

Item No. 8

GM LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

SUBJECT: The Manchester Channel
DATE: 16 January 2017
FROM: Sheona Southern, MD Marketing Manchester

1.0 Introduction and Background

The Manchester Channel was a concept created by a Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) member, Lou Cordwell. In September 2014, Jaywing was appointed by the LEP to conduct a scoping exercise for the development of world class content to push out to key audiences. In September 2015, O&O reviewed the business case and recommended a series of actions.

Priority themes of science and technology; creative/digital and media; arts, culture and sport have been identified and the output expected is high quality pieces of appealing content that will improve the perception and depth of Manchester's offer globally.

The GMLEP requested Marketing Manchester to undertake a feasibility study to assess the private sector appetite and potential public funding opportunities for the Channel. In July 2016 a feasibility paper was presented to the GMLEP. It was agreed that an incremental phased approach was the best way forward and that a bite-sized approach to the GMLEP investment would be used to develop momentum.

2.0 Objectives of the Manchester Digital Channel

As previously presented, the objectives and aims of the Manchester Channel are as follows:

- To build and change perceptions of Manchester
- To achieve cut through by building international recognition for Manchester's key world class areas of excellence
- To show Manchester innovative, diverse and international city. The creation of this unique digital channel is a demonstration of Manchester's modern and innovative instincts.

3.0 Progress Update

We have now undertaken the following actions:

- A) The Peppered Moth
- B) Digital Content Creation
- B) BBC Britain Partnership

A) The Peppered Moth

The story of the peppered moth has been developed into a full digital animation by creative agency Universal Everything, supported by Peter Saville and with content from the Museum of Manchester. A 5 second, 10 second and 60 second full length animation were delivered to coincide with the designation of European City of Science in readiness for use across various advertising, digital and social media platforms. A supporting audio narrative has been prepared and the text drafted ready for recording. Recognisable Mancunian and eminent scientist Professor Brian Cox has given agreement in principle to record this audio, the timing of which is TBC.

The animation was premiered during the landmark ESOF 2016 conference - the audience of which was made up of Nobel Laureates, high level scientists, policy makers, business leaders and influencers from over 80 countries worldwide. The animation featured heavily in and around the conference venue, including the main auditorium and conference rooms, as well as wayfinding signage and digital screens throughout in the exhibition area. 50 unique postcards were also created featuring the iconic image of the moth and these were given to high level international participants and VIPs visiting Manchester for the conference.

A completed version will be rolled out including scripted audio, supported by a PR and social media support campaign to maximise the impact and full leverage of the film across all media and in international activity. The commitment from Ocean Media to offer large scale outdoor digital advertising assets was renewed in late 2017 and options for roll out will be explored once the audio recording has been completed.

B) Digital Content Creation

Marketing Manchester has distributed a creative brief for agencies/organisations to pitch ideas for three pieces of original content for the Manchester Channel, against budget of £45k.

The collateral will focus on three of Greater Manchester's key sectors: science and technology; creative/digital and media, and arts, culture and sport. We are asking for high quality content aligned to Manchester's Original Modern branding that will promote our

region as a place where people will want to visit, study, do business and invest. We are requesting the content will be useable by a range of our stakeholders and that it will appeal to global audiences, in particular the key markets of China and the USA.

C) BBC Britain Partnership

Since the last update in Sep 2017, Marketing Manchester has been developing a closer partnership with VisitBritain that includes the opportunity for a unique content partnership with VisitBritain and BBC World to secure a platform for us to create and distribute Manchester Channel content on BBC Britain.

BBC Britain is a bespoke platform run by BBC Worldwide that is accessible to international audiences. It aggregates existing and newly commissioned articles from five BBC sites: Travel, Culture, Future, Autos and Earth.

Manchester has been offered the opportunity to become one of only four content partners in the UK including Scotland, Wales and London.

We propose to secure this content partnership with BBC World at a cost of £50,000. BBC World will create a 2minute brand film, documentary style for Manchester. We would decide the theme and content and the BBC will produce the film. This brand film will initially be aired a number of times on BBC World News, which as the biggest television service is broadcast across 200 countries and territories with a global audience of 434 million. Following initial broadcast, BBC World will guarantee a further £100k worth of media distribution.

Additionally, as a partner will have the opportunity to suggest content for over 100 syndicable articles and as much content as possible into a bespoke events calendar. We would also secure a 'Partner Module' on the site to promote ourselves in conjunction with VisitBritain and the BBC. This will enable us to have three weeks of content on the BBC Britain site with complete editorial control. This will provide Marketing Manchester with a high profile and reach platform to showcase Manchester's newly developed digital collateral, alongside articles, other media and links to our key platforms.

Investment Match

There is an expectation that the GMLEP budget would be matched with a minimum of 5:1 investment match, which could include project costs, such as support staff, distribution, IT and web activity needed to underpin the Manchester Channel. With the BBC World investment match would exceed this target.