



Manchester People First
Self-advocacy for adults
with a learning disability



Our report for 2020 to 2021

Welcome to Manchester People First's Report of the Year, which tells you what we have been doing from April 2020 to November 2021.

Every year we have to do a report, which we send to our members, our funders – the organisations that give us the money to run – and organisations such as the Charity Commission and Companies House.

These make sure we follow the rules about how charities and companies such as MPF should be run.

We have done a video version of this report.





Coronavirus

As we said in our last report, we closed the office at the end of March 2020 because of the Coronavirus. Some of our members and staff have health conditions that made them extremely vulnerable. We think we did the right thing, because soon after we closed, the government introduced the first lockdown.



Staff

Staff carried on working, sometimes at home and sometimes in the office. When the staff were at home, they could still answer the office phone. The Service Audit Team were not able to visit people in their homes to do inspections, so the Service Auditors mostly stayed at home.



Good bye

Two of the Service Auditors, Louise Crowley and Joanne Higginbotham left Manchester People First and Lea Heim the Audit Team's Co-Worker, left to go back to University. We wish them all well.



RIP

We are sorry to say two of our regular members died. Joseph Rooney who was one of the founder members of Manchester People First, and Paul Brannick passed away – Like Joseph he was a great character – We miss them both.



Just Info

Our accessible information service makes information such as leaflets, reports and minutes of meetings easier to understand. We do this work for people such as the NHS and social care providers. They pay us to do this, so it gives MPF extra money to do things. We have been very busy while the office has been closed.





Partnership Board

We are still involved in the Manchester Learning Disability Partnership Board. It has not been able to meet. But we have done a new website and have been working with the Commissioners to see how it can be relaunched.



Annual General Meeting and Committee

Every year we hold an Annual General Meeting, where members elect their committee to run Manchester People First. Because we were in lockdown, we were not able to hold the meeting.



The Committee we elected at the last AGM was: Joanne Smith, Richard Hughes, Barry Edwards and Qaasim Safdar. During the year, Barry and Qaasim stepped down, so Paul Hughes and Nathan Cairns joined in their place. The Committee met monthly online.



We asked the Charities Commission what we should do as we could not hold a meeting to elect a new committee. They said the committee we already had should carry on until we could all meet again.

Keeping up our work

We did not expect to have to keep the office closed for as long as we did. But we wanted to make sure we carried on supporting our members through the lockdowns.



Phone round

Every week, we phoned up members who used to come into the office. We had a chat and checked how they were doing. We asked if they needed help or support. If they did, we tried to put them in touch with people and groups that could help. We also let people know that they could still ring the office for help, or just for a chat.



How we did our work

Even when the office was shut and the country was in lockdown, it was important that our members could see each other and take part in meetings and do some of the fun things we do at MPF.

The only way we could do this was to have online video chats. We got funding from Llangkelly Chase to buy some tablet computers, which we have lent to members.

We set them up, took them to people's houses and showed them how to use them. Manchester Safeguarding did 4, weekly sessions with us to help us stay safe online.

We started 'MPF Online'. This was a new website and 'live' Zoom video sessions on the internet every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10:30am to 12 noon.



zoom



We try to do the same mix of things we did in the office – arts and crafts sessions including one with Manchester Art Gallery. Exercises with Marion from Street Shakers, creative storytelling, bingo and quizzes.

We also have things like our 'Chat, Chill and Choons' sessions where we relax have a chat and listen to our favourite music.





Health

Every month, Healthwatch Manchester come online and tell us what is going on in health and social care and listen to our experiences.

NHS Digital asked us about the problems we might have using services that are online.

The Coronavirus has made it more important than ever to look after ourselves. So, we made sure our members had the information they needed to do this.



- We had 2 Health and Wellbeing sessions
- We held our yearly series of 5 Health Workshops.
- Dr Maeve and the Learning Disability Nurses did a special event about vaccines.
- We had a session about the flu jab.
- We showed members how to do a Lateral Flow Test and produced an easy read booklet about it.

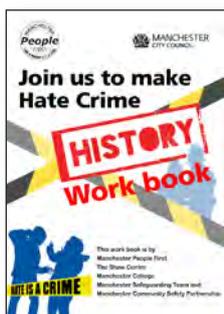


Guest speakers and events

We had lots of guest speakers come on our Wednesday video sessions speaking about things such as dental health, the Manchester Local Care Organisation and Hidden Histories. Manchester City Council's Electoral Services Unit told us about voting and we had a session about how to take part in the 2021 Census.



We were still able to have our Hate Crime event and have online meetings with other organisations, such as The Shaw Centre, Ordinary Lifestyles and Cumbria People First.



We ran training courses about learning disabilities for The Manchester College and Buzz.



Meetings

We took part in consultations on lots of different issues that affect our members with:

- Transport for Greater Manchester
- Manchester University
- Community Safety • Breakthrough UK • Macc
- Healthwatch Manchester • GMVCO
- North Manchester General Hospital
- Students from Coventry and Newcastle Universities
- Learning Disability England • Healthwatch Board
- Our Manchester Disability Plan meeting
- Breakthrough UK Disability Sounding Board
- Greater Manchester Mayor's Disability Advisory Panel

In total, Manchester People First have run over 200 online sessions online, and took part in more than 300 sessions using video conferencing. But we know our members would prefer to meet face-to-face rather than online, and the internet is not accessible for a lot of people.



Newsletters

To keep in touch with all our 600 members, we got funding from Learning Disability England to do an extra issue of our newsletter. We sent it out with our 2020 Annual Report and a DVD we had made with Manchester Health and Care Commissioning about having the flu jab.

We also sent out 2 People First postcards we had designed. The idea was to keep one and send the other to someone you were missing during the lockdown. We sent out MPF stickers, badges and even packets of flower seeds with the other newsletters.





Re-opening the office

We looked at opening the office again in September 2020, but the Coronavirus made this too risky. In July 2021 we opened the office for one day a week for a small group of members, who have to follow very strict rules. We will only fully re-open the office again when it is safe.



to everyone who has helped us get through these difficult times, especially...

all our brilliant members, Committee and staff team, and our volunteers: Sean Wilson, Andy Johnston and Louise Tanner.

Thank you to the following for their donations...



MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Lankelly Chase



STEP Programme



WINNERS CHAPEL



Manchester Health & Care Commissioning



Manchester Local Care Organisation



Manchester People First
Doing things differently since 1992



Our money

This is the short version of our accounts. The financial year runs from March to April, so this shows what money MPF got and what we spent from April 2020 to March 2021.

MONEY IN (Income)

Grants £143,214
Just Info and Training £8,025
Support £1,184
Donations £1,905
Interest £10
Other £7,622
Total Income: £161,960

MONEY OUT (Expenditure)

Wages, Pension and Add ons £86,737
Rent and Service £26,024
Meeting Costs £136
Print Postage and Stationery £4,577
Light, Heat and Power £732
Pubs and Subs and Sundries £1,734
Accounts and Bank Charges £2,137
Insurance £2,030
Rates and Water £1,305
Equipment £8,578
Telephone £1,501
Travel £498
Depreciation £8
Total Expenditure: £135,997

Money in
£161,960
54%



Money out
£135,997
46%

Please ask if you have any questions or want to see the full accounts.
Our accounts were checked by: Cadishead Accountancy Service Ltd,
Britannic House, 657 Liverpool Road, Irlam, Manchester, M44 5XD

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