

GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY**DATE: Friday, 13th December, 2024****TIME: 10.30 am****VENUE: Council Chamber, Manchester Town Hall Extension
(Entry via Mount Street Entrance), Manchester****AGENDA**

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Chairs Announcements and Urgent Business**
- 3. Declarations of Interest** 1 - 8

To receive declarations of interest in any item for discussion at the meeting. A blank form for declaring interests has been circulated with the agenda; please ensure that this is returned to the Governance & Scrutiny Officer at least 48 hours in advance of the start of the meeting.

- 4. GMCA Minutes - 29 November 2024** 9 - 26

To consider the approval of the minutes of the GMCA meeting held on 29 November 2024.

- 5. GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Minutes - 27 November 2024** 27 - 44

To note the minutes of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee

BOLTON	MANCHESTER	ROCHDALE	STOCKPORT	TRAFFORD
BURY	OLDHAM	SALFORD	TAMESIDE	WIGAN

held on 27 November 2024.

6. Bee Network Committee - 28 November 2024

45 - 54

To note the minutes of the Bee Network Committee held on 28 November 2024.

7. GM Appointments

1. To appoint 1 GMCA member to the GMCA Standards Committee.
2. To appoint 1 GMCA member to the Growth Company Board.
3. To appoint Cllr David Sweeton (Lab) (Tameside) and Cllr Brenda Warrington (Lab) (Tameside) as members and Cllr Charlotte Martin as a substitute member to the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
4. To appoint Cllr Laura Boyle (Lab) (Tameside) as a member of the GM Waste & Recycling Committee.
5. To appoint Cllr Leanne Feeley (Lab) (Tameside) as a member and Cllr Hugh Roderick (Lab) (Tameside) as a substitute member on the GM Culture & Social Impact Fund Committee.
6. To appoint Cllr Andrew McClaren (Lab) (Tameside) to the GM Work & Skills Forum.
7. To appoint Cllr Laura Boyle (Lab) (Tameside) to the Green City Region Board.
8. To note the appointment of Cllr Stephen Homer (Lab) (Tameside) as a member and Cllr Jacqueline Owen (Lab) (Tameside) as a substitute member on the Bee Network Committee.
9. To note the appointment of Cllr Eleanor Wills (Lab) (Tameside) as a member and Cllr Tafheen Sharif (Lab)

(Tameside) as the substitute member of the GM Integrated Care Partnership Board.

10. To note the appointment of Cllr Laura Boyle (Lab) (Tameside) as the member and Cllr Jacqueline Owen as the substitute member on the GM Clean Air Charging Authorities Committee.

11. To note the appointment of Cllr Laura Boyle (Lab) (Tameside) as the member and Cllr Jacqueline Owen as the substitute member on the Air Quality Administration Committee.

8. Greater Manchester's Approach to Building Safety 55 - 92

Report of Kate Green, Deputy Mayor, and City Mayor Paul Dennett, Deputy Mayor & Portfolio Lead for Housing First.

9. Breaking Down Barriers to Opportunity- A Proposal for a Stronger Education System as Part of Greater Manchester's Strategy - to Enable Young People to Participate & Thrive across Greater Manchester 93 - 124

Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, Portfolio Lead for Technical Education, Skills & Work and Councillor Mark Hunter, Portfolio Lead for Children & Young People.

10. Delivering the Bee Network Update (Performance) 125 - 142

Report of Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester.

11. TfGM Power Purchase 143 - 152

Report of Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester.

12. Brownfield Land New Allocations 153 - 164

Report of City Mayor Paul Dennett, Deputy Mayor & Portfolio Lead for Housing First.

13. Government Consultation - Remote Meeting Attendance and Proxy Voting 165 - 178

Report of Gillian Duckworth, Group Solicitor & Monitoring Officer.

14. Greater Manchester Investment Framework Fund - Conditional Project Approval 179 - 184

Report of Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment.

15. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business on the grounds that this involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

PART B

16. Greater Manchester Investment Framework - 3 Conditional Project Approval 185 - 190

Report of Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment.

Name	Organisation	Political Party
Councillor Eleanor Wills	Tameside MBC	Labour
GM Mayor Andy Burnham	GMCA	Labour
Councillor Arooj Shah	Oldham Council	Labour
Councillor Tom Ross	Trafford	Labour
Councillor Mark Hunter	Stockport	Liberal Democrats
Councillor Neil Emmott	Rochdale	Labour
Councillor Nicholas Peel	Bolton Council	Labour
Councillor Eamonn O'Brien	Bury Council	Labour
City Mayor Paul Dennett	Salford City Council	Labour
Councillor David Molyneux	Wigan Council	Labour
Councillor Bev Craig	Manchester CC	Labour

For copies of papers and further information on this meeting please refer to the website

www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk. Alternatively, contact the following

Governance & Scrutiny Officer: Governance and Scrutiny

✉ sylvia.welsh@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

This agenda was issued on behalf of Julie Connor, Secretary to the
Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Broadhurst House, 56 Oxford Street,
Manchester M1 6EU

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Declaration of Councillors' Interests in Items Appearing on the Agenda

Name and Date of Committee.....>

Agenda Item Number	Type of Interest - PERSONAL AND NON PREJUDICIAL Reason for declaration of interest	NON PREJUDICIAL Reason for declaration of interest Type of Interest – PREJUDICIAL Reason for declaration of interest	Type of Interest – DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST Reason for declaration of interest

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Please see overleaf for a quick guide to declaring interests at GMCA meetings.

Quick Guide to Declaring Interests at GMCA Meetings

Please Note: should you have a personal interest that is prejudicial in an item on the agenda, you should leave the meeting for the duration of the discussion and the voting thereon.

This is a summary of the rules around declaring interests at meetings. It does not replace the Member's Code of Conduct, the full description can be found in the GMCA's constitution Part 7A.

Your personal interests must be registered on the GMCA's Annual Register within 28 days of your appointment onto a GMCA committee and any changes to these interests must be notified within 28 days. Personal interests that should be on the register include:

1. Bodies to which you have been appointed by the GMCA
2. Your membership of bodies exercising functions of a public nature, including charities, societies, political parties or trade unions.

You are also legally bound to disclose the following information called Disclosable Personal Interests which includes:

1. You, and your partner's business interests (eg employment, trade, profession, contracts, or any company with which you are associated).
2. You and your partner's wider financial interests (eg trust funds, investments, and assets including land and property).
3. Any sponsorship you receive.

Failure to disclose this information is a criminal offence

Step One: Establish whether you have an interest in the business of the agenda

1. If the answer to that question is 'No' then that is the end of the matter.
2. If the answer is 'Yes' or 'Very Likely' then you must go on to consider if that personal interest can be construed as being a prejudicial interest.

Step Two: Determining if your interest is prejudicial

A personal interest becomes a prejudicial interest:

1. where the wellbeing, or financial position of you, your partner, members of your family, or people with whom you have a close association (people who are more than just an acquaintance) are likely to be affected by the business of the meeting more than it would affect most people in the area.
2. the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

For a non-prejudicial interest, you must:

1. Notify the governance officer for the meeting as soon as you realise you have an interest.
2. Inform the meeting that you have a personal interest and the nature of the interest.
3. Fill in the declarations of interest form.

To note:

1. You may remain in the room and speak and vote on the matter
If your interest relates to a body to which the GMCA has appointed you to, you only have to inform the meeting of that interest if you speak on the matter.

For prejudicial interests, you must:

1. Notify the governance officer for the meeting as soon as you realise you have a prejudicial interest (before or during the meeting).
2. Inform the meeting that you have a prejudicial interest and the nature of the interest.
3. Fill in the declarations of interest form.
4. Leave the meeting while that item of business is discussed.
5. Make sure the interest is recorded on your annual register of interests form if it relates to you or your partner's business or financial affairs. If it is not on the Register update it within 28 days of the interest becoming apparent.

You must not:

Participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your disclosable pecuniary interest during the meeting participate further in any discussion of the business,
participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

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SHORT GUIDE

GMCA CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

1. WHO

Mandatory for

The Mayor

Members of GMCA

Substitute Members of GMCA

Voting Co-opted Members of GMCA's committees

Appointed Members of Joint Committees

Voluntary for

Non-voting Co-opted Members of GMCA's committees

Elected members from GM districts when they represent GMCA

2. WHEN

Acting in your official capacity, and

In meetings of:

- GMCA; or
- GMCA's Committees or Sub-Committees, Joint Committees or Joint Sub-Committees

3. CONDUCT

General Principles

Selflessness: the public interest not personal gain

Integrity: avoid undue influences

Objectivity: decisions made on merit

Accountability: scrutiny is the norm

Openness: transparent decisions with reasons

Honesty: declare interests and avoid conflicts

Leadership: lead by example.

DO NOT

- Unlawfully discriminate
- Bully or be abusive
- Intimidate a complainant, a witness, or an investigator under the Code of Conduct
- Compromise the impartiality of GMCA's officers
- Disclose confidential information without authority
- Deny lawful access to information
- Bring GMCA into disrepute
- Abuse your position
- Use GMCA's resources improperly

DO

- Pay due regard to the advice of the Treasurer and Monitoring Officer
- Register your interests
- Declare your interests

INTERESTS

A. Pecuniary interests (you, your spouse or your partner)

Register within 28 days

- Employment or other paid office
- Sponsorship – payment in respect of expenses as a Member of GMCA, or election expenses.
- Contracts – between you/your partner (or a body in which you or your partner has a beneficial interest) and GMCA:

- Land you have an interest in within Greater Manchester
- Corporate Tenancies – where GMCA is the landlord you/your partner (or a body in which you or your partner has a beneficial interest) is the tenant
- Securities – you have a beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the area of the GMCA

Do not speak or vote at a meeting on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest

Disclose the interest at the meeting

Withdraw from the meeting

It is a criminal offence to fail to register disclosable pecuniary interests and to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

B. Other Interests

Personal Interests

You have a personal interest -

- If your well-being or financial position would be affected (i.e. more so than other ratepayers)
- If the well-being or financial position of somebody close to you would be affected or the organisations in which they are employed
- If the well-being or financial position of body referred to below would be affected
 - A body of which you are in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by GMCA;
 - A body of which you are in a position of general control or management which
 - i. exercises functions of a public nature;

- ii. is directed to charitable purposes; or
- iii. one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union),
- the interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £100.

Disclose the interest at the meeting

You may speak and vote

C Prejudicial Interests

You have a prejudicial interest -

Where your personal interest is one which a member of the public would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest and it:

- affects your financial position (or those persons or bodies referred to in section B above); or
- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration

Do not speak or vote at a meeting on a matter in which you have a prejudicial interest

Disclose the interest at the meeting

Withdraw from the meeting

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED
AUTHORITY HELD ON FRIDAY 29TH NOVEMBER 2024 AT BOLTON TOWN
HALL**

PRESENT

Mayor of Greater Manchester	Andy Burnham (in the Chair)
Deputy Mayor (Police, Crime & Fire)	Kate Green
Bolton	Councillor Nicholas Peel
Bury	Councillor Eamonn O'Brien
Manchester	Councillor Bev Craig
Oldham	Councillor Arooj Shah
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Mark Hunter
Tameside	Councillor Eleanor Wills
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross
Wigan	Councillor David Molyneux

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

GM Transport Commissioner	Vernon Everitt
GMFRS	CFO Dave Russel
GMP	Supt. Gareth Parkin

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Group Chief Executive Officer, GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM	Caroline Simpson
Group Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
Group Monitoring Officer	Gillian Duckworth
Group Treasurer	Steve Wilson
GMCA Director of Governance & Scrutiny	Julie Connor
Bolton	Sue Johnson
Bury	Lynne Ridsdale

Manchester
Oldham
Rochdale
Salford
Stockport
Tameside
Trafford
Wigan
TfGM
TfGM
TfGM
GMCA
GMCA
GMCA

Paul Marshall
Shelley Kipling
Kuiama Thompson
Tom Stannard
Michael Cullen
Harry Catherall
Sara Todd
Alison McKenzie-Folan
Martin Lax
Steve Warrener
Peter Boulton
Mark Atherton
Sylvia Welsh
Lee Teasdale

GMCA 164/24 APOLOGIES

That apologies be received from Steve Rumbelow (Rochdale), Councillor Nadim Muslim (Chair of GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee), Dame Sarah Storey (GM Active Travel Commissioner) & Warren Escadale (Chair of GM VCSFE Leadership Group).

GMCA 165/24 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, opened the meeting by reflecting on the recent government announcement through an inactivity white paper that Greater Manchester would be receiving £10m of support in the form of an inactivity trailblazer. This would go some way in providing a core infrastructure that in turn would also support the region's Live Well plan ambitions.

RESOLVED /-

1. That an update on the announcement of £10 million of support from government in the form of an inactivity trailblazer, and how this in turn will support the region's Live Well plan be received.

GMCA 166/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED /-

That it be noted that Deputy Mayor Kate Green declared an interest in Item 15 (GM Investment Zone) in respect to her role as a Governor of Manchester Metropolitan University

GMCA 167/24 MINUTES OF THE GMCA MEETING HELD ON 25 OCTOBER 2024

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the GMCA meeting held on 25 October 2024 be approved as a correct record.

GMCA 168/24 MINUTES OF THE GMCA RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 25 OCTOBER 2024

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the GMCA Resources Committee held on 25 October 2024 be approved including:

- i. That the extension of delegations to the Group Chief Executive and associated changes to the terms of reference of the Resources Committee to be included within the GMCA Constitution regarding staffing matters to align with common practice in local government be approved.
- ii. That delegated authority be given to the GMCA Monitoring Officer to update the GMCA Constitution to reflect the changes.

**GMCA 169/24 GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES – 23
OCTOBER 2024**

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 23 October 2024 be noted.

**GMCA 170/24 GMCA BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE MINUTES – 24
OCTOBER 2024**

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the GMCA Bee Network Committee held on 24 October 2024 be noted.

GMCA 171/24 GMCA AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES – 22 OCTOBER 2024

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the GMCA Audit Committee held on 22 October 2024 be noted.

GMCA 172/24 GREATER MANCHESTER APPOINTMENTS

RESOLVED /-

1. That the appointment of a GMCA Member to the GMCA Standards Committee and a GMCA Member to the Growth Company Board be deferred to the December 2024 meeting of the GMCA.
2. That the appointment of Councillor Yvonne Klieve to replace Councillor Paula Wakefield (Wigan) as a substitute member of the GM Police, Fire & Crime Panel be noted.

GMCA 173/24 BEE NETWORK UPDATE

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, introduced the item, stating that GM was now approaching a significant milestone with bus franchising due to complete in one month's time with the commencement of tranche 3 on 5th January 2025. The GMCA had now successfully acquired the fleet required and driver availability was at a good rate. It was hoped that 2025 would prove to be the year in which travel patterns changed and that more people will leave the car at home and take advantage of the increasing scope and ticket packages available through a reliable affordable Bee Network.

Vernon Everitt, GM Transport Commissioner, and Steve Warrener, Managing Director TfGM, were then invited to provide a presentation on recent Bee Network updates. Points highlighted included:

- GM partners continued to work together to ensure that the Bee Network became a single trusted brand which supported the region's growing economy and connecting people to more opportunities.
- The Bee Network currently remained on time and on budget; was seeing increased bus usage and improved reliability; investing in new technologies; achieving record Metrolink patronage; hitting major Active Travel milestones; reducing ticket prices; and building modern facilities.
- It was highlighted that the 615 bus service from Wigan to Middlebrook was the first new bus service introduced under the Bee Network banner.
- Next steps were highlighted including the delivery of tranche 3 on time and on budget; more new safety officers being brought in across the network; continuing to make transport more affordable through a simplified structure; the commencement of phase 2 (rail integration of 8 lines into the network); and continuous improvement across the system.
- In terms of finances. The budget during the current year had been balanced by a small use of reserves and using capital funding to support service delivery. The recently announced £66m government funding for bus fares and bus services would go a long way to supporting funding requirements but still necessitated a small use of reserves at this time.

- Given that the usage of reserves was not sustainable on a long-term basis – the achievement of sustainability was a key business plan priority.

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, welcomed the presentation and reflected upon the Bee Network entering its 'Phase 2' after the implementation of the multi-modal structure on 23 March 2025. This window up to early 2028 would be where focus would shift to the integration of the eight rail lines into the Network, and therefore confirmation was sought that this phase would carry the same level of momentum with the establishment of a clear timeline in collaboration with the rail networks detailing when each step in the process was expected to take place. The Greater Manchester Transport Commissioner confirmed that confirmed dates would be established in the new year with a similar programme to that which had been in place for the successful bus franchising.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the presentation be noted.
2. That it be noted that the timelines for GM Rail Integration into the Bee Network will be confirmed in the new year.

GMCA 174/24 VISION ZERO FOR GREATER MANCHESTER

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, introduced a report sharing the final Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan for Greater Manchester (GM) and provided an overview of GM wide road safety initiatives, which formed part of the Action Plan.

The item opened with the showing of a video produced as part of road safety week. The video highlighted the impact of dangerous driving through interviews with the family of Frankie Jules-Hough, who together with her unborn daughter was killed in an incident on the M66 where the perpetrator had been found to be driving at speeds of over 120mph whilst filming his actions on a mobile phone. Thanks, and condolences were expressed to the family of Frankie for their bravery in engaging with this project.

Peter Boulton, Network Director Highways, TfGM stated that there had been 10,000 killed or seriously injured on the roads of Greater Manchester in the past 10 years. With 799 of these being in 2023, and 45 of those 799 sadly resulting in fatalities. Vision Zero was about the families and friends of GM not suffering life changing injuries on the region's roads. It was about creating safe and attractive streets to encourage people to walk and cycle, improving health and air quality. It was about removing disruption from the road network to support the reliability of the Bee Network. It was also about addressing the sheer cost resulting from these accidents which currently ran into the region of £500m per year. The Strategy had been developed by the Safer Roads GM Partnership and brought together organisations from the whole of GM.

Deputy Mayor Kate Green, paid tribute to Dame Sarah Storey for being the driving force behind the implementation of Vision Zero and supporting elements such as the school streets initiative. It was stated that whilst there were detractors who stated that zero deaths on the roads of GM could never be achieved, this absolutely had to be the goal the region aimed for, as a single death on the roads was too many. The Deputy Mayor also highlighted the £1m Vision Zero innovation fund launched earlier in November. Partners were being encouraged to come forward with proposals relating to the fund.

Chief Fire Officer, Dave Russel (GMFRS), expressed his thanks to the team at TfGM for the delivery of the Strategy and welcomed the heavy emphasis placed on public engagement. He advised that GMFRS now attended more road traffic accidents than fires in the region, this shift in operational workload was particularly pronounced. The action plan presented a real opportunity for the region but would require a step change in collaboration to be fully realised.

Superintendent Gareth Parkin (GMP) stated that GMP officers would be pushing hard on this initiative. It would be challenging but it was absolutely the right thing to do and must be strived towards. Road traffic incidents were one of the worst things for officers to have to deal with, not just in terms of attendance at the time, but also in the sheer impact upon families after the fact, as evidenced in the video shown at the meeting. Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, made reference to a repeated complaint received from GM residents, which related to food delivery cyclists, who

were increasingly adopting anti-social and indeed dangerous tactics, cutting over pavements and through red lights, without lights and without reflective clothing. This needed to be reconsidered in the new year with the development of an appropriate code of practice similar to that developed in London.

Councillor Tom Ross welcomed the Strategy and noted that it made reference to another devastating loss of life in the region – Marcus Simmons-Allen, who had only been 18 years old, was killed in an accident by a driver travelling at around twice the speed limit in Broadheath near Altrincham, causing an unimaginable impact upon his family and friends.

Councillor Eamonn O'Brien stated that the Bee Network Committee would be treating the Vision Zero Strategy as a key part of its work load going forwards, and expressed thanks to all first responders who attended road traffic accidents, and the amazing levels of dedication they had to what was an extremely emotionally demanding role.

As phase 2 of the Bee Network commenced, alongside rail integration, highways would also need to be high on the agenda, as roads began to flow better through active travel there would also be the opportunity to work on better standards of driving.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the GMCA record its thanks to the family of Frankie Jules-Hough for their bravery and support for the Vision Zero Strategy.
2. That condolences be expressed to the family of Marcus Simmons-Allen
3. That the contents of the Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan be noted.
4. That the final Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan and the formal adoption of a Vision Zero ambition for GM, where no one will suffer death or life changing injuries on our roads, be approved.
5. That the launch of the £1m Vision Zero Innovation Fund earlier in November be noted.

6. That the GMCA record its thanks to Dame Sarah Storey for her support in driving forward the implementation of the Vision Zero Strategy and the School Streets initiative.
7. That it be noted that the development of a code of practice to address safety issues arising as a result of food delivery cyclists will be progressed in the new year.
8. That the GMCA record its thanks be to all first responders at road traffic accidents for their admirable dedication to what was an extremely emotionally demanding job.
9. That the importance of highways priorities within phase 2 of the Bee Network and wider active travel ambitions be noted.

GMCA 175/24 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GM VCFSE ACCORD

Councillor Arooj Shah, Portfolio Lead for Communities & Equalities, presented a report which provided an update on the work that is currently taking place across Greater Manchester, including the implementation of the VCFSE Fair Funding Protocol, agreed by the CA in October 2023.

A huge amount of progress had already been made, with VCFSE sector representatives “at the table” in many places where important decisions were made across the NHS Health and Social Care, GMCA and Transport for Greater Manchester partnerships. The sector was playing a strong role across all the commitments and thematic areas of the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS), and improvements had been made in support for the sector’s workforce, in communication, in partnerships and in service delivery.

However, at the current time there was huge pressure on both public budgets and the resources available for VCFSE activities, and recent months had seen significant developments that would affect future delivery. The VCFSE Accord and its associated workstreams had built capacity across the sector, but it was important that the commitment by the GMCA and its constituent local authorities was strengthened if

VCFSE organisations were going to continue to play their vital role in GM's communities and ambitions.

Work was ongoing between VCFSE leaders and public partners to explore the sector's role in the refreshed GMS and in Growth and Reform, including the delivery of flagship missions such as Live Well, the Bee Network, MBACC and Housing First. It was proposed that a further paper is brought to the CA for consideration early in 2025 which would describe a series of strategic undertakings in partnership with the VCFSE sector, which would be implemented through the VCFSE Accord.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the progress update and the next steps, as outlined at section 4, of the report submitted, be noted and that a further report be submitted to the GMCA for consideration early in 2025.
2. That an invitation should be extended to the Chair of the GM VCFSE Leadership Group to attend future meetings of the Combined Authority.

GMCA 176/24 FIVE YEAR ENVIRONMENT PLAN 2025-2030

Councillor Tom Ross, Portfolio Lead for Green City Region, presented the penultimate draft of the next Greater Manchester Five Year Environment Plan (2025-30) for approval, and provided an overview of the process undertaken to develop the Plan, plus the next steps prior to publication and launch in December 2024.

Councillor Ross noted highlights from the current plan. These included over £123m of investment in retrofitting nearly 10,000 homes; over £120m retrofitting public buildings; £26m invested in delivering renewable energy; 750 trees planted; 100km of new cycling infrastructure developed; and over 100 new electric buses delivered.

The report included a recent climate change risk assessment which painted a grim picture of the challenges that would be posed by climate change without further mitigation.

The revised plan built upon previous ambitions and aimed to ensure that everyone in GM had a healthy, low carbon, nature rich environment in which to live well, prosper and grow.

Councillor Tom Ross conveyed some of the comments raised when the Plan had been considered by the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee recently. These included the need for a positive narrative throughout the plan to engage the public on the benefits; language that was concise, clear and understandable to all residents; highlighting the benefits of nature and carbon capture; and that the tone be focussed on encouraging residents to take their own actions on this agenda.

Members highlighted the continuing areas of concern around landfills. Particularly the consistently poor performance and quality of Pilsworth South Landfill between Bury and Rochdale, with many residents seeking for this site to be closed following the conclusion of the current contract. It was stated that reducing the need for landfills as much as possible was a key area of importance and the GM Waste & Resources Strategy would be considering alternative ways forward.

Members noted the read through from the Environment Plan into Spatial Planning and it was highlighted that there was a need to revisit the Waste & Minerals Plan ,as the existing plan was not up to date and would require consideration through AGMA.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the Greater Manchester Five Year Environment Plan, as contained within Annex 01, of the report submitted, be approved.
2. That the development process and next steps for its' professional design, publication and launch at the Green Summit on 9th December be noted.
3. That the Greater Manchester Climate Risk Assessment, as a technical appendix to the Plan (Annex 02), be noted.
4. That it be noted that the co-benefits sustainability assessment of the Plan was positive.

5. That the comments highlighted from the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee consideration of the Plan be noted.
6. That the ongoing position in relation to the Pilsworth South Landfill be noted.
7. That the need to revisit the Waste & Minerals plan be noted and that this will be considered to AGMA in the new year.

GMCA 177/24 GM CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PROGRAMME UPDATE

Councillor Mark Hunter, Portfolio Lead for Children and Young People, presented a report providing an update on a selection of strategically significant work areas.

A significant amount of work had taken place in this space, and it was the intention that early in the new year an update would be brought to the GMCA on early years SEND education and Be Well in particular.

The statement of intent by the new government to tackle profiteering within the children's residential market by demanding greater transparency over the profits made within this space was welcomed. There was an ambition to expand the regional care co-operative model – of which GM was one of two pathfinder areas. There was also an ambition to drive up foster and kinship care which was very welcome.

Reference was made to the Greater Manchester Pledge, an agreement between the 10 Greater Manchester authorities on the spending conditions for the use of agency social workers. The latest data available suggested that in 9 of the 10 Greater Manchester local authorities had been a particularly successful initiative. This also put Greater Manchester in a very strong position for national plans that were due to commence soon.

Reference was made to the recent issues at Tameside Council's children's services. The workforce challenges they had faced were fully recognised and how this had impacted their adherence to the Greater Manchester Pledge. Reassurance was provided to Tameside colleagues that the fellow Greater Manchester local authorities and the GMCA were committed to working with them to get them back in line with the

Pledge. Tameside representatives welcomed the support received from across Greater Manchester during this period and highlighted that there had been a new appointment to the role of Director of Children's Services who would contribute to making a significant improvement in the service offer at the authority.

Project Skyline, the ambitious project to develop ten new children's residential care homes continued at pace, with properties now starting to be acquired by preferred providers.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the updates on the Children and Young People's Programme be noted.
2. That the proposal to extend the existing travel offer for care-experienced young people up to age 25 be endorsed, subject to funding being identified and approved as part of the Transport Budget setting process.
3. That it be noted that an update on early years SEND education would be submitted to the GMCA in the new year.
4. That the update received on Children's Services at Tameside be noted, with thanks expressed to partners across the region for their recent support.
5. That the Mayor of Greater Manchester approved the proposal to extend the existing travel offer for care-experienced young people up to age 25, subject to funding being identified and approved as part of the Transport Budget setting.

GMCA 178/24 GREATER MANCHESTER INVESTMENT ZONE

Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Lead for Economy, Business & Inclusive Growth, presented a report setting out investment zone project allocations for 2025/26 in detail.

Members were reminded that this stemmed from the £80m in grant funding for Advanced Manufacturing & Materials over the five years between 2024/25 and

2028/29. The programme also permitted Greater Manchester to retain the growth in Business Rates with no reset over 25 years on two sites totalling 600 ha.

The GMCA was now preparing a profile for the £17.76 million of grant funding available for the second year of the programme, in anticipation of this being signed off by government between January and April 2025.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the proposed approach be noted.
2. That authority be delegated to the Group Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Group Treasurer and the Economy Portfolio Chief Executive and Leader, to negotiate with Government and agree project allocations in each financial year to 2028/29. An annual programme update will then be provided to the GMCA setting out project progress, risks, and the impact of the funded interventions.

**GMCA 179/24 GREATER MANCHESTER ONE NETWORK CONNECTIVITY
PARTNER PROCUREMENT**

Councillor Nicholas Peel, Portfolio Lead for GM Digital, presented a report setting out progress on Greater Manchester One Network implementation and summarising the outcome of a tender process to extend One Network to include connectivity services for sites that are not served by the GM Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) and GM One Network.

RESOLVED /-

1. That approval be given to the GMCA entering into the contract with Telent for GM One Network Connectivity Managed Services Partner services valued at up to £3m to enable services that provide connectivity to more sites, creating an agreement that can be drawn on for the benefit of partners in GM One Network (at their cost); noting that orders under the contract will be subject to the governance set out in the report and decisions in accordance with the Constitution.

GMCA 180/24 GMCA REVENUE UPDATE QUARTER 2 2024/25

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment, presented a report informing members of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority financial position at the end of September 2024 (Quarter 2) and forecast revenue outturn position for the 2024/25 financial year.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the forecast position at 30th September 2024 be noted.
2. That an increase to the Mayoral budget of £80k funded from Mayoral reserves towards spend on mayoral priorities (para 3.2) be approved.

GMCA 181/24 GMCA CAPITAL UPDATE QUARTER 2 2024/25

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment, presented an update in relation to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's 2024/25 capital expenditure programme.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the current 2024/25 forecast of £581.8m compared to the previous forecast of £636.3m be noted.
2. That the addition of £0.3m National Highways funding to the 2024/25 capital programme to design and deliver a further 23 bus stop upgrades in Oldham, Tameside and Manchester, as outlined in section 2.7.5, as part of the Bus Infrastructure programme be approved.

**GMCA 182/24 GREATER MANCHESTER INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK,
CONDITIONAL PROJECT APPROVAL**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment, presented a report seeking approval of an equity investment of up to £300k to Shopblocks Limited

and two investments through GMCA's Advanced Manufacturing and Materials Investment Fund, GM Advance, alongside an update on the loan to Sustainable Ventures (North) Limited.

RESOLVED /-

1. That an equity investment of up to £300,000 to Shopblocks Limited be approved.
2. That an equity investment of £250,000 to Molyem Limited be approved.
3. That an equity investment of £150,000 to Wull Technologies Limited be approved.
4. That the update on the loan to Sustainable Ventures (North) Limited be noted.
5. That authority be delegated to the Group Treasurer in consultation with the Group Monitoring Officer to review the due diligence information in respect of the above investments, and, subject to their satisfactory review and agreement of the due diligence information and the overall detailed commercial terms of the investments, to sign off any outstanding conditions, issue final approvals and complete any necessary related documentation in respect of the investments noted above.

GMCA 183/24 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business on the grounds that this involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

GMCA 184/24 GM INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

Clerk's Note: This item was considered in support of the report considered in Part A of the agenda (GMCA 182/24).

RESOLVED /-

That the report be noted.

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD WEDNESDAY, 27
NOVEMBER 2024 AT THE TOOTAL BUILDINGS - BROADHURST HOUSE, 1ST
FLOOR, 56 OXFORD STREET, MANCHESTER, M1 6EU**

PRESENT:

Councillor Nadim Muslim	Bolton Council (Chair)
Councillor Peter Wright	Bolton Council
Councillor John Leech	Manchester City Council
Councillor Mandie Shilton – Godwin	Manchester City Council
Councillor Colin McLaren	Oldham Council
Councillor Ashley Dearnley	Rochdale Council
Councillor Terry Smith	Rochdale Council
Councillor Dylan Williams	Rochdale Council
Councillor Sameena Zaheer	Rochdale Council
Councillor Tony Davies	Salford City Council
Councillor Lewis Nelson	Salford City Council
Councillor Rachel Wise	Stockport Council
Councillor Jill Axford	Trafford Council
Councillor Ged Carter	Trafford Council
Councillor Joanne Marshall	Wigan Council
Councillor Debra Wailes	Wigan Council

ALSO PRESENT:

Andy Burnham	GM Mayor
Councillor Eamonn O'Brien	Portfolio Lead for Technical Education, Work & Skills

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Karen Chambers	GMCA
Gillian Duckworth	GMCA

Jane Forrest	GMCA
Gemma Marsh	GMCA
Nicola Ward	GMCA

O&SC 40/24 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Russell Bernstein (Bury), Councillor Imran Rizvi (Bury), Councillor Basil Curley (Manchester), Councillor Claire Reid (Tameside), Councillor Naila Sharif (Tameside), Councillor Shaun Ennis (Trafford), Councillor Fred Walker (Wigan)

Apologies were also received from Caroline Simpson, Group Chief Executive and Steve Wilson, Treasurer GMCA.

O&SC 41/24 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

Members were reminded of their obligations under the GMCA Members' Code of Conduct and were requested to complete an annual declaration of interest form, which had been emailed to them by the Governance & Scrutiny Officer.

Members were advised that the date for the budget meeting in February has been confirmed as 5 February 2025. It was confirmed that an updated meeting invite had been sent.

Ahead of the budget meeting on 5 February, an online information briefing session had been arranged for all members and substitute members on Thursday 12 December at 11am to 12noon. All members should have received the invitation for this session and were asked to prioritise attending.

The Chair reminded members to keep questions to a maximum of 1 or 2 per agenda item, to ensure there was time for everyone to ask a question.

Concerns were raised regarding a recent announcement on the proposed Post Office closures in GM and it was requested that an impact report be brought to the Committee.

The Chair advised that it was not appropriate for the Committee to take a report on this matter as it was a Local Authority issue, and the request should be made to their local scrutiny committee.

RESOLVED /-

1. That members as per their obligation stated in the Code of Conduct would complete their Annual Declaration of Interest form and return it to the Governance & Scrutiny Officer.
2. That members note the confirmed date for the budget meeting, which was scheduled for 5 February 2025.
3. That members note the details of the budget information briefing session taking place on Thursday 12 December 2024.
4. That members would limit their questions to a maximum of 1 or 2, to ensure there is time for everyone to ask a question.
5. That it was not appropriate for a report regarding the proposed Post Office closures to be brought to the Committee.

O&SC 42/24

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED /-

No declarations were received in relation to any item on the agenda.

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23 October 2024 be approved as a correct and accurate record.

O&SC 44/24**OVERVIEW OF GM LIVE WELL**

The Chair invited GM Mayor, Andy Burnham, GMCA Director of Public Sector Reform, Jane Forrest to present this item.

The GM Mayor introduced the report that provided the Committee with an introductory overview of the 'GM Live Well' ambition which formed the basis of one of the core interconnected commitments in the Mayoral manifesto. The purpose of the report was to set out the ambition and provide committee members an opportunity for early engagement. It was anticipated that further reports would be provided to the committee at a future date.

The GM Mayor shared his view that over the past 14 years GM had seen the emergence of a voluntary welfare state across all ten boroughs of GM. The GM model has reached such a degree of sophistication that now was the time to consider GM's most ambitious piece of public service reform yet. He added it was time to think differently about supporting residents with social interventions as opposed to the more expensive interventions, such as health or medical interventions. In an era of constrained resources GM needed to look at how pressure could be taken off public services to help support residents but at the same time provide more preventative everyday support so that people could have a good standard of living.

GM was aiming to provide services in a way that helped residents move forward but also created a more sustainable basis for councils and partners such as GMP and

the GM NHS. GM Live Well needed to work alongside the Housing First ambition; as coming out of the pandemic it was clear that many of our residents had a housing situation which was actively preventing them from living well, causing them concern and potentially physical harm in terms of the condition of the property. Giving people access to good housing was essential, providing a foundation that from there GM could provide the practical support to enable residents to sustain themselves in a better position.

The GM Mayor briefed the Committee on the concept and the objectives of Live Well. He advised that GM had been in discussions with the Secretary of State about widening GM's ambitions and the success of the GM Working Well Programme. The Working Well programme was aimed at people longest out of the labour market and GM was able to achieve much better results than the national work programme achieved by providing much more personal support with much greater focus on mental health, without the same deadlines and sanctions-based approach as the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

The GM Mayor advised that following those discussions GM had been announced as an Inactivity Pilot and given £10m to support the delivery of Working Well approach. He advised that this was an opportunity to rethink the delivery of support, recognising that the one size fits all approach does not leave GM residents feeling empowered.

The aim was to route employment support through the community and voluntary organisations in GM to create the infrastructure of a Live Well service then start bringing in health services. The GM Mayor stated that he had met with the Health Secretary and advised that GM was keen to become a prevention demonstrator and bring primary care closer. He advised that around a third of phone calls to GP surgeries related to social needs rather than medical needs, but it was often perceived that the only option available to get support was contacting the GP. By providing additional support for those people, rather than them going to their GP, GM could take pressure off overstretched services and get people the support needed more quickly.

The Committee welcomed the report and the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Live Well framework.

Members advised that they would be keen to see more mention of preventative social measures, such as activity, built into framework along with the importance of access to good food due to the impact of obesity. Mental Health and investing in our young people to build resilience could also be beneficial to capture. The GM Mayor agreed, and stated that activity, nutrition and mental health were core components of Live Well. In terms of activity, constructing something that people could do jointly also addresses isolation. The GM Mayor advised that the Age Friendly team and GM Moving Team were working together under the umbrella of Live Well to look at how they could structure activity in a joint way. In terms of nutrition, there were some organisations that provide an enhanced food pantry service, providing cookery lessons, these were examples of community services that could be expanded. In terms of mental health, this was often linked to a lack of connection or activity, therefore the aim was to provide those connections for people in their communities, but not to replace statutory services.

It was noted that it was important to build on and continue to support services already in place in communities.

Members asked for reassurance that consideration was given to localities needs and that areas that were lacking in voluntary or community sector infrastructure would be given the support they needed and that is relevant to that community. The GM Mayor advised that his vision was to use existing buildings to be Live Well Centres, and to ensure that everyone had access to a Live Well Centre for example there were many NHS centres that are underutilised which could be considered. Some authorities have purpose-built facilities, such as Gorton Hub, which was an excellent example of a Live Well Centre, including co-location of health and voluntary sector support. GM also needed to potentially consider rebranding Job Centre Plus, to ensure that the community and voluntary sector could be able to provide support in the same space.

It was noted that data sharing was holding back this work. The GM Mayor advised that data sharing with the DWP and NHS would be required to identify residents who we would want to target, those who were long term out of work and heavy users of GP and hospital services.

Members asked if there would be any consideration given to alternative or holistic health services, as these services were often only available for those who could afford to pay for them. The GM Mayor advised that the GM aim was to start with the core services to the offer, therefore it would be up to localities to design and provide enhanced services they felt would be of value to the community.

It was noted that there may be some stigma attached to a “Live Well” centre and that some residents may prefer these services in a GP setting. The GM Mayor hoped that this would not be the case, as we all, at some stage, may need some support to help us live well.

Members observed that the model was similar to Sure Start centres. The GM Mayor agreed. Sure Start was an excellent idea but it was almost a self-selective service, that we can learn from.

Officers advised that it was our ambition to have Live Well Centres in all 10 local authorities and recognised that we would want to see other Live Well spaces and offers. It was envisaged that a codesign phase with partners would be required, with the design being community led, using data available to understand what the needs and assets were. An example was given around the Live Well offer for people living with dementia and those in later life. Engagement had started to see what a Live Well offer would look and feel like for that cohort, considering what was already in place and what else our communities might tell us was needed. It was important to ensure this was fully networked across public services in all neighbourhoods, and included the voluntary sector, to help build sustainable support for communities. It was also important to recognise that we had lots of evidence from previous programmes, such as school readiness and Housing First, which could help design this going forward. The GM Mayor added that he would also like Housing First to be

part of the Live Well core offer so that people had support to address housing issues, such as enforcement of housing standards.

Members asked what support was in place for the voluntary sector for preventative intervention and how would the data support this, as this can at times be complex. The GM Mayor stated that the existence of a referral route, being able to direct someone to a service, would assist with this. Whilst it may be hard to provide data at the start, the fact that there was a service to refer people to, would have an impact. Officers confirmed that evaluation would be part of the design, and measurable impact would be tracked through the budget and use that to look at return on investment and pivot resources into prevention.

Members commented that the current model of job centres does not always work, particularly for those with a hidden disability. How could we ensure that staff in the job centres were appropriately trained and were empathetic and able to get people back into work. The GM Mayor advised that often the system the staff had to work with within the DWP might prevent them from appearing empathetic. If we approached that at a local level, to empower and support people, changing the culture and delivery of the service, it would make a difference, although this would take time. Officers advised that alongside the £10m the CA had received, there was additional Government funding for a number of different programmes which was flexible, that would create one pot to add to the £10m. That additional funding and flexibility would enable GM to go as far possible with the resources we have, and through our evaluation make a case to Government in terms of future spending rounds, especially in relation to current DWP services.

Members commented that the £10m was very welcome and asked whether it was enough. The GM Mayor advised that although the £10m is linked to what the DWP had received in the budget, GM were planning to create an integrated approach, starting with services in spring 2025, with the incapacity pilot, this was expected to build through the years so by the end of 2029 we would hope to have a fully integrated Live Well programme. Officers added that ability for front line services to have trusted relationships to have conversations with people, is at the heart of Live

Well, and it was recognised that the voluntary sector are very good at these interactions. Alongside this GM have a VCSFE Accord, that really sets out the intent around funding and how to effectively work with the sector, GM were also starting to look at the role of infrastructure organisations and how they can start being supported to support some of the grass roots organisations.

Members asked if there were concerns about the capacity in the voluntary sector organisations to lead on this work, how would we ensure consistency and connectivity to communities, especially diverse communities. The GM Mayor advised that there was a risk there, but if core funding was strengthened then that would ensure that organisations could worry less about fundraising to concentrate on what they did best. He advised that GM were trying to divert current funding streams into the voluntary sector, which would take pressure off local authority services by having a stronger local infrastructure.

Members commented that they had seen some fantastic examples of place-based working and advised how the input of a housing officer had made a difference in the uptake of engagement.

Members stated that the value of volunteering could really make a difference so they would like to see this incorporated into the Live Well ambitions. The GM Mayor agreed that volunteering was very valuable and could often be the step into work, as it helped with confidence building, but unfortunately it was not available in the current system. By changing that and working with voluntary organisations, it was expected that this could create an increase in volunteers and capacity in the system.

Members noted that volunteers would need training and resources to develop the programme, and assistance to link with other organisations. The GM Mayor advised that there would be a need for a Live Well coordinator role and training would be needed to ensure that they have the knowledge to deal with referrals.

Members asked if services would be affordable and accessible as this could be a barrier, especially for those in receipt of benefits. It was noted that services also

needed to be culturally appropriate. The GM Mayor advised that services did have to be affordable and culturally appropriate, but this needed to be built from the bottom up. Members added that often the people in the community understood their needs the most, how could GM ensure that that consideration was given to the people in the community in terms of employment opportunities. The GM Mayor agreed, Live Well was about building up from the organisations already there and empowering them to do more. It must be community owned and driven.

Members welcomed localised services but advised that they had concerns regarding availability of affordable spaces for use, and buildings such as health centres being demolished. In relation to premises, the GM Mayor stated that he would look at the health centre mentioned. He would like public organisations to identify building themselves, such as health centres. He also asked Members to consider what might work in their areas.

The GM Mayor thanked the Committee for their encouragement, positive and productive comments and suggestions.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Overview of Live Well be noted.
2. That information regarding the Health Centre being demolished in Horwich be investigated by Officers.

O&SC 45/24

TECHNICAL EDUCATION, WORK AND SKILLS UPDATE

The Chair invited Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, Portfolio Lead for Technical Education, Work & Skills and Gemma Marsh, Director of Education, Work & Skills, GMCA, to present this item.

Councillor O'Brien introduced the report that advised Members of GM's ambitions to develop an inclusive integrated technical education, skills and work system that connects residents, localities, providers, and businesses to build a strong, resilient, modern Greater Manchester economy that works for everyone is the central ambition of this portfolio area. The report and accompanying slides aimed to provide the Committee with an update on the current priority areas further enabled by the latest devolution deal for GM.

Councillor O'Brien stated that this report related closely to the previous item on the agenda. Work Well was an integral part of the Mayors Live Well ambitions. Good jobs would open up the rest of what a good life looks like for many residents. It was important that when we talk about this, that we are talking about a really clear priority around good quality work. We have already done some great work around this in GM, with the Good Employment Charter underpinning what we believe good work looks like.

The presentation summarised the ambitions of Work Well. At the moment, the system that exists does not work for many people, as the systems are siloed, process heavy and detached from everyday life.

GM's aim was to provide a service that was integrated to bring together all parts of the system, that was person centred and adaptable and closely aligned with employers and the needs of the GM economy and devolution was key to this.

Councillor O'Brien advised that nationally health related barriers to work were increasing, which was recognised in the new Government's agenda for growing the economy and reducing pressure on the NHS. There were many people who would want to work who feel they can't at the moment and there was a relatively small portion of people who were not working that did not want to work, but a one size fits all solution was currently ineffective.

Councillor O'Brien stated that there were a few questions for the Committee to consider regarding what was happening in local areas, as Live Well would only work if it was relevant to communities. Each area would have distinct communities that would need a very different and distinct offer and recognised that GM really needed to hear the voices of Members.

The Chair requested that Members considered the following questions when making their comments.

- **Employment Support:** From your experience locally: How can we reach and engage more people? What do you do now that you could build on? What could you do differently?
- **Greater Manchester Baccalaureate:** How would you like to be kept updated about your areas? Are there priorities in your locality that the Greater Manchester Baccalaureate can help with? What are the opportunities that the Greater Manchester Baccalaureate presents?

Members commented that entrepreneurship and community wealth building needed to be considered in order to drive future ambitions and economic growth. Councillor O'Brien advised that we needed to be aspirational, but we also had to recognise the low base starting point, lower than other parts of the country. We had to ensure our offer was inclusive. In GM, there were 400,000 people economically inactive and over 100,000 with long term health conditions, so to get them actively involved in some part of society would be a significant accomplishment.

Members asked what safeguards were in place for when an apprenticeship ends, as numerous apprenticeships seemed to be ending without a job. Councillor O'Brien advised that in relation to T Levels, although small in numbers at the moment, they were giving good results. However, the majority of apprenticeships was that the majority were being offered at a higher level, meaning the entry level apprenticeships were fewer. He advised that GM needed to work with Government to ensure that entry level and T levels were good quality and provided good outcomes.

Members asked if life skills had been considered as part of the MBacc, to allow students to learn crucial life and soft skills. Councillor O'Brien agreed; college courses should indeed equip students with these skills. If young people could see a value in what they were doing, then they would be engaged in their learning. By giving better and clearer choices to young people they would be more engaged and get better outcomes.

Members welcomed the MBacc as an alternative route to employment and training and asked if an apprenticeship programme could be designed for working class communities to get them out of the cycle of low paid employment and worklessness. Councillor O'Brien stated that GM needed to demonstrate that this was about the needs of the economy and align with what employers were telling us. It was important to demonstrate that this was about equity and fairness and respecting people where they are in life and that there were choices that were open to all. Officers confirmed that all young people needed real high-quality connections to opportunities in their areas.

Officers confirmed that if GM was going play its part in the mission to an 80% employment rate, which is an additional 150,000 people into work, we had to ensure all our young people could see the wealth of jobs that were available in GM. We needed to see more collaboration between employers and the skills system to break down that barrier so residents could see a clear path to good employment. We needed to start to have those conversations with our business boards to ask how they could change their entry requirements so residents can access jobs.

Members asked if the MBacc was transferable outside of GM. Councillor O'Brien stated that fundamentally this was about branding a certain set of choices that create a gateway to good jobs. The MBacc was similar to the EBacc, only it includes a range of technical subjects, it was expected that this would be transferable and that students taking the MBacc could not go onto university.

Members advised that it was important to ensure that employment support was support and not just a box ticking exercise. Councillor O'Brien agreed. We needed to ensure improvements in the system to enable people to trust in the system more. There was challenge there but it was noted that there were areas of good practice that GM could build on.

Members asked how we could capture feedback from employers about the MBacc. Councillor O'Brien advised that sessions had been taking place with employers who had signed up to technical placements. Some of the employers were recognising the quality and benefits of technical qualifications and were not necessarily looking for university graduates to fill every role in their industry, such as Ernst and Young and some of the digital and creative industries in Media City.

Members commented that a focus on younger children in school, especially those who may be third generation worklessness, was required to create ambition. Councillor O'Brien advised that we did need to speak to the aspirations of all younger people. At the moment, EBacc was only an option for one third of young people in GM so there was a large proportion of young people in GM that we needed to open up an alternative pathway for.

Members raised a question regarding the definition of a good job, and asked who was expected do the bad jobs and how do we get around the stigma of this. They also asked what could be done to look at the concerns that taking time off sick might lead to redundancies.

Councillor O'Brien stated that any job could be a good job, as long as there was decent pay, good terms and conditions, support when sick and that the employees were treated with respect. We need to encourage employers to sign up to the Good Employment Charter as the more employers who are signed up to the standards, the harder it is for the bad jobs to undermine confidence.

It was noted that a huge number of people were excluded from the job market or were doing jobs that were far less than their potential, how do we recognise this, how do we

reach those people to provide opportunities. Councillor O'Brien stated that it was true that there were people who were underemployed, that aren't able realise their potential and one way to address this was to have a really good adult education offer available, such as ESOL courses.

It was noted that we needed to be realistic about the level of resource available to us. There was a need to ensure a real collaborative approach and build on what was already in place. Councillor O'Brien stated that at the moment the model was far too programme led, relying on Government funding. We would like to have more control of what we do how we design these things and have a far more collaborative approach recognising GM could do far more by pooling this with the resources already available in communities.

Members asked if apprenticeships could be available for older people who may want to learn a new trade. Officers confirmed in terms of the over 50's, often they do not want to engage with the job centre, so it is vital to design how we support them around their needs as we have done with ethnic minorities and NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training). Similarly, it was good to see that 21,000 of people currently supported were over 50 years old. It was important to value older people that bring experience to the sectors. Members asked if there would be targeted support for older people to enable them to get a better job. In Stockport, roadshows had taken place that targeted not only people out of work, but also provided support for people in work to reach income maximisation.

On the question of how to reach and engage more people – an example was given on UA92 in Trafford who tailored their student timetable to AM or PM sessions to allow students with other commitments flexibility to attend. Officers advised that this was something that should be a Work Well ambition; to provide flexibility, as 9 to 5 training doesn't suit everyone, therefore it was important to meet the training needs of the person in a more inclusive and flexible way.

Members stated that there was a perception that skilled manual labour was less valued than a college education. This needed to be addressed at a school level to encourage

participation in these sorts of apprenticeships. Councillor O'Brien advised that we needed to find the balance between technical and academic education and employment. At the moment, that balance was tipped towards academic education, so it was important to tip that balance back so that all young people have good quality choices.

Members commented on employment opportunities in Ecommerce and online companies as an opportunity for young people that may need to work from home due to disabilities etc. Officers confirmed that GM currently have the same flexible approach to this as with the over 50's, we speak with employers and scope out what the programme could look like to support the sector. Councillor O'Brien agreed that internet-based types of job could be more suitable for people with neurodiversity. and explained that GM had found that by focusing in on particular sectors, we could actually reach a far greater range of the population .

RESOLVED /-

1. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcomed the Technical Education, Work and Skills Update.
2. That the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Technical Education, Work and Skills Update be noted.
3. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the following questions and feedback any outstanding comments via the Governance and Scrutiny Officer.
 - Employment Support: From your experience locally: How can we reach and engage more people? What do you do now that you could build on? What could you do differently?
 - Greater Manchester Baccalaureate: How would you like to be kept updated about your areas? Are there priorities in your locality that the

Greater Manchester Bacallaureate can help with? What are the opportunities that the Greater Manchester Bacallaureate presents?

O&SC 46/24

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME &
FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

RESOLVED /-

1. That the proposed Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme for November 2024 – January 2025 be noted.
2. That Members use the Forward Plan of Key Decisions to identify any potential areas for further scrutiny.

O&SC 47/24

FUTURE MEETING DATES

RESOLVED /-

That the following dates for the rest of the municipal year be noted:

- 11 December 2024 – 1pm to 3.30pm
- 29 January 2025 – 1pm to 3.30pm
- 5 February 2025 – 1pm to 3.30pm
- 26 February 2025 – 1pm to 3.30pm
- 26 March 2025 – 1pm to 3.30pm

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Agenda Item 6

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE HELD THURSDAY, 28TH NOVEMBER 2024 AT BOARDROOM, GMCA OFFICES

PRESENT:

Councillor Eamonn O'Brien (in the Chair)	GMCA
Councillor Alan Quinn	Bury
Councillor Tracey Rawlins	Manchester
Councillor Josh Charters	Oldham
Councillor Howard Sykes	Oldham
Councillor Grace Baynham	Stockport
Councillor David Meller	Stockport
Councillor John Vickers	Wigan

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Vernon Everitt	GM Transport Commissioner
Dame Sarah Storey	GM Active Travel Commissioner
CFO Dave Russel	GMFRS
Supt. Gareth Parkin	GMP

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Chris Barnes	TfGM
Peter Boulton	TfGM
Melinda Edwards	GMCA
Martin Lax	TfGM
Adam Sedgmond	TfGM
Caroline Simpson	GMCA
Lee Teasdale	GMCA
Danny Vaughan	TfGM

BNC/41/24 Welcome & Apologies

Apologies were received and noted from Mayor Andy Burnham, Councillor Hamid Khurram (Bolton), Councillor Phil Burke (Rochdale), Councillor Mike McCusker (Salford) & Mayor Paul Dennett (Salford).

BNC/42/24 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

BNC/43/24 Chairs Announcements & Urgent Business

The Chair opened by highlighting a number of funding announcements that had taken place over recent weeks. These included a draft total of £66m of funding secured for TfGM. Budget setting processes would show this funding set out within the context of the wider budget in due course. This additional funding was welcomed and would go some way to funding a low fare/high patronage integrated public transport system.

The Chair referenced the Bee Network Safety Summit that had recently taken place. It was advised that this had been used as an opportunity to work with transport operators and GMP to agree that as part of Vision Zero there would be a specific Bee Network Safety Plan. The focus of the event had been operational safety, and a meeting would be taking place with trade unions to engage on the delivery of this safety plan.

Members were reminded that the consultation process on the GM School Travel Strategy was now open, and that this needed to be promoted widely for the highest possible levels of engagement.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the update on the £66m of Bus Funding awarded to Greater Manchester from the Government following the autumn budget be received.
2. That the feedback provided on the recent Bee Network Safety Summit be received.

3. That it be noted that the consultation process on the GM School Travel Strategy was now live.

BNC/44/24 Minutes of the Meeting of 24th October 2024

RESOLVED/-

That the minutes of the meeting of the meeting of 24 October 2024 be agreed as a true and correct record.

BNC/45/24 Highways Network Management

Peter Boulton (Network Director Highways, TfGM) presented a report that provided an overview of the changing nature of the Greater Manchester (GM) highways network. It captured the performance of the KRN (Key Route Network) and the asset maintenance condition; the measures in place to support network management and in particular support the reliability of the bus network; future developments that would support the city region Bee Network and Right Mix ambitions; and the challenges that needed to be addressed to ensure the highway network supports the changing transport needs of the growing city-region and all of Greater Manchester's people, places and businesses.

Comments and Questions

- Members sought assurances that the network management plans retained a focus on working with council officers directly in order to find the best solution for their areas. It was advised that any changes to the road network would be worked on directly with the relevant local authorities to ensure the best solutions based upon local knowledge – there was a history of strong collaboration with local councils, and this needed to be maintained.
- Members noted that roadworks remained one of the key causes of delays on the highways network – were there ways to lobby government for more powers around this, particularly in terms of companies who overran on permits? It was advised that a business case was being built up for lane rental – and this would be an important tool going forward, particularly on roads that carried the highest levels of traffic. This lane rental would mean that utility companies would have to pay for overruns on roads. TfGM would work with councils to lobby the

Department for Transport for higher fines in future for these overruns – as current penalties were insufficient and often resulted in companies ‘taking the hit’ to get the extra time.

- Members further expressed concerns about utility companies working on recently resurfaced roads and doing a ‘patchwork job’ that led to increased potholes rather than a full carriageway reinstatement. Officers stated that there needed to be more work with utility companies to better coordinate works – regular meetings were being built in as part of the Bee Network establishment.
- Members stated that they would welcome the opportunity for direct engagement with utility company operators themselves to discuss the concerns raised and explore a best way forward on roadworks management.
- Members noted that the protocols last established in 2015 were being reviewed. It was noted that this nine-year gap was quite a long time to have gone without a review – would more periodic reviews be built in? Officers agreed that this needed to take place as aged protocols did not provide the direction needed by all parties. So regular reviews would be built into the process.
- Members expressed upon how stark congestion issues in the region were becoming. With car ownership having risen 16% in the past ten years and continuing to rise, a third of the GM road network was now reaching a saturation point. However, it was noted that in school holiday periods when traffic decreased by 10%, there was a 25% improvement on congestion levels. Therefore, there was hope that a corresponding overall reduction of 10% of traffic currently on the roads, this could have a marked positive impact on the road network.
- Dame Sarah Storey commented that it was important for TfGM and council officers to lead by example. With issues cited around works vehicles from both sometimes found to be parking in disabled spaces, cycle lanes and blocking footways. To up demands on utility companies, it was also important to ensure that public service vehicles were setting the appropriate standard.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.

2. That a review of the GM Highways Protocols as identified at Section 3.6 be endorsed.
3. That it be noted that the draft Local Transport Plan, due to be published in 2025, will build on the GM Streets for All approach, requiring change in how we plan, configure and manage our Highway Network to encourage, and provide for, more people to travel by sustainable modes - walking, wheel, cycling and bus, in line with our Transport Vision and Right Mix ambition.
4. That consideration be given to a session between Bee Network Committee members and utility company representatives to establish a best way forward on highways works.

BNC/46/24 GM Reported Road Casualties 2023 & Road Safety Update

Peter Boulton (Network Director Highways, TfGM) presented a report that provided an annual update on Greater Manchester (GM) road casualty figures for 2023 and an update on GM wide road safety initiatives and other road safety related developments supported by the Safer Roads Greater Manchester Partnership.

The road casualty figures would be used to measure progress towards the Vision Zero ambition in GM for 2040 along with an update on GM wide road safety initiatives.

In 2023 799 people had been killed or seriously injured on the roads in GM – a 6.2% reduction on the figures seen in 2022. Of the 799 figure – 45 of these resulted in fatalities – a reduction of 29.7% on 2022. Whilst these figures were going in the right direction and GM fared well statistically compared to the Great British average, it still remained an upsettingly high number – as each of these incidents had significant impacts upon people and their families.

Initiatives held with partners such as ‘Safe Drive, Stay Alive’ led by GMFRS were highlighted – as were publicity campaigns aimed around tackling the ‘fatal 4’ (mobile phone usage; seat belts; drink & drug driving; and speed).

An update was also provided on road safety cameras, with progress on the projects to upgrade safety camera housings and spot speed replacements on average speed

routes across the region. It was also highlighted that a road safety specialist had been hired to specifically review the current criteria for road safety camera installation. A draft of the revised criteria was now in place and managed by a working group. It was hoped that once approved, the criteria could be in place from early 2025 as part of the Vision Zero Action Plan – this criteria would be brought to the Committee for review in spring 2025.

Comments and Questions

- Members welcomed the revising of criteria for road safety cameras, as petitioning had been taking place on numerous hotspots for many years that did not currently meet the very high bar of the current criteria. Members recalled that the previous government were being written to on revised criteria and sought assurance that the newly installed government would also be written to on this as soon as possible. The Chair agreed that this should take place to reiterate GM's position and outline some of the actions being taken.
- Members sought a further update on the enforcement of 20mph speed limit zones. It was confirmed that GMP could enforce on these routes. However, priority was given to high-risk routes as dictated by intelligence and analysis data. With 20mph zones often being in quieter parts of towns, these were often lower priority routes for enforcement. Where multiple complaints were raised and issues highlighted, enforcement would absolutely take place within 20mph zones.
- Members welcomed the reductions in deaths on the roads seen, but noted that currently the region was not on course to meet its vision zero targets – what further could be done to get this on track? It was advised that the implementation of recommendations within the Vision Zero Strategy was crucial to getting this figure down.
- Discussion took place around the usage of dash cam footage following accidents and Operation Snap – where footage could be submitted to the police by the public. It was suggested that the government could be petitioned around new cars having dash cams installed as standard.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.

BNC/47/24 Vision Zero Strategy & Action Plan

Peter Boulton (Network Director Highways, TfGM) introduced a report that shared the final Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan for Greater Manchester (GM) and provided an overview of GM wide road safety initiatives, which formed part of the Action Plan. The importance of the Strategy was highlighted. This provided a vial opportunity to make fundamental changes to driving safety in GM.

The item opened with the showing of a video produced as part of road safety week. The video highlighted the impact of dangerous driving through interviews with the family of Frankie Jules-Hough, who together with her unborn daughter was killed in an incident on the M66 where the perpetrator had been found to be driving at speeds of over 120mph whilst filming his actions on a mobile phone. Thanks and condolences were expressed to the family of Frankie for their bravery in engaging with this project.

Dame Sarah Storey reflected on her work on the Strategy. The document provided a vision for how to tackle the fundamental issues that led to the sort of behaviour that resulted in the death of Frankie and many others. The Strategy had been created with the input of a wide range of stakeholders and an action plan was in place to ensure that this collaborative working continued and was further enhanced.

Chief Fire Officer Dave Russel (GMFRS) advised that he had recently taken over as the Chair of the Vision Zero Strategic Steering Group and expressed his thanks to TfGM officers for the fantastic work that had gone into the production of the Strategy and the supporting action plan. GMFRS would give its absolute commitment to the delivery of this, as the service was now in a position where it attended more road traffic accidents (RTAs) than it did fires (around 2000 RTAs per year).

Comments and Questions

- Members stated that to provide as much support as they could to this – local authorities would need access to the necessary resources. Not just monetarily but also in terms of the controls which councils could apply. An example was cited on dangerous parking incidents where no real enforcement could be

applied due to a lack of traffic regulation order powers. It was stated that Vision Zero itself was now fully funded, and that work would have to take place to identify the further funding streams required to provide additional support. It was suggested that Vision Zero requirements could be fed into conversations around CRSTS funding streams.

- Members noted that previously councils had access to larger road safety teams that had now largely been decimated, and that consideration would need to be given around the joining up of resources.
- Members stated that there needed to be an increase in coordinated campaigning to make the concept of speeding more socially unacceptable – similar to how the perceptions of drink driving have changed over time.
- Members expressed thanks to all first responders who handled road traffic accidents, and the amazing levels of dedication they had to what was an extremely emotionally demanding role.

Discussion took place around writing to government on issues relating to road safety raised throughout the three items considered so far at the meeting. It was agreed that a programme of interventions would be developed, and that these would be provided to the Committee for endorsement before publication. It was agreed that the first of these following the adoption of the Vision Zero Strategy would be the concerns previously raised around the need to change the existing criteria for road safety cameras.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That the final Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan and the formal adoption of a Vision Zero ambition for GM, where no one will suffer death or life changing injuries on our roads be endorsed by the Committee.
3. That there be commitment to a programme of interventions in the form of regular written submissions to government following the formal adoption of the Vision Zero Strategy.
4. That endorsement will be sought directly from the Committee before the sending of each written submission.

5. That the first of these submissions will focus on petitioning government for a change to existing speed camera criteria.
6. That the thanks of the Committee be recorded to the family of Frankie Jules-Hough for their bravery and support on the Vision Zero Strategy.
7. That thanks be recorded to all first responders at road traffic accidents for their admirable dedication to what was an extremely emotionally demanding job.

BNC/48/24 Transport Infrastructure Pipeline

Chris Barnes (Network Director Infrastructure, TfGM) presented an update on progress delivering a pipeline of transport infrastructure improvements to support the operation of the Bee Network. The report made a number of recommendations for members to support the continued development and delivery of the pipeline programme.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the current position, recent progress and key milestones on the transport infrastructure pipeline be noted.
2. That the drawdown of CRSTS funding and associated scheme progression be approved as follows:
 - Improving Journeys: £1.0m to include:
 - Rochdale-Oldham-Ashton QBT (Tameside elements): £0.4m
 - Early Interventions CCTV / ATCs: £0.4m and Full Business Case;
 - Ashton – Stockport QBT: £0.2m;
 - Development of Long-Term Rapid Transit Options – Transit-Oriented Development at Bury Interchange: £1.55m; and
 - Bury Radcliffe Central Phase 1 MCF scheme: £0.65m.

BNC/49/24 Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Bee Network Committee would take place on Thursday 12th December 2024.

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Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Date: Friday 13th December 2024

Subject: Greater Manchester's approach to Building Safety

Report of: Kate Green, Deputy Mayor, Portfolio Lead for Safer Stronger Communities and Paul Dennett, Deputy Mayor, Portfolio Lead for Housing First.

Purpose of Report

This report provides the Committee with an overview regarding Greater Manchester's (GM) response to:

1. The publication of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 report.
2. The approach taken in response to the Government's request to produce a Local Remediation Acceleration Plan for GM.

Recommendations:

The GMCA is requested to note:

1. The governance structure established to ensure the recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry (GTI) Phase 2 report are being implemented effectively within the city-region.
2. The contents of GM Remediation Acceleration Plan set out in appendix A.

Contact Officers

Dave Russel

Chief Fire Officer, GMFRS

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Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

None.

Risk Management

There are no direct risk management measures required as a consequence of this report.

Legal Considerations

There are no direct legal considerations arising from this report, however proposals for new legislation including a potential duty to enforce may impact on the GMCA. This will be monitored as the Government proposals are developed.

Financial Consequences – Revenue

The Government has committed to making funding available for Combined Authorities to support the acceleration of remediation. An initial ask has been made for revenue funding with an indicative ask of circa £850,000 per annum. Any grant funding will come with reporting requirements.

Financial Consequences – Capital

Not applicable.

Number of attachments to the report:

Remediation Acceleration Plan – Greater Manchester's approach to Building Safety.

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Not applicable.

Background Papers

Not applicable.

Tracking/ Process

Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution?

No.

Exemption from call in

Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?

No.

Bee Network Committee

Not applicable.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Not applicable.

Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report

1. Introduction

1.1 The Grenfell Tower Inquiry (GTI) was established to investigate the circumstances leading up to and surrounding the fire at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017, which resulted in the tragic loss of 72 lives, many people injured as well as the significant impact the fire had on the wider community which continues to this day.

1.2 Phase 1 of the GTI focused on the factual narrative of the events on the night of the fire and was published on 30th October 2019 in 4 volumes. It also provided a conclusion about the origin and development of the fire and an analysis of London Fire Brigade's (LFB) response and other emergency services which attended the incident. Phase 1 of the GTI also made recommendations arising out of the report's findings and looked ahead to identify matters of particular importance for Phase 2. It is important to recognise that there is a meaningful and purposeful relationship between Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the GTI.

1.3 Phase 2 of the Inquiry examined the causes of these events, including how Grenfell Tower came to be in a condition which allowed the fire to spread in the way identified by Phase 1; this was published on 4th September 2024 in 7 volumes. As a result of his Phase 2 conclusions, the GTI Chair, The Rt Hon Sir Martin Moore-Bick, made 58 recommendations aimed at improving fire safety and emergency response in addition to the 46 recommendations made in his Phase 1 Report. These recommendations are directed at various organisations, including local authorities, fire and rescue services, local resilience forums, Government and national bodies.

1.4 It is important that appropriate governance structures are established from the outset, to ensure the recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 report are being implemented effectively and in a timely manner within the city-region.

2. Responding to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 report.

2.1 A Greater Manchester Grenfell Tower Oversight Group (GM GTOG), chaired by the Chief Fire Officer, will be established to ensure a co-ordinated and joined up approach is taken to implementing the recommendations effectively. The group will ensure GM as a system remains aligned and connected, ensuring a partner-led, systems approach is taken

to developing and delivering the necessary action required to implement the recommendations.

2.2 The group will meet quarterly and provide a strategic forum through which knowledge, skills and understanding can be shared, harnessed and applied by bringing partners together from across GM to maximise the collective effort.

2.3 The group will develop a Grenfell Tower Action Plan which will clearly detail the responsible owner, action required, timescales for implementation and apply a RAG rating to each recommendation to aid future reporting.

2.4 The recommendations which are in scope are those directly assigned to 1) Fire and Rescue Services 2) Local Authorities and 3) Local Resilience Forums. Recommendations which are assigned to Government and National Bodies are out of scope albeit the group will undertake a monitoring role and report accordingly. It is important to note the inter-relatedness of the recommendations and in some cases the inter-dependencies of them and our collective ability within GM to effectively operationalise and deliver the recommendations. Furthermore, it is critical that we don't lose sight of the importance of our roles as GMCA, GMFRS, the High Rise and Building Safety Strategic Oversight Group and Grenfell Tower Oversight Group in terms of lobbying and influencing for progressive change within the 'system' in its broadest sense, outside of our direct control.

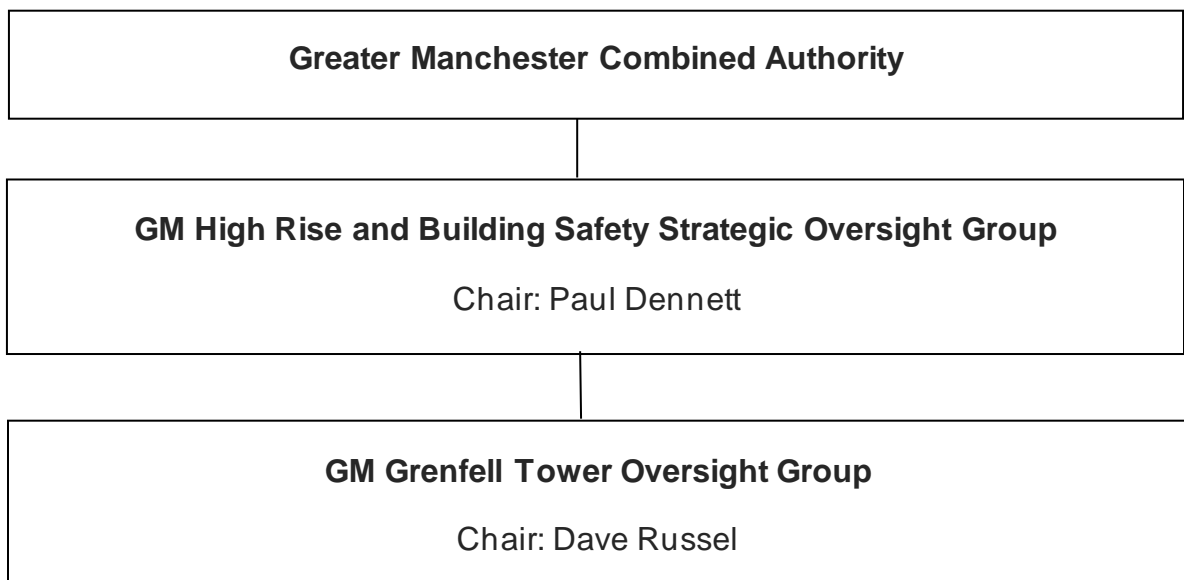
2.5 The GM GTOG will report directly into the existing GM High Rise and Building Safety Strategic Oversight Group, chaired by Deputy Mayor Paul Dennett. The Strategic Oversight Group is a long standing and established group, well placed to perform a scrutiny and oversight role in respect of how GM responds to and implements the Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommendations.

2.6 The Chair of the GM GTOG will report progress to the Strategic Oversight Group on a quarterly basis. The Chair of the Strategic Oversight Group will report on going progress against the Grenfell Tower Phase 2 recommendations into this Committee.

2.7 The illustration below is not designed to place or position the GMCA as the responsible body for the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. The purpose of reporting progress to the GMCA, is to ensure Leaders and Chief Executives maintain a level of awareness and importantly visibility, on a matter of significant importance to our city region and the safety of residents across the built environment. Future reporting to the GMCA will happen ad hoc and as needed.

2.8 We recognise the importance of added value generated by collective partnership working in this way in GM i.e. sharing knowledge and best practice, supporting one another, influencing and lobbying, effectively supporting residents and communities, whilst ensuring any new / reformed governance builds on the work to date. This isn't about creating more bureaucracy or seeking to take control etc but to genuinely create something in GM that adds value and genuinely represents something that's greater than the sum of its parts, while ensuring we remain transparent and accountable to public, in respect of how we operational the Phase 2 recommendations within GM.

2.9 The recommendations will be 'owned' by the responsible organisation and the action plan will detail this clearly i.e. GMFRS will be the responsible body for implementing the recommendations which relate to Fire and Rescue Services and remain accountable to Deputy Mayor Kate Green through the existing 'fire' governance arrangements. The structure will ensure partners work together, avoid silo working and bring together into one place, a single method of reporting which enables GM as a 'system' to know exactly where it is, at any given point, in respect of implementation of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommendations.



Local Remediation Acceleration Plan

3.1 On the 13th September 2024 the RT Hon Angela Rayner MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government wrote to Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, requesting that he convene regulators and other key partners to prepare a local remediation acceleration plan.

3.2. The letter explained the publication of the final Grenfell Tower Inquiry report represents a significant milestone, and seven years on from Grenfell, it is unacceptable that so many people are still living in buildings with unsafe cladding. The letter went on to say, everyone deserves to live in a safe home, and this new government is determined to redouble efforts to make buildings safe. This will require a collective effort, with all parts of central and local government working together.

3.3 The aim of the local remediation acceleration plan is to articulate how the pace of remediation can be increased in Greater Manchester and what support is needed to enable this, alongside a requirement to share with Government by the end of November the remediation acceleration plan for Greater Manchester which is included as appendix A.

3.4 The Deputy Prime Minister's letter placed a strong emphasis on how in Greater Manchester we will work with local partners to make sure they are all using their legal powers to increase the pace of remediation in the highest risk buildings, and that Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service are doing everything necessary in the meantime to keep people safe in their homes while they are awaiting or undergoing remediation.

3.5 In Greater Manchester we share the concerns about the pace of remediation and the need for this to be accelerated. It is not right that residents in Greater Manchester are still living in buildings that need remediating before they can be deemed safe. The barriers to fixing our unsafe buildings are multiple and complex.

3.6 Immediately after the Grenfell Tower fire, Mayor Andy Burnham established the city region's High Rise and Building Safety Task Force. Chaired by Salford City Mayor Paul Dennett, the task force has brought together Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service, local authorities, landlords and government officials to help make all our buildings safe and

lobby government. The Task Force has achieved an enormous amount in this time and its work is reflected in the remediation acceleration plan.

3.7 The remediation acceleration plan highlights a range of issues which delay the progress of remediation. It also provides an overview of the work already undertaken in Greater Manchester, identifies next steps, and looks at the barriers that need addressing. In addition to the need to investing in resources to deliver this important work, specifically, the formation of a 'GM Remediation Delivery Team', we have articulated six clear asks of Government to:

- Urgently assess the current capacity required to accelerate remediation and provide investment to build competency and capacity
- Close the regulatory gap
- Develop a single dataset
- Establish clear standards and expectations
- Provide clarity on funding
- Embed Leaseholder protections

3.8 It is important to stress the successful delivery of GMs Remediation Acceleration Plan is not within our sole control. There are several dependencies external to GM i.e. appropriate funding being available, improved data sharing etc which unless addressed and resolved they will adversely impact on our delivery. In short – GM cannot on its own accelerate the pace of remediation without the support of Government and other key stakeholders.

3.9 The six asks of Government have been arrived at through the work undertaken to date by the Strategic Oversight Group and following careful consideration. Equally, this will inevitably be an iterative process, and as we experience the operationalisation of the accelerated remediation plan in practice, and learn from it, our asks of Government may change, become further refined and potentially be added to.

4.0 As with the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, it is important that an appropriate governance structure is put in place, to ensure the remediation acceleration plan for GM is being implemented effectively and subject to scrutiny.

4.1 Rather than create a new structure with new reporting lines, in an already complex and complicated landscape, it is sensible to utilise the existing GM High Rise and Building Safety

Strategic Oversight Group as the reporting body to oversee remediation within GM. By doing so, it will ensure the knowledge, skills and understanding which already exist within the Strategic Oversight Group, built up over many years, coupled with its strong leadership can be drawn upon and maximised fully, the value of which will be significant especially given the challenges ahead.

4.2 In practical terms, the Strategic Oversight Group will oversee, albeit not exclusively, two substantive areas of work in relation to building safety 1) Responding to the Grenfell Tower Phase 2 recommendations and 2) Remediation Acceleration Plan both of which will report into this Committee going forward.

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Remediation Acceleration Plan

Greater Manchester's approach to Building Safety

November 2024

Foreword

It is now more than seven years since the horrific fire at Grenfell Tower in which 72 innocent people lost their lives and a whole community was impacted for the remainder of their lives – the Grenfell Community remain in our thoughts and in our hearts.

Since 2017 the actions taken in Greater Manchester identified that hundreds of buildings were affected by it is not right that many Greater Manchester residents are still living in high rise that need remediating before they can be deemed safe and potentially thousands more do not know if their homes are safe. The impact on residents is widespread and has had a significant and detrimental impact on health, finances and ability to move on with their lives.

Immediately after the Grenfell fire, Mayor Andy Burnham established the city region's High Rise and Building Safety Task Force. Chaired by Salford City Mayor Paul Dennett, the task force has brought together Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service, local authorities, landlords, residents and government officials to help make all our buildings safe. The Task Force has achieved an enormous amount in this time and its work is considered later in this Plan.

The barriers to fixing our unsafe buildings are multiple and complex. They include the failure of the previous Government to deliver a timely and effective funding regime resulting in confusion and delay; disputes over Grant Funding Agreements; critical fire safety works being deemed ineligible funding; Developers stalling on progressing with required works despite pledging to fix buildings; problems with duplicated and conflicting specialist reports; large freeholders prioritising work across a national portfolio; and problems finding suitable alternative building materials.

The new government has pledged to accelerate building remediation and is asking combined / mayoral authorities to help deliver this. This Plan provides an overview of the work we have already undertaken in Greater Manchester, identifies the barriers that need addressing and sets out how we will move forward to support an increase in the pace of remediation.

We will work with national government to help accelerate remediation programmes and will continue to work in an integrated way with local partners. As Deputy Mayors of Greater Manchester, we remain absolutely committed to supporting our residents and ensuring their safety.

Kate Green, Deputy Mayor, Safer and Stronger Communities,

Paul Dennett, Deputy Mayor, Housing First, and Salford City Mayor

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Executive Summary

In Greater Manchester we share the concerns about the pace of remediation and the need for this to be accelerated. Our plan highlights a range of issues which delay the progress of remediation. In addition to investing in resources to deliver this important work, our asks of the Government are to:

1. Urgently assess the current capacity required to accelerate remediation and provide investment to build competency and capacity
2. Close the regulatory gap
3. Develop a single dataset
4. Establish clear standards and expectations
5. Provide clarity on funding
6. Embed Leaseholder protections

Introduction & work to date

Greater Manchester context

Greater Manchester is one of the country's most successful regions, with a population of more than 2.8 million and an economy larger than those of Wales and Northern Ireland. It is our vision to make Greater Manchester one of the best places in the world to grow up, get on and grow old. We are delivering this through a combination of economic growth, and the reform of public services. We have significant growth plans for the region including an increase in housing. This is set out in 'Places for Everyone', our long term plan for the region and a collaboration between nine local authorities and the GMCA.

Places for Everyone sets out ambitious proposals to deliver the homes Greater Manchester needs, including high rise developments utilising brownfield sites. We have signalled our intent to help deliver the Government's manifesto commitment to Get Britain Building again and we aim to build 75,000 new homes in the region over

the course of this parliament. This includes a significant increase in delivery of affordable and net zero homes which are key to ending the homelessness and housing crisis.

The security of a good home is a fundamental foundation for us all to achieve our ambitions in life – our safe space for growing up, getting on and growing old, in line with the city region’s “**Live Well**” ambitions. The housing crisis means that too many of us don’t benefit from the security of a safe and secure home which is the bedrock of enabling people to fulfil their potential. The building safety crisis means that many of our residents feel trapped in unsafe homes, unable to move and in fear of unmanageable bills. Our bold aspirations for the future won’t happen unless we fix that, so in Greater Manchester, we are putting Housing First.

Our ambition is for everyone in Greater Manchester to live in a home they can afford that is safe, secure, healthy and environmentally sustainable – a healthy home for all by 2038.

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry has exposed the failures of the regulatory system to ensure that buildings are safe for those who live in them. Reversing this will require significant investment and effort across a range of stakeholders.

Ensuring that buildings are designed, constructed and managed to high standards is key to preventing future tragedies and ensuring that residents in flats of all heights are safe. Our ambition extends beyond our commitment to delivering new homes. It is vital we ensure residents are safe and feel safe in their existing homes. We know this requires significant work across our existing building stock to remedy fire safety defects and we welcome the Government’s clear intention to speed up the pace of remediation.

The GM High Rise & Building Safety Task Force

The Greater Manchester High Rise Task Force was established immediately after the fire at Grenfell Tower by Andy Burnham, the Mayor of Greater Manchester. Salford City Mayor Paul Dennett has chaired the Task Force since its inception, supported by Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS).

The Task Force has led on a collaborative approach to tackling building safety, drawing together local authorities, the GM Housing Providers Group, universities, and other agencies who can offer support to ensure action is taken to ensure high rise buildings are made safe and residents receive the right fire safety advice.

When established, the key objectives of the Task Force were;

- Ensuring all services in Greater Manchester can respond in the event of a large scale incident at a high rise building.
- Providing assurance to all residents that their homes are safe as quickly as possible.

The Task Force has overseen the response within Greater Manchester to ensure preparedness in the event of a similar incident to the fire at Grenfell Tower. It has taken action to ensure the safety of premises and provided reassurance to residents.

From the outset in Greater Manchester, we recognised that a comprehensive and holistic approach to the safety of buildings was required, acknowledging the risks of a range of cladding types and other fire safety defects. As long ago as 2018 we were raising concerns with government about the risk of a range of cladding types, and warning that the risks were not restricted to buildings over 18 metres. In 2019 the scale of the risks was demonstrated by a fire at The Cube in Bolton – student accommodation with high pressure laminate cladding and measuring under 18 metres. The work undertaken across Greater Manchester following the publication of the Grenfell Tower Phase 1 Report meant that Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service took swift action to instigate an immediate building evacuation and undertake a small number of rescues so consequently no residents suffered serious injuries. Key stakeholders worked together in the hours and days after the fire to ensure affected residents were provided with emergency accommodation and ongoing support.

The work of the Task Force has evolved. In 2023, the meeting structures were changed and a Strategic Oversight Group established. The purpose of the Strategic Oversight Group is to oversee work undertaken across Greater Manchester to ensure the safety of residents living in blocks of flats, including the implementation of legislative changes brought in under the Building Safety Act. Its other key function is

to clearly articulate the voice of Greater Manchester and our residents to inform legislative and policy change, ensuring safety is prioritised.

The Strategic Oversight Group will monitor our work to accelerate remediation, ensuring we build on the effective approaches taken so far.

Collaboration & Engagement

The Building Safety Crisis has created unprecedented challenges for those who own, manage, regulate and live in blocks of flats. The scale of the problem emerged over a number of years, and between 2017 and 2020 the Government issued over 20 Advice Notes relating to building safety risks. There have subsequently been significant changes in legislation with new duties and requirements imposed on those responsible for fire safety in buildings and a new approach to the design, construction and management of the safety of high rise buildings introduced under the Building Safety Act.

In Greater Manchester we have sought to work together to understand these challenges and respond to them. Much of this work has been delivered under the oversight of the GM High Rise and Building Safety Task Force with many elements building on the existing partnerships within Greater Manchester.

GMFRS has worked pro-actively with Housing Providers and Managing Agents to share information and advice through regular engagement sessions both in person and online covering Government advice notes, legislative changes, and emerging risks. These events are well attended and support the consistent approach being taken across Greater Manchester. (See Case Study 1 – Fire Safety England Regulations)

Residents have been at the heart of our approach in Greater Manchester and our work has been shaped by their feedback and concerns. Since the establishment of the Manchester Cladiators in 2019 there has been close liaison and support for their work including the national lobby of Parliament in 2020, regular attendance at meetings and the co-production of a safety video for residents in December 2021.

Local authorities and GMFRS have engaged with central government officials to provide data and consider interventions at an individual building level. The central government approach has evolved over time and currently this monitoring is undertaken through 'Account Management Meetings' with key local authorities. These meetings are used to highlight buildings of concern and determine what action is required to support acceleration of remediation. Whilst these meetings provide a mechanism for engagement, we consider that the effectiveness of these meetings would be improved through broadening the stakeholders involved and ensuring there is a better system for monitoring progress towards remediation.

Current position

The extent of the impact of the building safety crisis in Greater Manchester is not yet fully known and this is reflective of the national picture. It is absolutely vital that an understanding of the number of buildings and residents affected, the nature of the defects and potential costs of remediation is assessed and understood in order to ensure a clear plan of action can be developed with realistic timescales.

The work undertaken since 2017 to inspect high rise buildings has resulted in significant numbers of buildings identifying serious fire safety defects which require remediation works. The extent of fire safety defects is not restricted to 'unsafe cladding' and in many cases poor quality construction means there are missing cavity barriers and internal compartmentation issues.

Recent changes to the way the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) collates and shares information about buildings requiring remediation means it is not possible to establish the status of buildings by height. However, according to the latest statistical information provided about buildings within a Government portfolio, there are 77 buildings with known cladding defects where work is yet to start on site. The majority of these are buildings over 18 metres.

A high number of buildings where remediation work is yet to commence are those which have moved from a Government funded scheme to the 'Developers Pledge'. There are currently 112 buildings across Greater Manchester which are covered by

the Developers Pledge, with only sixteen of these having completed remediation, and 20 with remediation works underway.

Analysis of the latest data shared by MHCLG in relation to remediation works suggests there are 116 buildings which require remediation of some form but where works have not yet started.

High Rise buildings

There has been extensive action to inspect high rise buildings since 2017. Following the fire at Grenfell Tower, GMFRS inspected all occupied high rise buildings. Where cladding was identified, Housing Providers and Managing Agents were asked to identify the materials used in the external wall system and assess the risk of external fire spread. This work continued under the Building Risk Review programme which was funded between 2020 and 2021 and involved GMFRS assessing, inspecting and providing information about 712 buildings, of which 551 were occupied high rise buildings.

As a result of these inspections, over a third of high rise residential buildings have identified such serious fire safety defects that the evacuation strategy has needed to change. Currently there are 147 high rise buildings across the city region operating with a 'temporary' simultaneous evacuation strategy – in some cases these temporary arrangements have now been in place for five years.

Since 2017 the number of high rise buildings in Greater Manchester has increased considerably, and 737 high rise buildings have been registered with the Building Safety Regulator.

The remediation of high rise buildings with unsafe cladding is ongoing across Greater Manchester, however only 60% of buildings within Government remediation programmes have completed all works required. All high rise buildings identified as having Aluminium Composite Material have completed remediation works and there are 59 buildings where remediation works are currently underway and 112 where all works have been completed.

In Greater Manchester our view is that those buildings which are awaiting remediation should be prioritised by the new Building Safety Regulator to ensure a robust approach is taken to making the buildings safe leveraging all of the power of the new enhanced regime.

The changes in Government advice since 2017, and the introduction of the PAS9980 standard for assessing external walls, means there are many buildings where multiple safety reports have been undertaken, often with differing conclusions. This creates a further degree of complexity in determining the extent of remediation work required and can cause significant distress and disruption to residents. (See Case Study 2 – High Rise Building with Multiple Reports)

11-18m Buildings

The position in Greater Manchester in relation to 11-18m buildings is unknown at this stage and this reflects the national picture.

“Remediation of buildings over 11 metres is not currently on course to complete by 2035 and there are significant challenges to overcome.” *National Audit Office report – ‘Dangerous cladding: the government’s remediation portfolio’*

Identifying the number of buildings across Greater Manchester is a challenge and there is no comprehensive list of blocks of flats. In 2020, the Home Office utilised Ordnance Survey data to determine allocation of Protection Uplift funding to FRS. This estimated there to be 1,500 blocks of flats 11-18m in Greater Manchester.

Homes England are working to identify 11-18m buildings which may require remediation works and have shared the initial findings. Early indications are that the number of 11-18m buildings is likely to be significantly higher than the estimates used by the Home Office in 2020. An initial data set of 6,000 unique property reference numbers (UPRNs) in Manchester alone has identified 990 buildings 11-18m in height, of which 584 have so far been confirmed as having some form of cladding.

Manchester is just one of 10 local authorities in Greater Manchester. Whilst it is the most densely populated area, it also has the highest concentration of high-rise buildings (18m+). **It is possible, therefore, that there could be between 7,000 and 10,000 buildings across the city region that are between 11 and 18 metres in height.**

Whilst significant resource has been committed to inspecting high rise buildings, primarily by GMFRS, there is not currently capacity within Greater Manchester to proactively inspect smaller blocks of flats. This means that we are in a reactive position and responding to issues as they are identified by Housing Providers and Managing Agents.

There are currently 49 buildings under 18 metres which are operating temporary simultaneous evacuation strategies and 39 of these have a known risk of external fire spread. According to the latest statistical information provided by MHCLG, there are 24 buildings which are in the Cladding Safety Scheme and none of these buildings have remediation works underway.

The Fire Safety Act 2021 clarified the extent of the Fire Safety Order in relation to external walls of blocks of flats. Information explaining the implications of this have been shared with Housing Providers and Managing Agents across Greater Manchester. However, undertaking assessments of external walls in buildings under 18 metres will be ongoing. Based on capacity and capability within the wider industry, this could take a number of years.

The Risk Prioritisation Guidance issued by the Government to support the implementation of the Fire Safety Act means that a single staircase six-storey building without balconies, but where the materials in the external wall system are unknown, could be categorised as a 'low priority' for prioritising an assessment of the external walls. This coupled with the capacity issues within the sector to undertake PAS9980 assessments poses a significant challenge to identifying 11-18m buildings which may require remediation works.

This current costs of a PAS9980 assessment vary significantly with costs of between £12,000 – £25,000 routinely being reported. In order to have the assessment

undertaken leaseholders must meet these costs often in advance and in addition to the costs of obtaining an EWS1 form the price of which can range from £6,000 - £50,000.

Accelerating Remediation: Barriers

In Greater Manchester we share Ministers' concerns about the pace of remediation and the need for this to be accelerated. We have highlighted a range of issues which have delayed the progression of remediation of high rise buildings and many of these are reflected in the **National Audit Office report**. The way these have impacted Greater Manchester is complex and varied but their effect means that we have been unable to target our resources where they are needed most.

Whilst the Government focus has been on the remediation of unsafe cladding, a more holistic approach is required to remediation to remove fire safety risks. There is a wealth of evidence that poor quality construction is not restricted to cladding and many buildings have also identified significant risks from internal fire spread. The replacement of cladding alone cannot be considered as remediation of buildings where there are other defects.

We have repeatedly highlighted to national Government that the regulatory interventions available to local authorities and FRS were not designed to address the failure of the wider regulatory system – there is no simple enforcement route to address failings in the design and construction stage. In Greater Manchester we took the position early on that the most efficient regulatory mechanism for addressing fire safety defects was the Fire Safety Order and therefore GMFRS has led on inspections and enforcement interventions. However, this work has been done without significant additional resourcing with only the time-limited Building Risk Review programme being funded.

There has been considerable investment in data collection exercises, but this has failed to produce a single data set of buildings accessible by all key stakeholders. Local Authorities, GMFRS, National Fire Chiefs Council and the Building Safety Regulator have all collated information on high rise buildings. Despite these various exercises there is still no single comprehensive data set of high rise occupied

buildings which can be utilised by stakeholders, and no means of validating the information provided to different regulators. **To date, there has been no data collection undertaken in relation to 11-18m buildings.**

The National Audit Office has identified the lack of 'clear and consistent data' across the Government's portfolio as a major barrier to measuring progress of works across comparable buildings to determine whether the pace of remediation is reasonable. This reflects our experiences in Greater Manchester and exacerbates the challenges of determining what, if any, regulatory intervention would support acceleration of works.

There is no clear mechanism for establishing fire safety defects which require remediation, and the national position has shifted from a requirement to replace unsafe cladding, to the promotion of more proportionate approaches to remediation. However, there is a lack of clarity and consistency in relation to 'proportionality' and no established mechanisms for determining what works are proportionate. This is exacerbated by a lack of up to date centralised guidance on managing fire safety in blocks of flats, leaving regulators and those responsible for buildings without effective benchmarks for determining appropriate safety standards.

The lack of a centralised system for logging the extent of remediation work required, and monitoring progress of remediation works, impedes our ability in Greater Manchester to identify and respond to the barriers to remediation at a building level. The content of the data shared from central Government has changed frequently often with no explanation and lacks key information to support effective regulation. Recent data sets have not included Unique Property Reference Numbers, have buildings allocated to incorrect Local Authorities and lack detail about the remediation status and plans. There is no transparency in relation to the progression of buildings which are covered by the Developers Pledge and how this is being monitored.

Whilst we welcomed the introduction of Government funding as a means of protecting leaseholders from the costs of fixing their buildings the approach taken to funding was piecemeal and created a complicated system which many found difficult to navigate and apply for. Administration of the fund has been slow with many

buildings stuck in the system for years awaiting approvals, in some cases these delays meant the works had to be re-tendered and costs increased significantly. The disputes between Freeholders and the Government in relation to Grant Funding Agreements delayed progression with remediation and required national resolution.

There is a lack of clarity about what can reasonably be expected as a timeframe for progressing remediation works, and the progress of many buildings through the Building Safety Fund has been slow. There was no agreement in place with national Government on how information about the progress of buildings in the Building Safety Fund would be shared with local partners. This has created a lack of clarity around expected and reasonable timescales.

The introduction of Leaseholder Protections was welcomed in Greater Manchester, but the interaction between the protections and remediation work is not well understood, and there is a lack of clarity as to how the protections can be enforced. The nature of the protections means that non-qualifying leaseholders may still be liable for considerable costs, and this has the potential to delay the progression of remediation work.

The widespread issues of competency and capacity across a number of sectors has contributed to delays in remediation. We remain concerned that the capacity of industry to support the identification and remediation of fire safety defects will continue to pose a barrier, with the potential to drive up costs. There are significant defects beyond cladding that are unfunded but need to be included in a programme of works.

There has been inadequate funding to support an increase in public sector regulatory capacity at a national and regional level and this poses a key risk to accelerating remediation and ensuring that any works to make buildings safe are undertaken to a high standard. The Government's commitment to increase the number of Planning Officers by 300 in the next two years is a positive step but there has been no such commitment to date to increase Building Control Officers, Housing Officers and Fire Safety Regulators.

The impact of the previous deregulation agenda which preceded a decade of cuts to local authority budgets has created a significant shortfall in capacity. Nationally there are approximately 1400 Housing Officers working within Local Authorities to assess and respond to a range of housing standards issues and many of these are not fully qualified environmental health professionals. In 2021 the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health raised concerns about the impact of budget cuts and called on Government to increase financial support to local authorities in order to maintain resources within LAs for regulatory and public health work.

There are currently 4094 Building Control professionals registered with the Building Safety Regulator of which 1900 are Trainees and only 464 are Class 3 Registered restricting the capacity to oversee remediation work on high rise residential buildings through the Building Safety Regulator. It is unclear how many of the 1600 Class 2 Building Control Inspectors have registered to undertake work in relation to buildings over 11m and this must be urgently assessed.

There are currently in the region of 1200 qualified Fire Safety Regulators nationally with less than 75% of these qualified at Level 4 Diploma and only 27 Fire Engineers working across 43 Fire and Rescue Services. There has been limited investment to increase capacity to support the introduction of the Building Safety Regulator but this is aligned to the requirements of the new regime and for Greater Manchester was based on 550 high rise residential buildings not the 700+ which are now occupied. There is an urgent need for sustained investment to increase

Accelerating Remediation: Our Ask

We are committed to supporting the acceleration of remediation and recognise the complexity of the challenge posed by the building safety crisis and the efforts of national government to respond.

Our plan to accelerate remediation will only be effective as part of a wider national effort to develop a long-term roadmap to ensure that existing buildings are made safe and the quality of the construction of future buildings is improved. This poses a

significant challenge in relation to buildings under 18 metres, which are outside the enhanced safety regime introduced by the Building Safety Act.

Ask One: Urgently assess the current capacity required to accelerate remediation and provide investment to build competency and capacity

The extent and complexity of the building safety crisis has identified significant gaps in competency across the whole system, from building design, to building management and regulatory awareness and expertise. There needs to be urgent and sustained investment in increasing regulatory capacity. More needs to be done to address this to ensure the work undertaken by the Competence Steering Group is embedded and delivering meaningful change.

In order to effectively support the acceleration of remediation there needs to be clarity about the current capacity to support the work. There are common issues across a range of sectors relating to the lack of resources, workforce, and relevant skills which will be a key barrier to success across all partners

There must be an urgent national review of the capacity to support the following work;

- Regulatory capacity across a range of disciplines
- Capacity and expertise to undertake relevant assessments of buildings
- Capacity to prepare scope of works and oversee programmes of works
- Capacity within the construction sector and associated supply chains

There needs to be significant investment in providing support to residents who are Directors of Resident Management Companies to understand and exercise their duties effectively.

This needs to be considered centrally to inform the key milestones of a national roadmap.

Ask Two: Close the regulatory gap

There have been significant changes in legislation primarily through the introduction of the Building Safety Act and the Fire Safety England Regulations. These changes significantly enhance the regulatory requirements for high rise buildings throughout the life cycle of a building. Whilst these changes have been welcomed, there is now a two tier system of regulation for blocks of flats.

For buildings under 18 metres, the only major changes in relation to regulatory requirements concern clarity on the requirement for fire risk assessments to consider the materials in the external walls and providing information to residents.

This creates a significant regulatory gap and a two-tier system of regulation which poses a risk to the safety of our residents. There must be increased oversight and control of remediation works as without this there is a risk that the same actors who have profited from substandard construction will continue to select their own regulator and the building control process will not exercise sufficient scrutiny of works.

Consideration should be given as to whether some of the requirements imposed on high rise buildings should be extended to other blocks of flats, and whether the registration of buildings and mandating fault and safety occurrence reporting should be introduced.

Ask Three: Develop a single dataset

A co-ordinated approach needs to be taken to establish a single data set of all buildings which may require remediation and will provide a basis for tracking and monitoring progress over the long term. This will ensure the duplication of work undertaken in relation to high rise buildings is not repeated.

A lack of grip on data and effective data sharing over the last seven years has resulted in duplication of effort, wasted resources and impeded the ability to focus effort on s a minimum, this data set needs to include unique property reference numbers (UPRNs), the details of responsible entities, and key building information.

The creation of a single data set would be expedited by a requirement for registration of buildings as set out above. This would reduce the level of resourcing required to identify buildings which require remediation.

Consideration should be given to building on the work undertaken by Homes England to develop a case management system accessible by local regulators.

Ask Four: Establish clear standards and expectations

Develop a clear understanding of expectations in relation to the progression of work in high rise buildings. National government must clearly set out reasonable timescales for undertaking remediation works which reflect the complexities of funding arrangements and regulatory approvals and can be used as a benchmark for monitoring progress.

This needs to be supported by a single data set accessible by the Building Safety Regulator, local authorities, and GMFRS to support the tracking of progress at a building level and a consistent and proportionate approach to enforcement.

Ensure consistency in assessments undertaken under the PAS9980 methodology and consequent recommendations for remediation. The assessment of risks must extend beyond 'life safety risks' to ensure that residents are and feel safe in their homes and address the financial burden faced by many due to increased insurance costs. Without addressing the inconsistencies and quality issues related to PAS9980 assessments and subsequent fire risk assessments there will inevitably be a repeat of the surge in the use of unreliable and costly Waking Watches.

The Simultaneous Evacuation Guidance must be reviewed to ensure that a pragmatic and proportionate approach is taken when managing a change to the evacuation strategy in 11-18m buildings.

Standards must be enshrined in national guidance to support those responsible for fire safety in flats to understand and comply with their obligations. The publication of updated guidance on Fire Safety in Purpose Built Blocks of Flats must be prioritised. This must include guidance on the legal position in relation to Personal Emergency

Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) to ensure vulnerable residents are supported and protected.

Ask Five: Provide clarity on funding

A key factor in the pace of remediation has been the evolution of funding regimes and the eligibility of works for funding. The Cladding Safety Scheme offers a more holistic approach to funding works, but this is reliant on the effectiveness of the PAS9980 assessments. There are concerns regarding internal compartmentation works which can be costly and are not effectively funded.

The work undertaken by national Government in relation to the Developers Pledge and the Responsible Actors Scheme is not widely understood. We consider that improving communication on this work will build understanding and awareness of what works may be funded through these schemes.

Ask Six: Embed leaseholder protections & ensure adequate funding

The introduction of leaseholder protections was welcomed across Greater Manchester as a positive step in protecting residents from the costs of remedying defects caused by developers. However, there has not been sufficient resource committed to supporting leaseholders to understand and utilise these protections and ensure they deliver on the policy intent.

Residents have told us these protections do not go far enough and more work is required to ensure there is not an adverse impact on the pace of remediation. At present the guidance available is long, detailed and complex making it difficult for residents and others to navigate. This leaves leaseholders vulnerable to inaction by Freeholders with no obvious and easy mechanisms to ensure they are protected. The protections are inadequate to protect leaseholders from what may be unreasonable costs of a Waking Watch as they do not prohibit these costs from being passed on. A thorough review of the current protections should be carried out to ensure that they are delivering on the policy intent.

The single biggest delay in progressing remediation of high rise buildings was the delays in funding of the works. It took 3 years for the previous government to move from a mantra of 'Freeholders should do the right thing' to establishing the Building Safety Fund which was subsequently expanded.

It is absolutely imperative that the funding position is clear in relation to 11-18m buildings. A particular concern is the lack of funding for social housing given the estimated costs of remediation given in the National Audit Office report and the potential impact this will have on funding other essential works and progressing with plans to increase the scale of delivery of affordable housing.

Accelerating Remediation: Our Approach

Our approach to date in Greater Manchester is built on collaboration and partnership working, and this provides a strong foundation for us to support the acceleration of remediation.

A key challenge in our response in Greater Manchester is that this work has not been funded and is therefore subject to competing and conflicting demands on partners and stakeholders.

We welcome the ask to support the acceleration of remediation to review and refresh our approach in light of new challenges. However, we are clear that the extent and effectiveness of what can be achieved will be determined by the resources we can commit to this work. There is a need for significant investment if we are to deliver for our residents and make them safe in their homes.

This plan sets out our approach and we will engage with partners and stakeholders to clarify the scope of work and develop an effective delivery plan which will identify the resources required.

Greater Manchester partners

The GM High Rise & Building Safety Task Force has co-ordinated much of the activity across Greater Manchester and has evolved over the last seven years. A

consequence of this is that those local authorities with the majority of privately owned high rise buildings have been more actively engaged in recent years.

We will review and revisit the key stakeholders and undertake further consultation to establish the mechanisms for accelerating remediation at a tactical level, identifying the current barriers and escalating them to national Government.

Residents

We will continue to work with the Manchester Cladators and affected residents to ensure their experiences continue to shape our approach. We will also look to re-establish our GM Residents Forum.

Homes England

We have commenced engagement with Homes England to explore how we can work effectively together to support the progress of buildings through the cladding safety scheme. Although this work is at an early stage, progress has been made on effective sharing of information and a pilot agreed to give GMFRS fire safety officers direct access to Homes England's case management system.

An in principle agreement has been reached on the circumstances in which Homes England may require support from GMFRS in relation to applications which are not effectively progressing. Homes England have been identified as a key stakeholder to join the GM Strategic Oversight Group and provide high level data on progress of buildings in Greater Manchester.

Building Safety Regulator (BSR)

Although the BSR is a national regulator it is considered key to supporting the acceleration of remediation in Greater Manchester and ensuring our resources are utilised effectively to maximise impact.

We are supportive of the BSR's ambition in its Strategic Plan that by April 26, '*any work on remediating dangerous cladding will be completed or underway*'.

GMFRS and local authority Building Control departments are already invested in supporting the new regime through participation in multi-disciplinary teams assessing

and overseeing proposals for work and assessing safety case reviews. There has been some investment to increase capacity for building control and fire safety to support the new regime, but there is a risk that the initial demand for support may be greater than the available resource.

It is imperative that high rise buildings which require remediation are prioritised as part of the new regime. This will ensure we maximise the available resource, agree a clear plan of action, and can effectively monitor and track the works required.

Accelerating Remediation Over 18m buildings

We consider that we can make significant progress with our existing resources for buildings over 18 metres.

This can be done through improving the information sharing between stakeholders and utilising the case conferencing approach developed by GMFRS and key local authorities with MHCLG officials in November 2022. This will ensure a detailed review of information is undertaken on a building by building basis, determining the most appropriate enforcement mechanisms to accelerate remediation and the appropriate lead for this.

Developing a Plan for 11-18m buildings

There is significant work required in order to understand the scale of the challenge affecting 11-18 metre buildings.

Based on work undertaken in conjunction with the National Fire Chiefs Council, if GMFRS allocated all of its current competent Fire Safety Regulators, it could take up to 10 years to identify and inspect all our 11-18m buildings, and one year if only 1000 buildings required inspection.

Our approach to 11-18 metre buildings needs to start with a process of identification. There needs to be a clear plan identifying how to ensure relevant assessments have been undertaken, and how this can be enforced.

We will work with Homes England, MHCLG and local stakeholders to establish how this single data set can best be created and avoid duplication of effort and work.

Next Steps

In light of the information contained in the National Audit Office report of the extent of the work required, and potential timescales for completion of remediation, we are clear that any work to accelerate remediation must be planned on a long term basis.

Whilst this plan sets out our high level approach and ask from Government, significant further work is required to develop a detailed plan which recognises the interdependencies of work undertaken by other stakeholders.

Consulting on our Remediation Acceleration Plan

A Greater Manchester Remediation Acceleration Plan needs to be built on collaboration. We therefore need to undertake consultation on our approach and use this to inform the development of a delivery plan. It is our intention to share this Plan and consult with stakeholders over the coming months to shape our delivery arrangements.

This consultation will support us in identifying in further detail the existing barriers to remediation and help inform expectations moving forwards. It will also assist in identifying capacity issues across stakeholders to inform our asks for the required delivery resources.

Determining resourcing

We are not in a position to establish the level of resourcing required to deliver a remediation acceleration plan over a ten year period without further work to establish the extent and scale of work required. However, additional resourcing will be needed to support this work and create the capacity within the GMCA to effectively support the Task Force and development of a delivery plan.

We have set out an indicative delivery structure for progressing this work which reflects the complexity of the challenge of both identification and inspections of buildings, co-ordination of work with stakeholders and increasing engagement with residents. It is imperative to recognise that there is not capacity within the existing regulatory system across Greater Manchester to pro-actively undertake inspections of 11-18 metre buildings and this will require significant investment with a minimum

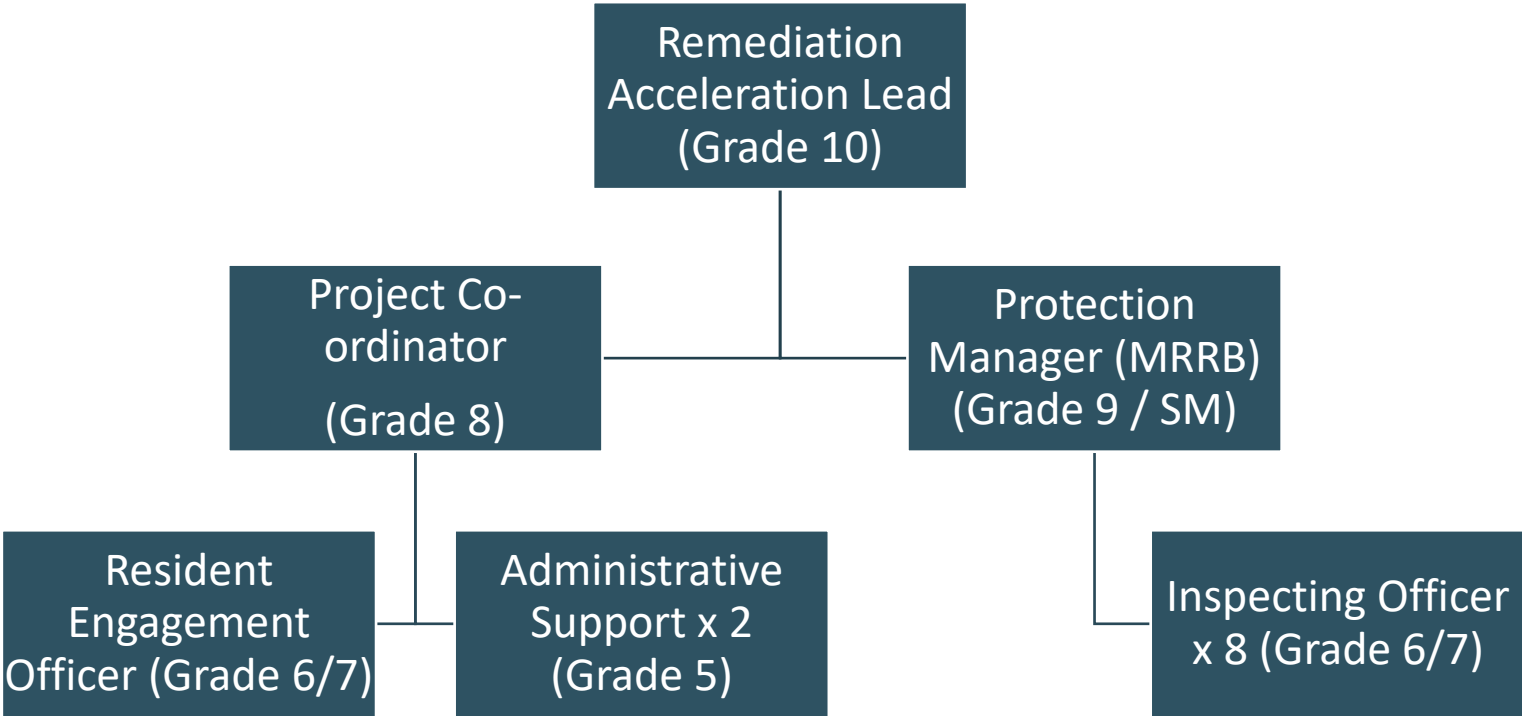
of a nine month lead in time for recruitment and training. The estimated costs of this delivery are c.£850,000 per year in salary costs.

This would provide the capacity to inspect and take follow up action in approximately 1000 buildings over a three year period and the capacity to inspect and take action in 3500 buildings in a 10 year period. If inspections of all buildings are required, then the number of Inspecting Officers would need to increase to 18 to create the capacity to inspect 10,000 buildings over a 10 year period.

We consider as a minimum in the short term there should be immediate investment in resourcing to support the work required to develop this Remediation Acceleration Plan and ongoing work in relation to high rise buildings. There should be immediate funding of c.£250,000 for the creation of the following posts:

- Remediation Acceleration Lead
- Project Co-ordinator
- Resident Engagement Officer
- Administrative Support

GM Remediation Delivery Team



Case Study 1: Fire Safety England Regulations

Our approach to collaboration has ensured we have a collective understanding of the challenges posed by adapting to new legislation and are able to address them. An example of this is the Greater Manchester approach to the introduction of the Fire Safety England Regulations and the provision of advice and information for residents.

Our residents survey in 2019 identified that many residents were unaware of the evacuation strategy for their building and highlighted that GMFRS was trusted by residents.

The Fire Safety England Regulations imposed new legal requirements to provide information to residents including fire safety instructions and the importance of fire doors. This information is required to be provided to residents when they first move in and on an annual basis.

In Greater Manchester we welcomed these legislative changes but recognised that this could have significant cost implications for housing providers and managing agents so working together we developed materials that can be used across the city region.

GMFRS developed leaflets which are available free of charge and meet the requirements of the Fire Safety England Regulations. They contain key prevention messages to help reduce the risk of a fire and can be utilised by Housing Providers and Managing Agents.

This approach was expanded by working with fire and rescue services (FRS) across the North West to produce evacuation strategy videos which support this key messaging.

To reinforce prevention messaging and help residents feel safe in their homes, GMFRS is working with Housing Providers and Managing Agents to deliver High Rise Days of Action in all buildings operating a temporary simultaneous evacuation strategy.

Case Study 2: High Rise Building with Multiple Reports

The complexities of the differing funding regimes and multiple reports are made evident in the case of a 17 storey high rise residential building in Manchester. The building has a number of different wall types, but predominantly render over mineral wool insulation with some aluminium spandrel panels incorporated into windows and upper three floors.

The building was inspected in 2017 and 2021 as part of the Building Risk Review Programme. An assessment of the external walls was undertaken in accordance with the Consolidated Advice Note and identified that the spandrel panels posed a risk of external fire spread, but that a change to the evacuation strategy was not required. A further assessment was undertaken by Fire Engineers under PAS9980. This identified the spandrel panels as a moderate risk requiring remediation but not necessitating a change to the evacuation strategy.

An application was made to the Building Safety Fund but the building has subsequently transferred into the Developers Pledge.

The Building Safety Regulator (BSR) has requested the Safety Case and established a Multi-Disciplinary Team to review it. A Fire Risk Assessment undertaken in 2024, provided as part of the Safety Case Report, utilises information from the original assessment of the external walls, but concludes that the risk was 'intolerable'. It failed to reference the assessment undertaken in accordance with PAS9980.

Some 18 months after the building was transferred from the Building Safety Fund to the Developers Pledge, a full programme of works is yet to be finalised.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Date: 13th December 2024

Subject: Breaking Down barriers to Opportunity- A Proposal for a stronger Education System as part of GMS- to enable young people to participate & thrive across GM.

Report of: Kate Green- Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester, Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, Portfolio Lead for Technical Education and Councillor Mark Hunter, Portfolio Lead for Children & Young People

Purpose of Report

This paper provides a focused overview of key areas across the education landscape from (Early Years to post 16) that if worked on with more intentionality, focus and with a GM and or combined national approach we would see improved outcomes for the sector and thus for young people. It seeks the approval and commitment from the GMCA to formalise the joint work programme outlined in the paper ensuring the right governance to take forward action that demonstrably shows GM to be the first Combined Authority to make this bold step in place. It has been drafted in partnership with and endorsed by senior officers in all ten local authorities and the combined authority.

Recommendations:

The GMCA is recommended to:

1. Agree that there should be a greater focus on education in the Greater Manchester Strategy.
2. Agree that the areas outlined in this paper are the priorities for this work.
3. Agree that work on promoting inclusive mainstream schools, improving attendance, on making GM the best place to teach and on post 16 sufficiency should be taken forward immediately, noting that these areas do not require agreement from central government.
4. Agree that officers should further develop this proposal, working with the education sector and partners alongside senior officers from LAs. This will include developing proposals which can be taken forward at GM level now and proposing solutions which require national government action.

Contact Officers

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Gemma Marsh- Director EWS GMCA- Gemma.marsh@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

Recommendation - Key points for decision-makers

Insert text

Impacts Questionnaire

Impact Indicator	Result	Justification/Mitigation
Equality and Inclusion		
Health		
Resilience and Adaptation		
Housing		
Economy		
Mobility and Connectivity		
Carbon, Nature and Environment		
Consumption and Production		
Contribution to achieving the GM Carbon Neutral 2038 target	Currently this is just for further consultation	
Further Assessment(s):	N/A	

G Positive impacts overall, whether long or short term.

A Mix of positive and negative impacts. Trade-offs to consider.

R Mostly negative, with at least one positive aspect. Trade-offs to consider.

RR Negative impacts overall.

Risk Management

Consultation at this stage- limited risk

Legal Considerations

There are no legal implications arising directly from this Report. Further decisions may be required from the GMCA or other decision makers in due course to implement the proposals sent out in this Report and relevant legal implications will be considered at that time. The GMCA is able to work collaboratively with others and can utilise the Wellbeing Power in s2 of the Local Government Act 2000 where it does not have other more specific functions.

Financial Consequences – Revenue

None at this stage

Financial Consequences – Capital

None

Number of attachments to the report: 0

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Early stages of consultation- Scrutiny will form part of ongoing work plan

Background Papers

None

Tracking/ Process

Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution

No

Exemption from call in

Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?

Bee Network Committee

None

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

None

1. Introduction/Background

Greater Manchester's long history of partnership working, as reflected in the Greater Manchester Strategy, has for some years included a focus on children and has recognised the **importance of the education sector**. We know that we **will not achieve any of our ambitions for Greater Manchester without a focus on children and young people**. They must simultaneously be the purpose for all joint endeavour and the key beneficiaries of it.

This focus whilst it has been successful must be intensified, because the **challenges our children face have increased**, in both their scale and their complexity.

- **4.3 million children in the UK live in poverty**. That is 9 children in every classroom. 7 in 10 of these children live in households where at least 1 parent works.
- **Disadvantaged pupils have, on average, lower attainment than other pupils** and this gap widens as pupils progress through their education.
- only 8% of mental health spending is allocated to CYP mental health provision, despite them making up 30% of the demand.
- There has been a **72% increase in the number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) nationally since 2019**.
- Over 20% of students nationally are recorded as 'persistently absent' from school
- There has been an increase of 33,485 students nationally attending alternative provision and special schools since 2015.
- Less than half (45.7%) of 16-18 study leavers in 2020/21 in GM went on to a UK higher education institution. However, when considered as a proportion of the overall cohort (not just those completing 16-18 studies) this drops to a little over a third (34.8%) – meaning that around two-thirds of young people did not progress into higher education.

In order to address the current challenges facing the education sector a step change in our approach is required. Whilst, the case for change is well-rehearsed at a national level, we now we have an opportunity to act at GM level in order to support **the Government's mission to break down the barriers to opportunity for every child, at every stage and shatter the class ceiling**. by:

- **Being purpose driven** and focusing on areas across GM that coming together delivers more than the sum of its parts.

- **Delivering things differently and better**, working together across the education sector, our ten Local Authorities and with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority on key areas.
- **Implementing things first and acting as a leader** on those areas of policy which require innovation⁵.

Evidence of strong education collaboration and action across the ten localities can be traced back many years but none more striking than during the Covid-19 pandemic which set the foundations of the work proposed in this paper and articulates a bolder intention concerning improved outcomes for young people.

Education is the foundation of **hope and aspiration and the springboard to economic growth**. GM already has a strong track record of collaborative working in areas of **school readiness, careers education, information advice and guidance, the post-16 functions and supports cross-GM work on SEND, as well as violence reduction, attendance and linking health initiatives to schools to name a few**. However, we know that GMS, while setting out the city-region's ambition to support young people in education, has not been sufficiently engaging of schools nor invested in those areas of policy which affect schools and seek to improve outcomes for young people in the pre-16 age group. This paper outlines how we might change that.

Over the past six months the priorities, below, have been identified by the system partners to be **the focus of our collaboration**. These priorities support our collective desire to **improve life chances of every child and young person** in Greater Manchester:

- Focus, relentlessly, on the **Early Years**
- Reduce **Child Poverty**
- Reform **Inspections**
- Overhaul the **SEND System**
- Resolve the **academy question and strengthen the role of the LA**
- The importance of **curriculum and assessment**
- Enable **post-16** to deliver greater alignment with labour market needs and positive outcomes for learners- building on the devo trailblazer agreement
- Be the **best place to teach** and to work in education across age groups.

These priorities are not a reflection of a deficit in our education system, on the contrary a national focus on improving standards in schools over the last three decades has undoubtedly improved the quality of our schools. **Children achieve better at all key**

stages, our schools are well led and benefit from skilled and committed teachers and school support staff.

However, despite, or perhaps as an unintended consequence of, these improvements, there has been a **deterioration in the quality and consistency of inclusion**. This can be seen in the massive rise in EHCPs, the **significant increase in persistent absence and severe absence** where young people with SEND, SEMH, on FSM or from particular ethnic groups, are all too often disproportionately represented; and it can be seen in the **increases in both exclusions and elective home education**.

As well as addressing the challenges above, these priorities are focused on **further embedding our education led system**, one which is built on partnerships, between schools, colleges, with Multi Academy Trusts and with local and combined authorities. Further partnership work between leaders in schools, local and combined authorities will bring benefits to us all and will bring **education leaders into the centre of all our work in Greater Manchester**. By strengthening the school system we can ensure better alignment and responsiveness in the face of challenges that need a system response such as **addressing challenges faced in post-16** including capacity, attainment in all phases and increasing positive participation whilst reducing numbers of NEET young people.

We know that **a strong school led system must be complemented by strong local authorities** who are confident in their role and properly resourced to deliver. Furthermore, we believe that **working at a Greater Manchester level with the GMCA** on those issues which require our joint attention will have transformative impact on our education system.

2. Proposed focus- Building on a strong foundation

Greater Manchester has years of experience in coming together to tackle issues for the benefit of all residents. Children & young people are a clear priority for all local areas and significant partners, as well as the Mayor.

This proposal is building on the success we have already demonstrated. Working together using existing structures across Greater Manchester for example, our school readiness programme, the excellent work Local Areas already do with the DfE on key areas of policy (SEND Change Programme, AP) and most recently through our GM Local Attendance Action Alliance.

Our work with the Dame Rachel de Souza (Children's Commissioner for England) and the DfE on the GM Local Attendance Action Alliance has demonstrated the ability of

GM to act together, to act at pace and to deliver impact and sets a template for this new way of working. Continuing this work on improving attendance is an immediate priority and should be taken forward without delay.

Others such as The SEND Board, School Readiness Board and the GM Careers Hub along with two education summits including the Greater Manchester Baccalaureate have shown we can deliver *at pace*. The **structures of collaboration are in place**, the relationships already exist and we are clear about our priorities and our ambition for:

- Greater Manchester to **the best place to teach** and to work in education (all institutions)
- Every family to be able to **choose an excellent school**
- All children & young people both to want to attend and to **attend school/college every day**
- Every child/Young Person to **achieve well** at school and **move confidently** into their further education, training or employment
- All of our communities to **share in the success of our Greater Manchester economy**

3. Purpose driven to deliver better

Building on our strong foundations, there are areas which with a clear political steer and combined resources, GM could deliver better outcomes across all places. GM has a history of not asking permission- doing what it can locally before needing to ask Government.

Our proposal here will once again build on this approach. We have identified a set of actions to be taken forward now. These are on areas where both urgent action is needed (SEND, Attendance and teacher recruitment and retention) and where the commitment and permission to act has been given locally. We have also identified actions which need further work and discussion with central government. In these areas there is a potential to move further into the devolution space following the first year Spending Review and push for greater regional leadership across the education space, linking to strong GMS outcomes. *The following sections set out the areas of focus whereby coming together across the 10, plus the GMCA and the sector delivers more than the sum of the parts.*

4. Further strengthening our focus on the Early Years

We know that investment in the Early Years has the greatest impact for children and is the most cost effective investment that we can make. That is why the Early Years and School Readiness have been a priority in Greater Manchester for many years. This focus had delivered significant improvements which the developmental gap between children eligible for free school meals and their more affluent peers narrowing significantly. However, the COVID 19 pandemic put back the progress of this work. We must re-galvanise our system to the priority.

In Greater Manchester, we've been working on a framework to improve the skills of early years workers. This can be expanded nationwide. We are also making improvements to vocational training programs (like T-levels) in Education and Early Years to create clearer career pathways for young people interested in working in this sector. Through the Integrated Settlement GM can target funding to ensure the uptake of places across young people & adults- Using the Greater Manchester Baccalaureate as a driving force for change and aspiration.

We also must refocus on an integrated model in the early years with education, child care, health and wider children services working together to support children and their families. With greater focus on the role of early education provision within Family Help. Connecting families in with wider support where it's needed. Through the LiveWell manifesto commitment GM can look to work differently with the sector and build around a place.

5. Child Poverty

The biggest barrier to many children's achievement in school and their future life chances is poverty. Unless poverty affecting children reduces, we cannot combat effectively the attainment gap which is once again growing between the most and least disadvantaged children.

The role of schools will be critical to developing and implementing the Governments new Child Poverty Strategy, as the Education Secretary noted in launching the taskforce, *"tackling child poverty is at the heart of breaking down barriers to opportunity and improving the life chances for every child. For too many children, living in poverty leaves them not ready to learn and robbed of opportunity"*.

Greater Manchester's education community wants to join this work and would be willing to act as a pathfinder to implementation of the strategy- this however would take commitment from Government.

6. Reform Inspections

We must reform our inspection framework so that it supports school leaders, encouraging them to innovate and lead confidently equally considering how young people succeed in school and how they will succeed in life. It must also provide the flexibility for schools to succeed in their place, accommodating local priorities and reflecting local agreements and innovations, such as the proposed MBacc.

The new Government is seeking to reform the inspection system to better support school leaders, allowing flexibility to meet local priorities and encouraging a balance between academic success and inclusion. This reform would ensure schools serve their communities, with a focus on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and the representation of the wider local area. The Government also plans to introduce a new "Excellence in Leadership Programme" for headteachers, and create Regional Improvement Teams to enhance school-to-school collaboration. They emphasize the importance of peer review alongside Ofsted judgements to offer a more comprehensive view of school performance.

The ask would be that the new Regional Improvement Teams should be a function of combined authorities bringing Local Authorities (LAs) and MATs together. This would most accurately reflect that accountability and statutory responsibility should remain at place level and would be a helpful focus for partnership working with school leaders.

7. Overhaul of the SEND system

This is a clear area that requires joint working and design with the new Government to tackle the failure in the system. There are many areas highlighted in the annex which need more than the current levers and resource allow and this is something GM could be pushing more for in terms of the next Spending Review window.

We welcome the commitment in the Kings Speech to require "all schools to co-operate with local authorities on place planning, admissions and SEND inclusion". We think this cooperation should include a strengthening of the LA role, placing a duty on schools to cooperate with their Local Authority in delivering integrated children's services in their local

area focused on prevention, and require schools to be a named statutory partner to local safeguarding arrangements with a specific focus on improving attendance and reducing exclusions.

Local Authorities in Greater Manchester are already working together closely through the GM SEND Board and in partnership with the DfE on a number of key initiatives (SEND Change Programme, GM LAAA). This work should be accelerated and further promoted. Local Authorities senior officers will work together immediately to do this with a focus on inclusive mainstream schools.

8. Resolve the Academy Question

It is a perverse impact of the academisation of schools that the policy, which intended to devolve power to schools, has in turn centralised the oversight of schools to the DfE. This must be addressed. It does not mean we should establish further or additional tiers of oversight. We should simplify with MATs being more accountable at place level to communities within existing structures. We can build on our partnerships and the structures which already exist. These partnership at local and GM level are strong.

9. Strengthening the role of LAs

We must strengthen the role of the LA, because whilst the role and responsibilities of the LA in education is clear, in too many areas LAs do not have the powers or the resources to deliver these. Improving funding for Local Authorities in education is a critically important issue.

The partnership at local and GM level are strong. But we also have the opportunity to improve our partnership working between schools and local and combined authorities and should increase the role of Combined Authorities in their support of LAs to collaborate and deliver in their areas. This could include models of QA, commissioning and also peer review, to support school improvement and accountability. This will in turn ensure that schools are increasingly accountable to their local community.

10. The Importance of curriculum and assessment

In Greater Manchester, we have excellent teachers, staff and leaders across our school, colleges and providers and are proud of them and of our children and young people who

achieve well. However, they are all being held back by a system that is not allowing all children to fulfil their potential and is making education providers choose between high standards and inclusivity. We strongly believe that both can and must be achieved.

We welcome the launch of the Government's Curriculum and Assessment Review and the announcement that following the review all publicly funded schools, including academies will be required to follow the new national curriculum. The current national curriculum and more importantly the way in which we assess children is not fit for purpose. GM has submitted its response already to this review. We have said that to improve outcomes for children and young people across the country and in Greater Manchester, we recommend that less is more when it comes to the curriculum – it is important to offer a broad and balanced curriculum, but the focus should be on the key skills children and young people need for further study, life and a future career. These skills should be relevant to both the modern world we live in as well as relevant to local areas and the economy.

We want to do more. We want to join this work and would be willing to act as a pathfinder to implementation of these reforms- This has already been stated in the Spending Review submission to DfE.

11. Reform post-16 transition to deliver greater alignment with labour market needs and positive outcomes for learners

The 2023 deeper devolution trailblazer deal, recognised for the first time that places like GM should play an important role in strategic oversight of post-16 technical education, and of the impact of the publicly funded careers education, advice and guidance provision being delivered in the city-region. But oversight alone without the levers to drive change is a job half done. What happens pre-16 is inherently linked to post-16 education and the wider outcomes for our young people as they transition into work. There are a number of systemic issues acting as a barrier to young people pursuing a vocational pathway. GM's ambition is to move towards a post-16 system rooted in place and more responsive to local labour markets.

GM is already developing a **Greater Manchester Baccalaureate (MBacc)**, which will raise the bar on technical education. The MBacc will provide a clear line of sight to the local labour market by steering young people through seven "gateways" – with GCSEs aligned to each one – that lead to real jobs in the local economy.

MBacc is the vehicle through which we will achieve the vision of an integrated technical education city-region, ensuring that technical education connects more directly to the local economy and the labour market in a place.

GM is also coming together across GMCA, LAs and post-16 providers to work together to understand the challenges caused by the demographic increases and looking at solutions to ensure young people aged 16-18 can participate in further education.

However, there is more that needs to be done- GM is continuing to explore opportunities through devolution to test flexibilities in funding and accountability in GM for the further education system (16-18) to address the anomalies and disincentives in the current system with a strong focus on preventing young people from becoming NEET. A lack of post-16 places, narrowing of technical pathways and declining apprenticeship opportunities for young people all add to the growing number of young people not in employment education or training (NEET) in GM. This is something that GM has stressed in conversations with DfE & DWP in terms of the developing a strong Youth Guarantee alongside the role of MCAs in supporting young people to participate and thrive in the economy.

Connecting what GM is doing already is critical to the success for young people- The Violence Reduction Unit is one example that can support the wider NEET agenda and why GM is the perfect place for a more place-based focus for the developing Youth Guarantee.

Since its launch, the VRU has worked with schools, colleges, hospitals, police, criminal justice partners, charities, and most crucially with communities. The VRU's objective has been to tackle violence and its root causes, with a primary focus on children, young people, and families. The VRU has provided a multi-million-pound investment and commissioned a range of interventions to help achieve these ambitions. Key programmes have included community sports, targeted mentoring, support for parents, work in primary and secondary schools, youth work in hospitals and in the community.

12. The best place to teach and work in education

We know how important brilliant teachers, educators, lecturers and school support staff are and we believe Greater Manchester can be the best place to teach and work in education. However, the challenge we face is great.

We must take bold and decisive action in order to address these challenges. Greater Manchester has fantastic assets, its colleges, universities, teaching schools and other

training providers are outstanding. Greater local control over priorities and flexibility to utilise existing funding and coordination of resources could have a profound impact.

This is another area where we do not need to seek permission to deliver. We will, working together, with school leaders, teaching schools and providers design and implement a *best place to teach plan* for Greater Manchester. This plan building on brilliant work already underway will bring together discussions on training, CPD, and leadership development, more closely with our other key policy priorities on areas such as transport, housing and the economy. With a focus on our challenges and opportunities in the early years, schools and further education.

13. Conclusion

Whilst we know that these challenges are overlapping and interlinked and resolving them requires them to be addressed together, we also know that the public finances are constrained. This paper is primarily intended to address questions of policy. However, **these policy challenges will not be met without sufficient resources** and financially resilient institutions.

However, notwithstanding, the need for investment, this investment cannot be successful unless it is combined with change in both our intention, ensuring that every child succeeds and a change in how we deliver, moving away from an increasingly centralised education system to one which is more locally responsive, more locally accountable, and more locally delivered.

Appendix 2 of this paper sets out the proposal in more detail and explores how a more devolved and place-based approach to education can ensure all our children and young people break down their barriers to opportunity. Whilst in many areas we need a discussion with Government, in order to agree that things can be differently in Greater Manchester, to advocate for changes in policy or funding or to agree that Greater Manchester can do things first acting as a pathfinder for reform. In other areas we do not need permission. We propose to take forward work right now in four of our priority areas:

- SEND promoting inclusive mainstream schools
- Attendance, continuing the work of the GM LAAA
- Best Place to teach – developing our plans to make Greater Manchester the best place to teach and work in education
- Post 16 Sufficiency completing work already underway

Recommendations

The GMCA is recommended to:

- Agree that there should be a greater focus on education in the Greater Manchester Strategy.
- Agree that the areas outlined in this paper are the priorities for this work.
- Agree that work on promoting inclusive mainstream schools, improving attendance, on making GM the best place to teach and on post 16 sufficiency should be taken forward immediately, noting that these areas do not require agreement from central government.
- Agree that officers should further develop this proposal over the next 6 months, working with the education sector and partners alongside senior officers from LAs. This will include developing proposals which can be taken forward at GM level now and propose solutions which require national government action.

Appendix 1 – Governance

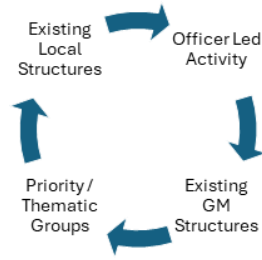
Currently the pre 16 education responsibilities at GM Level are overseen within the Children's Portfolio led by Cllr Mark Hunter and Micheal Cullen and are separated from post 16 Skills and Work responsibilities led by Cllr O'Brien & Sara Todd- apart from work offering young people from Primary, secondary through to Post-16 a clear line of sight to good jobs building on Mayoral priorities. However, it should be noted that the vast majority of the Children's portfolio at GM Level has to this point been focused on Children's Social Care and Early Help/Prevention and Early Years priorities.

At local authority level Local Authority GM Education Leads (Directors and Assistant Directors of Education) oversee mature partnerships with school leaders and coordinate partnerships between schools and wider children's services, under the wider leadership of Directors of Children's Services. Whilst these structures differ at local level. They all include, primary, secondary and special school forums and borough wide partnership groups.

GM Education Leads meet monthly. This forum acts as both a forum for collaboration between LAs and as sounding board for GM issues. Throughout the pandemic the group met on a weekly basis and coordinated a GM wide education response. GM DCS's also meet on a monthly basis. Providing leadership on all issues affecting children and coordination to the agenda at GM Level. These structures feed into the GM Children's Board.

In addition, the Greater Manchester Learning Partnership (GMLP) Executive brings together, LA, School and Diocesan leaders. In addition, the GMLP organises regular meetings with Multi Academy Trust CEOs and wider community of practice events for School Leaders. The GMLP has also in recent years coordinated a number of projects including school to school support work on inclusion and peer review of Local Authority Functions (i.e. School Improvement).

A greater focus on education issues at the Greater Manchester level does not mean we should establish further or additional tiers of oversight. Rather, we should build on our partnerships and the structures which already exist. These partnership at local and GM level are strong. Currently the partnerships (described) above work in the following way:



Whilst we do not need to create new governance structures we may need to tweak the membership and / or terms of reference of existing groups. In addition, a greater focus on education issues at Greater Manchester level will require sufficient capacity to lead and deliver the work.

Appendix 2: Our Priorities – In detail

A national focus on improving standards in schools over the last three decades has undoubtedly improved the quality of our schools. **Children achieve better at all key stages, our schools are well led and benefit from skilled and committed teachers and school support staff.**

However, despite, or perhaps as an unintended consequence of, these improvements, there has been a **deterioration in the quality and consistency of inclusion**. This can be seen in the massive rise in EHCPs and subsequent enormous increase in numbers of children attending special schools. It is seen in the **significant increase in persistent absence and severe absence** where young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), with social emotional and mental health challenges (SEMH), eligible for free school meals (FSM), open to youth justice services or from particular ethnic groups, are all too often disproportionately represented; and it can be seen in the **increases in both exclusions and elective home education**.

We must reject the notion that we need to choose between a school system which achieves well and schools that are inclusive. The very best schools must do both. We need a school system which ensures **all children both want to attend school and achieve very well when they do** and we must do this in **very difficult financial circumstances**.

School budgets are under huge pressure. The Institute for Fiscal Studies in their [sixth annual report on education spending in England](#) noted the following: *In 2022–23, total public spending on education in the UK stood at £116 billion (including the cost of issuing student loans and in 2023–24 prices). In real terms, this represents an 8% or £10 billion fall since 2010–11.* This is a serious challenge and, taken alongside the rapid increase in demand for SEND services, has contributed to a **[national deficit](#) in our high needs funding, now estimated to be in excess of £3bn.**

In addition, the services that touch the lives of children and families from **health, social care and the wider public and voluntary sector have been significantly depleted** or ceased. However, this is not simply a question of resource. The policy dynamic for education and vulnerable children has become **increasingly fragmented** and funded in a time-bound way through competitive grants. Government-led programmes (for example, Family Hubs, SEND and AP Programme, and Education Improvement Areas) are not sufficiently connected.

What happens **pre-16 is inherently linked to post-16 education** and the wider outcomes for our young people as they transition into work. There are a number of systemic issues

acting as a barrier to young people pursuing a vocational pathway. **GM's ambition is to move towards a post-16 system rooted in place and more responsive to local labour markets.**

The priorities outlined above and described in detail below are **intended to complement the priorities of Government.** Furthermore they describe and detail some **further steps that can be taken to address these overlapping challenges**

1. **Focus, relentlessly, on the Early Years**

Whilst evidence for focus on the early years is overwhelming, our investment doesn't match. We know that investment in the Early Years has the greatest impact for children and is the most cost effective investment that we can make. That is why the Early Years and School Readiness have been a priority in Greater Manchester for many years. This focus had delivered significant improvements which the developmental gap between children eligible for free school meals and their more affluent peers narrowing significantly. However, the COVID 19 pandemic put back the progress of this work. We must re-galvanise our system to the priority.

An investment in the early years is needed, this includes increasing places in the early years sector. This necessary step is not in itself sufficient, as we must ensure the system is **sustainable** (funding and support must be addressed) **and that quality is improved.** Crucial to this will be addressing the **recruitment and retention challenges** the sector faces. We need to think again about how we attract, train and retain the best colleagues. This could include placing **greater emphasis on apprenticeships in the Early Years**, developing an 'Early Years First' model for school leavers, similar to the Teach First graduate approach. This **model would support young people into the profession whilst in full-time employment.** It would embrace the high turn-over of staff.

Our Greater Manchester work on **our Early Years workforce competency framework can be expanded.** Through this we can invest in workforce and strengthen skills and competencies that support child development. Working with Post 16 providers **we have strengthened T-levels for Education and Early Years.** We have also chosen Education & Early Year as one of the priority Gateways for The MBacc to create the line of sight and qualification pathways to a career in this sector. We want to do more.

We also must refocus on an **integrated model in the early years** with education, child care, health and wider children services working together to support children and their families.

With **greater focus on the role of early education provision within Family Help**. Connecting families in with wider support where it's needed. The recent commitment of the Government to funding early language based interventions is welcome and will make an enormous difference, however, we know from work in GM that before this can take effect we **need to strengthen our targeted offer in the Early Years**. We know that support provided when a child is 18 months old is most effective. This investment in Primary schools must therefore be **matched by an equal investment in the Early Years and through Family Hubs** to target children not in early education.

We must also move away from measuring success by the % of children reaching arbitrary early development milestones. This risks overstating outcomes and instead we must focus on **identifying every child who requires extra support in their early years** and make sure that they receive that support and build the skills and capabilities of all children to achieve well in school.

2. Reduce Child Poverty

The **biggest barrier** to many children's achievement in school and their future life chances is **poverty**. Unless poverty affecting children reduces we cannot combat effectively the attainment gap which is once again growing between the most and least disadvantaged children.

The **role of schools will be critical to developing and implementing the Governments new Child Poverty Strategy**, as the Education Secretary noted in launching the taskforce, *"tackling child poverty is at the heart of breaking down barriers to opportunity and improving the life chances for every child. For too many children, living in poverty leaves them not ready to learn and robbed of opportunity"*.

Greater Manchester's education community **wants to join this work** and would be willing to act as a pathfinder to implementation of the strategy.

In addition, we should require all local authorities to work with their schools to conduct **poverty-proofing audits** identifying the barriers poverty can create and developing plans to address these at school level. This model has been developed within the voluntary and community sector, principally driven by Children North East. It has been universally welcomed by schools who have participated and a number of authorities are interested in this approach. Led by the lived experiences of children, it offers a 360 degree look at the

school day, examining policy, practice and interaction with a final report going to the head-teacher and their senior team for consideration.

The latest data for 2 year old Free Early Education Entitlement eligibility shows a decrease in number eligible due to increased wages but no adjustment to eligibility threshold to impact of inflation on cost of living. Compared to January 2023, 800 fewer children are eligible for the 2-year-old FEEE in Greater Manchester. This is a decline by 6.6%. **In January 2024, 2300 fewer children were eligible for the offer than in January 2022** (around the time the cost-of-living crisis started). Policy **reform is needed** to ensure targeted interventions intended to support are reaching those who need them.

3. Reform Inspections

Our **inspection framework is a contributing factor in both the improvement of our schools and the deterioration in the quality and consistency of inclusion**. It should neither be possible for a school with high levels of persistent absence or suspensions to be judged to be good nor a school with a poor quality of education. Inclusion deserves the same rigour of scrutiny as attainment as they are of **equal importance to a child and family**, their outcomes and life chances.

We must **reform our inspection framework so that it supports school leaders**, encouraging them to innovate and lead confidently equally considering how young people **succeed in school and how they will succeed in life**. It must also provide the flexibility for schools to succeed in their place, accommodating local priorities and reflecting local agreements and innovations, such as the proposed MBacc.

It must enable our school leaders to **focus on meeting the needs of all their children confidently** and ensure that schools do not operate as islands of success within their local area, with inspectors focusing on analysing the SEND cohort in every school and asking about whether it is representative of its community and the wider borough and that we consider **measuring school outcomes using its community catchment rather than just its on roll school community**. School leaders must also be empowered to lead in our most challenging schools, equally prioritising attainment and inclusion.

We also contend that the Governments proposed **Regional Improvement Teams should be a function of combined authorities bringing Local Authorities (LAs) and MATs together**. This would most accurately reflect that accountability and statutory responsibility

remain at place level and would be a helpful focus for partnership working with school leaders. To further concentrate this power and these teams with the DfE would be an unnecessary centralisation which risks further confusion and fragmentation in the system (see priority five below).

Ofsted inspection judgements, although important, must cease to be the only judgement on a school's & college quality, rather we need to **develop a more rounded and balanced view of school performance**. This should include a **greater emphasis on peer review** to inform school improvement planning between schools, and between Multi Academy Trusts. Enabling an equal focus on our Greater Manchester priorities, for our economy and workforce.

4. Overhaul the SEND System

A number of key policy changes over the last 12 years including assessment, curriculum, reductions in school budgets, Ofsted inspections of schools and how we measure success has meant that the school system is less inclusive. The 2014 SEND Reforms have failed. As a result of all of these factors, alongside the impact of the pandemic and cost of living crisis, over a number of years we have seen an increasing number of children requiring EHCPs and there has been a move towards children requesting specialist provision with a perception that their needs cannot be met within the mainstream system.

Consequently, SEND budgets all across the country are in deficit. We need to take swift action to resolve this. This a view shared by the Secretary of State - she noted in her speech at the Confederation of School Trusts Conference, *"last month's report from the National Audit Office confirmed what parents and people in this room already knew:*

- *A system neglected to the point of crisis*
- *A system too skewed too far towards specialist provision*
- *A system failing families on every measure*

Now is the time for bold reform. And let me be clear: the direction of that reform is inclusive mainstream. That is why we will bring a new focus on improving inclusivity and expertise in mainstream education settings."

Four Greater Manchester authorities, led by Manchester, are currently working with Department for Education on the **SEND change programme**. Going forward this work will continue to include a focus on supporting the development of a model for effective mainstream inclusive schools supported by a 3 tier model of alternative provision and the roll out of speech and language programme in the early years which supports children to

remain in mainstream provision. This work will inform national policy on what inclusive mainstream practice looks like, what parents and children should expect to see in every mainstream school and how this can be rolled out across all schools, what are the enablers for this and the barriers which need to be addressed.

This coupled with the work Greater Manchester has led through its **Local Attendance Action Alliance**, makes Greater Manchester the place to lead this *national ambition* to deliver inclusive mainstream schools. We will continue this work and will ensure we spread its learning across GM.

We welcome the **additional investment announced by the Government**, in the budget, and their commitment and focus on addressing the widespread failings the SEND system has. We offer the following suggestions about the system could be reformed.

Inspection and Accountability for SEND

Local Area **SEND and AP Inspections should be halted**, there is no point inspecting a broken system and those local areas waiting for inspection are all too often unable to take the kind of action which would reduce overspending because of their concerns about negative feedback which will impact on inspections. Delivering the expectations of Ofsted is we would argue fuelling the SEND funding crisis.

Instead the **School Inspection Framework should be updated emphasising the equal importance of inclusion** and be working with Local Authorities, school leaders and DFE to determine what good inclusive mainstream schools look like and therefore how the regulator can ensure that this is being implemented and is the ambition of all mainstream schools.

Changes to Statutory Duties and Guidance

We should legislate to **bring all independent special schools voluntarily under the scope of the Children and Families Act**. This would mean all schools would be under a duty to admit a child, and deliver the provision in a plan. If Independent Schools do not agree then the LA must not be required to place a child in an Independent School if the school is preferred by a parent and the Tribunal must not be able to require this.

We must then **re-focus our SEND system on what should be available in all schools to address high volume and predictable needs through a graduated response and ensure that mainstream schools are funded appropriately to do this. In particular,** a much greater focus and priority given to **speech language and communication**, which is the biggest driver of demand and when unidentified or unmet escalate into often costly

Social Emotional and Mental Health needs. Addressing this priority will require **greater investment in speech and language therapy (SALT) services** and a radical rethink of their organisation. SALT should be a LA commissioned and delivered service through the Public Health Grant.

We need to provide parents with the **same confidence at in the SEND Support Plan which should be developed and delivered by their child's schools drawing on multi agency support to help devise.** There should be no resources that a school cannot access for a child at SEND Support.

We should also ensure that the **outcomes of any permanently excluded child, remain with their initial school.** These changes will require **better guidance, support and training for schools** This will mean quickly implementing national thresholds for support and provision for all children with SEND.

Workforce development

Inclusion comes from a whole **school ethos and culture** . We must do more to support and enhance the role of the SENCOs, who should be future leaders of our schools. Ensuring that they have come through a system where they have access to all the training and development they need i.e. the 100 next leaders programme. We must also ensure that SENCOs play a greater role in influencing school culture and are part of their school leadership team. This should be supported by inclusion being equally as important to our school improvement agenda with brokered support for schools who do not meet standards.

Training and professional development for teaching assistants and school support staff must be prioritised. **School Support staff pay should recognise the vital roles they play.** Teaching Assistants should be paid a decent salary for the job they do and should be able to progress professionally as a Teaching assistant and not feel need to become a teacher or change professions to progress/earn a decent salary.

Funding and Budget Pressures

High Needs funding allocations should be reviewed and redesigned on a needs basis, with a revised funding formula, and the current **High Needs block debt written off** this is a central government pressure not a local government pressure.

High Needs allocations should be wholly based on current need not historic funding. To complement this, local areas should be required **to publish three to five year forward**

plans for sufficiency. Local Authorities should have greater flexibility to expand and to new specialist provision including special schools.

We must also **increase funding for schools** by raising the threshold (AWPU + £10k) for school contributions significantly and fully funding this increase. This should increase in line with rising costs and continue to be fully funded. We must consider how our funding model can **reward inclusion, early identification and prevention** and be better joined up with, health and social care resources.

This should be supported by a **closer focus on the use of SEND notional funding with a new MFG for notional budgets with no school receiving less per pupil than the median.** To complement this, schools should publish details of their use of its notional funding as required already for pupil premium, with this a key line of enquiry for inspectors.

Local Areas through their Schools Forums need greater freedom to **retain/top slice from all schools including academies to operate SEND Support services** for all children moving away from a statutory only and/or traded model. We need to consider how these approaches can be school led, whilst ensuring consistency in approach across a local area.

5. **Resolve the academy question and strengthen the role of the LA**

The biggest change to the school system in the last decade has been the rise of academies and multi-academy trusts. **With more than half of all schools currently academies, we must recognise how difficult it would be to reverse these changes.** However, it must be possible to create a better, more integrated system with a greater emphasis on value for money.

Beyond this pragmatic argument the case for change is simple. **Schools working in formal partnership with other schools and their local partners are better placed to succeed and better able to sustain that success.** They can offer more to families, to young people, to their staff, and can better maximise the limited resources in our system.

Our academy system is not only unfinished it is unplanned. This must be resolved. **Local Authorities working with school leaders, and in partnership with the DfE, should be asked to develop plans for a fully planned and sustainable school system** and given the powers to implement these plans. These plans should address the dual challenges our school system faces, increasing standards and improving inclusion.

It is a **perverse impact of the academisation of schools** that the policy, which intended to devolve power to schools, has in turn **centralised the oversight of schools to the DfE**. This must be addressed. It does not mean we should establish further or additional tiers of oversight. **We should simplify with MATs being more accountable at place level to communities within existing structures**. We can build on partnerships which already exist. These **partnership at local and GM level are strong**. But we also have the opportunity to improve our partnership working between schools and local and combined authorities and should **increase the role of Combined Authorities in their support of LAs to collaborate and deliver in their areas**. This could include models of QA, commissioning and also peer review, to support school improvement and accountability. This will in turn ensure that **schools are increasingly accountable to their local community**.

At the same time **we must strengthen the role of the LA**, because whilst the role and responsibilities of the LA in education is clear, in too many areas LAs do not have the powers or the resources to deliver these. We welcome the commitment in the Kings Speech to require *“all schools to co-operate with local authorities on place planning, admissions and SEND inclusion”*. We think this cooperation should include a strengthening of the LA role, **placing a duty on schools to cooperate with the LA in delivering integrated children’s services in their local area focused on prevention**, and require schools to be a named statutory partner to local safeguarding arrangements with a specific focus on **improving attendance and reducing exclusions**. In addition Local Authorities should:

1. Be required to **develop and implement plans for a planned and sustainable school system** which delivers the benefits of partnerships between schools, and with Local Authorities and combined authorities.
2. Be funded appropriately in line with their responsibilities in relation to **attendance, CME, EHE and Section 19 Alternative Provision duties**, statutory responsibilities, expectations and demand have increased by funding has not. Without resources we cannot deliver these functions well and get children back into school where appropriate.
3. Be given **back stop powers to direct the admission of children**, and powers to coordinate admissions processes and manage in year and fair access admissions.
4. Be given **powers which match their responsibilities in relation to place planning**, to expand and close schools in their area in response to demographic changes.
5. Be given **greater flexibility to manage all DSG** budgets blocks.

6. As place leader should manage **all** school capital funding with an **increased and expanded role in managing and delivering capital investment in all schools** with the LA becoming responsible for all condition funding in this as it is responsible for all basic needs funding. This should include a duty to publish medium-term Asset Management Plans for schools in their area, and a long-term plan to improve all schools in their areas to agreed national standards. This is also an area where **Combined Authorities, working together with Local Authorities, could deliver** providing the scale needed to deliver as well as a focus for wider collaboration.

6. The Importance of curriculum and assessment

In Greater Manchester, we have excellent teachers, staff and leaders across our school, colleges and providers and are proud of them and of our children and young people who achieve well. However, they are all being held back by a system that is not allowing all children to fulfil their potential and is making education providers choose between high standards and inclusivity. We strongly believe that both can and must be achieved.

We welcome the launch of the Government's Curriculum and Assessment Review and the announcement that following the review all publicly funded schools, including academies will be required to follow the new national curriculum. The current national curriculum and more importantly the way in which we assess children is not fit for purpose. We want to join this work and would be willing to act as a pathfinder to implementation of these reforms- This has already been stated in the Spending Review submission to DfE.

Greater Manchester has now submitted its response to the curriculum and assessment review. We have said that to improve outcomes for children and young people across the country and in Greater Manchester, we recommend that less is more when it comes to the curriculum – it is important to offer a broad and balanced curriculum, but the focus should be on the key skills children and young people need for further study, life and a future career. These skills should be relevant to both the modern world we live in as well as relevant to local areas and the economy.

We want to do more. We **want to join this work** and would be willing to act as a pathfinder to implementation of these reforms. We agree with the Secretary of State who said in launching the review: *"This government, alongside leading education experts, leaders and staff on the frontline, will breathe new life into our outdated curriculum and assessment system. Our renewed curriculum, built on a foundation of high and rising standards, greater*

access to cultural learning and crucial work and life skills, will set up all our children to achieve and thrive in the workplaces of the future, and throughout their lives”.

However, we believe that curriculum and assessment in the Early Years must also be reviewed. As we have stated in priority one of this paper, We must move away from measuring success in the Early Years by the % of children reaching arbitrary early development milestones as this risks overstating outcomes and instead we must focus on **identifying every child who requires extra support in their early years** and make sure that they receive that support and build the skills and capabilities of all children to achieve well in school.

To improve outcomes for children and young people across the country and in Greater Manchester, we recommend that less is more when it comes to the curriculum – it is important to offer a broad and balanced curriculum, but the focus should be on the key skills children and young people need for further study, life and a future career. These skills should be relevant to both the modern world we live in as well as relevant to local areas and the economy.

7. Reform post-16 to deliver greater alignment with labour market needs and positive outcomes for learners

The reform of qualifications overall needs reconsideration, **we welcome a national post-16 strategy and wider curriculum and assessment review announced by Government.** We also believe that our curriculum and its assessment must do more to support and encourage students to study technical subjects. We are developing a **Greater Manchester Baccalaureate (MBacc)**, which will raise the bar on technical education. The MBacc will provide a clear line of sight to the local labour market by steering young people through seven “gateways” – with GCSEs aligned to each one – that lead to real jobs in the local economy.

MBacc is the vehicle through which we will achieve the vision of an integrated technical education city-region, ensuring that technical education connects more directly to the local economy and the labour market in a place. It brings sharp focus on the young people and acknowledges the key actors in the system who can enable a simpler journey for young people. It is about maintaining a relentless and unapologetic focus on the journey our young people take, rather than focusing on ‘the system’.

GM is strongly committed to effective curriculum reform and the ongoing development of the T-level. GM's FE Colleges have exceeded the national average in T-Level performance (Summer 2024) for the pass rate (94% vs 88%) and high grades (68% vs 62.7%). **However, we are particularly concerned about the impact of L3 defunding which we estimate will impact 4,454 learners across GM.** Without rapid intervention thousands of young people will not have post-16 options when the reforms unfold between 2024 and 2028.

There are a number of systemic issues in the post-16 system that the review should look at – we have highlighted English & maths and sufficiency as particular issues for GM: **English and Maths Attainment:** Last year 62.8% of young people in GM achieved a Grade 4 pass in English and Maths compared to 65.1% nationally. Colleges are struggling to recruit maths teachers and attendance/motivation of students is dropping when even less of the course is focused on their chosen vocational area. Access for young people to technical education pathways at Level 3 and beyond are affected by a **sufficiency gap at post 16.**

In GM we have a growing demographic of 16–18-year-olds, projected to continue to 2028 and then plateau, and our colleges are facing challenges in funding this growth, identifying available space to deliver from, and recruiting the workforce with industry related expertise.

We would like to explore opportunities to test flexibilities in funding and accountability in GM as well as looking again and funding for further education colleges (16-18) to address the anomalies and disincentives in the current system. Including the devolution of all capital funding linked to post-16 education and skills. A lack of post-16 places, narrowing of technical pathways and declining apprenticeship opportunities for young people all add to the **growing number of young people not in employment education or training (NEET) in GM.**

Connecting all parts of the system is critical to ensure all young people can participate and have clear pathways to the GM economy. The Mbacc in year 2 will start to focus on 'pathways for all' ensuring inclusion and supported focus- **this is where the connection to the VRU is key.**

Since its launch, the VRU has worked with schools, colleges, hospitals, police, criminal justice partners, charities, and most crucially with communities. The VRU's objective has been to tackle violence and its root causes, with a primary focus on children, young people, and families. The VRU has provided a multi-million-pound investment and commissioned a range of interventions to help achieve these ambitions. Key programmes have included

community sports, targeted mentoring, support for parents, work in primary and secondary schools, youth work in hospitals and in the community.

Taken together with a focus on participation and reducing NEET & youth unemployment then the MBacc can ensure pathways for all.

8. The **best place to teach** and work in education

We know how important **brilliant teachers, educators, lecturers and school support staff** are and we believe Greater Manchester can be the best place to teach and work in education. However, the challenge we face is great, and **want to lead on these much needed initiatives.**

We know these **issues of both recruitment and retention issues are persisting**⁹ and that the number of teachers who are considering leaving the profession increased by 44 per cent in 2022/23. We also know that the challenges we face in school are replicated in our Early Years (see above) and Further Education sectors where pay and funding issues are even more pronounced.

We must take **bold and decisive action in order to address these challenges.** Greater Manchester has fantastic assets, its colleges, universities, teaching schools and other training providers are outstanding. Greater **local control over priorities and flexibility to utilise existing funding and coordination of resources** could have a profound impact. To do this we need:

1. A **fair and equitable settlement for further education**
2. A re-think about how **we attract and train colleagues in the Early Years** sector, (see priority one) building on our **Early Years workforce competency framework** this could include placing **greater emphasis on apprenticeships** in the Early Years, developing an '**Early Years First**' model for school leavers, similar to the Teach First graduate approach. This model would support young people into the profession whilst in full-time employment. It would embrace the high turn-over of staff.
3. **More local control of the resources made available to teaching schools and teacher training providers** (i.e. Teach First), this would enable us to target our work to our local workforce and performance challenges and to join up our activity all the way from the early years to work.

We will, working together with school leaders, teaching schools and providers design and implement a *best place to teach plan* for Greater Manchester. This plan building on brilliant work already underway will bring together discussions on training, CPD, and leadership

development, more closely with our other key policy priorities on areas such as transport, housing and the economy. With a focus on our challenges and opportunities in the early years, schools and further education.

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Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Date: Friday 13th December 2024

Subject: Delivering the Bee Network – Network Performance

Report of: Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, Portfolio Lead for Transport
and Caroline Simpson, Group Chief Executive, GMCA

Purpose of Report

To provide GMCA with an overview of the performance of Greater Manchester's transport network for the period March 2024 – November 2024, and to update on preparations for implementation the final tranche of bus franchising.

Recommendations:

GMCA is requested to note and comment on the performance of Greater Manchester's Transport Network and preparation for completion of bus franchising.

Contact Officers

Danny Vaughan, Chief Network Officer, TfGM

daniel.vaughan@tfgm.com

Equalities Impact, Carbon, and Sustainability Assessment:

N/A

Risk Management

N/A

Legal Considerations

N/A

Financial Consequences – Revenue

N/A

Financial Consequences – Capital

N/A

Number of attachments to the report: 0

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

N/A

Background Papers

N/A

Tracking/ Process

Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution?

No

Exemption from call in

Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?

No

Bee Network Committee

Report will be considered by Bee Network Committee on Thursday 12th December.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

N/A

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report provides an overview of the performance of the transport network for the period March 2024 – November 2024.
- 1.2. It summarises some of the key challenges and incidents which have impacted on network performance over the last quarter and provides metrics for reliability, patronage, safety, and security.
- 1.3. It highlights some of the interventions being implemented to improve network performance, and outlines major engineering works due to take place on the Metrolink network during 2025 as part of the Metrolink Renewals and Enhancements Programme.
- 1.4. The report also gives a short update on preparation for the third and final tranche of bus franchising.

The Bee Network – one year on

- 1.5. September marked the one-year anniversary of the Bee Network. With buses back under local control, passengers are getting the benefit of cheaper, cleaner more reliable services. Since the launch there have been more than 75 million passenger journeys on Bee Network bus services delivering year on year growth of 5% on the franchised network.
- 1.6. Greater control has enabled us to make improvements to services. From September a pilot of 24-hour Bee Network services commenced. The services on the V1 and 36 routes connecting Manchester with Leigh and Bolton via Salford run at least every hour both ways, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Night buses are proving popular with those working in or enjoying Greater Manchester's night-time economy with around 7,000 people getting onboard in the first month alone.
- 1.7. The development of the Bee Network has also seen revised timetables, more frequent services, and the launch of the first new bus route introduced by the Bee Network during October. The new 615 route connects the town and surrounding areas with Middlebrook retail park. The service has been a welcome addition to the network in the run up to Christmas. The first phase of performance improvements in the Tranche 2 area saw the introduction of additional vehicles on the 59, 83, 84 services as well as the Manchester city centre free bus.

- 1.8. Improvements to the Bee Network App have seen better real time information such as live tracking of buses and improved information during disruption. Further enhancements are planned to incorporate travel alerts into the app and journey planner. Since launch, the Bee Network App has been downloaded more than 674k times.
- 1.9. Work continues to improve services and customer experience with feedback from passengers used to help direct improvements in the on-bus experience and the reliability of the service.

Safety

- 1.10. Two significant safety incidents affecting the Bee Network received national media coverage during October and November.
- 1.11. A head-on collision between a tram and bus on Mosley Street on Friday 18 October left the driver seriously injured and three passengers with minor injuries. The incident led to disruption to services with the closure of Piccadilly Gardens Bus Station for 4 hours. A TfGM led investigation into the incident is ongoing.
- 1.12. In a second incident on Saturday 09 November two Bee Network buses collided on the A664 Rochdale Road close to the regional centre. The incident left 13 people needing hospital treatment, three with serious injuries. The A664 Rochdale Road was closed for 3 hours with bus services and traffic diverted. TfGM are working with GMP and the operator to understand the cause of the incident.
- 1.13. Accidents like those above are unacceptable on our transport network. There is nothing more important than the safety of both passengers and staff who keep the city-region moving.
- 1.14. TfGM is working with all Bee Network operators, including bus operators and representatives from Metrolink and the rail industry, as well as with Greater Manchester Police, highways experts and the trades unions, with a view to improving safety performance and setting a new gold standard for safety across all forms of public transport and active travel. A joint Bee Network Safety Plan is being developed, aligned to the Vision Zero strategy and action plan.

Delivering for events

- 1.15. Passenger numbers on Manchester City Matchday Bus Services, delivered in partnership with Manchester City Football Club, continue to grow with the first games of the season seeing more than 600 people using a Matchday Bus Service – 13% higher than last year’s busiest match. The network and ticketing have been adapted for the 2024-25 season. Buses now operate on 15 routes (compared to 17 last season), covering 64 stops and pricing has been tailored to make it even more appealing to families. Children under the age of five can now travel for free, and those under the age of 16 will have a discount of 50%.
- 1.16. GM will host major events at venues in and around the regional centre during a programme which intensifies in the run up to the New Year. The programme has already seen the MTV music awards at Co-op Live delivered and the UK’s biggest Christmas Market commence on 08 November. These events pose a challenge to the transport network and TfGM has developed strong partnerships with event organisers to make sure that these occasions run as seamlessly as possible.
- 1.17. The Christmas period is also seeing an increase in journeys and road traffic congestion. TfGM is providing additional services and enhanced operational tactics to manage the impact of congestion. Additionally, TfGM has issued a range of customer messages and marketing campaigns to encourage people to use public transport and behave safely when travelling.

Growing Patronage and Revenue

- 1.18. October saw the highest passenger numbers on the bus network since the launch of the Bee Network (and post-pandemic). Patronage during October 2024 was 7% up on October 2023. Total bus patronage for the 12 months ending October 2024 is up 5% year on year. Bus revenue has outperformed the budget target in every month of the year so far. Year-to-date there is a positive variance against budget of 9% mitigating wider financial pressures across transport operations.
- 1.19. October saw record passenger numbers on the Metrolink network with 4.12 million journeys. Year on year Metrolink journeys are 15% up (the 12 months ending October 2024 compared to the 12 months ending October 2023).
- 1.20. Metrolink fare evasion has fallen by more than third following the introduction of a plan to tackle fare evasion 12 months ago. Measures delivered included increasing the penalty fare from £100 to £120, recruiting an additional 50 customer service

representatives (CSRs) to bring the total number of frontline staff to 169 across the network and the roll out of new inspection devices. More than 5 million ticket inspections are now undertaken each year. This new approach is on target to generate an extra £2 million in net revenue per year.

- 1.21. TESO deployments during October delivered a 50% increase in ticket inspections on Bee Network buses. TSEO Bus Revenue Inspection activity during October included: 7,294 Buses boarded, 113,266 passenger tickets checked, and 48 passes or ticket withdrawn. TSEOs also supported User Acceptance Testing of the new penalty fare app. The software has now received technical acceptance. Officers will receive training to issue Penalty Fare Notices on bus throughout November and December.

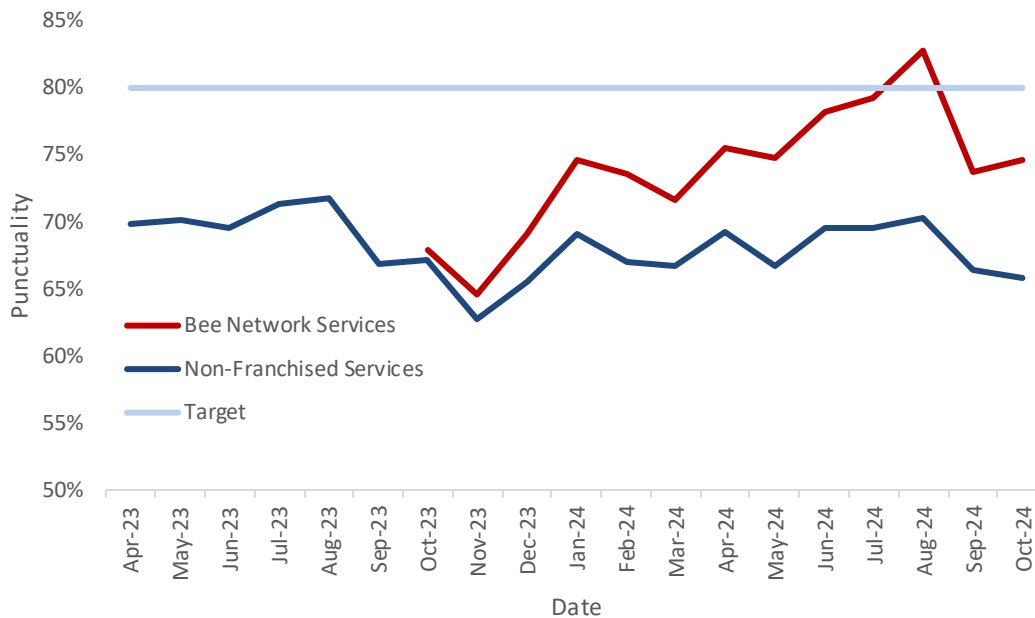
2. Reliability

Bus

- 2.1. Punctuality for the franchised network continues to track above both the non-franchised network.
- 2.2. A range of initiatives to improve the performance of franchised bus services are being delivered including service improvement measures, priority for late running buses at traffic signals and tackling the impact of roadworks through closer working relationships with districts and roadwork promoters.
- 2.3. A package of service improvement measures, including new timetables across some services in tranches 1 and 2, and additional buses on the Manchester city centre free bus and the 59, 83, 84 services, were introduced on 27 October and 17 November 2024. New timetables on some routes operated by First Manchester are showing significant improvements in punctuality with both start point and mid-point punctuality up 5% on figures under the old timetables.
- 2.4. The overall age and standard of the fleet continues to improve with 10 new Zero Emission Buses received at Oldham depot. Additionally, 140 new buses have also started to arrive ahead of the launch of Tranche 3 in January and plans have been approved to invest £71 million to further expand and bolster the fleet, delivering a step change in the experience for passengers with new, cleaner, and accessible buses.

- 2.5. Delivering on our commitment to transparency and accountability, weekly reporting of bus performance continues to be published. Performance figures are posted on X (formerly Twitter) and linked to a more detailed report on the TfGM website.

Chart 1: Bus Punctuality



Metrolink

- 2.6. Autumn has been a challenging period for Metrolink performance with punctuality and reliability affected by significant stand-alone events including, the derailment at Cornbrook and trees on overhead lines (across multiple lines) due to adverse weather.
- 2.7. Punctuality was also affected by late running on the Rochdale line due to speed restrictions because of the Derker land slip which had caused a partial closure of the Oldham and Rochdale Line during the summer. Away from these one-off incidents performance remains good and has returned to a positive trend following a timetable change in November.
- 2.8. The final disruptive phase of the 2024 Metrolink renewals programme has been delivered. The programme has seen £21.4 million invested to improve the Metrolink network over the year and is part of a planned £147 million package to maintain and upgrade the network up to 2027. These works will deliver improvements in punctuality, reliability, and safety.

Chart 2: Metrolink Reliability

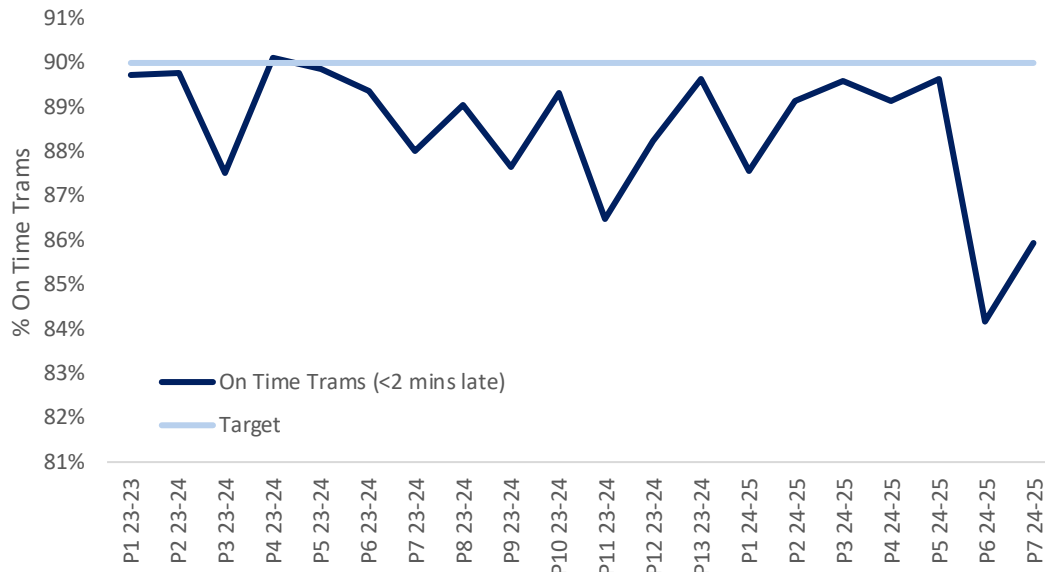
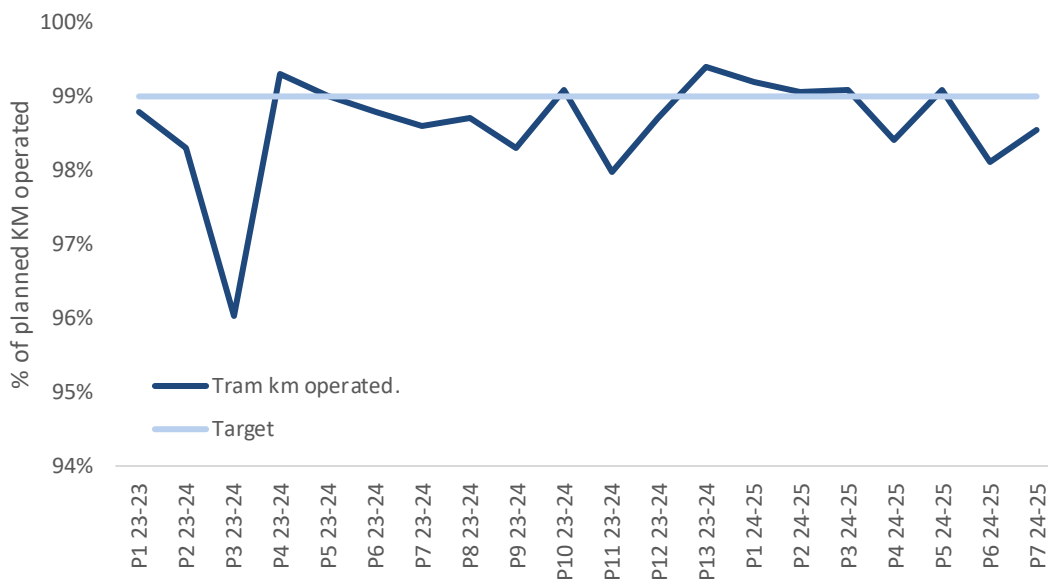


Chart 3: Metrolink Planned Operated Mileage



2.9. An enhanced approach to tackling fare evasion was launched 12 months ago with an increase in the fine for travelling without a ticket, more staff checking tickets and new inspection devices. Since these measures were introduced, fare evasion has fallen by more than a third.

2.10. Further analysis is required to link cause and effect. However, revenue inspection activity may be disrupting and deterring those who looking cause trouble on the network. Over the same period the number of reported incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) on the Metrolink network has also fallen. During the 12

months to October 2024 reported incidents of crime and ASB were 31% down on the equivalent period to October 2023.

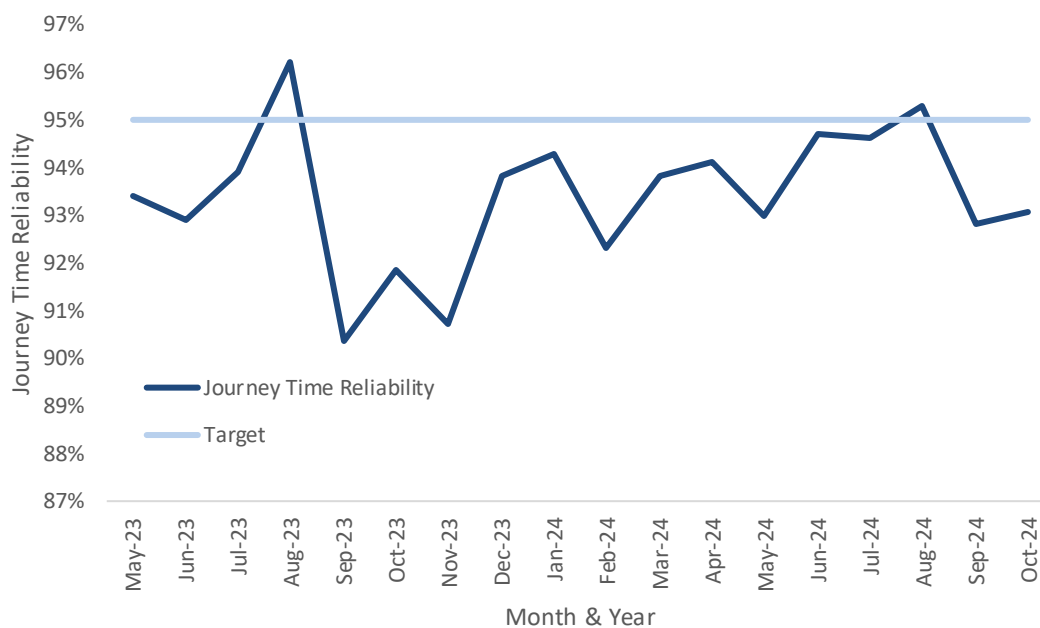
Highways

- 2.11. The traffic signal asset continues to be used as a key tool for managing journeys across all modes. Including priority across the Metrolink network and for late running buses, 1 in 4 junctions (around half of the locations feasible) are now providing priority for public transport.
- 2.12. Delivery of bus priority has been focussed on routes in Tranche 1 and 2. Priority measures to support Tranche 3 services will be identified once Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) data from Bee Network buses becomes available (in January 2025).
- 2.13. Additionally, to compliment the ongoing upgrade of junctions to improve active travel facilities which has seen new or enhanced pedestrian facilities commissioned in districts across GM a review of pedestrian facilities has seen a reduction in pedestrian wait times at 189 crossings across GM this year so far.
- 2.14. More than £7 million in funding has been approved for improvements to junctions near new schools and separated pedestrian and cycle lanes. The schemes in Radcliffe and Salford will deliver improvements in safety, better active travel facilities and easier access to the public transport network.
- 2.15. Traffic engineers continue to work within TfGM's Operational Control Centre (OCC) to monitor the network, making changes to the signal timings when necessary. In addition, there are a growing number of signal strategies for known or recurrent issues. These signal strategies can be deployed instantly by the OCC 24/7.
- 2.16. Managing seasonal increases in congestion and pedestrian activity has been a major focus. During December, weekend traffic volumes in the Regional Centre are typically 12% above average, equivalent to an addition 80,000 journeys to, from or through the Regional Centre.
- 2.17. A range of measures are in place to help manage the network through the seasonal congestion and the busy events schedule including roadwork embargo, interventions by the OCC and amended signal timings as well as co-ordination with highways authorities targeting enforcement activity (by both Police and Local Authorities) and temporary traffic regulation orders.

2.18. The routes in and around the regional centre continue to see significant schemes delivering improved facilities for cycling and walking. The extension of the Deansgate Active Travel scheme is now on street with a scheme on Chapel Street in Salford programmed for the new year. The effects of these schemes on highway capacity will be monitored.

2.19. TfGM continues to work with Google on an artificial intelligence (AI) project to ensure signal timings are optimised to reduce stop-start traffic and associated vehicle emissions. This initiative has delivered local benefits where signal timings were adjusted. Additionally, having the performance and operation of GM’s signal asset reviewed by an independent third party provides assurance that the signal network is working well with the development of the asset and day to day operation delivering benefits.

Chart 4: Highway Journey Time Reliability



2.20. Works to enhance TfGM’s Operational Control Centre have been completed. The new space enables bus franchise operators, TravelSafe, GM Police as well as Customer Communications and Control Centre colleagues from TfGM to be co-located, delivering a coordinated approach to managing the Bee Network.

Rail

2.21. In September members of the ASLEF Union (train drivers) accepted a pay deal that brought an end to more than two years of strike action on the rail network. The offer

included a 5% backdated pay rise for 2022-23, a 4.75% rise for 2023-24, and a 4.5% increase for 2024-25.

- 2.22. Crew availability at Northern continues to be a challenge for service delivery. Northern issued a “Do No Travel” notice on multiple GM routes on consecutive Sundays. Northern are not operating up to half of planned services, with Sundays being the most affected day. A rest day working agreement for drivers at Northern has been confirmed for 3 years. This will help reduce cancellations.
- 2.23. The latest period saw operational performance steady on public performance measure (PPM) but declines on Right Time (RT) at final destination for all six GM train operating companies (TOCs). Only Northern and TfW managed to achieve 1 in 2 trains arriving on time. The worst performing operator on the RT metric continues to be Avanti West Coast, where only one in around seven trains arrived at its final destination on time on the Manchester to Euston route.
- 2.24. The latest ORR quarterly figures (April – June 2024) show Avanti was the worst operator across Great Britain (GB) in terms of ‘on time trains’, achieving just 41.2% in the latest quarter (this was 4.9% down on the previous quarter), with the latest GB average at 70.1%.
- 2.25. The ORR performance data (April – June 2024) shows a continuing increase in the total number of trains operated in GB. The latest data shows there were 5% more planned trains compared to the same quarter in 2023. Nationally, there have been declines in both punctuality and reliability, with more trains operating late and increases in cancellations compared to the previous year.

Chart 5: Public Performance Measure (PPM)

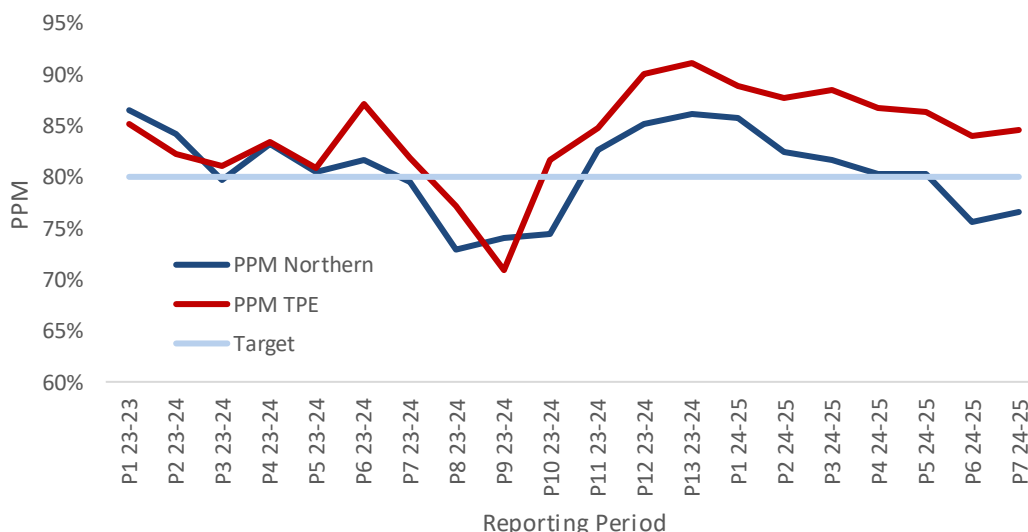
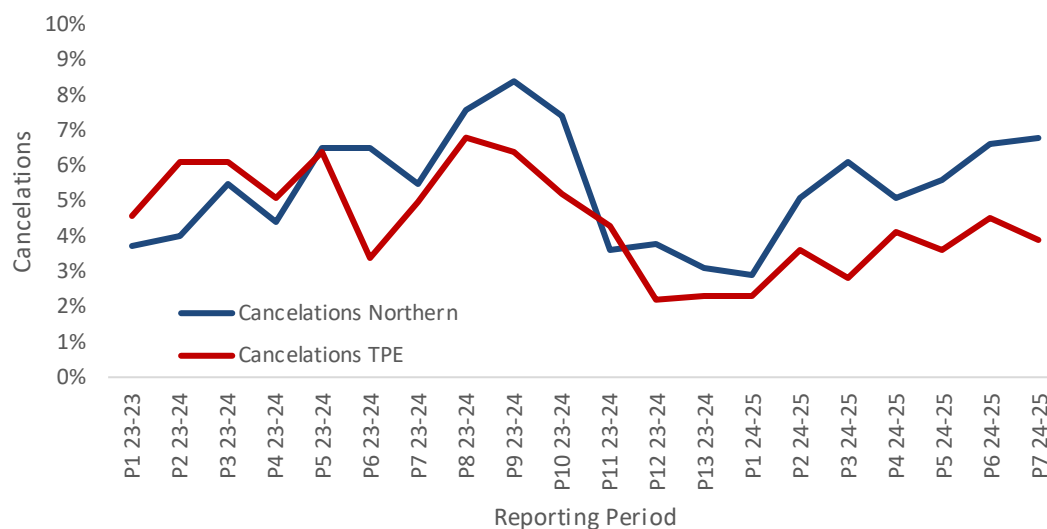


Chart 6: Percentage Cancellations



3. Safety and Security

TravelSafe

- 3.1. During the 12 Months to October 2024, there has been an increase in the number of reported incidents of crime and ASB to the TravelSafe Partnership (TSP). In part, this is believed to be a result of the increase in the number of TravelSafe Support and Enforcement Officers (TSEOs) deployed across the Bee Network making it easier for passengers to report incidents
- 3.2. Key themes remain youth related incidents and incidents associated with homelessness. Together these account for more than half of all reported incidents of crime and ASB on the public transport network. Incidents related to missiles being thrown at vehicles continues to be a concern.
- 3.3. Between March and November, TravelSafe enforcement activity saw 73 exclusion notices (removing the implied permission of entry to our sites) issued to prolific offenders, as well as 366 tickets and travel passes removed.
- 3.4. 98 TSP operations have taken place across the period and Operation AVRO¹ (Transport) took place on the 19 July, scheduled to coincide with the end of the school term. The results of this operation are detailed in the infographic overleaf.

¹ Operation AVRO is a Greater Manchester Police, force-wide monthly day of action which runs in a different district each month to target criminality.



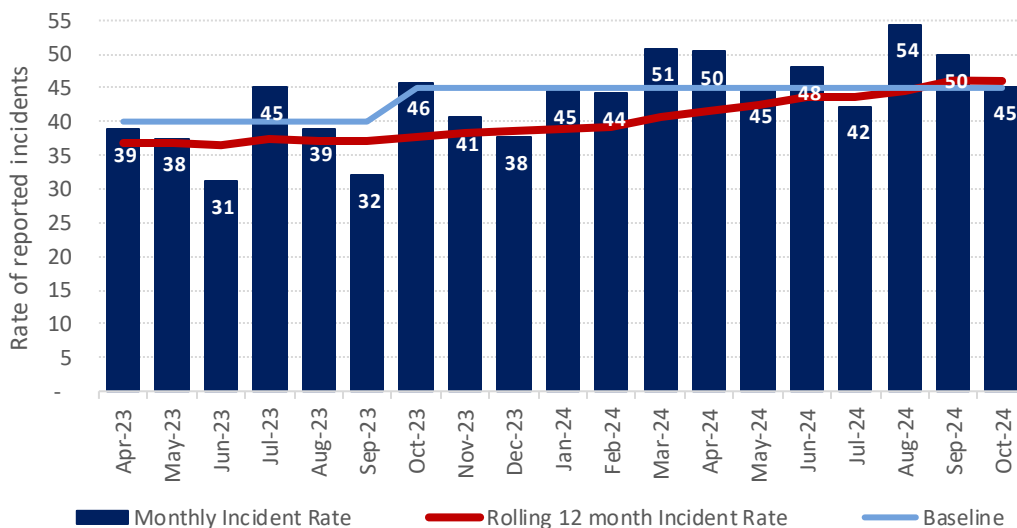
- 3.5. The TravelSafe education and engagement programme delivered sessions to 15,000 young people between March - November. This included several sessions using virtual reality headsets which have been well received by both staff and pupils as well as exploring new joint working opportunities in partnership with GMFRS at the Fire Safety Centre in Bury.
- 3.6. TravelSafe commissioned deployments by Foundation 92 detached youth workers have continued to take place across the network, targeting youth ASB hotspot areas and ensuring referrals back into local authorities. Over 3,400 young people have been engaged by this outreach capability across the period.
- 3.7. September marked twelve months of having TravelSafe Support and Enforcement Officers (TSEOs) deployed across the Bee Network. A summary of outcomes is shown below.



- 3.8. To support the launch of the night bus pilot, an additional team of TSEOs were formed to provide overnight safety and security provision. These officers work between 2200-0800 hrs to support staff and customers. TSEOs maintain a visible presence at key route locations and assist with service loadings, as necessary.

- 3.9. To further enhance safety on night bus services, the TSP has partnered with Strut Safe, a UK charity that offers a free (national) phone service for anyone wishing ‘companionship’ when travelling alone. The service is advertised across all night bus services alongside LiveChat reporting.
- 3.10. Recruitment of additional TSEOs ahead of the start of the third and final tranche of bus franchising is well underway and a new hub will be opened at Stockport Interchange.
- 3.11. TSP has launched two campaigns within the period:
 - A summer ASB campaign ‘don’t get ghosted’ ran from 12 August to 15 September. This performed well with feedback that young people were playing back the campaign messages to youth teams.
 - ‘Help the scene. Intervene’ supporting safety of women and girls, is currently live. This campaign aims to promote safe, active bystander intervention and was co-designed with the support of the GMCA Gender Based Violence Lived Experience Panel.

Chart 7: TravelSafe rate of reported incidents of Crime and ASB per million passenger journeys.



- 3.12. The baseline was adjusted from September 2023 to reflected increase in reporting due to the deployment of TSEOs.

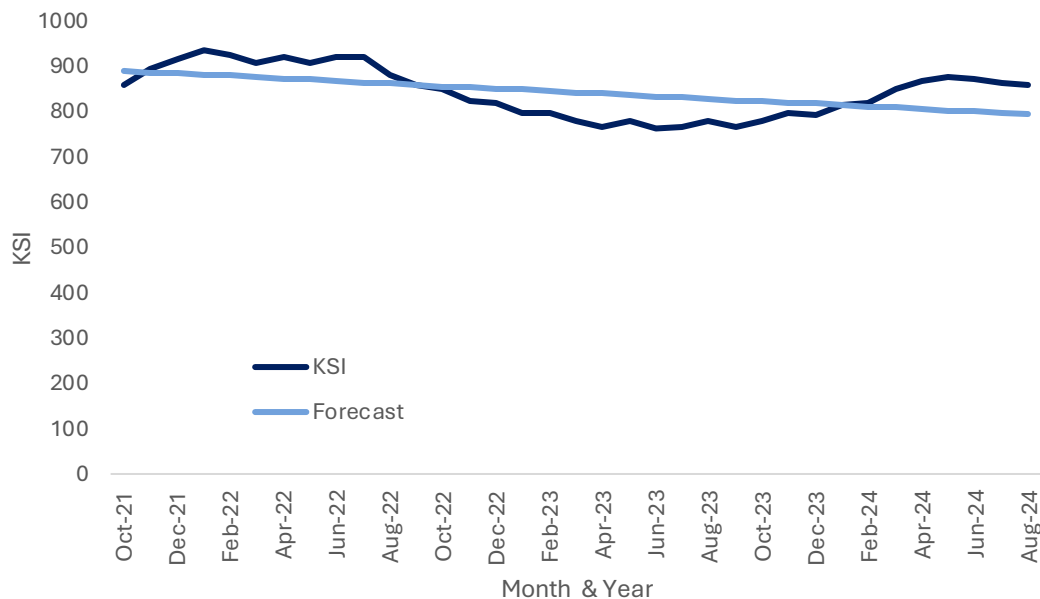
Highways

- 3.13. The Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan was launched in November following approval by GMCA. Ahead of launch, Vision Zero showcase activity took place

during road safety week (week commencing 18 Nov). Including, AI camera trials, the relaunch of GMP’s Operation Snap, education-based activities, and the announcement of the Vision Zero Innovation Fund.

- 3.14. Latest data shows the 12-month (to Apr 2024) there were 857 people killed or seriously injured on GM roads. This is a 0.8% decrease in KSIs from the average of the 36-month period ending April 2023 (856.7) but is above the DfT forecast of 795.

Chart 8: Killed and Seriously Injured Casualties (KSI) (Rolling 12 Months)



- 3.15. The programme of road safety campaigns continues with a pedestrian focussed campaign targeting drivers during the winter months launched in October and a Don’t Drink/Drug Drive campaign in development with partners (particularly GMP) ahead of festive period.
- 3.16. Safety camera upgrades continues with average speed cameras now being delivered. Sites which have previously been vandalised are scheduled for replacement during November. The sites, and others in the vicinity are being fitted with an anti-vandal cover.

Communications

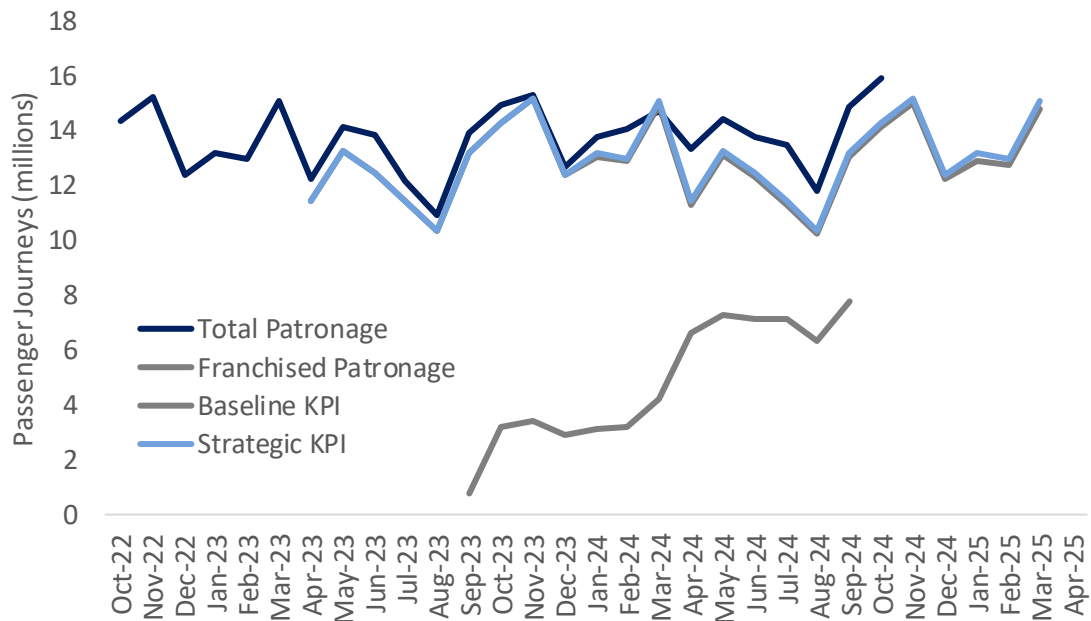
- 3.17. Travel demand management (TDM) plays an important role in managing the network and delivering customer information during periods of exceptional demand and/or disruption. In addition to ongoing activity supporting events and major works programmes, a TDM plan is being delivered throughout the Christmas market period. The plan is designed to both help manage the impact of increased trip numbers and congestion as well as maximise revenue opportunities.

4. Passenger Journeys and Revenue

Bus

- 4.1. Patronage on the bus network continues to grow. Passenger journeys are 5% up year on year and October 2024 saw patronage at its highest level since the introduction of the Bee Network (and post pandemic).

Chart 9: Bus passenger journeys (millions)



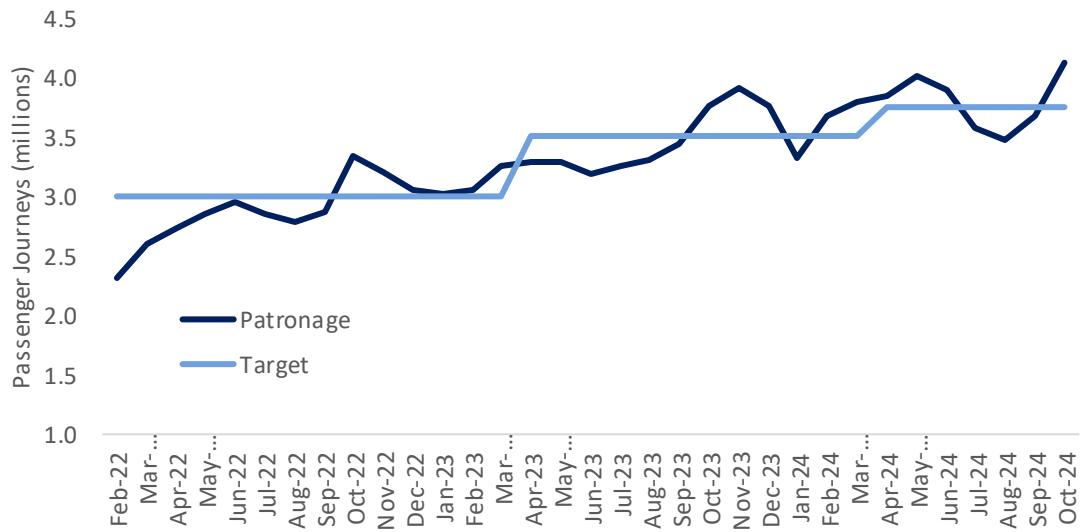
- 4.2. The introduction of the first new service under franchising (the 615) on 27 October 2024, has seen a very positive start in terms of patronage, as has the increased frequency on the 132 service. There has been on average of 752 passengers per week on the service 615 and a 39% increase in patronage on the service 132 ½ hourly service when compared with the hourly service, in its first 2 weeks.

Metrolink

- 4.3. A new record for Metrolink passenger journeys was set in October with patronage up 15% year on year (rolling 12 month). Year to date Metrolink revenue is showing year on year growth of 11%. However, this is 1.3% down on the challenge target set for the financial year.
- 4.4. Both patronage and revenue were affected by a number of challenges during the summer months. Closures due to engineering works, civil disorder and subsequent changes in travel behaviour and the unplanned closure between Oldham Mumps and Rochdale due to a landslip all had an effect.

- 4.5. Strong patronage numbers during Q3 (October to December) are critical to Metrolink achieving the ambitious targets set at the start of the financial year.

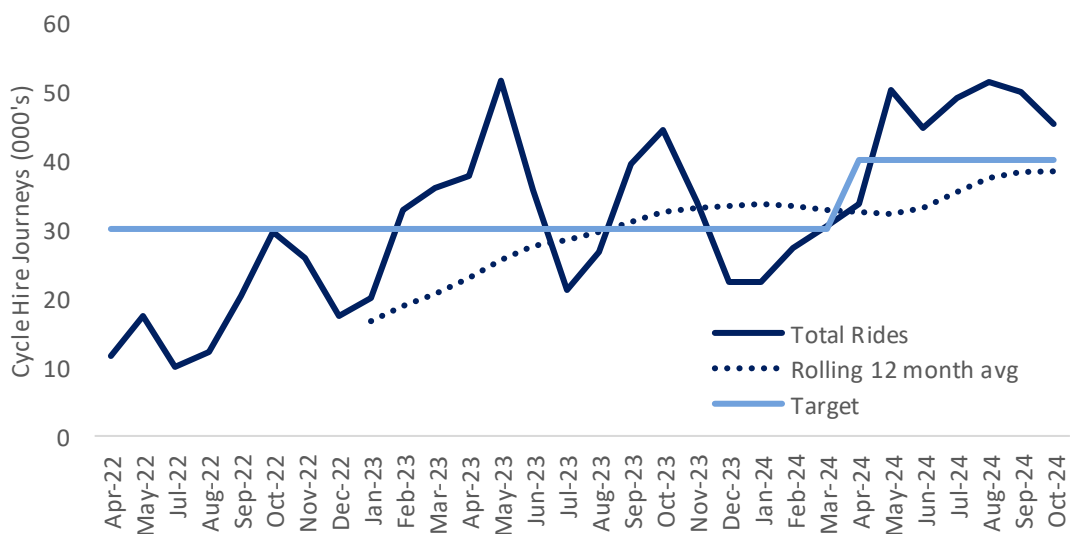
Chart 10: Metrolink passenger journeys (millions)



Cycle Hire

- 4.6. Starling Bank Bike hire scheme reached a major milestone in October passing one million rides. Not only have bike hire users clocked up one million rides, but they have also collectively pedalled 2.5million kilometres since the scheme first launched in November 2021, the equivalent of travelling around the world 62.5 times.
- 4.7. The scheme continues to be popular with usage 18% up on year on year. The scheme will receive a further boost with 300 new e-bikes added to the fleet over the coming months.

Chart 11: Cycle hire trips per month thousands



5. Bus Franchising Implementation

- 5.1. Preparations are now in the final stages to implement the third and final tranche (Tranche 3) of bus franchising on 5th of January 2025, when all of Greater Manchester's bus services will be under public control
- 5.2. Metrolink will operate services from four out of five of the large bus depots, with Stagecoach operating services from the Stockport depot. GNW and Diamond will operate all small franchises and school services.
- 5.3. Hyde Road depot will be electrified in advance of the 5th of January with Ashton depot set to be electrified in February 2025 to support the deployment of a new fleet of electric zero emissions buses (ZEBs).
- 5.4. 60 ZEBs will operate from the 5th of January, with a total of 134 ZEBs set to be deployed by the end of March 2025. Nearly 400 new buses will be operating across the Tranche 3 area by the end of March 2025.
- 5.5. 45 new TravelSafe and Enforcement Officers are being recruited for Tranche 3 to support passengers. Metrolink have recruited 100 new drivers and aim to recruit a further 100.
- 5.6. Representing half of the GM bus network, the third and final tranche of bus franchising represents the biggest challenge yet. TfGM are training employees, communicating with customers, and working with both new and incumbent operators to ensure the smoothest possible transfer of depots, vehicles, staff, and services on 5th of January, and the best possible start to franchised services across Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and parts of Manchester and Salford.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Date: Friday 13th December 2024

Subject: TfGM Power Purchase Agreement

Report of: Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, Portfolio Lead for Transport and Caroline Simpson, Group Chief Executive, GMCA

Purpose of Report

To provide GMCA with an update on the status of the TfGM Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) project.

Recommendations:

The GMCA is requested to:

1. Note TfGM are progressing work on the procurement of a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) under a programme to address current and future energy demand;
2. Note that the TfGM PPA will function as a pathfinder for future PPAs to encompass the wider GMCA Group and potentially other GM partners;
3. Note the proposed procurement approach for the TfGM Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) project; and
4. Note that a further report will be presented to GMCA in Summer 2025, prior to entering into a PPA.

Contact Officers

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Frank Tudor Deputy Director of Corporate Services, TfGM

Frank.Tudor@TfGM.com

Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

Recommendation - Key points for decision-makers

1. Note the contents of the report,
2. Note the proposed procurement approach for a PPA; and
3. Note that a paper will be presented to GMCA in Spring Summer 2025 for approval, prior to entering into a PPA.

Summary of Decision Tool results: Positive impacts overall, whether long or short-term and significant.

Impacts Questionnaire

Impact Indicator	Result	Justification/Mitigation
Equality and Inclusion		
Health		
Resilience and Adaptation		
Housing		
Economy		
Mobility and Connectivity		
Carbon, Nature and Environment	G	Provision of additional renewable energy to the grid supporting TfGM's key strategy to decarbonise transport by switching to electric vehicles, and GM's overall target to become carbon neutral by 2038.
Consumption and Production		
Contribution to achieving the GM Carbon Neutral 2038 target		Provision of additional renewable energy to the grid supporting TfGM's key strategy to decarbonise transport by switching to electric vehicles, and GM's overall target to become carbon neutral by 2038.
Further Assessment(s):	N/A	
G	A	R
Positive impacts overall, whether long or short term.	Mix of positive and negative impacts. Trade-offs to consider.	Mostly negative, with at least one positive aspect. Trade-offs to consider.
		RR
		Negative impacts overall.

Carbon Assessment

Buildings	Result	Justification/Mitigation
New Build residential	N/A	
Residential building(s) renovation/maintenance	N/A	
New build non-residential (including public) buildings	N/A	
Transport		
Active travel and public transport	N/A	
Roads, Parking and Vehicle Access	N/A	
Access to amenities	N/A	
Vehicle procurement	N/A	
Land Use		
Land use	N/A	
No associated carbon impacts expected.	G	B
	High standard in terms of practice and awareness on carbon.	Mostly best practice with a good level of awareness on carbon.
		A
		Partially meets best practice/ awareness, significant room to improve.
		D
		Not best practice and/ or insufficient awareness of carbon impacts.

Risk Management

See Section 4.

Legal Considerations

TfGM must ensure that the actions they take are within their powers (*intra vires*). DLA Piper have provided advice to TfGM and GMCA confirming that to enter into a virtual PPA (which is essentially a financial instrument) would be *intra vires* under TfGM's functional power of competence, set out in section 10A of the Transport Act 1968. Any exercise of powers would also need to comply with TfGM's general duties in respect of proper administration of their financial affairs which will be considered prior to entry into a PPA.

TfGM is intending to enter into a long term (15-20 year) PPA, which will be negotiated during the procurement process. The final terms of the PPA will be presented to the GMCA for approval prior to entering into contract.

Financial Consequences – Revenue

Assuming an annual volume of 45,000MWh of electricity and an unindexed 'strike price' of £85/MWh, a PPA will have an annual cost of circa £3.8m per annum over an estimated term of at least 15 years, which at current market prices will provide a lower unit cost than TfGM's current approach to energy purchasing.

Financial Consequences – Capital

No Capital will be expended on securing the Power Purchase Agreement

Number of attachments to the report: 0

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

N/A

Background Papers

N/A

Tracking/ Process

Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution?

No

Exemption from call in

Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?

No

Bee Network Committee

N/A

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

N/A

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Greater Manchester's 5 Year Environment Plan sets a vision for a nature-rich and carbon neutral city region where all citizens have access to affordable renewable energy, warm climate resilient homes, high quality blue and green spaces, healthy and locally produced food, and a reliable, integrated, inclusive, sustainable and affordable transport system, where avoidable waste is significantly reduced.
- 1.2. It sets out that in Greater Manchester, we want to create a 'Manchester-Energy Model', a low carbon energy system, that other places will aspire towards, and which will meet our target of being carbon neutral by 2038. Reaching this target remains challenging and will require accelerated and scaled up action across all aspects of society - residents, public and private sector organisations and, importantly, national government.
- 1.3. Such a system will be based around the three pillars of energy efficiency, energy generation and smart energy innovation:
 - Energy Efficiency - Where our homes and buildings are improved to use as little energy as possible, using the most efficient insulation and cost-effective, low carbon appliances and heating systems.
 - Energy Generation - Where our homes, businesses and transport are all powered through affordable renewable energy, built all over Greater Manchester, including local heat networks, onshore wind and solar panels on roofs, to reduce transmission losses and give people more control over their energy bills.
 - Smart Innovation - Where this is all integrated by embracing the latest developments in technology and energy innovation to allow people to smartly store and control their energy use, adapting to their individual requirements and benefiting financially from being able to manage when they buy, sell and use energy.
- 1.4. Aim 1 of our 5 Year Environment Plan is that "Our energy infrastructure is smart, flexible, and fit for a low carbon future."
- 1.5. In anticipation of an increase in electricity demand for public transport, and in recognition of the aims of the 5 Year Environment plan TfGM are progressing work on the procurement of a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). The proposal is for TfGM to enter into an initial PPA of c 45,000MWh (broadly equivalent to Metrolink's annual

electricity consumption) as a 'pathfinder', enabling future PPAs to address future demand growth from an electrified bus fleet; and to encompass other partner organisations within the GMCA Group and beyond within the broad GM family.

1.6. A Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) is a long-term contract (typically 15-20 years) between a corporate electricity consumer and a generator of renewable energy, with the consumer's payment to the generator contributing to the cost of constructing and operating the generator asset. PPAs enable buyers to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and meet their sustainability targets by sourcing clean energy at a competitive price.

1.7. The benefits of PPAs are as follows:

- i) **Net Zero / Social Value** – a PPA demonstrates a commitment to sustainability by contributing to the decarbonisation of the energy system.
- ii) **Price Certainty** – PPAs provide long term price certainty, protecting against market volatility.
- iii) **Additional Renewable Capacity (Additionality)** – PPAs provide much needed renewable power to the grid. By signing a PPA with a developer / generator , the consumer has committed to provide a stable revenue stream to the project over a long period of time

1.8. TfGM currently procures energy utilising a flexible strategy via traditional retail arrangements, meaning volumes are hedged / fixed for different seasonal periods. However, TfGM's annual electricity consumption is estimated to grow from c58,000MWh in 2024 to c214,000MWh by 2036, primarily due to the introduction of zero emission vehicles across franchised bus services to meet the ambition of a 100% ZEB fleet by the early 2030s which, at today's prices, represents an annualised increase in costs from c£14.5m to c£53.5m¹.

1.9. This, allied with ongoing volatility within the market, results in TfGM needing to take action to mitigate cost as far as possible, whilst also providing price certainty and stability. A review of the energy purchasing strategy / implementing a PPA was a key mitigation within the Financial Sustainability Plan submitted to Department for

¹ day-ahead commodity price of c £100/MWh as of 19 November 2024 and taking into account non-commodity costs of circa £150/MWh made up of government levies and charges

Transport as part of the Covid / post Covid funding agreements; and is also a key component in TfGM's Business Plan.

2. Procurement Process

- 2.1. Following initial work, supported by external advisors, to assess the viability of a PPA, TfGM moved onto the Procurement phase which commenced with the issuance of a Prior Information Notice (PIN) to the market in June 2024, followed by a virtual supplier day for those who expressed interest in the opportunity.
- 2.2. Market sounding was then undertaken, the objective of which was to test the market on potential offerings and to understand market conditions to help inform a competitive tendering process.
- 2.3. As a result, TfGM will be seeking proposals which offer a technology agnostic (i.e. solar or wind) new-build virtual PPA with an output of 35,000 – 45,000 MWh per annum, for a term of 15-20 years. A virtual PPA is effectively a 'contracts for difference' arrangement whereby TfGM continues to procure energy on a day-ahead basis by way of a traditional purchasing arrangement, with a reconciliation directly with the generator back to the guaranteed price under the PPA.
- 2.4. It is currently anticipated that the PPA would become live by 31 December 2027, as the renewable facility will need to be built, albeit an earlier commencement date will be sought if such developments are available.
- 2.5. The procurement will be undertaken under the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 (UCR16) utilising the Competitive Dialogue (CD) procedure, enabling TfGM to negotiate on the complex commercial elements of the contract to ensure best value for money outcomes.
- 2.6. Assessment of suppliers will include, but not be limited to:
 - i. **Financial / Legal Standing and Capability** - strong mandatory requirements and due diligence to ensure a strong financial standing, legal standing of the supplier, and supplier technical capability.
 - ii. **Technical / Deliverability** – ensuring suppliers have the capability, capacity, and experience to meet requirements.
 - iii. **Commercial** - including price, term, and key commercial criteria to ensure a value for money outcome.

- iv. Social Value** - due to the nature of the market and uninfluenceable factors (such as weather conditions and the regulatory nature of the UK renewables energy market), driving local social value will be challenging. However, the procurement will include a range of social value assessments including payment of Real Living Wage, prompt payment of supply chains to support SMEs; and commitment to the principles of the GM Good Employment Charter, to ensure that the selected supplier shares TfGM's social value aspirations.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1. Based upon the latest Contracts for Difference auction, which is a government scheme to incentivise investment into renewable energy projects in the UK, TfGM are expecting a PPA strike price to be in the region of £85/MWh, which compares to current day ahead pricing of c£100/MWh (as of 19 November 2024) and year ahead pricing of c£86/MWh.
- 3.2. Assuming annually generated volumes of 45,000MWh, the PPA (which only covers the commodity cost, with non-commodity costs such as government levies still payable by TfGM) will have an annual cost of c£3.8m per annum.
- 3.3. The market 'norm' is for the strike price to be inflated annually in line with the Consumer Price Indices to account for increases in cost in operating and maintaining the generating asset, but this will be explored further as part of the procurement exercise.

4. Risks and Opportunities

- 4.1. Entering into a PPA on the terms above helps to mitigate the following risks:
- i) **Price Volatility** – entering into a PPA brings long-term price certainty, with a long-term hedge against market volatility and also price fluctuations within the Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGOs) market.
 - ii) **Achievement of Decarbonisation Targets** - entering into a PPA supports the generation of renewable energy generation, effectively the 'gold standard' for green power supply and demonstrating decarbonisation.
 - iii) **'Green Washing'** – entering into a PPA for a new-build asset ensures that there is true 'additionality' by way of injection of additional renewable energy into the grid which would not otherwise exist without the PPA.

4.2 However, the following risks remain:

- i) **Pricing Level** – whilst a PPA offers price certainty, given the volatility within the market, it may not offer the lowest pricing when compared against procuring via traditional means at any given time.
- ii) **Supply Chain Bottlenecks** – projects have potential for construction or grid connection delays post PPA signature, which would be offset by way of liquidated damages.
- iii) **Market appetite** – the UK has ambitious renewable energy generation targets which are supported by a national Contract-for-Difference (CfD) auction process whereby renewable generators can bid for a government-backed PPA. The attractiveness of the national CfD auction process (i.e. the prices offered and volumes granted by government) could potentially affect bidder appetite in a PPA for TfGM
- iv) **Accounting** – due to a virtual PPA being a financial instrument, accounting treatments will be carefully considered prior to entering into the PPA.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1. This first Power Purchase agreement for TfGM is intended as an initial 'pathfinder' to inform future PPAs for the wider GMCA Group and potentially other GM partners.
- 5.2. Subject to any feedback from GMCA, a tender will launch in January 2025, with contract award currently anticipated by Summer 2025. GMCA approval will be sought prior to contract signature.
- 5.3. It is currently anticipated that the PPA would become live before the end of 2027.

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Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Date: 13 December 2024

Subject: GM Brownfield Housing Fund Reallocations

Report of: Councillor Paul Dennett, Portfolio Lead for Housing First and Steve Rumbelow, Portfolio Lead Chief Executive for Housing, Homelessness and Infrastructure

Purpose of Report

This report seeks the GMCA's approval to the reallocation of £10.8m of funding from the GMCA Brownfield Housing Fund.

Recommendations:

The GMCA is requested to:

1. Approve the £10.8m allocations to projects identified at Appendix 1, subject to further due diligence;
2. Approve the variations to projects detailed in Appendix 2.

Contact Officers

Key contact officer:

Andrew McIntosh Andrew.Mcintosh@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

Recommendation - Key points for decision-makers

It is recommended that the proposal is supported, as set out in the paper. The Decision Support Tool has identified the proposal will positively impact Housing and the Economy. The impact on the Carbon Assessment is currently unknown at this stage of the programme and will be monitored during and at the end of the programme.

Impacts Questionnaire

Impact Indicator	Result	Justification/Mitigation
Equality and Inclusion		
Health		
Resilience and Adaptation		
Housing	G	The proposal will positively contribute to the number of affordable homes in GM. The proposal supports brownfield land being brought back into use where market failure has otherwise made this unviable. It may also support surplus to use buildings being demolished or retained and refurbished for new homes.
Economy	G	The deployment of £115m grant funding will contribute to improving economic development in the residential construction sector and associated supply chains. The deployment of £115m grant funding will support the delivery of 7000 new homes which will in turn increase jobs in the construction sector. The deployment of £115m grant funding will support the delivery of 7000 new homes which will in turn create jobs in the construction sector. The proposal will attract wider investment into GM. Wider investment will include private sector and other public sector funds. The proposal will increase opportunities for training and skills development in the construction sector and wider, e.g. apprenticeships.
Mobility and Connectivity		
Carbon, Nature and Environment		
Consumption and Production		
Contribution to achieving the GM Carbon Neutral 2038 target		Schemes that are to be considered as part of this grant award from DLUHC will have due regard to sustainability credentials in line with the Carbon Neutral 2038 target and applied through an agreed set of criteria.
Overall	G	Positive impacts overall, whether long or short term.
	A	Mix of positive and negative impacts. Trade-offs to consider.
	R	Mostly negative, with at least one positive aspect. Trade-offs to consider.
	RR	Negative impacts overall.

Carbon Assessment		
Overall Score		
Buildings	Result	Justification/Mitigation
New Build residential	TBC	
Residential building(s) renovation/maintenance	N/A	
New build non-residential (including public) buildings	N/A	
Transport		
Active travel and public transport	N/A	
Roads, Parking and Vehicle Access	N/A	
Access to amenities	N/A	
Vehicle procurement	N/A	
Land Use		
La	No associated carbon impacts expected.	High standard in terms of practice and awareness on carbon.
		Mostly best practice with a good level of awareness on carbon.
		Partially meets best practice/ awareness, significant room to improve.
		Not best practice and/ or insufficient awareness of carbon impacts.

Risk Management

The grants will be conditional upon a satisfactory outcome of detailed due diligence and ongoing monitoring confirmation that the schemes are being delivered satisfactorily.

In view of the nature of the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government grant funding agreements for the Brownfield Housing Fund, any conditions will be mirrored in agreements between the GMCA and scheme promoters, mitigating any risk retained by the GMCA.

Legal Considerations

The GMCA have entered into agreement with MHCLG in order to receive the grant. The terms and obligations within the MHCLG grant agreement will continue to be flowed through to the ultimate grant recipients within the onward grant agreements to ensure that potential risks to the GMCA are passed on to those grant recipients.

An onward grant agreement and other associated legal documentation will be completed for each scheme ahead of the first grant payment.

As this is a grant the subsidy control position has been considered. The grant agreement from MHCLG to the GMCA is not deemed to be a subsidy as the GMCA will be acting as an intermediary for the funding and flowing through all of the grant money, other than its reasonable administrative costs, to grant recipients to deliver the various Brownfield programme funded schemes. The GMCA is therefore acting in the capacity of an

intermediary of the grant funding which is in line with the Government's Subsidy Control Statutory Guidance. Subsidy Control requirements will be considered further for each individual scheme allocation as part of the detailed due diligence, with any allocation being compliant with the Subsidy Control legislation.

Financial Consequences – Revenue

In a previous report £500k was approved to be used from Housing Investment Loans Fund surpluses towards legal costs. Some budget remains from this approval, and it is proposed that any further costs will be funded from the overage payments received to date from historic Brownfield grants.

Financial Consequences – Capital

Capital expenditure is formed of £10.8m from the Brownfield Housing Fund devolved to GMCA. This financial year's allocation (and therefore spend target) from Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government is £74.9m, the £10.8m capital expenditure will contribute to this year's delivery.

Number of attachments to the report: 0

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

N/A

Background Papers

1. GMCA Trailblazer Devolution Deal (GMCA approval on 24th March 2023)
2. GMCA Brownfield programme (Devolution Trailblazer deal) - Methodology and Year 1 Allocations (GMCA approval on 30th June 2023)
3. Greater Manchester Brownfield Programme - Year 2 and 3 Methodology and Allocations (GMCA approval 26 January 2024)
4. GM Brownfield Programme (GMCA approval 14th May 2024)
5. GM Brownfield Programme (GMCA approval 27th September 2024) – Brownfield Housing Fund Reallocations

Tracking/ Process

Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution

Yes

Exemption from call in

Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?

No

Bee Network Committee

N/A

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

N/A

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1. GMCA manages a Brownfield Housing Fund (BHF) with monies from several sources: £135m capital allocations from the 2020 – 2025 MHCLG programme, and the £150m capital allocation as part of the 2023 Devolution Trailblazer. These are subject to rules set out in the associated grant agreements, including requirements to spend certain amounts of the allocations in certain financial years without the possibility of moving funding between years.
- 1.2. Allocations of the Trailblazer BHF funding for 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years were approved by GMCA in January 2024. Since then, several projects have been withdrawn by applicants or otherwise fell out of compliance with the funding requirements, meaning the associated allocations will not be drawn down. This supports the need to maintain an overprogrammed position in order to ensure that the in-year spend target is achieved. In September, CA therefore approved the reallocation of £21.3m of funding from the BHF for 2024/25.
- 1.3. There have since been additional withdrawals of funding. In order to manage the risk of underspend for this financial year, it is proposed a further £10.8m of projects be brought forward for approval.
- 1.4. To date, GMCA has successfully spent all tranches of brownfield funding awarded by government in line with targets set and continues to meet the outputs required.

2. Funding Withdrawals and Variations

- 2.1. The allocations approved by GMCA in January and September 2024 were made on the basis that projects would draw down funding in the year(s) originally forecast and where this was no longer possible, the allocation would be withdrawn.
- 2.2. This batch of proposed reallocations are due to slippage in the delivery of schemes with a Year 2 Brownfield allocation.
- 2.3. Further non-performance by recipients has very recently become evident and as such, it is anticipated that a further report will be brought through the governance cycle with additional proposed reallocations.

3. Funding Reallocation Process

3.1. In October 2024, GMCA invited proposals for projects which prospective recipients considered would be likely to be able to draw down funding by the end of March 2025.

3.2. In addition, registered Providers (RPs) and Local Authorities delivering affordable housing were given the opportunity to apply for funding for projects already in delivery that could evidence a viability gap (or a further viability gap for those projects already in receipt of BHF funding).

3.3. Projects were sorted into a number of categories in consultation with Local Authority Directors of Place, as follows in priority order:

1) RP/LA new BHF project (additional units for the programme), 100% affordable housing and high confidence to meet funding requirements in year.

1(a) As above but tenure type is not 100% affordable housing.

2) RP/LA existing BHF project (no new units to programme), primarily affordable housing, high confidence to meet funding requirements in year.

3) RP/LA new BHF project, 100% affordable housing, low confidence to meet funding requirements in year,

4) LA land acquisitions

5) Private developer – no or very little affordable housing

6) Not enough information provided for prioritisation process.

3.4. Due to the current forecast programme spend position, projects that fall into category 1 and 1(a), totalling £10.8m, are recommended for funding allocations as set out at Appendix 1.

3.5. Together, these allocations will deliver the following:

- 19 projects supported;
- £10,821,250 funding allocated;
- 775 homes will be unlocked and supported, of which 684 are expected to be affordable homes and of those 194 social rented homes;
- £13,962.90 average grant rate per unit.

3.6. Across the GMCA BHF, the target is to unlock brownfield land with capacity for at least 16,230 homes by 2025/26. With these reallocations GM expect to comfortably exceed this target.

4. Other Variations

4.1. Several projects allocated funding through previous approvals, due to changes in project circumstances require further support.

4.2. In addition, for some projects the proposed recipient has changed due to changes in site ownership and we recommend that this is formally approved.

4.3. Details of these variations can be found at Appendix 2.

5. Next Steps

5.1 Projects in receipt of reallocated funding will be subject to the same monitoring and performance framework as projects with existing allocations to ensure continued compliance with GMCA's requirements.

5.2 All schemes must meet the eligibility criteria required by government:

- Benefit Cost Ratio of 1 (plus non-monetised benefits);
- Green Book appraisal;
- Evidence of market failure; and
- Housing delivery starts on site by March 2026.

- 5.3 All projects will also be subject to a further rigorous due diligence process prior to entering into a Grant Funding Agreement which will safeguard GMCA's interests and ensure that recipients deliver the homes supported by the grant, including the agreed proportion of affordable homes. This will include, where appropriate, overage provisions to limit excess profit arising from the projects.
- 5.4 Reallocation of funding as set out in this report, in conjunction with existing allocations is expected to allow expenditure of funding in 2024/25 in accordance with targets agreed with government. Should there be further slippage, it may be necessary to make further reallocations in which case additional approvals will be sought from GMCA to ensure compliance with the agreed spending profile.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Recommendations are set out at the front of this report.

Appendix 1

2024/25 Reallocations

Authority	Scheme Name	Recipient	Number of Homes	Brownfield funding required (£)
Bolton	Radcliffe Road – Darcy Lever	Great Places Housing Association	93	£1,395,000
Bolton	Rivington Chase, Horwich, Bolton	Irwell Valley Homes (IVH)	63	£1,260,000
Manchester	Embassy Village	Embassy	40	£1,400,000
Manchester	Jurby Avenue	Irwell Valley	16	£335,000
Manchester	Albany Road	Southway Housing Trust	40	£600,000
Manchester	Benchill Road	Wythenshawe Community Housing Group	23	£200,000
Manchester	Dalton Avenue	MSV Housing	8	£160,000
Manchester	Greenbrow Social Club	Wythenshawe Community Housing Group	23	£200,000
Manchester	1 Ancoats Green	This City	129	£350,000
Manchester	Royal British Legion	Wythenshawe Community Housing Group	14	£250,000
Manchester	Vine Street, Gorton	One Manchester	25	£300,000
Manchester	Whitemoss	The Guinness Partnership Limited	30	£581,250
Rochdale	Kara Street	Salix Homes	91	£1,800,000
Salford	Mayfield	ForHousing Ltd	18	£270,000
Salford	Reginald Street	MSV Housing	42	£840,000
Tameside	Rutland Street	Prima Housing Group	19	£190,000
Trafford	Higher Road, Urmston	GM Community Led Homes	5	£150,000
Trafford	Old Crofts Bank Urmston	Trafford Council	24	£240,000

Appendix 2

2024/25 Funding Variations

Authority	Scheme Name	Recipient	Units	Current Brownfield funding allocation	Additional Brownfield funding required (£)	Reason for Variation
Stockport	London Road	Stockport Council	32	£480,000	+£48,000	Build costs have increased on project. Units delivered will remain the same but there are also additional low carbon benefits in the project, above build regs standard.
Bury	Kemp Heaton Avenue	Great Places Housing Association	43	£645,000	+£64,500	Contractor costs have increased significantly from previous budget cost plan.
Manchester	Grey Mare Lane	Great Places Housing Association	70	£1,035,000	+£15,000	Grant Recipient want to increase scheme by 1 unit from 69 to 70 at a rate of £15k per unit.
Wigan	Tulach Phase 2	Great Places Housing Association			N/A	Grant Recipient to change from Northstone Development Ltd to Great Places
Bolton	Creams Paper Mill	Onward Homes & Watson Construction (Holdings) Limited			N/A	Grant Recipient to reallocate part of the grant to the ultimate beneficiary of the site, Onward Homes who are responsible for delivering 44 Affordable Housing Units. Watson Construction (Holdings) Limited will retain the

						grant towards the delivery of 24 Private Rented Sector units.
Stockport	Romiley Liberal Club	Stockport Council			N/A	Grant Recipient to change from WC Investments Limited to Stockport Council.

Date: Friday 13th December 2024

Subject: Government Consultation - Remote Meeting Attendance and Proxy Voting

Report of: Gillian Duckworth, Group Solicitor and Monitoring Officer

Purpose

To inform the GMCA of the scope of the Government consultation on enabling remote meeting attendance and proxy voting with a view to submitting a GMCA response, to be submitted by the deadline of 19 December 2024.

Recommendations

The GMCA is recommended to:

1. Consider the experience of the Covid 19 Pandemic whereby all GMCA meetings were held remotely in considering the response to the Government Consultation.
2. Agree that meetings of the GMCA should normally be held in person but the right to determine whether it's meetings or meetings of its various committees are held in person or remotely should rest with the GMCA in order to consider local circumstances and retain flexibility and for this view to be fed back into the consultation.
3. Note the Consultation questions and draft responses based on feedback from Members as set out in appendix 1 and agree to delegate authority to the Group Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to finalise the submission, in consultation with the Mayor.

Contact Officer:

Gillian Duckworth, GMCA Solicitor & Monitoring officer
Gillian.Duckworth@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

1. Introduction

1.1 During the Covid Pandemic, legislation was amended temporarily to allow for remote attendance at meetings [Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels \(Coronavirus\) \(Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings\) \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2020](#) (SI 2020/392), made under section 78 of the [Coronavirus Act 2020](#). Recently Government have announced that they are willing to reconsider whether this legislation should be amended permanently. In order to inform their decision, an online consultation is currently open for all interested stakeholders to submit their contributions.

1.2 Government intends to legislate to give local authorities the flexibility to allow elected members to attend formal meetings remotely. It is suggested that this modernising measure of providing broad flexibility to enable remote attendance will have the dual positive impacts of diversifying the representation of those willing and able to stand for elected office and enhance the resilience of local authorities in the face of local or national emergencies.

1.3 The intent is that this legislative change would give local authorities the flexibility to allow members to attend remotely. In responding to the consultation, the GMCA may wish to specifically request that the legislation is open enough to allow for local determination. In this way, the GMCA could determine which of its meetings could be held remotely, and where it was appropriate to impose limitations.

2. Scope of the consultation

2.1 Government is consulting on introducing powers for local authority members to apply to the relevant authority for a dispensation to attend formal council meetings remotely and to vote by proxy in certain circumstances.

2.2 Responses are invited from local authority elected members, all types and tiers of authorities, and local authority sector representative organisations, plus those members of the public who have a point of view based on their interest in

accessing local democracy in their area or standing as a candidate for local government at any tier to represent their local community at some future point.

Geographical scope

2.3 The questions in this consultation apply to all relevant local authorities in England. They do **not** apply to authorities in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland. For the avoidance of doubt the term Local Authorities included Combined Authorities in this instance.

Impact assessment

2.4 If any policy changes are made following this consultation, they will be subject to appropriate assessment. No impact assessment has been conducted at this time.

Basic information

2.5 This is an open consultation, with views sought from individual members of the public; prospective and current local authority members/representatives; all relevant local authorities defined above; and those bodies that represent the interests of local members/representatives at all levels.

Body/bodies responsible for the consultation

2.6 The Local Government Capability and Improvement Division in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is responsible for conducting this consultation.

Duration

2.7 This consultation will last for 8 weeks from 24 October 2024 – 19 December 2024

3 Response to the consultation on behalf of the GMCA

Leaders have been canvassed for their views on the consultation and those received indicate that the GMCA should have the flexibility to determine which decision making meetings should meet in person and which meeting could be held remotely.

Other comments received:

- GMCA meetings should remain in person
- GMCA should be given the flexibility to hold decision making meetings virtually or hybrid, and supports the idea of proxy voting
- GMCA meetings specifically should be meetings and voting in person and that virtual attendance or proxy voting should be exceptional. Where people are attending virtually they should be required to keep their cameras live so that people are seen to be engaging with the meeting
- Hybrid meetings should have a minimum attendance in person of 2/3 of the membership and the Chair should be physically present
- Hybrid meeting are more difficult to manage
- Remote attendance should be in exceptional circumstances
- Remote meetings for informal meetings only
- Implement procedures, particularly for the consideration of restricted items, that would help to ensure a remote or hybrid attendance policy is workable and efficient
- Proxy voting to be considered, especially for elected members with Physical or medical conditions, Caring responsibilities or Parental leave or other responsibilities
- Legislative change to allow Councillors to attend local authority meetings remotely should be considered for the following reasons:
 - It would likely increase the diversity of people willing and able to stand for election in their local area, making councils more representative of the communities they serve
- Legislative change to allow Councillors to attend local authority meetings remotely should not be considered for the following reasons:
 - Councillors should be physically present at all formal meetings
 - It would be more difficult for councillors to build personal working relationships with colleagues, and engage with members of the public in attendance at meetings
- Cautious about jumping to a prescriptive model in favour of completely hybrid or remote arrangements. Impact of hybrid working yet to be properly evaluated in terms of public accountability, transparency of decision making, access to democracy and also impact on organisational culture and sociology, as well as individual health and wellbeing.

- Favour a facilitative approach – a system that allows for remote, hybrid as well as face to face, the balance of which to be determined locally.
- On balance believe all public facing decision making meetings should be held in person, with the option for the public to access digitally. Allow for exception to be determined locally.
- Favour parity – meaning equity between elected members and officers. If elected members are required to attend in person, then officers should have the same requirements; if officers can attend remotely, then so too should members.

Below are a selection of opportunities and risks associated with allowing remote attendance at formal meetings to aid your consideration of the matter.

Opportunities	Risks
Increased accessibility for those who cannot attend in person.	Not all members are present for the duration of the meeting and therefore the potential to become inquorate.
Provision for meetings when buildings are closed, poor weather etc.	Members are called away from their screen at the point of decision making which could impact transparent decision making.
May encourage members to put themselves forward for committee roles when previously they were unable to do so due to meeting times/locations.	Required officers are not present for the duration of the meeting, with potential legal implications.
Improved 'viewability' as you can clearly see the faces of all attendees.	Additional Local Authority tech support may be required to assist some elected members with access, voting etc.
More welcoming for viewers as a Teams meeting is more familiar to most than attending the Town Hall.	Ensuring confidential items are not overheard.
Improved participation for all attendees as each person has a dedicated 'turn' without interruptions.	Meeting Management and the potential to limit debate of elected members.

Chair has the ability to mute or remove a member from the meeting if required.	Different skills required of the Chair to manage a virtual meeting – potential for behaviour of members decline.
Move towards a positive modern approach.	Technology fails during meeting.
The number of apologies would reduce.	Members joining from abroad, creating data protection risk.

Appendix 1

Consultation Questions:

Question 1

Please tick all that apply - are you responding to this consultation as:

a) an elected member – if so please indicate which local authority type(s) you serve on

- Town or Parish Council
- District or Borough Council
- Unitary Authority
- County Council
- Combined Authority / Combined County Authority
- Fire and Rescue Authority
- Police and Crime Panel
- Other local authority type - please state

b) a council body – if so please indicate which local authority type

- Town or Parish Council
- District or Borough Council
- Unitary Authority
- County Council
- Combined Authority / Combined County Authority
- Fire and Rescue Authority
- Police and Crime Panel
- Other local authority type - please state

c) a member of the public

d) a local government sector body – please state

2. Do you agree with the broad principle of granting local authorities powers to allow remote attendance at formal meetings?

Yes /No

If you answered 'No' to question 1, select 'Continue' and go directly to question 3.

3. If you answered 'Yes' to question 1, do you think that there should be specific limitations on remote attendance?

Please tick all the options below that correspond with your view and use the free text box for any other comments.

- a) Any formal meeting allowing remote attendance should have at least two thirds of members in physical attendance
- b) Members should only be able to attend council meetings remotely in exceptional circumstances, such as those who are medically or physically unable to attend, or for reasons of local or national emergencies
- c) There should be no limitations placed upon councils with regard to setting arrangements for remote attendance of council meetings, up to and including full remote attendance
- d) Add any further comments It would likely increase the diversity of people willing and able to stand for election in their local area, making councils more representative of the communities they serve

2. If you are an elected member, can you anticipate that you personally may seek to attend some of your council meetings remotely?

- Yes
- No
- I am not an elected member

4a. If you answered 'No' to question 3, please explain your answer below:

Explain your answer

4b. If you answered 'Yes' to question 3, please indicate below which of the following options best describes your likely pattern of attending meetings remotely:

- Very occasionally
- From time to time
- Regularly but not always
- All the time

5. If you are responding to this consultation on behalf of a council as a whole, what proportion of the council's current elected members are likely to seek to attend council meetings remotely over the course of a year?

- Less than 10%
- More than 10% but less than 50%
- More than 50% but less than 90%
- Most of them 90% to 100%

6. The government recognises that there may be cases in which it is necessary for councils to hold meetings fully remotely. Do you think there should be limitations placed on the number of fully remote meetings councils should be able to hold?

- a) Councils should be able to allow full remote attendance at up to half of council meetings within a 12-month calendar period
- b) Councils should only have the flexibility to change a meeting from in-person to online, or vice versa, due to unforeseen and exceptional circumstances
- c) Councils should not have the flexibility to conduct fully remote meetings to ensure there is always an in-person presence
- d) Add any other comments that you have
Councils should have the flexibility within the legislation to determine a local policy relating to the use of remote attendance at meetings

7. Do you think there are there any necessary procedural measures that would help to ensure a remote or hybrid attendance policy is workable and efficient?

Tick all the options that correspond with your view and use the free text box for any other comments.

- a) Councils should be required to publish a list of attendees joining the meeting remotely and give notice if a meeting is being held with full remote attendance
- b) Councils should be required to ensure that standard constitutional arrangements are followed for hybrid and fully remote meetings
- c) Councils should be required to make arrangements to ensure restricted items (where a council decision is taken in private to protect confidentiality) are

managed appropriately and to require remotely attending members to join from a private location

d) Add any other comments that you have

8. Do you think legislative change to allow councillors to attend local authority meetings remotely should or should not be considered for the following reasons?

Tick all the statements below that apply to your point of view.

Should be considered because	Should not be considered because
It is a positive modernising measure.	Councillors should be physically present at all formal meetings.
It would likely increase the diversity of people willing and able to stand for election in their local area, making councils more representative of the communities they serve.	It could lead to a significant number of councillors habitually attending remotely and ultimately reduce the effectiveness of councils.
Councils would be more resilient in the event of local or national emergencies which prevent in-person attendance.	It would be more difficult for councillors to build personal working relationships with colleagues, and engage with members of the public in attendance at meetings.

Free text box – please state any other reasons	Free text box – please state any other reasons
--	--

9. In your view, would allowing councillors to attend formal local authority meetings remotely according to their needs particularly benefit or disadvantage individuals with protected characteristics? For example, those with disabilities or caring responsibilities.

Please tick an option below:

- it would benefit members
- it would disadvantage members
- neither

Please use the text box below to make any further comment on this question.

Proxy voting

Proxy voting is a form of voting whereby a member of a decision-making body may delegate their voting power to another representative to enable a vote in their absence.

It is possible some members may find that, due to their personal circumstances, they are temporarily unable to participate in meetings even if remote attendance provisions are in place. Provisions for proxy voting could provide additional flexibility to those who really need it on a time-limited basis, allowing affected members to indirectly exercise their democratic duty, participate in their local authority's governance, and ensure that their views are taken into consideration. In the context of local authorities, the representative would have to be another elected member of the local authority.

10. In addition to provisions allowing for remote attendance, do you consider that it would be helpful to introduce proxy voting?

- a) Yes

- b) No
- c) Unsure

11. If yes, for which of the following reasons which may prohibit a member's participation in council meetings do you consider it would be appropriate?

Please select all that apply:

- a) Physical or medical conditions
- b) Caring responsibilities
- c) Parental leave or other responsibilities
- d) Add any other reasons

12. Are there circumstances in which you feel proxy voting would not be appropriate?

Add your comments

AGM, Budget setting and other meetings where agenda items voting requirements are fixed by legislation

13. If you think proxy voting is appropriate, are there any limitations you think should be placed upon it?

Add your comments

Limited number of opportunities per municipal year to exercise the right/option -
Councils should have the flexibility within the legislation to determine a local policy regarding proxy voting

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Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Date: 13th December 2024
Subject: GM Investment Framework, Conditional Project Approval
Report of: Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Investment and Resources and
Steve Wilson, Portfolio Lead Chief Executive for Investment

Purpose of Report

This report seeks Greater Manchester Combined Authority (“Combined Authority” and “GMCA”) approval for a loan to North West Evergreen Limited Partnership. The loan will be made from recycled funds.

Further details regarding the investments and update are included in the accompanying Part B report to be considered in the confidential part of the agenda due to the commercially sensitive nature of the information.

Recommendations

The GMCA is requested to:

1. approve a loan facility of up to £9,500,000 to North West Evergreen Limited Partnership.
2. delegate authority to the Combined Authority Treasurer in consultation with the Combined Authority Monitoring Officer to review the due diligence information in respect of the above investments, and, subject to their satisfactory review and agreement of the due diligence information and the overall detailed commercial terms of the investments, to sign off any outstanding conditions, issue final approvals and complete any necessary related documentation in respect of the investments noted above.

Contact Officers





Steve Wilson: steve.wilson@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk



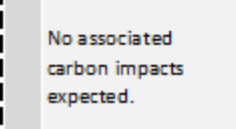
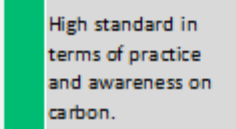
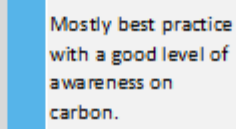
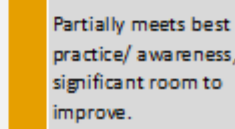
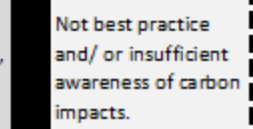
Laura Blakey: laura.blakey@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

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Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment

A) North West Evergreen Limited Partnership

Impacts Questionnaire		
Impact Indicator	Result	Justification/Mitigation
Equality and Inclusion		
Health		
Resilience and Adaptation		
Housing		
Economy	G	Increased funding capacity to support commercial regeneration in the long term
Mobility and Connectivity		
Carbon, Nature and Environment		
Consumption and Production		
Contribution to achieving the GM Carbon Neutral 2038 target	N/A	
Further Assessment(s):	Equalities Impact Assessment and Carbon Assessment	
	Positive impacts overall, whether long or short term.	 Mix of positive and negative impacts. Trade-offs to consider.
	Mostly negative, with at least one positive aspect. Trade-offs to consider.	 Negative impacts overall.

Carbon Assessment		
Buildings	Result	Justification/Mitigation
Overall Score		
New Build residential	N/A	
Residential building(s) renovation/maintenance	N/A	
New Build Commercial/Industrial		All Evergreen loans target energy efficiency under its eligibility criteria and outputs are driven by carbon reduction.
Transport		
Active travel and public transport	N/A	
Roads, Parking and Vehicle Access	N/A	
Access to amenities	N/A	
Vehicle procurement	N/A	
Land Use		
Land use	N/A	
	No associated carbon impacts expected.	 High standard in terms of practice and awareness on carbon.
	Mostly best practice with a good level of awareness on carbon.	 Partially meets best practice/ awareness, significant room to improve.
	Not best practice and/ or insufficient awareness of carbon impacts.	

Risk Management

The investments recommended in this paper will be governed under the existing investment framework which includes several levels of review and ongoing monitoring of performance.

Legal Considerations

The legal agreements will be based upon the existing templates for the GM Investment Fund, amended for the specific requirements of the individual funding arrangements.

Financial Consequences – Revenue

Any income generated on the loan will be applied to reserves.

Financial Consequences – Capital

The proposed loan will be made from recycled Growing Places funding.

Number of attachments to the report

None.

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Not applicable.

Background Papers

None.

Tracking/ Process

Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution?

Yes

Exemption from call in

Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?

No.

GM Transport Committee

N/A

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

N/A

1. Introduction/Background

1.1. Background:

- 1.1.1. The Combined Authority maintains and develops a pipeline of projects submitted by applicants seeking funding from the Combined Authority's Investment Funds allocation. These projects are assessed against criteria based on the GM Investment Strategy, developed to underpin the economic growth of Greater Manchester. A condition of investment is that the companies sign up as (at a minimum) a supporter of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter.
- 1.1.2. Recommendations in this report follow on from:
 - an appraisal by the GM Investment Team; and
 - a review by an investment sub-group which includes independent, expert advisors.

2. Investments Recommended for Approval in Principle

2.1. North West Evergreen Limited Partnership, GM-wide

- 2.1.1. The business case in respect of a £9.5m loan facility to North West Evergreen Limited Partnership has been submitted to, and appraised by, the GMCA Investment Team and is recommended to the Combined Authority for approval.
- 2.1.2. The North West Evergreen Fund is a £60m fund established during the 2007-2013 ERDF Operational Programme to provide development finance for commercial property schemes across the North West (exc Merseyside). This forms part of GMCA's wider collection of Evergreen Funds which includes GM Evergreen 2 and the GM Low Carbon Fund (collectively referred to as "Evergreen").
- 2.1.3. The Evergreen funds are largely deployed into eligible schemes, and this is restricting capacity to fund new development in the region. By providing this loan to Evergreen, this will enable two further schemes to progress which will accelerate delivery of Grade A office space within GM.

- 2.1.4. The loan will be fully secured, and is expected to be repaid in September 2025 upon repayment of the underlying development loan, and provide a return of 6.9% per annum in interest.
- 2.1.5. This loan is above the Investment Fund's investment threshold (of £5m) under its investment strategy. However, the Investment Fund has sufficient investment capacity and facilitating a short-term loan to accelerate development of much needed Grade A office space in the region is important.
- 2.1.6. Further details regarding the loan are included in the accompanying Part B report to be considered in the confidential part of the agenda due to the commercially sensitive nature of the information.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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