facing People at Work in the UK, Report for the European Commission, DG Employment (pp157).

use of temporary agency workers and fixed-term temporary contracts is common across the skill spectrum of jobs. The higher education sector, for example, which is a major employer in Greater Manchester, displays a very high use of temporary jobs and has recently been the object of a media spotlight on precarious work (see Box 2).[36]

The number of people employed on zero hours contracts in the North West currently stands at 102,000 (3% of people in employment) which reflects trends in the UK more generally (903,000 people or 2.9% of people in employment). It is important to note how the number of people on zero hours contracts has increased substantially in recent years, with 2008 pre-recession figures standing at 143,000 (0.5% of total employment) for the UK – an increase of 760,000 workers between 2008 and 2016. In addition, there is an age and gender dimension to this with women (a 3.4% share of employment) more likely to be employed on zero hour contracts than men (2.4% of employment) – UK figures) and young people aged 16-25 (8.4% - UK figures) most likely to be on zero hours contracts than any other age group.[37] There is also an earnings penalty for people on zero hours contracts; the TUC estimates a weekly median pay penalty of up to 37% compared to other employees.[38] This might be explained by the fact that zero hours contracts tend to be employed in low paying sectors, such as health and social care which employs 21.7% of the workforce on this basis.[39] Given that Greater Manchester has a high share of employment in low paying sectors such as retail, hospitality and care work (see below) it faces a real challenge in reducing the share of people employed on zero hours contracts.

For trade unions and civil society organisations, the proliferation of insecure jobs has caused a diminishing in the social and economic status of individuals. The more that employers depend on insecure employment forms and contractual forms of work that reduce entitlement to employment rights and social protection the greater the risk that segments of the more vulnerable workforce (whether due to age, disability, or limited education for example) are rendered 'invisible' and both the worker and their work become marginalised in the city. The TUC representative stressed that while it was important not to have an overly nostalgic view of work in the 'golden age', nor to assume that all new forms of work were automatically precarious, nevertheless, the issue of basic rights and felt fair comparisons with peers was an important yardstick:

> ***'The employment landscape is so different now and that means challenges in defining what is a good job… For some people the idea of working in a factory all their life would not be a good job…but even if you are on a temporary contract you should still have the same terms and conditions'***

The ACAS interviewee argued young people did not necessarily want to work in a traditional factory environment where conditions could be dirty and working time might require unsocial hours and shift work, and instead might prefer retail work whatever the contract terms or rate of pay. The TUC representative argued that young people's expectations had lowered in the context of the harsh realities of the labour market:

> ***'Young people now would think they are doing pretty well if they got a permanent contract and have some terms and conditions which protect them if they fell ill…if they get something above the statutory entitlement…. Young people's expectations are so low then they would think that was a great job… Our job is to say that there can be a different situation.'***

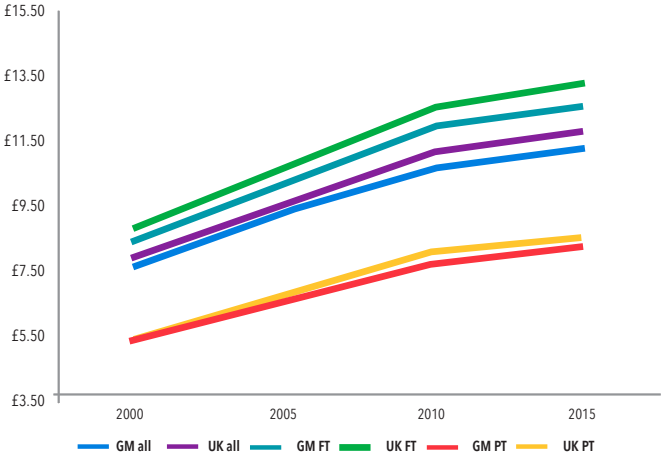
The TUC representative argued that although unions may have a view on the power asymmetry reinforced by certain employment relationships such as zero hours contracts or freelance jobs in the 'gig economy', it was not for the unions to say what kinds of employment workers should take as people may want some flexibility or may want to work freelance on top of their main job. The problem is when zero hours contracts and self employment are exploitative and arise out of a constrained choice for workers, as we find for example with delivery drivers in the 'gig economy' who are contracted on a self-employment basis and not entitled to basic employment rights including the minimum wage and holidays.[40] There have been calls for government to implement regulation to protect the 'false self employed' or economically dependent self employed, including a guaranteed minimum wage for workers in such roles.[41]

For their part, unions are playing a clear role in promoting core rights to which all workers should be entitled to such as sick pay, holiday pay and the chance to contribute to a pension scheme. Moreover, the challenge now is how to enforce standards in a context of fragmented business networks with multiple tiers of subcontracting and informal employment relations. The employment tribunal ruling that Uber taxi drivers should be categorised as workers rather than self-employed (and therefore be entitled to holiday pay and sick pay) is important in highlighting the problem of bogus self-employment. For the GMB, who led the challenge, it is said to have spurred mobilisation of many workers who have traditionally been hard to unionise owing to the lack of a fixed workplace, and irregular work patterns.

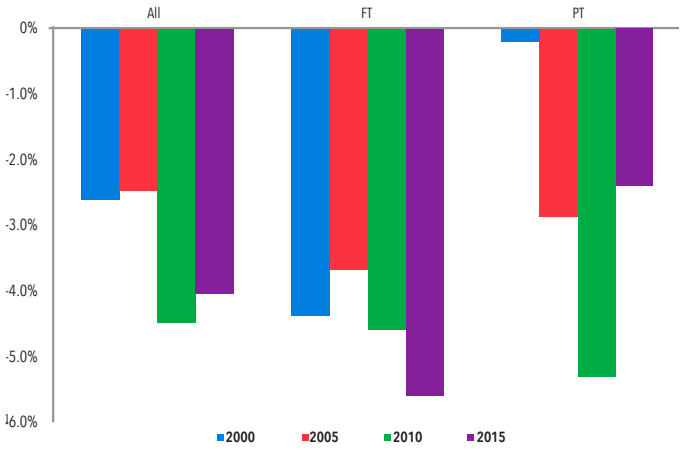
ii) Decent pay and fair pay

Alongside job security, concerns over decent pay and a fair distribution of pay between groups have increased in recent years. Our stakeholders raised concerns about low pay across Greater Manchester, pointed to the important role of the living wage campaign and worried about the more general problem of real wage stagnation and the erosion of terms and conditions for public sector workers.

Gross hourly earnings for residents of Greater Manchester are lower than for the UK, and the situation has deteriorated since 2000. At £11.20, median hourly resident wages in Greater Manchester are 4.0% lower than the UK average of £11.72. Furthermore, despite steady growth in nominal wages for both full and part-time workers since 2000 (figure 6a), the pay penalty for Greater Manchester residents has widened since 2005, particularly for full-time workers (figure 6b).



a) Gross hourly nominal median wages



b) Wage penalty (GM vs. UK)

Figure 6. Resident median hourly wages for full-timers and part-timers in Greater Manchester and the UK, 2000-2015.
Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, user specified request

Adjusting for inflation, median real wage growth across Greater Manchester (similarly to the UK) has slowed and stagnated in the period since 2000: wages in the private sector were drastically affected by the 2008-09 recession and the pay freeze and ongoing 1% cap on public sector pay has added to downward slump in household incomes. Current projections for the UK suggest wages will not recover to their pre-2008 levels until 2021.[42] The lack of wage growth for the public sector workforce was a particular concern for UNISON:

> ***'The whole issue of low pay - it's not sufficient just to want better minimum thresholds of pay because the real earnings of the whole public service workforce has declined quite a lot over the last ten years …. 20% since 2008 … so that's an average of £2,000 per worker'.***

Several unions identified the erosion of terms and conditions for both public and private sector workers as a key area of concern. For the TUC terms and conditions were not 'luxuries' but a basic safety for workers should they fall ill, and UNISON suggested sick pay was a particular target for local authorities and hospitals looking to save money. The Unite interviewee noted that pensions and pay progression within the NHS had been altered several times in quick succession:

> ***'One of the big ones is erosion of conditions… - the pay freeze is the easiest one to look at but also things like taking away of automatic increments within each pay band. There have been lots of other things [NHS managers] are looking at - sick pay, pensions - they have altered the pension scheme 3 times in the last 10 years. Every time it's been a case of if you do this we won't have to look at it and then within 3 or 4 years another alteration has been brought to the table.'***

Alterations to redundancy schemes were also to the detriment of many workers who were at risk of restructuring and downsizing, and according to Unite, some employers were attempting to dismiss workers (for gross misconduct) rather than making them redundant and incurring severance payments:

> ***'Rather than pay them redundancy you get rid of them. It also looks bad saying we're making people redundant, it's just everything and anything now is gross misconduct so you have to fight them on that.'***

Low pay is a major issue in the Greater Manchester labour market and all stakeholders raised concerns, whether from the perspective of low pay holding back productivity improvements, the contribution of low pay to worker poverty or the urgent need for better routes for pay progression and skill development. Earnings data from the Office for National Statistics highlight the problem and provide two indicators, one for employee jobs located in Greater Manchester and another for resident employees; both measures exclude the self employed and so underestimate the overall scale of low wage work in the city region. Here we report a measure of low pay as gross hourly earnings less than the independently fixed 'UK Living Wage'.[43] The headline findings for 2016 are:

- by residence, almost one in four employees of Greater Manchester were low paid (24.3%) - a significantly higher figure than for the UK (21.1%); and
- by place of work, the share is less at 22.8% for Greater Manchester, still higher than the UK measure of 21.1%.

There is considerable variation across the city region. For the residence measure, figure 7 reports very high shares of people surviving on low paid jobs in the four local authorities of Manchester, Rochdale, Wigan and Oldham – more than one in four residents - and yet far lower shares, below the national average in fact, among residents of Stockport, Bury and particularly Trafford. There is thus enormous variation in the experience of low paid work across the ten local authorities of the combined city region.

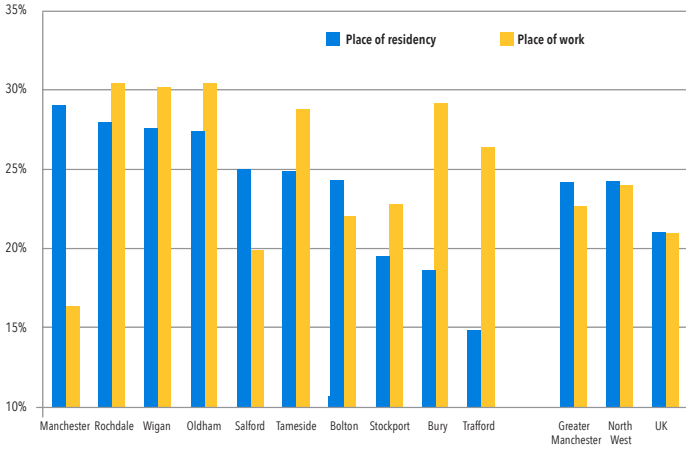


Figure 7. Low-Wage Work: the share of all employee jobs in Greater Manchester paid less than the living wage, by residence and by place of work, 2016

Notes: gross hourly earnings excluding overtime for employee jobs (place of residency and place of work); all adult employees; authors' estimations from decile earnings figures. Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2016.

Figure 7 also contrasts the residency measure with that of jobs in the local authority. We find different patterns among local authorities. In three local authorities (Manchester, Salford and Bolton) the quality of jobs on offer within the place is significantly greater than the experience of work among residents. The difference is most striking for Manchester and reflects the fact that higher paid jobs are more likely to be taken by employees commuting in from outside the local authority. Nevertheless, the low share of low wage jobs in Manchester local authority can be interpreted as success in generating higher paid jobs.[44] There is a different pattern in a second group of local authorities where we find the opposite is true, namely residents are better off than the available stock of jobs in the locality. This is especially notable in Bury and Trafford, where the share of resident employees in low wage jobs is less than 20%, but the share of low wage jobs in each local authority is more than the average for Greater Manchester, suggesting that these jobs are being serviced by employees commuting in from other local authorities. Part of the explanation for high rates of low pay concerns the sectors for employment in each local authority. For example, three in four (75%) hospitality workers are low paid, as are more than half of retail workers and residential care workers in Greater Manchester (53% in each case). So if certain local authorities rely on these low paying sectors for employment it generates limited prospects for decent pay.

There is an important gender dimension to low pay, with a far higher proportion of women in low wage jobs (28.1%) than men (20.5%) – and an even higher proportion among women employed part-time in boroughs such as Manchester, Oldham and Salford (figure 8). It is also important to note that over 58% of young people in Greater Manchester were paid less than a living wage, largely due to a concentration in low paying sectors (e.g. hospitality, retail, social care).[45] These patterns are significant since they suggest the opportunities for 'just work', including decent pay, are shaped by local job opportunities, as well as personal characteristics such as age and gender.

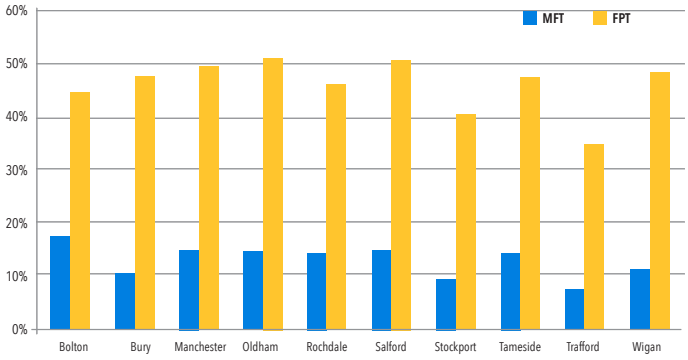


Figure 8. Share earning less than the UK living wage by local authority, gender and full and part-time

Notes: Estimated by decile, Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2015

Women's higher risk of working in a low paid job feeds through, along with other factors, into patterns of gender pay inequality. Greater Manchester faces challenges but on most measures in fact scores better than at national level (figure 9). At the median point of the earnings distribution, female employees earn 14% less than male employees (residents of Greater Manchester), compared to a UK gender pay gap of 18%. The one local authority that stands out is Bury[46], where the gender pay gap among residents is just 4%, and among full-time employees close to zero at 2% which is a noteworthy achievement and deserving of further scrutiny so that lessons can be learned. In all ten local authorities, female part-time employees face a large pay penalty - the largest in Trafford despite a relatively small penalty for women in full-time jobs, which suggests a polarisation in the jobs taken by women. Because a high incidence of low-wage employment contributes to a wider gender pay gap[47], it is unsurprising that women's relatively high pay in Bury is accompanied by a relatively low incidence of low-wage employment among residents (see figure 6 above), while the opposite is true for Wigan and Manchester residents.

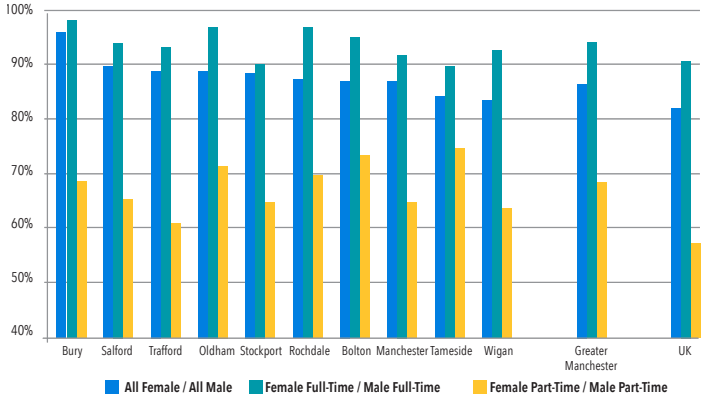


Figure 9. Gender Pay Inequality: women's median pay relative to men's, place of residence, 2016

Notes: gross hourly earnings excluding overtime for employee jobs (place of residency); all adult employees. Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2016.

iii) Careers and skill development

The skills and qualifications of young people are often identified as barriers to economic growth and individual progression. New Economy (part of the Manchester Growth

Company) is working with the GM Chamber of Commerce on a marketing and communications project aimed at increasing the uptake of apprenticeships in Greater Manchester. A representative for the GM Chamber of Commerce felt that the proportion of SMEs in Greater Manchester represented a key challenge for increasing the uptake of apprenticeships in the region (e.g. in terms of SMEs lack of resources) and also the lack of engagement with apprenticeships from schools despite this being a requirement as part of the curriculum, for example she argued that higher education is the 'favourable route….9 out of 10 times'. In addition, the GMCA are working with the Skills Company to offer apprenticeships in Greater Manchester.

Despite the ambitions to move towards a 'knowledge intensive' economy, there remain a number of barriers to progress. Alongside the general downward pressure on real wages resulting from the recession and public sector cuts, the concentration of jobs in 'low value added' sectors such as retail and care work in Greater Manchester has been identified as a barrier to economic growth as well as to individual earnings. At present, productivity within Greater Manchester (as measured by Gross Value Added per job) is £42,383 which is nearly 10% below the national annual average of £46,624. Paradoxically, whereas productivity within GM in high GVA added sectors such as financial services is about 25% below the national average, productivity within low GVA added sectors such as arts and entertainment is nearly 8% above the national average.[48] It is often argued that wages in these sectors are held back by their labour intensive nature and the lack of scope to raise productivity.[49] Furthermore, as one of the Manchester Growth Company interviewees noted, low productivity was inherently interlinked with the quality of work:

> ***'Increasingly what we see is we have our priority sectors that could deliver GVA [gross value added] but let's not forget retail, the service sector, health and social care because when you look at the volume of people in Greater Manchester who are employed by it, it's like if you could get into retail and health and social care and make those businesses more productive you could have thousands of people that have better quality work.'***

Alongside the creation of more high skill/high wage jobs, there is more that employers could do in respect of job design and career progression to allow workers to move into higher paying (and higher 'value added' roles or sectors). Another interviewee noted that the constrained financial climate meant investment in staff development was difficult for some firms:

> ***'You do have some employers who want to train their staff but can't afford to pay for training and development.'***

An efficient skills system is one which supplies the labour market with a skilled workforce in line with employer demand[50], therefore it is necessary to look beyond the basic extent of qualification levels and include a focus on the extent of 'fit' between skills supply and employer demand for skills in the local labour market. Several interviewees suggested that despite the large student population (who could provide a large skilled workforce) and declining numbers of people with no qualifications, there was still a skills shortage in Greater Manchester. Table 2 shows that qualifications for those aged 16-64 in Greater Manchester are broadly in-line with regional averages, but the city region has fewer residents educated to degree level or above than the national average.

	Greater Manchester	North West	Great Britain
NVQ4 and above	33.7	32.6	37.1
NVQ3 and above	53.2	52.2	55.8
NVQ2 and above	71.6	72	73.6
NVQ1 and above	82.8	83.6	84.9
Other qualifications	7.1	6.6	6.5
No qualifications	10.1	9.8	8.6

Table 2. Qualification profile, percentage share of residents aged 16-64, 2016. Source: Annual Population Survey 2016

Whether employers go to the external market to fill these skills gaps or whether they simply manage without the requisite skills is difficult to say, but the TUC interviewee noted that the supposed skills shortage in GM should act as a bargaining lever to raise wages, but this did not have much effect on wages near the bottom where workers could be replaced fairly easily and cheaply. More fundamentally, there appears to be a growing recognition that not all low paid workers are low skilled, and not all low wage jobs are necessarily 'low productivity' or 'low valued added'. For example, New Economy note that 65% of care workers are qualified to level 3 or above, and nearly 12% are qualified to degree level.[51]

Manchester council suggest that there is likely to be a significant skills deficit over the next ten years or so, and pointed to high levels of unfilled vacancies in higher level professional and technical roles. While employers often argue that they cannot find the skills they need in the labour market (and in particular among young people), the evidence suggests skills in Greater Manchester are not necessarily being put to good use. The New Economy skills analysis for 2015-16 suggests that nearly 40% of unemployed residents in Greater Manchester are qualified to Level 3 or above (this will include recent graduates who have not found work yet), and also that more than 10% of workers in jobs which are usually classed as low skill/low wage (such as care and retail) are qualified to degree level. There is also evidence to suggest that employees in Greater Manchester are less likely to have received training in the last four weeks than regional and national averages.[53] There is clearly an issue of 'fit' as many skilled workers are either out of work or in low paying occupations, while employers claim not to be able to find the skills they need, and some appear unwilling to invest in training. Many stakeholders cited graduate retention as a key labour market challenge for Greater Manchester. The CIPD pointed to the high numbers of students that come to study in Greater Manchester but questioned to what extent we have the number of high value added jobs to retain them compared with London:

'You've got 38,000 students in Manchester and 4,000 MMU and 20,000 at Salford in a very small area and we need to try and keep them here and stop them going to London. We don't kind of make that connection I think between employers and universities that we might need to, with employers offering the kind of jobs that graduates want.'

The Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DHLE) survey asks graduates what they are doing six months after graduation. New Economy data from 2013/14 shows that 38% of Greater Manchester graduates were employed in the Greater Manchester region six months after employment. The University of Bolton had the highest number of graduates (53%) staying in the Greater Manchester region compared to the lowest (28%) at the University of Manchester. However, the data suggest that the University of Bolton had a higher number of graduates who were previously residents in Greater Manchester which might affect the results. After Greater Manchester, London is the most attractive destination for leavers, and again the University of Manchester lost the greatest number of graduates to London (13%), compared to the lowest at the University of Bolton (2%). There were differences in graduate retention for different subject groups, with maths, engineering and physical sciences with the poorest retention rates (<25%), and education and mass communication among the highest (>50%), which might suggest different opportunities for employment across sectors in our region.

A representative for the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce believed the high number of SMEs in Greater Manchester might partly explain why graduates move to London to progress into more senior roles:

'We call it to the glass ceiling where you can only get so far, you can't smash through it. … If you are a widget maker in Tameside have you got good quality work for your employees? Have you got a progression plan? Can you move the widget maker through? Are you going to reach a glass ceiling when the widget maker is shop floor manager?'

This city region glass ceiling appears to be especially problematic in the arts and digital/creative industries because of the lack of arts jobs in the region compared to London and the short-term nature of contracts in digital/creative (which are predominantly SMEs) which generate obstacles for young people seeking to develop their skills over several years with a secure employment contract:

'In the arts sector there is certainly a desire to make the city more attractive to artists. So there is work going on in mills to provide studio space; Salford University do some incredible work on talent retention. … On the digital and creative side this is personally where I have big question marks. It is a growth sector in GM but they tend to be small businesses under 50. … People do short-term contracts, they create a PlayStation game and they are off. So apprentices get taken on, and if they have not got a position to move to they will never complete their apprenticeship because of short-term contracts. If you look at progression and retention in that sector, it is a huge problem. So whilst they say it's a growth sector, are we actually addressing what is going on in the market place?'

The issue is how to make these issues around economic development in the digital and creative sector more visible, and in particular to examine what policy or sector 'voice' is in place and the effectiveness of these structures. These issues will be examined in further detail in a subsequent Just Work research briefing.

The TUC interviewee suggested that employer strategies and policies for older workers were highly variable. Although some workers were supported to undertake career reviews and skills refreshers in order to help with transferable skills and retraining options, the pressure on workers to remain in work was a risk to health and wellbeing. Furthermore, jobs were not being redesigned to allow for the needs and abilities of older workers, and some employers were unwilling to make adjustments to the pace and performance demands of work.

iv) Voice, silence and dignity

The extent of worker voice through collective representation is a key indicator of labour power in the labour market. As table 3 shows, at 26% trade union membership density in Greater Manchester is slightly higher than the England average (23%), lower than the Merseyside area (32.5%) and is broadly in-line with the rest of the North West region (27%)Similarly trade union presence in the workplace (45.8%) and collective bargaining coverage (30%) in Greater Manchester are higher than the England averages (42.7% and 27.9%), lower than Merseyside (49.8 and 37%) but in-line with the rest of the North West region (45.7% and 29.8%).

Union membership is segmented between the public and private sectors with far higher rates among public sector workers. Organising and recruitment are still core activities for the trade unions interviewed although there was a recognition that unions would have to do more to reach out to new members and young workers using alternative means such as social media platforms and capitalising on broader networks of activists. According to the TUC, while many young people experience bullying, harassment, arbitrary management power, and favouritism in the workplace, few identify trade unions as a solution. Trade unions therefore still have a great deal to do to raise aspirations, and more importantly to offer a means to achieve improvements through collective action.

	Union Membership	Trade unions present in the workplace	Employee's pay affected by collective agreement
Greater Manchester	26	45.8	30
Merseyside	32.5	49.8	37
Rest of North West	27.3	45.7	29.8
UK	24.7	42.7	27.9

Table 3. Voice in the workplace, by region, 2016
Source: BIS 2016, table 4.3[54]

Other stakeholders also suggested that bullying and harassment (in particular sexual harassment) are on the rise. According to Citizens Advice, the power imbalance in the labour market means that some employers were no longer willing to make reasonable adjustments for workers' family situations and individual needs such as a disability, and in some cases were reluctant to hire women to avoid having to pay for maternity leave. This corroborates recent findings from the EHRC where more than three in four (77%) working mothers in their survey reported a negative experience or discrimination during pregnancy, maternity leave or on return from maternity leave.[55]

Although a proportion of this was due to employers being unaware of the rules and perhaps an element of opportunism, there was also a sense that workers (and particularly vulnerable workers) would either put up with this kind of discrimination or quit their job rather than contest employer behaviour. The Unite representative argued that the culture within even unionised workplaces was one of aggressive management which was based on 'shouting at people':

> *'To put it bluntly the employer knows it can get away with it because it can bully the type of people it employs…'*

It was also noted that a large part of the union's work was now taken up with supporting individual grievances against employers, which in many ways depended on the presence of shop stewards, and their willingness to take on intransigent managers. However, in non-unionised workplaces, the mechanisms for dealing with such disputes are less robust and open to abuse. The high number of SMEs in Greater Manchester is one potential barrier to developing and coordinating progressive HR standards, and a number of interviewees noted that many firms no longer had a formal HR department and simply bought in HR advice from third party firms. The Citizens Advice specialist noted that this contributed to a more adversarial approach to resolving employment issues, as small disputes or grievances would quickly be escalated higher up the chain to be dealt with by HR specialists and in some circumstances solicitors.

According to Citizens Advice, the introduction of fees for employment tribunals led to a sharp decrease in the number of claimants in Greater Manchester bringing cases, with many people inquiring as to the merit of a claim before finding out the cost and not pursuing it any further. Research suggests that nationally seven in ten potentially successful claims are now not going ahead.[56] Fees were introduced supposedly to reduce the number of frivolous or vexatious claims, but there was a clear sense among many stakeholders that the Employment Tribunal system was loaded against individual workers. Although Citizens Advice could support complainants through the Employment Tribunal process (winning over 99% of cases lodged) trade unions were increasingly reluctant to take claims unless there was at least a 40% chance of winning, or a chance that a single test case would pave the way to initiate a class action for a wider group of workers. At a basic level the cost of an Employment Tribunal meant many claims with merit were simply not being lodged. Moreover, the process of dealing with claims in a court environment favoured employers who could bring in specialist (and expensive) lawyers who could undermine the evidence and credibility of complainants (who would typically attend on their own):

> *'When I started you could take a case to an employment tribunal if you had a reasonably good idea that you stood a chance of winning and you could represent yourself. But over the years employment tribunals have become legalistic… and even with the best will in the world, [they] put a claim in and then they find that the other side is going to be represented by a barrister. They immediately will drop the case because of the fear, and they don't feel like going into the tribunal and being cross-examined by someone whose job it is to bring them to tears really.'*

Early conciliation with ACAS produced mixed results with some cases settled early, but the strengthening of the position of employers (as a result of fees) in fact encouraged employers to take cases all the way to an Employment Tribunal knowing that there was a good chance that claimants would back out or fold under cross-examination, or ultimately that the financial cost of a lost case would be minimal (around £5,000 on average). Rather than weeding out so-called 'vexatious claims' from workers, it appears that the Employment Tribunal system actually encourages vexatious employers.

Overall, therefore, the voice and representation processes in relation to precarious work and vulnerable workers remain a major challenge as trade union responses to these issues have not been as effective and engaged as they would have liked. The inability of the traditional labour movement to systematically and structurally represent these hidden communities of workers and job segments means there is a growing sense of disconnection, with the exception of a patchwork of organising campaigns and forms of social engagement around learning initiatives, although even these have been limited and government funding for such initiatives has been in decline.

v) Public sector employment

The combination of high shares of professional and technical occupations, a legacy of solidaristic systems of pay and other employment conditions, and relatively high union membership historically established the public sector as an important benchmark for employment standards.[57] However, austerity budget cuts, outsourcing of services, downsizing of jobs especially in local government, and increasingly stringent performance management techniques in many public sector workplaces have to a great extent overturned past norms of the public sector as good employer.[58] Our stakeholder interviews reflected in some depth on these contradictory legacy and contemporary roles played by the public sector.

Like other northern regions, Greater Manchester enjoys a relatively high share of public sector employment, even after the major downsizing as a result of Conservative-led governments targeting it for budget cuts. As well as providing a source of employment, public bodies also play an important role as 'anchor institutions'. For example the procurement practices of local authorities have become increasingly important as an indirect means of setting pay and conditions along private sector supply chains, but at the same time local councils are using their position to influence private sector firms to recruit locally and adopt higher standards. Nevertheless, there was a view among unions that public sector standards had been eroded by austerity:

> *'If you think about public sector work it wasn't great pay but it was seen as a good job, a*

secure job with decent terms and conditions and a pension…but all of that is under attack.' [UNISON]

Furthermore, the weakening of job security and real wages had changed perceptions among public sector workers themselves:

'I think people do feel differently about their job, I was speaking to a longstanding council employee who said now we feel like we're on a rolling one year, fixed-term contract, so with each round of budget cuts you don't know if you are in the firing line or not.' [UNISON]

Each of the ten local authorities within the GMCA play a key role in shaping employment prospects within their geographical remit. Salford City Council was well regarded by the trade unions for their employment standards charter which includes accreditation with the Living Wage Foundation, along with a learning agreement, a commitment to creating local job opportunities and apprenticeships, and action to end union blacklisting across the borough. This was also an important framework for regulating employment in the private sector as firms had to abide by the same standards in order to secure council contracts. Manchester local authority described their efforts to model best practice in terms of its directly employed workforce (which was still around 7,000 despite the heavy toll of austerity) by making a commitment to offering apprenticeships, graduate trainee schemes, and internal redeployment and retraining opportunities.

The council had also taken steps to promote local employment opportunities by ring-fencing all entry level jobs to Manchester residents, and implementing clauses in external contracts which guarantee a proportion of local job opportunities and guarantee workers a living wage. This has so far been applied to outsourced leisure and waste services, although social care services (where cost competition creates significant downward pressure on wages) had not been re-contracted since the adoption of the living wage clause so this remains an area to explore. In addition the council negotiated a local recruitment deal with Amazon as part of the planning process to build a warehouse at Airport City (Wythenshawe), which will eventually provide around 1,500 jobs. So far almost all of those hired are Greater Manchester residents and the majority are from Manchester, although with a car-pool scheme some workers travel from places such as Rochdale and Oldham on the M60 ring-road.

It is expected that the majority of these jobs will be offered on a permanent basis (although the share of part-time work among the total is likely to make the full-time equivalent total far less than the 1,500 headline figure) and a proportion of jobs have initially been offered as temporary contracts with a view to hiring the 'best' candidates permanently. In addition, Amazon continues to advertise for 'Flex Delivery Partners' which are effectively self-employed delivery drivers used to fulfil online orders in 'blocks' (estimated to be 1, 2 , 4 or 6 hours), with payment offered for the total block regardless of the actual time taken to deliver them. This highlights the potentially key influence local government is having on economic development in Greater Manchester. It is quite possibly, at present, the only actor that can provide a hub within the decentralised and deregulated space of labour market and business processes. It also suggests the need for local policy makers to invest and think more about how the platforms and players for the promotion of just work can be further developed.

As the local economy is increasingly reliant on smaller firms in the private sector (which are unlikely to be unionised) the scope to use collectively agreed pay and conditions as a means to set the pace is limited. Although the banking and finance sector was recognised for comparatively good pay and pensions, none of the interviewees identified large private sector firms who were 'leading' on issues of employment standards, around which some momentum could be built. Furthermore, it was also argued by one of the trade union representatives interviewed that despite the presence of flagship businesses such as large retailers and football clubs, and the development of various arts and cultural institutions, these did not offer a great deal in the way of high quality and sustained employment opportunities for those in the surrounding neighbourhoods (such as the Eastlands/Miles Platting area of Manchester close to the Manchester City Ground and several large supermarkets). This disconnection between the high profile aspects of Greater Manchester's regeneration, and the large number of Greater Manchester residents living in areas of deprivation and disadvantage was seen as a major concern for the future of the local economy. For example Manchester local authority is the fifth most deprived nationally on the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation. Further work is clearly needed to map sector/industry patterns of change across different parts of the Greater Manchester area and the connection of employers to 'communities' in terms of providing good quality and sustainable work.

What is being done to promote inclusion?

A key element of the Just Work project is to map and understand the issues facing marginalised groups in Greater Manchester, and what can be done to help people move into good quality and sustainable work. The interviews and secondary data analysis points to the varied outcomes of economic growth in Greater Manchester, with a degree of polarisation between different communities, and for groups of workers found at the top and bottom of the wage distribution. The conceptualisation of marginal work and marginal workers is complex. Nevertheless, there are clear patterns in the types of employment relationship which certain groups such as younger workers, women, black and minority ethnic workers, and migrant workers may often find themselves, such as temporary agency work, subcontracted work, and bogus self-employment, and the stakeholder interviews also underline issues of inequality and unfair treatment in the workplace. This in turn means that strategies to tackle issues of 'marginalisation' have to address both the type and material conditions of work, as well as the wider dynamics of marginalised groups and the support offered to them to access and remain in the labour market. The retrenchment of public services since 2010 places additional pressure on the voluntary sector to fill the gap in terms of legal advice, employment support, and remedial action against unscrupulous employers. We can take some encouragement from (albeit highly localised) examples of good practice which help to include historically marginalised groups, and strengthen career prospects for those who need flexibility to suit their personal circumstances. This reverses the dominant mantra of 'making people job ready' and places an emphasis on 'making jobs people ready'.

Work as a means to address social problems – issues of supply and demand

Work is often seen as a key mechanism to 'bring' in socially excluded groups; providing economic security and self-reliance while also offering purpose and meaning to individual workers. indeed the total dominance of 'work' in the narrative of economic recovery since the 2008 recession (and the demonization of worklessness) strongly places work of any kind at the heart of current debates about economic, labour market and social change. On the supply side, marginalised groups are often defined by their 'distance' from the labour market (measured by individual human capital and motivation), with the unemployed a key target of labour market activation policies. However, the reform of welfare since 2010 has further exposed workers to 'market pressures', and individuals are increasingly expected to look for work on a near full-time basis, and to either accept any job on offer or to show entrepreneurial 'spirit' by registering as self-employed. However, according to one of the welfare to work organisations, by removing many of the support mechanisms for low paid and precarious workers the government had created a new form of trap which actually stifled new enterprise:

> *'Unless they are earning £1000 a month profit afterwards, DWP is not going to be propping you up. So say you are only earning £400 through your business then that's all you get. So in many cases people would be £600 better off per month by forgetting their business and saying right I will go back full job search, back on benefit and become unemployed. And so it's affecting the number of people starting their own business now and its definitely affecting the sustainability.'*

More broadly, there remain significant problems with this 'work first' model of unemployment support which largely ignores the quality and sustainability of jobs, and there are questions about the extent to which those 'furthest from the labour market' are properly supported by a highly standardised system built around financial performance targets and benefit sanctions. Not only is it difficult to disentangle aggregate outcomes of the work programme, but the structure of the payment by results system does not do enough to address the poor outcomes of specific contractors or for specific groups with more complex needs.[59] For example, staff at an unemployment centre in Greater Manchester were working with HMP Manchester (with funding from the Lottery) to support offenders post-release. A key activity was to help ex-offenders back into secure employment, for example by assisting with CV writing and offering mentoring services. However, an interviewee from one of the welfare advice centres felt his role was constrained by a lack of opportunities available to ex-offenders, which when combined with austerity and welfare reforms, often led to benefits sanctions:

> *'We go into the prison and say to them if you want to get off crime we will look after you, we will get you somewhere to stay, we'll get you a bank account, sort your benefits out, get you out of drugs and alcohol and put you into training schemes - which is great but we know that the type of work they can get is limited. For instance, unskilled work like security, if you have got a record you can't do that. So the amount of possibilities is incredibly limited.'*

> *'The big pattern is the fact that the majority of people who aren't working have got mental*

health problems and no employer is going to employ them… If you have got a mental health problem you probably can't get out of bed certain days because of the fear of what you will face, just not killing yourself is a big thing but they get their benefits stopped as a result of that…. That's what happens. We have had 18 in the month of October just in [this borough], every one of them not fit for work according to doctors and consultants.'

A representative for the Manchester City Council described a joint project with Job Centre Plus to provide an employer suite in the council buildings which advertises job opportunities in the city, with the Job Centre providing job ready candidates (by preparing candidates and pre-screening for employers) under the premise that the service will incentivise employers not to use temporary work agencies. Manchester City Council are also working with Manchester College on the 'My Future' project to provide (NEET) young people with pre-employment training (provided by the College) and two months' work experience in order to provide them with the skills and experience to improve their chances of employment. The idea is to extend this service across the ten local authorities in partnership with local colleges and builds on the work of New Economy in promoting apprenticeships. There is also the Working Well programme (coordinated by the Work Company, part of the Manchester Growth Company), which has enjoyed notable success in delivering active support to the long-term unemployed and placing them in secure employment.

A number of organisations in Greater Manchester offer employment advice and guidance ranging from simple CV refreshers and interview preparation for 'job ready' candidates, through to more tailored and specialist interventions for those with multiple and complex needs. The 'Yes project' in Newton Heath (in north east Manchester) provides employment advice and support for those out of work, or wishing to change career. The director of the 'Yes project' noted that although there were high levels of unemployment in the local area, there was no simple story of worklessness. Although some had lost their jobs when heavy industry and manufacturing collapsed in the 1980s and 90s, there were cyclical and seasonal patterns of unemployment which meant it was increasingly difficult for workers to find stable and secure work. A lack of confidence in interviews and limited ICT skills were identified as significant (but manageable) barriers for some, and the project offered various training programmes along with CV and interview preparation (including simple measures such as lending formal clothing to candidates to wear at interviews). For others just being able to attend the project premises for drop in sessions and group activities was an important step in reducing social isolation and building the confidence of individuals to both 'navigate the system' (which was increasingly online and many did not have the requisite skills or equipment). The project has links with local employers and placed a number of clients into either paid employment or into volunteering roles (as a step towards paid work), although the willingness of employers to take on the long-term unemployed was somewhat variable (with temporary agency contracts often used to reduce the employers exposure to 'risk').

On the demand side, even if workers do manage to find work, questions remain about the suitability, sustainability and quality of that work, and the extent to which the most vulnerable groups have 'choice' in relation to powerful employers. As the data in this report show, non-standard work has grown in importance in Greater Manchester with more people self employed, or engaged on precarious and contingent contracts in the 'gig economy' (even in high skill/high wage areas such as media and creative industries). Although the insecure nature of certain employment contracts are a key source of power asymmetries between employers and employees, there are also numerous ways in which employers can directly and indirectly leverage their position to either cut labour costs or extract additional effort from workers. Bogus self-employment is a growing problem and a number of workers in sectors such as security services have reported that they are required to 'rent' uniforms from their employer, causing their hourly wage to fall below the minimum wage. An interviewee from a welfare advice centre described how they had successfully supported a number of individuals to take cases to an employment tribunal over 'wage theft' by firms using employment agencies or self-employed contractors for short-term assignments and then not paying for all the hours worked (although employers did not always pay the wages owed). Interestingly, the employment advisor at the Citizens Advice noted that the problem of exploitation was not necessarily a product of weak regulation but weak enforcement with HRMC and Health and Safety Executive inspectors short of the resources needed to proactively inspect and check for breaches before problems are reported. Furthermore, some migrant workers in marginal employment were said to be reluctant to report breaches to the authorities as the state was seen as 'corrupt' and could lead to their employers being forced to close. More work is needed to understand issues of enforcement and the limitations of an individual 'whistleblowing' approach to identify non-compliance with basic entitlements.

Who supports those on the margins?

A particular challenge for 'traditional' mechanisms of worker voice and representation such as trade unions is that membership density and collective bargaining coverage has declined sharply in the UK over the last 30 years. Furthermore, despite the many challenges facing people (especially young people) in the workplace, the trade unions are not necessarily seen as a source of either advice or redress in situations where unfair treatment occurs:

'We did some focus groups with young people about whether they felt they needed a union in their workplace and they all said no but when we asked them about any problems they had at work they reeled them off….you know favouritism, moving me around locations, work overload, working long hours, bullying and harassment…and we said what do you do about it and they said well we look for another job…. we're not the people they automatically go to so I think we were fourth on the list after Google and their parents and citizens advice bureau and after ACAS.' [TUC]

The third sector is large and dynamic within Greater Manchester offering support for the most vulnerable and marginalised

groups, where issue of work may be one of many challenges facing households including debt, energy bills, and the quality of private rented accommodation. The Citizens Advice service is a major source of advice and guidance and can support vulnerable and marginalised people to access justice in respect of employment issues and benefits (sanctions are an increasing problem). The organisation is staffed mainly by volunteers although a number of paid staff are responsible for managing and coordinating services – the majority of which are delivered 'remotely' over the phone or on-line – although there is a drop-in centre in Manchester town hall, and a number of Greater Manchester local authorities have decided to maintain fixed premises in order to offer face-to-face appointments. The GMCA also work with Citizens Advice and partially fund their services (along with individual local authorities and national government).

Part of the remit of Citizen's Advice is to provide free and independent employment advice including a Greater Manchester helpline across the ten local authorities which means service recipients can get some initial advice and signposting rather than being diverted back to their local office. The GMCA require Citizens Advice to report back on the number of people they have seen, and what financial outcomes it has generated for Greater Manchester residents. However, national government spending cuts mean funding from local government has been reduced significantly which has forced a choice between maintaining staffing and volunteers or maintaining fixed premises. On the one hand a large share of advice services can be provided over the phone or on-line using web chats, query forms and Skype, but on the other hand, the local authority were keen to see a move away from face-to-face advice services which were thought to contribute to 'dependence' on state services. Citizens Advice suggested that this 'channel-shift' had not led to a significant change in the types of queries they received, nor the types of people looking for advice. However, it could reasonably be assumed that an increasing reliance on on-line services would not make it any easier for some vulnerable groups such as older people, people without free/cheap access to a computer, or for those with sensory disabilities to get help.

An interesting alliance is forming between the Planned Retirement Association of Greater Manchester (PRAGMA – part of AGE UK Manchester) and the Manchester Black and Minority or Ethnic (BME) network. PRAGMA runs courses to help prepare people for retirement, predominantly in large public sector service organisations (such as NHS trusts) but had noticed the absence of BME groups as part of their training sessions so are currently working with the BME network to think about how the concept of retirement might be different for these groups and how PRAGMA might be able to deliver a service that fits the needs of this group better:

> ***'I think it's very interesting that the BME networks approach to retirement is so different it just makes you think there isn't only one way to look at this and it's not always the way you think it is. The woman I am working with says that in the Pakistani community if you are a man of 50 and you have a lot of children who are wage earners you might decide I will retire and then there are people who are self-employed and I suppose are stereotypically are running a corner shop and don't think I'm 60 or 65 years old I will retire, they think I have got to keep running the shop! Then there are the gender issues that it is a very different experience than it is for men – I think faith is an issue where people think I will spend much more time at the mosque. I think it's not at all the same.'***

However, PRAGMA felt they were constrained by their charity status and the inability to offer advice (a regulated activity) which is offered by banks and financial management companies, but obviously at a cost which excludes those on low incomes. He did argue that this type of service would be offered by trade unions that tend to hire independent financial advisors, so there are no examples of PRAGMA delivering their services in alliance with the unions.

Bringing in the employers

One major limitation of mainstream approaches to tackling unemployment among marginalised groups is the emphasis placed on individual human capital and 'resilience', along with the legitimisation of precarious work as a 'stepping stone' to better paid and permanent employment. This diverts attention away from employers and their role in creating and sustaining good jobs for all, and designing career paths through internal labour markets which suit the needs and preferences of diverse range of workers. Broadly speaking, the data point to two main issues in Greater Manchester. The first issue is that employers do not appear to be creating enough good quality entry level jobs; that is jobs with stable working hours and a reasonable degree of job security, paid at or above the living wage (which when combined with cuts to in-work benefits is contributing to a growing problem of in-work poverty). The second issue is that there appear to be variable prospects for workers to progress into better paid middle skill jobs, underpinned by training and development.

Flexible working is one obvious adjustment which employers may accommodate in order to meet the needs of workers who have other commitments and activities to pursue outside of work. Flexibility in this sense may be part-time hours, job share, variation in start and finish times, and the ability to work remotely from home. While flexible working is often perceived as only being available for women with childcare responsibilities, it may also be especially desirable for many older workers due to additional caring responsibilities or health and disability issues that tend to increase with age.[60] In addition, few employers offer flexible working at the point of recruitment, thereby limiting the opportunities for many people, including older workers, to enter into, and remain within, flexible jobs in the labour market.[61]

Recent research conducted by the community interest company 'Timewise' into the flexible jobs market in the UK suggests that just 8.7% of 'quality' jobs with an annual salary of more than £20,000 are advertised with any form of flexible working, although this proportion increases to around 20% for jobs paid at around the national living wage (equivalent to £14,000) which is likely to reflect high levels of part-time working among lower paid roles in retail, hospitality, and care

work.[62] This suggests that employers may not be adapting to changing worker preferences for greater flexibility, and by not offering jobs on a flexible basis they may also be ignoring or under-utilising an important source of skills and experience. Although part-time work in lower paying roles may offer flexibility it can also be a source of low wages, and the lack of higher paying and senior jobs offered on a part-time basis can also mean that women in particular get trapped in low wage work which does not fully utilise their skills, or offer the training and development opportunities to progress. One example of good practice highlighted by Timewise is the national retail chain Pets at Home which undertook a project to better understand problems of turnover and the lack of promotion among women workers. The consultation exercise highlighted that the lack of part-time hours and job share opportunities in management roles was a major barrier to internal progression, and now all managerial vacancies are advertised on this basis. Other examples of good practice flexible working in Greater Manchester are at Kellogg's which actively promotes good work-life balance through a number of initiatives which includes the option to take Friday afternoon off if the worker had accrued a 36.6 hour week – implemented as a way of reducing absenteeism.[63]

Another part of the problem is that employers do not properly advertise the flexibility which is available. Moreover a particular problem in the UK is that the right to request flexible working is only 'activated' once a worker has accrued at least 26 weeks continuous service with the same employer. Employers may then see flexible working as an issue for negotiation on a case-by-case basis rather than something which is written into company policy, and to be included in job adverts. Furthermore, the right is only to request flexible working and for the employer to address the request in 'a reasonable manner' within three months. There are eight reasons which allow an employer to legally refuse including the additional costs to accommodate flexible working which will damage the business, the inability to reorganise work or recruit additional staff, or the catch-all reason that 'the business won't be able to meet customer demand'. The business case dimensions make requests for flexible working vulnerable to changes in the economic context and also mean employers who are fearful that accommodating one request for flexible working will trigger similar requests from the rest of the workforce may be inclined to reject all requests in order to preserve parity.

The evidence presented in this report also suggests that some employers are unaware of what reasonable adjustments can and should be made to the workplace or to specific jobs in order to accommodate workers with disabilities, or are unwilling to recognise that workers have a disability and need additional support. The Equality and Human Rights Commission[64] notes that only around half of adults with a disability are in work compared with more than four in five non-disabled adults, and at every qualification level, disabled people are over three times more likely than non-disabled people to be without a job (but want to work). Furthermore, the adverse financial context has disadvantaged disabled workers as public sector jobs have been lost (historically an important employer for disabled workers), and private sector employers struggle to justify the additional cost of redesigning jobs or making adaptations to the workplace. However, the EHRC report sees this as an opportunity for a win-win partnership rather than simply a barrier to overcome:

> ***'We recommend shifting the onus and spotlight off individuals to secure the support they need towards more collaborative delivery that works for all, recognising that work practices can be shaped around individuals to capture their skills in the interests of business'.***

A representative for the GMCA commented that some employers had adapted jobs to provide flexibility for disabled workers (e.g. to attend appointments) as part of the Working Well programme for the long-term unemployed, which is an indicator of 'good practice' among employers in Greater Manchester. However, a representative from a welfare advice centre argued that such examples were rare, that most employers would not easily hire an unemployed person with mental health problems and that the necessary radical reshaping of jobs to fit the needs of workers with complex needs had been constrained for many years in Greater Manchester by a loose labour market.

The abolition of the default retirement age and the increase in the age at which people are eligible to claim their state pension means that employers increasingly recognise the need to accommodate an ageing workforce. This may entail job redesign and workplace adaptations but in the long-term any costs are likely to be offset by retaining the skills and experience of older workers. Some companies, such as B&Q for example, had abolished the default retirement age prior to the change in legislation. Their HR policy includes the promise to adjust the design of jobs to accommodate workers with health issues.[65] Also, Asda have an 'Asda Goldies' scheme which offers flexible working as well as one week unpaid leave after the birth of a grandchild.[66] Although there are practical considerations such as providing support for workers to cope with the physical demands of certain roles, the inclusive approach to older workers both increases workforce diversity and ensures a wide range of skills and experience. However, it is worth noting that these examples of good practice are in the retail industry, a low-wage sector where flexible working might be easier to implement. There appear to be fewer examples of good practice in higher paid, private sector professional firms, in part because flexible working would not be liked by clients.[67] The result is that many older workers exit the labour market early, contributing to the major gap in the employment rate for the 50-64 age group in Greater Manchester both compared to the younger cohort and to older workers for the UK as a whole.[68]

More clearly needs to be done to identify and share good practice among employers, which is the focus of the Just Work case studies, the focus of a second stage of data collection. This not only includes what is being done to help bring marginalised groups into the labour market in a general sense, but how employers design progressive HR policies which support decent working conditions and ensure diversity within the workplace.

Next steps

The aim of this report was to reflect on the views of key stakeholders in Greater Manchester regarding the fairness and decency of work in the city region. There are exciting changes in the economic and political environment of Greater Manchester with major new investments in industrial and creative hubs promising high skill and high paid jobs, as well as the new Mayor and the devolution deal with central government. At the same time, Greater Manchester faces challenges in common with broader national trends, including a stagnation in real wages and a rise in precarious forms of employment, especially worrying in connection with the platform or 'gig' economy and exploitative self-employment contracts. This is worrying because Greater Manchester still scores poorly on measures of household poverty and low-wage employment compared to the rest of the country. Trends in the occupational job structure suggest a continued 'hollowing out' of middle-level jobs (by skill and relative pay) so that whilst there is a welcome rise in high skill managerial, professional and technical jobs in Greater Manchester, there is also growth in low paid care and customer services work. Furthermore, whilst government supply side initiatives have increased qualification levels in the Greater Manchester region there is a challenge concerning the lack of 'fit' with employer demand for skills, exacerbated by public spending cuts, leading to underemployment for many workers and challenges of graduate retention in key sectors in the city region.
It is clear that people's aspirations towards paid employment have also changed, with many workers under the impression that 'any job is a good job'. In part, this reflects the radical political shift in the UK narrative around work, illustrated by almost 20 years of a 'work first' welfare policy that has prioritised the quantitative targets of a low unemployment rate and high employment rate at the expense of job quality or just work. As a result many workers are putting up with insecure and exploitative employment contracts including zero hours contracts and bogus self-employment. This is particularly apparent in core growth industries in Greater Manchester, which ought to be providing decent and sustainable employment opportunities, such as the digital and creative industries where many young people work on short-term and insecure employment contracts. Specific groups of workers are affected by unjust work more than others, and further detailed research is needed to uncover the range of disadvantages experienced by young people, older people, women, specific ethnic groups and migrants, among others. Moreover, uneven patterns of economic growth across Greater Manchester, made visible in this report in the form of access to well paid jobs and access to good transport and infrastructure, suggest that certain groups 'on the margins' are constrained in accessing just work by their demographic background and/or the geographic area in which they live.

Yet the legacy of trade union organisation in the historically industrialised Greater Manchester region continues to contribute to relatively high levels of trade union membership (compared to national figures) and therefore provides an important potential power resource and set of formal mechanisms for workers to exercise a collective voice and the opportunity to redress the imbalance of power between the individual worker and employer. Furthermore, despite the challenging context of austerity and public spending cuts, local authorities in Greater Manchester show signs of maintaining their traditional roles as 'good employers'; for example through the design and application of employment standards such as decent pay, redeployment measures and secure contracts, as well as good practice approaches to procurement of local authority services. In addition, the strong political network between the ten local authorities and other regional organisations and local stakeholders are promising features that may be harnessed to develop just work in our region – particularly in the context of political and financial devolution which may provide the opportunity to develop a more progressive employment approach in Greater Manchester in line with the strong labour movement across its policy networks. The 'Just Work in Greater Manchester ' research project will investigate the impact of proactive coalitions of organisations and 'anchor institutions' on changing employment standards across the region, as experienced by those in work and those seeking just work through a variety of pathways from the margins of the labour market. A second Just Work Research Report will map out the potential for regulatory instruments to protect people in particular areas of the labour market and analyse the role anchor institutions, trade unions and other actors play in shaping this.

Appendix

Stage one research

The first phase of the empirical research within the Just Work project combined original desk-based research with an initial tranche of semi-structured interviews with representatives of key stakeholder organisations with either a presence in Greater Manchester or a role in shaping the nature of work and employment relations in the Greater Manchester area. This included representatives from local government, business organisations, voluntary sector organisations who work with marginalised groups, and various trade unions.

The interviews and secondary data analysis were designed to identify the unique attributes of Greater Manchester which make it worthy of study, as well as to highlight a range of possible case studies (which could be either representative of sectors or areas, or counterfactual/novel single cases). Although there are four main sets of research questions underpinning the research project overall (technology, careers, regulation and dignity), this first phase of the research was oriented around a number of broad themes which were used to frame the analysis as well as to guide individual interviews:

- How has the economy in GM changed and what does this mean for the labour market?
- What are common or usable benchmarks of just work and decent work?
- What opportunities are there to influence policy and practice around decent work?
- What is being done to reach out to those 'on the margins'?

Interviewees

Organisation	Interviewee/s
ACAS	Former regional director
CIPD	Regional branch chair
Citizens Advice	Policy manager Employment advisor (volunteer)
City region welfare support office	Support office manager
Equality and Human Rights Commission	Research manager
GM Chambers	Senior manager
GMB	Regional
Manchester Growth Company	Director 3 x workforce development managers
Manchester local authority	Policy and partnerships manager
PRAGMA	Manager
Trades Union Congress (TUC)	Regional organiser
UCATT	National officer
UNISON	Regional organiser; Policy Officer
UNITE the union	Regional officer

Major firms located in Greater Manchester

(source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_companies_based_in_Greater_Manchester)

Company	Country of origin	Borough	Type of base
2ergo	UK	Manchester	global head office
Adidas	Germany	Stockport and Trafford	national head office
Apadmi	UK	Trafford	head office
Arup	UK	Manchester	regional office
AstraZeneca	UK and Sweden	Manchester and North West England	regional office and factory
ATIC Records	UK	Manchester	national head office
Auto Trader	UK	Manchester	regional head office
Avecia	United States	Manchester	national head office
Banter Media	UK	Manchester	national head office
Baker Tilly LLP	UK	Manchester	regional office
The Bank of New York Mellon	UK	Manchester	national head office
Barclays	UK	Manchester	regional office
Barclays Wealth	UK	Manchester	regional office
BBC	UK	Salford	regional head office
BDP Architects	UK	Manchester	regional head office
Begbies	UK	Manchester	world head office
Betfred	UK	Manchester	national head office
Britannia Hotels	UK	Trafford	national head office
Brother International Europe Ltd	Japan	Audenshaw	European head office
Brother UK	Japan	Audenshaw	national head office
Bruntwood	UK	Manchester	national head office

The Co-operative Group	UK	Manchester	national head office
DAC	UK	Manchester	regional office
Deloitte	UK	Manchester	regional office
Fast Web Media	UK	Manchester	national head office
First Greater Manchester	UK	Oldham	head office
First	UK	Manchester	national head office
Gazprom	Russia	Manchester	national head office
Google	United States	Manchester	regional head office
Great Fridays	UK	Manchester	national head office
Guardian Media Group	UK	Manchester	regional office
Henri Lloyd	UK	Manchester	global head office
Hydes	UK	Manchester	national head office
In Touch Networks	UK	Manchester	global head office
ITV Granada Television	UK	Salford	head office
ITV Studios	UK	Trafford and Salford	joint head office
JJB Sports	UK	Wigan	head office
Joseph Holt's Brewery	UK	Manchester	national head office
Kellogg's Company	US	Trafford Park	national head office and factory
Kitbag	UK	Manchester	global head office
KPMG	UK	Manchester	regional office
Landis+Gyr	Switzerland	Stockport	regional office
LateRooms.com	UK	Salford	national head office
Leonard Curtis	UK	Manchester	national head office
Manchester Airports Group	UK	Manchester	national head office
Manchester Building Society	UK	Manchester	head office
Manchester City F.C.	UK	Manchester	head office
Manchester United F.C.	UK	Manchester	head office
Marks & Spencer	UK	Manchester Salford Quays	regional office and departmental
McVitie's	UK	Manchester	regional head office and factory
N Brown Group	UK	Manchester	national head office
National Car Parks	UK	Manchester	regional head office
Network Rail	UK	Manchester	regional office
Northern Rail	UK	Manchester	regional office
Outsourcery	UK	Manchester	head office
Pannone	UK	Manchester	national head office
Patak's	UK	Wigan	head office
The Peel Group	UK	Trafford	global head office
PH Media Group	UK	Trafford	global head office
PG Tips	UK	Trafford	national head office
Pinsent Masons	UK	Manchester	regional office
PZ Cussons	UK	Manchester	global head office
Red Production Company	UK	Salford	head office
Regatta	UK	Trafford	head office
Renovo plc	UK	Manchester	global head office
Royal Bank of Scotland	UK	Manchester	regional head office
Siemens	Germany	Manchester	regional head office
departmental			
SimpsonHaugh	UK	Manchester	global head office
Sky	UK	Salford	regional head office

Stagecoach Manchester	UK	Manchester	head office
Swinton Colonnade	UK	Manchester	national head office
Thomas Cook Airlines	UK	Manchester	national head office
The Tote	UK	Wigan	national head office
Think Money Group	UK	Trafford	national head office
UKFast	UK	Manchester	national head office
Umbro	UK	Stockport	global head office
Urban Splash	UK	Manchester	national head office
VoxelStorm	UK	Manchester	head office
Warburtons	UK	Bolton	head office
The Warehouse Project	UK	Manchester	head office
Williams & Glyn	UK	Manchester	global head office

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