

## **Councillor Sue Murphy's speech**

### **LinguaSnapp Launch Event**

**23rd February 2016**

There are many reasons why I'm proud of Manchester. This vibrant, progressive and ambitious city gives us all lots to celebrate, from its increasingly strong economy to the wide range of varied and exciting things to do as a resident or a visitor. Most of all though, Manchester's greatest asset is its people. We've long embraced the breadth and diversity of our population in Manchester and celebrated the values that bring people of different backgrounds together as Mancunians, and that continues as strongly as ever.

- Manchester's become rapidly more diverse in the last decade. We're the only local authority outside London with residents in each of the 90 detailed ethnic groups listed in the Census.
- The proportion of residents within the White broad ethnic group has fallen in Manchester from 81% in 2001 to 66.6% in 2011, 18.8 percentage points below the average for England and 23.6 percentage points lower than the North West as a whole.
- All other ethnic groups have increased in proportion since 2001, with the Asian group, in particular, growing from 10.4% in 2001 to 17.1% in 2011.

Of course, a diverse population brings with it an equally diverse range of spoken languages to the city.

- The Manchester Strategy reports that our Universities and higher education institutions, for example, draw on a richly diverse staff and student population originating from over 150 countries across the globe.
- The School Census shows that there are around 190 languages spoken by pupils attending schools in the city.

- The percentage of pupils recorded with English as an additional language has risen from 23.5% in 2005 to 37.1% in 2015.
- The Census told us that Manchester has a lower proportion of residents who speak English as their main language in their home than the average for England. Manchester has more than double the national average of households with no one speaking English at home (10.3%) and a larger- than-average proportion of households have only children speaking English as a main language at home.
- Urdu is spoken by more than 13,000 residents according to the 2011 Census, making it the second most common language in Manchester after English, followed by over 6.5k residents who speak Polish.

It certainly catches people's attention when you reel off statistics like this – these are the realities of life in Manchester that are often overlooked or unreported. But what the statistics can't articulate is the inherent value that this rich linguistic diversity brings to the city. What it adds to our already heady cultural mix.

Our language diversity adds an exciting dimension to our opportunities to learn from each other and come to understand each other all the more. Language difference needn't be a barrier that separates people, but a bridge to bring people together and build relationships by sharing our personal histories and values, and finding ways to communicate about language difference, not in spite of it.

Of course, our linguistic diversity represents a huge opportunity for the city's economy too. Financial and professional services along with other traditional sectors such as retail are increasingly using technology to develop and grow. Manchester's diverse population with its vast array of languages and cultures, along with the city's affordable locations and good connections to international markets, are making Manchester increasingly attractive to businesses looking to operate in the global market place.

I think that programmes like LinguaSnapp are really valuable in helping us to share and understand our cultural and linguistic diversity. I'd like to congratulate everyone involved for their hard work and successes in supporting Manchester to become more connected with its myriad communities and cultures, and for promoting cohesion and inclusion through a greater awareness and in depth knowledge of our different languages. This programme doesn't just make us aware of our linguistic differences, but encourages us to celebrate them, and I hope you'll join me in this opportunity to do just that. Thank you.