

Greater Manchester

Business Visits and Events Strategy
2019 – 2025



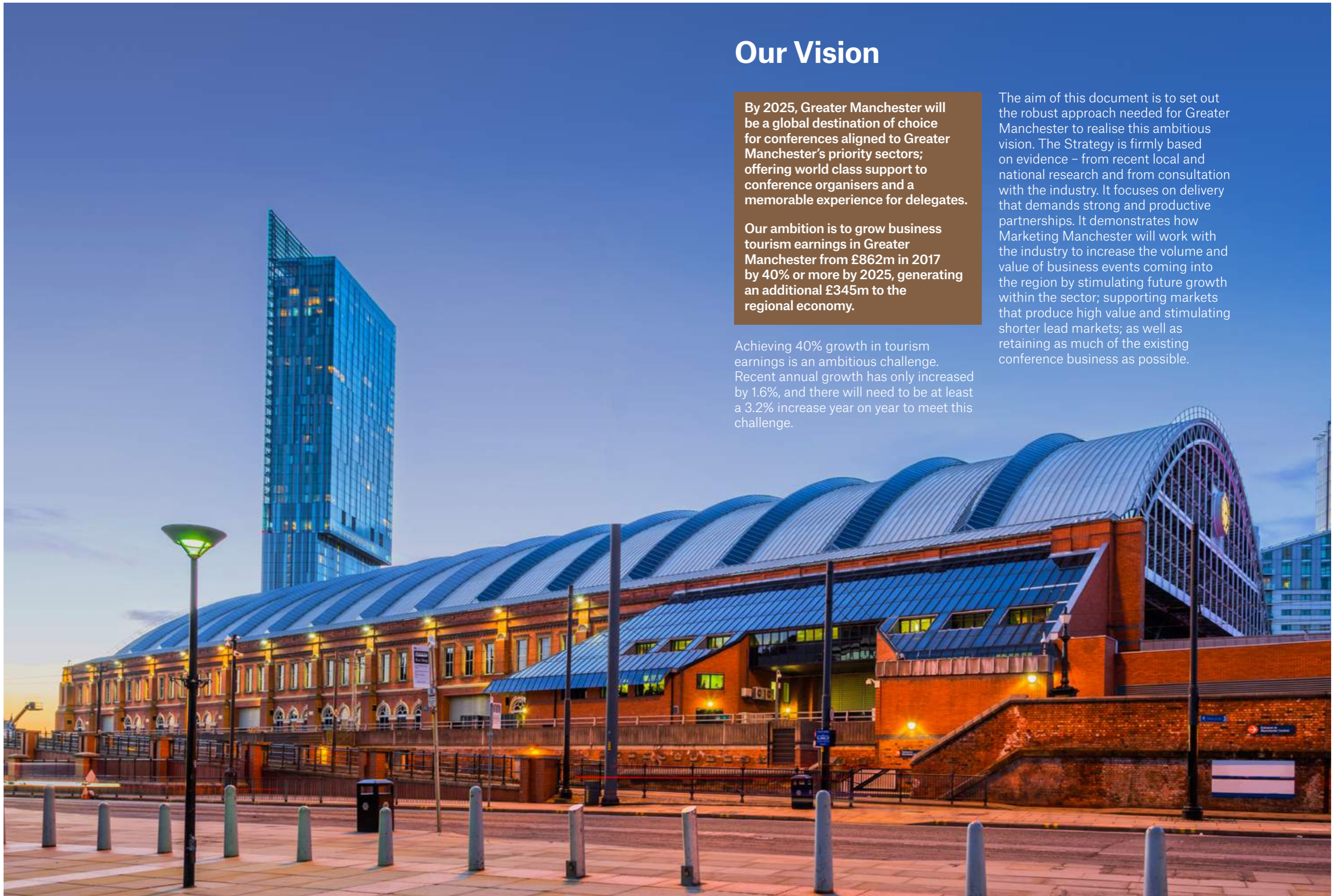
Our Vision

By 2025, Greater Manchester will be a global destination of choice for conferences aligned to Greater Manchester's priority sectors; offering world class support to conference organisers and a memorable experience for delegates.

Our ambition is to grow business tourism earnings in Greater Manchester from £862m in 2017 by 40% or more by 2025, generating an additional £345m to the regional economy.

Achieving 40% growth in tourism earnings is an ambitious challenge. Recent annual growth has only increased by 1.6%, and there will need to be at least a 3.2% increase year on year to meet this challenge.

The aim of this document is to set out the robust approach needed for Greater Manchester to realise this ambitious vision. The Strategy is firmly based on evidence – from recent local and national research and from consultation with the industry. It focuses on delivery that demands strong and productive partnerships. It demonstrates how Marketing Manchester will work with the industry to increase the volume and value of business events coming into the region by stimulating future growth within the sector; supporting markets that produce high value and stimulating shorter lead markets; as well as retaining as much of the existing conference business as possible.



The Importance of Business Tourism

Conference and business events hosted within Greater Manchester during 2017 were worth £862m to the economy (up from £810m in 2015). A further £430m is projected to be generated from delegates who will make a return visit for leisure purposes, many bringing partners and family with them¹. The sector supports over 35,000 jobs, with additional jobs being supported by those extending, or returning, for leisure purposes.

The findings confirm the increasing value of conference and business events business coming from outside of the north west, from the rest of the UK and from overseas. This business now accounts for £454m, compared to £370m six years ago. International association business is key to developing our overseas market and this has almost doubled since 2011; from £46m in 2011 to £91m in 2017.

Whilst these areas of higher value business have grown, competition for business events is fierce in an ever-increasing competitive global marketplace.

Business Tourism plays a vital role in the growth and development of Greater Manchester's Economy:

- It is less seasonal than leisure tourism, providing a year-round influx of delegates, thereby increasing productivity
- It improves the region's image (by bringing visitors who wouldn't normally have considered Manchester; by discussing world leading innovations/topics; by generating global media coverage)
- It promotes the region's world leading experts through their participation in business tourism
- It provides a distinctive means to highlight the region's ground-breaking research
- Business visitors spend more than leisure visitors
- A delegate's experience of a destination can generate return leisure visits or extended stays

¹(source: Conference Volume and Value Report 2017, RJS Associates for Marketing Manchester, using data modelling from VisitBritain's Business Visits and Events Delegate Spend and Trip Extensions Report).

“Business tourism plays a significant role in the success of hotels in Manchester, filling rooms and creating vital delegate spend year-round as well as important repeat business. Business tourism has undoubtedly been a key factor in the rapid growth of Manchester's hotel sector and has certainly helped improve Manchester's image as a place to do business.”

Adrian Ellis, Chairman of the Manchester Hoteliers Association

“Overseas visitors attending business events in the UK are valuable to our economy, spending more than one and a half-times what the average inbound visitor spends during their stay. VisitBritain is committed to growing the business events sector, working with local destinations as well as internationally to highlight all the UK has to offer, from our world-leading credentials in business, research and innovation to our first-class convention centres, exclusive incentive travel programmes and quality infrastructure.”

VisitBritain/ VisitEngland Director Robin Johnson

“We need to continue to collaborate and work in partnership to ensure we remain competitive with the ability to attract world-leading events that can not only deliver maximum return for our economy but help keep the spotlight firmly on Manchester as a leading global destination for business.”

Shaun Hinds, CEO of Manchester Central

The International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) uses the following definition for business tourism:

“Business tourism is the provision of facilities and services to delegates who attend meetings, congresses, exhibitions, business events, incentive travel and corporate hospitality”.





About Manchester Convention Bureau

Marketing Manchester's Role

The Manchester Convention Bureau was established in 1996 by Marketing Manchester to facilitate and attract conferences to the region. The Bureau has sought to develop a series of strategic partnerships with key stakeholders including VisitBritain, Manchester Central, the universities and the Manchester Hoteliers Association to increase the number of conferences hosted in Greater Manchester and to maximise their economic benefit.

Manchester's Convention Bureau identifies, bids for, and successfully secures, major conferences to Greater Manchester; works with professional conference organisers and venue contacts to secure and facilitate incoming business; and operates a venue sourcing service and a delegate accommodation service.

Manchester's Convention Bureau sits within Marketing Manchester and is responsible for developing and supporting the destination's conference and business events activity conducted under the 'Great Minds Meet in Manchester' brand.

Marketing Manchester is responsible for promoting Greater Manchester as a place to visit, invest, meet and study and is the Destination Management Organisation for Greater Manchester. Marketing Manchester is part of the Growth Company.

In 2017/18 the Manchester Convention Bureau

Submitted 85 bids
for major conferences

Converted 30 bids
with an economic
impact of **£26million**
into confirmed business

Booked £2.2million
of business through its Venue Location
and Accommodation Booking Services

Placed 12,000
accommodation bookings

Increased the number of
bids submitted by 16.5%
compared to 2007

Increased the number of
bids converted by 50%
over the same period

Achieved a 25% increase
in economic impact

Trends

Recent Performances

Conference and business events hosted within Greater Manchester during 2017 were worth £862m to the economy (up from £810m in 2015). A further £430m is projected to be generated from delegates who will make a return visit for leisure purposes, many bringing partners and family with them¹. The sector supports over 35,000 jobs, with additional jobs being supported by those extending, or returning, for leisure purposes.

Between 2015 and 2017 Greater Manchester performed better than the UK average:

- There was a 2% decrease in the number of conferences and meetings hosted in Greater Manchester compared to a 4% decrease in the UK
- The average conference length was 1.7 days in Greater Manchester compared to 1.5 days in the UK
- The average delegate rate in Greater Manchester was higher than the UK average

However:

- There was a 2% decrease in the number of delegates hosted in Greater Manchester compared to a 1% decrease across the UK
- The number of delegate days in Greater Manchester decreased by 5% compared to a 3% decrease for the UK
- There was a decrease in share of total delegates from the association sector compared to a static share for the UK
- The average event size in Greater Manchester was smaller at 67 delegates when compared to between 70-72 delegates for the UK

Greater Manchester Trends

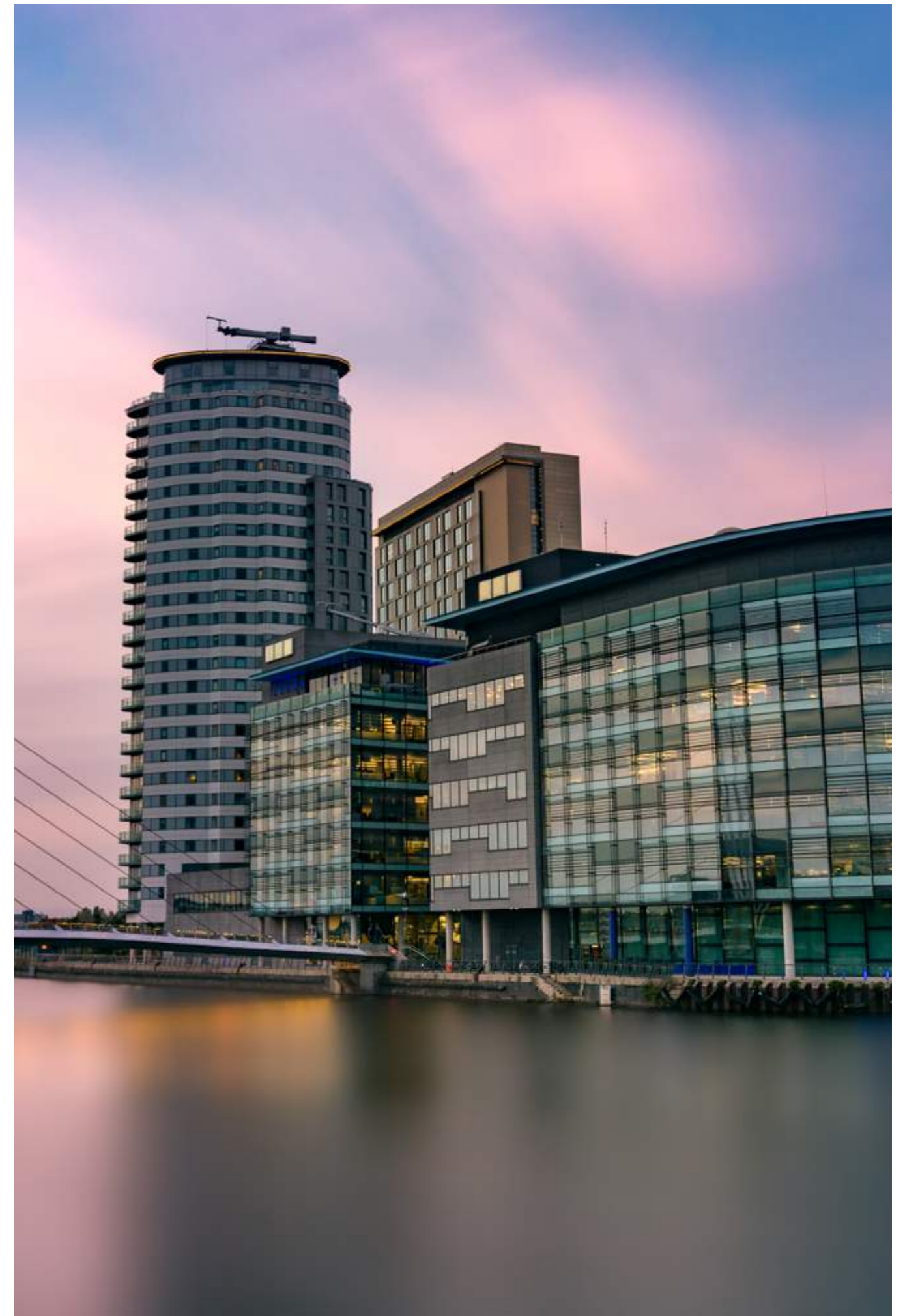
Conference activity within Greater Manchester is generally focused around Manchester City Centre, particularly Petersfield and Manchester Central, as well as The Quays.

Consistent growth has been seen from international associations, overseas delegates and business booked from outside north west England.

The findings confirm the increasing value of conferences and business events coming from outside of the north west, from the rest of the UK and from overseas. This business now accounts for £454m, compared to £370m six years ago. International association business is key to developing our overseas market and this has almost doubled since 2011; from £46m in 2011 to £91m in 2017.

In recent years, there has been a trend towards Manchester Central hosting larger conferences, yet across all venues the size of meetings has become smaller and the length of conferences has become shorter.

Venues outside the city centre, such as EventCity and Victoria Warehouse, along with the extensive facilities at sporting venues (Emirates Old Trafford, Etihad Stadium, Manchester United Football Club, AJ Bell etc) all offer significant opportunities for further growth.



Focus 1: Attracting More Conferences to Greater Manchester



Key to attracting conferences to the region is an understanding of buyer decision making when it comes to choosing a conference location.

The VisitBritain Events Research Report published in June 2017 sets out how buyers choose destinations. Availability of subvention has traditionally been seen as a key determining factor in the decision-making process; however, the report clearly omits it from top priorities, and suggests it is rather a 'nice to have'.

Four other key points came out of the research:

77% of organisers say access is the most important factor

If a destination is perceived as difficult to get to, then the location becomes a non-starter in the decision-making process.

- Manchester is one of the most accessible cities in Europe
- Manchester Airport is Europe's 19th busiest airport. It currently offers direct flights from more destinations than any other UK airport
- The £1bn investment in the Manchester Airport Transformation Programme will increase passenger capacity from 26 million to 40 million and transform the passenger experience. It will attract more of the world's leading airlines and open up new markets for business tourism.

62% of organisers say suitability of venue is the second most important factor

For association business, overall venue capacity can determine whether a location is even considered by the organiser before scoping the number and capacity of breakout rooms. Corporate companies may well also factor in whether the venue fits their brand image.

- Organisers who are familiar with Manchester know that there is a diverse range of venues which eases the process of finding a suitable venue
- As more venues and hotels come into the market, this message needs to be amplified to organisers who are unfamiliar with Manchester.

51% of organisers say value for money is the third most important factor

Many organisers suggest that whilst London has easy access, it is perceived as expensive.

- Manchester has a strong opportunity to capture this business but needs to increase the volume of messaging around value for money and ease of access, capitalising on the new routes coming into Manchester Airport. Many organisers benchmark value for money against Berlin and Barcelona for conferences.

14% of organisers say the perceived safety of a destination is becoming a much more influential factor in destination choice

Attacks or unrest can lead to events being moved or cancelled. The attack in Manchester in May 2017 did not have as detrimental an impact on business tourism as it was feared it might. This is due to the way the region galvanised its response, with extremely positive messages coming out about the destination. This is testament to the collaborative approach that Greater Manchester took to the situation.

The VisitBritain Events Research Report also highlights the dominance of London and the lack of awareness and therefore consideration of other British cities for conferences by international organisers:

- London is by far Britain's strongest business event destination across all organiser types and markets internationally – it is perceived to offer easy access and iconic points of interest

The research clearly shows that Manchester needs to raise awareness of its business tourism offer to conference organisers across all markets. Key messages to focus on:

- Global connectivity
- Ease of access nationally
- Corporate businesses within the destination
- Home of ground-breaking research
- Safety
- Variety of venues
- Value for money
- Cultural and social programmes which enhance destination appeal

Marketing and Sales Promotion

In our promotional messaging, we need to address the 'why Manchester?' question. Our proposition to organisers and delegates needs to make a compelling case to challenge our competitor destinations. We need to:

- Highlight our sector strengths
- Make full use of our intellectual capital
- Unlock our local networks to activate events

We need to create great delegate experiences which develop and encourage the promotion of Manchester's brand narrative. Based on the brand values of 'original modern', our narrative should provide a strong desire to meet in Manchester, 'where great minds meet'.

European Markets

Manchester has been pro-active in the European market around business tourism and approximately 60% of conference business coming through the convention bureau is from Europe. As with other UK destinations, Manchester is beginning to feel the impact of Brexit, with a small number of bids being lost recently where the uncertainty around the Brexit deal or lack of it is being cited. Some organisers are either not considering Britain at all, or decisions on destination choice, particularly for European conferences, are taking longer. Therefore, Manchester needs to investigate opportunities in new markets.

Chinese Market

This is an extremely lucrative market, not only for corporate and association conferences, but also incentives. A recent report by VisitBritain shows that Chinese buyers are becoming more adventurous with their choice of destination.

Greater Manchester already has many of the key attributes required - direct air access, a good variety of MICE product, accommodation capacity and shopping, as well as easy access to the wider North. However we need to improve our international incentive offering to be fully competitive with other UK incentive destinations such as London and Edinburgh.

Marketing Manchester continues work in the Chinese market with the group and travel trade, so these businesses are already aware of Manchester's leisure offer. Many of these businesses have a MICE department within them, therefore it makes sense to 'piggy back' on activity that is already being carried out in this market presenting the offer for the MICE market.

Indian Market

India is another emerging conference market for Greater Manchester, particularly with the new direct route from Mumbai and the work being done already by VisitBritain and Marketing Manchester. The Indian MICE market is very similar to the Chinese MICE market: it is lucrative and not only pure conferencing but also incentive led. It works in the same way as the Chinese market with large group and travel trade companies having a MICE department within them.

Attracting the Corporate Market

More focus needs to be placed on the domestic corporate market, as this is of higher value and has shorter lead-in times than national association business. Currently Greater Manchester attracts most of its corporate conferences from within the region and the majority of these are day delegates rather than residential. To grow this sector and increase stay length and economic impact, we need to attract more conferences from further afield domestically as these will have a greater economic impact for the region. With so many corporate companies relocating their regional and UK headquarters to Greater Manchester, it is crucial that relationships are built with these as many conferences, events and training courses in the corporate sector are normally run near to the regional and national headquarter locations.

Encouraging Delegates to Extend Their Stay

As the Gateway to the North of England, Manchester is well located to capitalise on its position at the centre of the UK and easy direct access for international visitors. Recognising that international visitors spend more during their stay, we have an opportunity to encourage delegates to extend their visit before or after their meeting, using Manchester as a base.

The Growth in New Convention Centres

There are several new convention centres due to open across the UK over the next few years, creating more competition in the market place. These new facilities will have large marketing campaigns around their openings. It is key that Manchester remains proactive within all markets and has sustained marketing activity in the face of increasing competition.

Key UK convention centres opening:

- Blackpool Winter Garden Conference Centre opening 2019 – capacity 7,000 delegates
- ICC Wales, Newport – opening 2019 – capacity 5,000 delegates
- TECA Aberdeen – opening 2020 – capacity 5,000 delegates

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

- Increased understanding of buyer decision making – capitalising on Manchester's existing strengths with a priority on ease of access, world leading sector strengths and venue capacity
- Consistent business tourism messages to existing and emerging markets
- Investigate opportunities in China and India, as well as an increased presence in North America
- 'Piggy back' on Group and Travel Trade activity already taking place in these markets
- Develop a robust incentive offer to target part conference/part incentive groups
- Increase promotion to delegates of opportunities to extend their stay
- Re-focus on attracting national business particularly from the corporate market as this is shorter lead in time and quicker wins
- Increase on territory activity particularly with VisitBritain and local partners
- Gain sufficient resources required to deliver the agreed marketing activity
- Provide reassurance of Manchester as a 'safe' destination

BY 2025 WE WILL HAVE:

- Delivered sustained marketing and communications activity to promote awareness of Manchester as a major business tourism destination
- Developed a consistent business tourism message which will provide a common narrative when the Convention Bureau and partners are promoting Greater Manchester
- Worked closely with the region's bookable product and developed robust promotion detailing reasons for delegates to extend their stay
- Increased national association and corporate conference business coming into Greater Manchester



Focus 2: Collaboration

Successful conference destinations rely heavily on collaboration between the Convention Bureau, stakeholders, members and ambassadors.

At a national level, business visits and events will play a key role in implementing the 'productivity boost' in the proposed tourism sector deal. We therefore need to ensure that Manchester is positioned to maximise the national opportunities afforded by DCMS and VisitBritain. Within Greater Manchester, we must identify opportunities for business events to deliver against the Local Industrial Strategy.

Manchester Convention Bureau operates a strong collaborative approach preparing conference and event bids for Greater Manchester. Collaboration with the conference ambassador, hotels and venues is vital; but coordination with Transport for Greater Manchester, Manchester Airport, GMCA, The Mayor of Greater Manchester, Local Authorities and (when relevant) national government, is also part of the established process. Such support is essential to make organisers feel that there is support from the city and a desire to host the business. This is where Greater Manchester currently excels.

However, major improvement is needed in the process following a conference win, with a collaborative approach dedicated to the support and service of conference organisers and delegates. In a highly competitive market, the city needs to provide a robust business tourism package and a more collaborative approach post-win to remain competitive against other destinations. Conference organisers and their delegates need to feel that their presence is recognised and that their business is valued. Manchester needs to provide hotel welcome, city branding and added value offers for

delegates. More collaborative work also needs to be done with transport providers in Manchester to remain competitive with other, mainly international destinations which offer discounted delegate travel cards and added value for conference delegates.

Greater Manchester is currently undergoing significant redevelopment and investment. The boom in building, investment and business coming into the region is also attracting new hotels and venues. It is important that operators in these new developments are encouraged to support and participate in the activities of the Convention Bureau and join the collaborative approach to promoting Manchester as a conference destination.

Manchester has a robust Conference Ambassador Programme which offers the support and partnership necessary to inspire and enable individuals to host prestigious national and international conferences. Ambassadors are experts in their field and are drawn from key academic and industry sectors. Ambassador led bids for conferences have a higher conversion rate and generate substantial economic impact for the region: they also raise the profile of Greater Manchester institutions and research areas. However, more needs to be done to fully recognise the value that Conference Ambassadors bring to the region and to ensure their ongoing engagement. There should be formal engagement throughout the year with Ambassadors, a clear plan for Ambassador recruitment and a programme to demonstrate to Ambassadors that their work and contribution to business tourism is valued.

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

- Increased partnerships with stakeholders and strategic partners to demonstrate to conference organisers a 'Team Manchester' approach
- Engagement with Transport for Greater Manchester to develop a strong local transport offer for delegates
- A clear recruitment and recognition programme for Conference Ambassadors
- Early engagement with new venues and hotels to gain their participation with the offer of incentives and to ensure timely sign up in order to include them in business tourism activity
- Maximise opportunities afforded by DCMS, other Government Departments and VisitBritain
- Seek greater Ministerial advocacy and support
- Develop airline partnerships

BY 2025 WE WILL HAVE:

- A clear recruitment and recognition programme for Greater Manchester's Conference Ambassadors
- Worked in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester to create a delegate transport pass to encourage visitors to travel further around the region
- A robust "Team Manchester" approach from bid inception to convention delivery

Focus 3: Delivering a World Class Delegate Welcome

Manchester needs a world class delegate welcome to remain competitive both nationally and internationally. For a conference organiser, significant weight is placed on the delegate welcome offered by a destination. The majority of destinations offer a simple delegate welcome but the key to winning organisers is to ensure that Manchester has a 'perceived' strong (and differentiating) delegate welcome.

Working with key partners and stakeholders – Manchester Hoteliers Association, Manchester Central, TfGM - Marketing Manchester has drafted a Delegate Welcome which is ready to be implemented.

Manchester's Delegate Welcome will start before the event is confirmed in the form of:

- Bespoke bid proposal
- Printed bid documents
- Bespoke destination video
- Convention Bureau and local Ambassador attendance at the formal presentation if required
- Site inspection costs would also be included, working with stakeholders and partners on an in-kind basis to cover accommodation, subsistence and national transport costs

VisitBritain research shows the importance to organisers of a sense of arrival and a sense of place. A host city needs to demonstrate to the conference organiser that the city's business community knows the conference is taking place and welcomes their delegates. This needs to come across in the city and delegate welcome. Depending on the number of delegates, Manchester's Delegate Welcome will offer:

- A Conference Welcome in all conference hotels with bespoke conference branding

- Access to a team of Event Welcome Volunteers situated at key arrival points
- A 'Welcome to Manchester – have a drink on us!' promotion
- Bespoke city walking tours themed to the conference for all delegates
- Special delegate travel passes
- A Welcome Pack for all delegates with information on what there is to see and do within the region, delegate offers for attractions, bars and restaurants.

Marketing support is key for a conference organiser, particularly to increase the profile of the chosen destination to delegates and therefore increase delegate attendance at the conference. Manchester will offer:

- Access to an online toolkit with Manchester promotional films and assets
- Social media support
- Support with direct marketing and campaigns to boost delegate attendance
- Conference Bureau services, including accommodation booking, local knowledge, access to local thought leaders and experts.

Manchester's Delegate Welcome will need the support and commitment of key partners and stakeholders to make it a reality and offer a truly competitive and stand out welcome. Discussions have already begun, and work is underway with the Manchester Hoteliers Association and Manchester Central to develop an experiential Delegate Welcome for Manchester in the form of a city reception.

Arrival and Transportation

The £1bn transformation of Manchester Airport is set to offer a world class passenger experience: it will transform delegates' arrival into Manchester and significantly increase

capacity. It is crucial that this arrival gives delegates a sense of place and key welcome messages.

The Airport's new PremiAir facility will strengthen our transportation offer for business visitors.

Manchester is perfectly situated for major rail networks access across the country. Delegates can travel with ease from north to south and east to west making Manchester a desirable destination for national conferences via Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Victoria stations.

Once in Manchester, the Metrolink, Europe's largest tram network, enables delegates to navigate easily around the City Centre and beyond.

Investment is also being undertaken in a city region wide cycling and walking network. This will offer the delegate a greater choice of travel around the region and will bring Manchester in line with other conference destinations such as Amsterdam, Berlin and Copenhagen.

The majority of international conference destinations offer a delegate transport pass which enables the delegate to travel around the region on one travel card. Manchester's competitor cities (such as Frankfurt, Barcelona, Lyon and Glasgow) already offer such a facility and it is therefore important that Manchester develops a similar offer.

Destinations are more successful at attracting business visits and events when they can demonstrate to organisers and delegates that their presence in the city is valued and recognised. Marketing and communication is key to creating this welcome perception within a destination and should be the cornerstone to its success.



PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

- Develop a clear and compelling Delegate Welcome programme with adequate funding to promote and deliver it
- Consistent business tourism messages in the market to increase the profile of a delegate welcome within the region
- Increased collaboration of key stakeholders
- A memorable offer that creates a 'buzz' for organisers and delegates
- Engagement of the wider business community around larger conferences
- Develop a delegate transport pass
- Consider transport issues, eg coach parking and ease of transport for out of hours events
- Develop an International Delegate Airport Arrivals programme and Delegate Rail Arrivals Programme
- Engage Boroughs in inspiring delegates
- Develop opportunities for social programmes
- Consider basic hygiene factors i.e. street cleaning, roadworks

BY 2025 WE WILL HAVE:

- Developed an International Delegate Airport Arrivals programme with clear messages on the region's offer for business tourism
- Developed a delegate transport pass in partnership with TfGM
- Developed a clear and compelling Delegate Welcome programme with the collaboration and buy in from stakeholders

Focus 4: Developing our Product

Greater Manchester already has great conference venues and capacity for conferences and associated social programmes. Focus now needs to be placed on further developing our product to adapt to changing market demands. We need to keep improving and innovating in order to maintain and extend our appeal. Increasing value is being placed by organisers on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), sustainability and technology.

Organisations tend to gear their business activities around venues and destinations that have a positive image around these topics. Greater Manchester is known as a place of innovation which is large enough to experiment at scale but small enough to collaborate at speed.

Responsible Tourism Credentials

Greater Manchester is working hard to promote its green credentials and the recently held Green Summit saw the launch of "Plastic Free Greater Manchester" with high profile names from the hospitality and tourism region pledging to eradicate single use plastics by 2020. This fits with the wider context of Greater Manchester's ambitious carbon reduction targets and "green agenda" which will place the region at the forefront of the UK's sustainability agenda.

Many conference venues across the region are adopting more 'green meeting' packages encompassing healthy eating, local produce and energy conservation programmes.

There is no doubt that sustainable meetings are beginning to grow in the events market and an increasing number of organisers are looking at destinations with strong messages around this topic. Manchester needs to capitalise on this by highlighting its credentials in this field.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

This topic has become a tangible competitive advantage for destinations to attract conferences. Organisers actively seek to hold meetings within venues that operate a strong CSR policy.

Manchester needs to be more vocal in promoting venues and businesses in the region with a strong CSR policy to attract meetings and events from this growing market.

Developing Home Grown Events

Creativity and pioneering new ways of working is nothing new for this region. Manchester needs to be a pioneer in business tourism to drive meeting business into the region. One opportunity is to create or nurture new events, as well as attracting existing ones in line with Greater Manchester's priority sectors. Working with one of our key sectors, and potentially in partnership with another international destination (in the US or Far East), we should seek to scope a suitable opportunity to pioneer this new approach.

Digital

Manchester needs to understand what drives the organiser to be stimulated enough to choose a destination whilst having a synergy with its creative and digital roots. There needs to be a review of business tourism marketing for the region which moves away from print and looks to have digital marketing pieces specific to different sectors – i.e. corporate, association, incentive.

More use should be made of technology: around marketing, digital delegate welcome and notifications of what's on in the city. This could be done through blue tooth beacons being positioned at the main conference venues to send messages to delegates. A further option would be to create a conference app as part of the tool kit for conference organisers.

Access

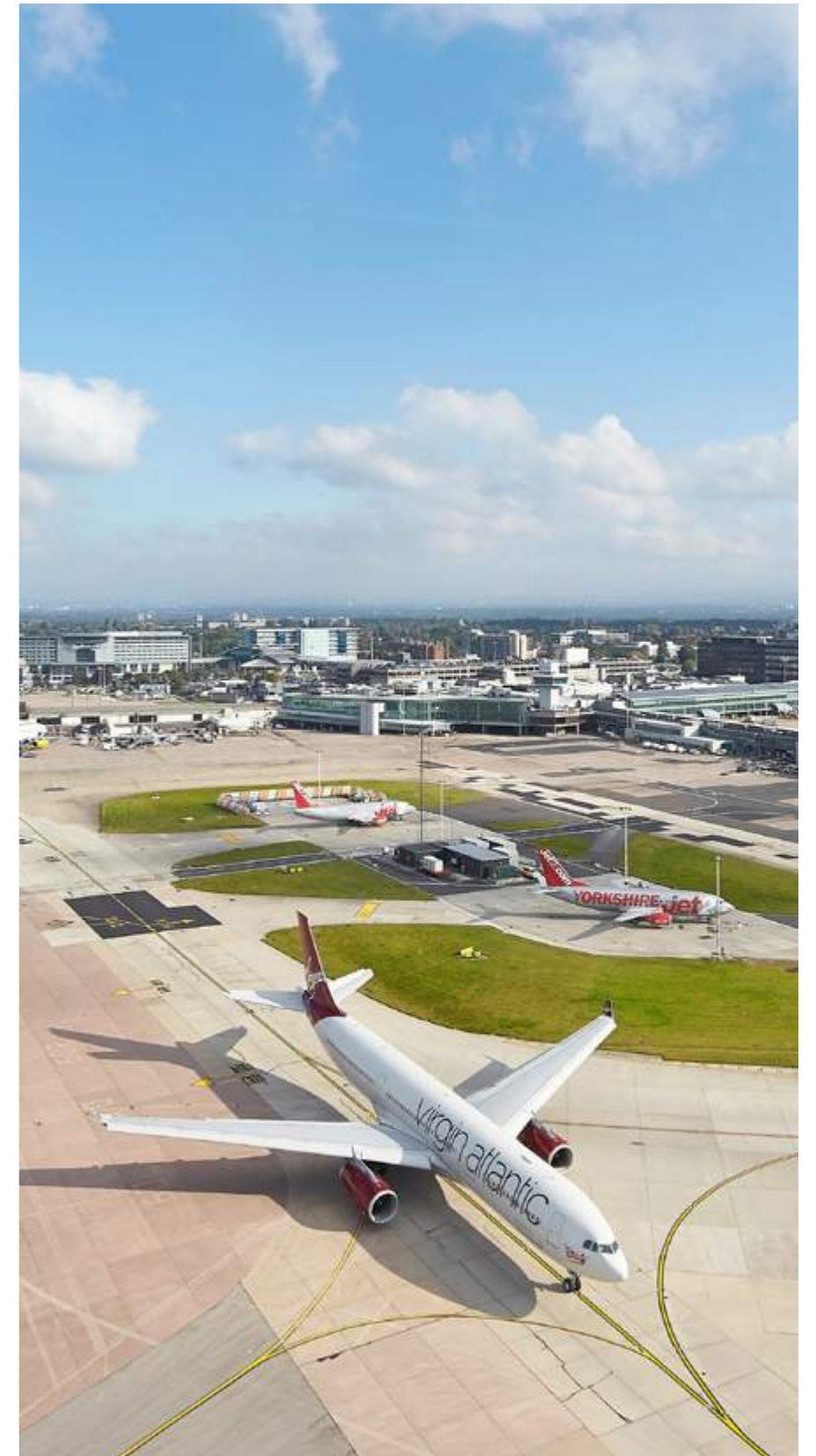
Manchester is a knowledge hub across a variety of sectors. It is by nature innovative and pioneering and is home to ground breaking research and several firsts. As a result it has attracted a number of world class academics and industry leaders to the region which has helped to catapult Manchester onto the world stage for key industry sectors such as life sciences, advanced manufacturing, creative, digital and tech. Manchester therefore provides a wealth of knowledge that appeals to conference organisers, adding value and enhancing the conference programme. Marketing Manchester will work with academics and thought leaders to provide introductions to conference organisers for programme content.

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

- Connecting organisers with Manchester's world leading academics and businesses to assist with key note speaker opportunities
- Strategic promotion of green credentials, CSR and sustainability messages about Manchester and its venues
- Developing a programme of 'home grown' events
- Exploration of digital marketing piece for defined conference sectors i.e. corporate, association, incentive
- Exploration around conference destination message app for delegates or blue tooth beacon messaging
- Set out a programme of intelligence gathering, monitoring and impact analysis

BY 2025 WE WILL HAVE:

- A robust process in place to connect organisers to Manchester's world leading academics and business community
- Fully capitalised on the city's aspirations to be a 'Carbon Free City'
- Developed two 'home grown' events, initially scoping the advanced manufacturing and digital sectors





Strategy Engagement Process

To prepare the framework for a new Business Tourism Strategy, Marketing Manchester held two workshop sessions involving 75 business representatives. Through this process of engagement and consultation, the ambition and business priorities of the sector were identified and are reflected in this document.

VisitBritain's Head of Business Visits & Events was also consulted to ensure that Manchester can take full advantage of national opportunities. Insights of best global practice were sought from the Editor in Chief of Conference News Magazine.

A further consultation workshop with industry partners was held in November 2018 to gain feedback on the draft Strategy before publication of this final version.

The following businesses and organisations have contributed to this strategy:

- Bullocks Coaches
- Chill Factor®
- Crowne Plaza & Staybridge Suites Manchester - Oxford Road
- DoubleTree by Hilton Manchester Piccadilly
- Emirates Old Trafford
- Etc. Venues
- Greatdays Travel Group and Manchester Sightseeing Tours
- Hilton Manchester Deansgate
- Hotel Football
- Imperial War Museum North
- INNSIDE By Melia Manchester
- Jurys Inn
- Manchester Art Gallery
- Manchester Central
- Manchester City Council Events and Sports Team
- Manchester Conference Centre and Pendulum Hotel
- Midland Hotel
- Manchester Hoteliers Association
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- Manchester United Football Club Limited
- Marriott Worsley Park Hotel & Country Club
- Oldham Council
- Principal Hotel Manchester
- Radisson Edwardian Manchester
- Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
- The Lowry Hotel
- The Studio
- The University of Manchester Conferences and Venues
- Transport for Greater Manchester
- Treetop Trek
- University of Salford

Resources

The success of this Business Tourism Strategy will require a realistic allocation of resources comparable to those of Manchester's key competitors. There needs to be even stronger collaboration between partners and stakeholders to implement this strategy as well as increased support from the private sector.

Discussions are underway, led by Manchester Hoteliers' Association, to investigate the potential to introduce an Accommodation Business Improvement District. Following the cessation of subvention in March 2020, a BID might provide a mechanism to fund activity which drives more business tourism into the city.

Summary

To realise the vision, ambition and targets of this Business Tourism Strategy, we need to have the buy in of stakeholders and partners to fully collaborate and work towards one goal: to ensure that Manchester maintains and grows the volume and value of business tourism to the region. To enable us to achieve this, we will require strong collaboration and a commitment to contribute additional resource.

APPENDIX 1 – SWOT Analysis

As part of the consultation with over 75 Marketing Manchester members, partners and stakeholders, the following summarises the main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for Greater Manchester Business Tourism.

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong sector strengths • Recognised conference destination • Diverse accommodation offer • Global Connectivity • Gateway to the north of England • Convention Centre in the heart of the City • Greater Manchester Mayor as advocate • Metrolink and free shuttle buses • Variety and choice of venues • Recognised universities • Personality of Manchester Bids • World renowned academic research • Relocation of companies to the North 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity of Convention Centre • Cost • Delegate Welcome • Loss of subvention • Lack of funding • Lack of awareness of British Cities • Lack of public realm • Homelessness/safety/police cuts • Regional transport and roadworks • Airport – building, welcome, price • Cleanliness • Green space • Few historic venues
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth of new sectors – CD&T and advanced manufacturing • Development of hotels and transport • Airport Expansion • Manchester’s Business Tourism offer • Academic conferences and Ambassadors • Greater Manchester Mayor as advocate • Brexit – focus on national associations and corporates • North Shoring • New international markets • Large corporate conferences and events • Sporting events • Transport links to EventCity • Partner packaging and bookable product • Mixing work and play – make it obvious its Manchester 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brexit • Terrorism • Developing conference locations • Air B&B • Will infrastructure keep up with developments • Skills shortage in sector

APPENDIX 2 – Business Tourism Strategy - Year One Action Plan

Currently, Manchester Convention Bureau operates a breakeven budget of £420,000. We estimate that an additional £200,000 per annum would be required to deliver the priorities set out below:

<p>ATTRACTING MORE CONFERENCES TO GREATER MANCHESTER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created a consistent business tourism campaign to existing and emerging markets • Developed a national activity campaign to increase national association business and corporate business • Have an Increased presence in N. America market for associations and corporate • Have a clear message for the European market that Manchester is open for collaboration for European conferences • Developed a campaign around extending delegate stays dovetailing with bookable product • Increased bids for major association conventions <p>-----</p> <p>KPI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uplift in national and international bids by 30 • Uplift in VLS/ABS bookings of 10% • Increase ICCA rankings 	<p>CREATING A WORLD-CLASS DELEGATE WELCOME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a clear and compelling delegate welcome • Developed a delegate transport pass • Developed an inspiring list of ideas with the Boroughs of Greater Manchester <p>-----</p> <p>KPI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delegate Welcome trialled on 5 conferences • Delegate Transport Pass created
<p>COLLABORATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have re-launched and re-engaged the Conference Ambassador programme • Developed Airline partnerships i.e. Virgin Atlantic for conferences from N. America • Created a formal Team Manchester approach <p>-----</p> <p>KPI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambassador event held by the end of the year and new collateral produced 	<p>DEVELOPING OUR PRODUCT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a programme of home grown events • Began creation of conference destination messaging app/ Bluetooth beacons • Developed a campaign around promotion of green credentials of conference venues

