

## **Belarusian delegation visit Manchester and Stockport to understand best practice in health and social care**

Mayors for Peace member councils Manchester and Stockport facilitated a special visit from a senior Belarusian delegation which was organised by Chernobyl Children's Project UK (CCP UK).

The delegation was led by Vladimir Privalov, the Deputy Governor of the Gomel region of Eastern Belarus, and included senior health and social care officers Sergei Paroshin and Piotr Shutko. The Gomel region was one of the most radioactively contaminated regions of Belarus after the 1986 Chernobyl disaster, and many children and young adults have endured illnesses as a result of the contamination.

CCP UK was established in 1995 after a public conference hosted by the Lord Mayor of Manchester. Over the past 23 years it has brought many Belarusian children in remission from cancer or immune system illnesses to the UK for recuperative holidays with host volunteer families, and taken other children for sanatorium holidays in clean parts of Belarus unaffected by the Chernobyl nuclear fall-out. Even though it is over 30 years since the disaster, large parts of the country remain contaminated and serious health problems still occur and persist.

CCP UK has also established a number of important projects in Belarus, including the first hospice for children and a centre for accommodating children with acute disabilities. They have also brought specialists to Belarus, or brought Belarusian health and social care staff to the UK, to encourage best practice support for children affected by the disaster.

Between May 20<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, the charity brought the Belarusian delegation to see a number of projects assisting vulnerable children and young adults, services for disabled children and new technologies to assist such children across the Stockport and Manchester area.

The final event of the visit was a civic reception to meet the Lord Mayor of Manchester, Councillor June Hitchen, to talk through their experiences, and a meeting with senior officers in Manchester's Children and Adult Services department, and the moves to merge such services with the local part of the National Health Service. The delegation really enjoyed meeting the Lord Mayor and the meeting was very productive. It is hoped the experiences and meetings will help in the improving of health and social care back in the Gomel region.

For further information on the work of CCP UK –  
<http://www.chernobyl-children.org.uk>

### **Photos from the Manchester visit –**

