

**GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****DATE: Wednesday, 29th January, 2025****TIME: 1.00 pm****VENUE: The Tootal Buildings - Broadhurst House , 1st Floor, 56  
Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 6EU****COMPLETE AGENDA PACK**

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Chair's Announcements and Urgent Business**
- 3. Declarations of Interest** 1 - 4

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 meeting.

- 4. Minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 11 December 2024** 5 - 18

To consider the approval of the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 11 December 2024 as a correct and accurate record.

<b>BOLTON</b>	<b>MANCHESTER</b>	<b>ROCHDALE</b>	<b>STOCKPORT</b>	<b>TRAFFORD</b>
<b>BURY</b>	<b>OLDHAM</b>	<b>SALFORD</b>	<b>TAMESIDE</b>	<b>WIGAN</b>

**5. Addressing Digital Inequity in Greater Manchester** 19 - 42

Report of Councillor Nick Peel, Portfolio Lead Leader for Digital City Region.

**6. Mayoral General Budget and Precept Proposals - 2025/26** 43 - 68

Report of Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester.

**7. Work Programme and Forward Plan of Key Decisions** 69 - 98

Report of Nicola Ward, Statutory Scrutiny Officer, GMCA

**8. Future Meeting Dates**

Future meetings will be held at 1pm to 3.30pm on the following dates:

- 5 February 2025
- 26 February 2025
- 26 March 2025
- 9 April 2025
- 25 June 2025

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Political Party</b>
Councillor Tony Davies	Salford City Council	Labour
Councillor Nadim Muslim	Bolton	Conservative
Councillor Russell Bernstein	Bury Council	Conservative
Councillor Jill Axford	Trafford Council	Labour
Councillor Basil Curley	Manchester	Labour
Councillor Shaun Ennis	Trafford	Liberal Democrats
Councillor John Leech	Manchester City Council	Liberal Democrats
Councillor Joanne Marshall	Wigan	Labour

Councillor Colin McLaren	Oldham Council	Labour
Councillor Lewis Nelson	Salford	Labour
Councillor Imran Rizvi	Bury Council	Labour
Councillor Mandie Shilton Godwin	Manchester	Labour Co-operative
Councillor Fred Walker	Wigan Council	Labour
Councillor Peter Wright	Bolton	Independent
Councillor Ged Carter	Trafford	Labour
Councillor Terrance Smith	Rochdale BC	Labour
Councillor Dylan Williams	Rochdale Council	Labour
Councillor Rachel Wise	Stockport Council	Labour Co-operative
Councillor David Sweeton	Tameside	Labour
Councillor Brenda Warrington	Tameside	Labour

For copies of papers and further information on this meeting please refer to the website [www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](http://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk). Alternatively, contact the following Governance & Scrutiny Officer: Karen Chambers, Senior Governance & Scrutiny Officer  
✉ [karen.chambers@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:karen.chambers@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

This complete agenda pack was issued on Tuesday, 28 January 2025 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

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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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD WEDNESDAY, 11  
DECEMBER 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 Russell Bernstein	Bury Council
Councillor Imran Rizvi	Bury Council
Councillor John Leech	Manchester City Council
Councillor Mandie Shilton – Godwin	Manchester City Council
Councillor Colin McLaren	Oldham Council
Councillor Terry Smith	Rochdale Council
Councillor Dylan Williams	Rochdale Council
Councillor Tony Davies	Salford City Council
Councillor Lewis Nelson	Salford City Council
Councillor Helen Hibbert	Stockport Council
Councillor Rachel Wise	Stockport Council
Councillor Jill Axford	Trafford Council
Councillor Ged Carter	Trafford Council
Councillor Shaun Ennis	Trafford Council
Councillor Mary Callaghan	Wigan Council
Councillor Fred Walker	Wigan Council

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Councillor Paul Dennett	Portfolio Lead for Housing and City Mayor, Salford
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**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Karen Chambers	GMCA
Gillian Duckworth	GMCA
Steve Fyfe	GMCA

**O&SC 48/24                      APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Basil Curley (Manchester), Councillor Claire Reid (Tameside), Councillor Naila Sharif (Tameside) and Councillor Joanne Marshall (Wigan).

Apologies were also received from Caroline Simpson, Group Chief Executive, Steve Wilson, Group Finance Officer and Nicola Ward, Statutory Scrutiny Officer, GMCA.

**O&SC 49/24                      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.

The Chair further advised members that a private briefing on the development of the Greater Manchester Strategy and Delivery Plan would take place from 2-3.30pm and advised that the GM Mayor would be in attendance.

The Chair advised that, as there was no local elections taking place in May 2025, and the Committee had a busy work programme, he had suggested to officers to schedule meeting dates in April and June to provide continuity of scrutiny activity. There would, however, be a short recess in May 2025. He advised that dates would be circulated after the meeting.

The Chair invited the Chair of the Task and Finish Group, Councillor Helen Hibbert, to update the Committee on the progress of the group so far.

Councillor Hibbert advised that the first meeting of the Task and Finish Group was an information and scoping session to agree the focus of the deep dive. It was agreed that the focus would be the Safety of Women and Girls in Travel & Transport, with a particular focus on ensuring that the safety of women and girls is considered consistently in GM policy making. It was noted that the Task and Finish Group included members from the Police and Crime Panel and the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee.

So far, the group has looked at what data was available in relation to the perception of safety on the transport network and incidents that have taken place. The next meeting would be used to look at how the feeling of safety on the network was addressed and what schemes were in place to increase the perception of safety. There were six further sessions planned but the scope for those sessions had not yet been defined as it was important to remain open minded at this stage whilst gathering information. It was anticipated that a draft report would be presented to the Committee in April with the final report being presented in June.

**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 additional Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings would be arranged for April and June 2025 and invites would be circulated after the meeting.

**O&SC 50/24**

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**RESOLVED /-**

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

The Committee noted that within the minutes on page 7, point 1 it read:

*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.*

The Committee requested the minutes be amended to read:

*Concerns were raised regarding a recent announcement on the proposed Post Office closures in GM and it was requested that an impact report on the proposed closures and the impact of previous closures 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.*

*ADDITION (agreed 11/12/24) - The member who requested this matter be considered by the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee further requested that it be recorded that there were no other indications of support from the Committee for this approach.*

**RESOLVED /-**

That subject to the inclusion above, the minutes of the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 27 November 2024 be approved as a correct and accurate record.

The Chair invited Salford City Mayor Paul Dennett, GMCA Portfolio Lead for Housing First, and Steve Fyfe, GMCA Head of Housing Strategy, to present this item.

The City Mayor Paul Dennett introduced the report that provided the Committee with an update on the progress being made in delivering the recommendations from the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Report on Affordable Living which was presented at the 13 July 2024 meeting.

The City Mayor updated the Committee on the six recommendations, highlighting areas where the GMCA should take the lead, as detailed in the report's table. He provided context on the GM Integrated Settlement, confirmed at the Autumn Spending Review, and discussed strengthening ties with Homes England through a new commissioning model. Additionally, he mentioned the preparation of a 10-Year Plan for Growth and Prevention, which aimed to deliver new homes, jobs, and infrastructure through a place-based approach that aligns national and local investments. Plans were also underway to develop a co-produced GM Housing Strategy, building on the Housing First philosophy, with the goal that everyone in Greater Manchester would live in a safe, secure, healthy, and environmentally sustainable home by 2038.

**Recommendation 1 – Bold, national action for the creation of more affordable homes with greater flexibility as a region to ensure that the housing market can line up with affordability of residents in GM. Recognising that the formula for affordable living is multi-faceted and should include rent, energy, and essential food costs.** The City Mayor advised the Committee that the housing market was not delivering affordable housing in line with what people are earning and the gap was widening. Issues with data and the national development framework were impacting on this work. GM has committed to providing 75,000 new homes, 10,000 of which needed to be affordable homes, and GM was collaborating with Homes England and local authorities to deliver these.

The City Mayor mentioned that the ongoing consultation on the Social Housing Rent Policy, which was due to end on December 23, could influence this work and may require additional efforts.

**Recommendation 2 - Move towards supporting people out of debt at every point of contact, ensuring a minimum standard of welfare advisors to support residents to access unclaimed welfare support and begin their tenancies with no deficit.** The City Mayor advised that debt and welfare advice was a non-statutory service, and local authorities did not receive any funding to provide these services. Therefore, this support was delivered via partnerships and collaborative working. He mentioned that the GM Live Well Financial Resilience Group was responsible for coordinating efforts, identifying best practices, sharing knowledge, and standardising approaches across GM to prioritise tackling debt. Additionally, the GM Housing Partnership played a role in that initiative by supporting individuals who may be struggling with rent, service charges, and debt.

Lobbying and campaigning for welfare and debt advice to become a statutory service would also be beneficial.

**Recommendation 3 - A GM Housing Strategy that is ambitious enough to deliver what is needed to meet the housing needs of residents in Greater Manchester, including the ambition for all new homes to be zero carbon, enabled by long term partnerships that have the ability to deliver more collaboratively.** The City Mayor advised that plans were in place to develop a co-produced GM Housing Strategy in the new year, building on the Housing First philosophy and the ambition was for everyone in GM to have a healthy home by 2038.

**Recommendation 7 – Effective promotion of the support available to local residents to assist with energy bills, insulation, food provision etc in recognition of the need to see housing as just one element of affordable living.** The City Mayor advised that a package of support for private landlords was being incorporated into the Good Landlord Charter offer.

**Recommendation 8 – Creation of a national housing minimum standard for all private rental properties in order to remove any detrimental health outcomes of poor living conditions, driven by the recognised benefits of being an accredited member of the Good Landlord Charter.** The City Mayor commented that it was important to acknowledge that there were developments afoot nationally in regard to the National Decent Homes Standard for social and private housing and the Future Homes Standard for new homes committed through and approved by local planning system would have an impact on this work.

The City Mayor confirmed that a partner had been procured to deliver the GM Good Landlord Charter.

**Recommendation 10 - An annual GM Strategic Place Partnership event with key planning influencers (elected members and officers) to begin to break down any planning barriers to viable schemes and to hold further conversations regarding capacity and required expertise.** The City Mayor advised that an annual GM Strategic Place Partnership event would be an opportunity to come together locally, creating space for local elected members and officers to share best practice was a positive suggestion and an Affordable Homes Roundtable with providers had already taken place. Members were encouraged to hear that the Affordable Homes Roundtable that took place was welcomed by housing providers and hoped these would continue.

The City Mayor highlighted the significant challenges and pressures that housing providers faced due to the Grenfell tragedy and the tragic case of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale. He expressed concerns that these issues could impact the ability to deliver new housing at pace.

It was confirmed that the integration of the GM Strategic Place Partnership into the emerging governance for the Housing First Unit would ensure the alignment of priorities and decision-making processes.

The City Mayor advised the Committee that a great deal of work was underway to implement the recommendations of the task and finish review. They were not isolated efforts but were integrated into the broader activities within housing and spatial planning.

Officers advised that the Devolution White Paper would further influence this work. A new version of the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) was expected and officers were in the process of writing some guidance setting out how net zero and Places for Everyone should be operationalised.

The Committee thanked the City Mayor and officers for the report.

Members asked what support could be provided for vulnerable residents struggling to pay historical pay day loan debt. The City Mayor agreed that this was important to address and stated that local authorities would like to do more than they currently could. This was due to, as previously mentioned, to these services being non statutory and consequently the local authorities did not have the resources to provide the support that was needed. Local Authorities were working with partners to ensure that there was some support available, but more was needed to ensure that there was a systemic change to address debt and the impact of the cost of living on those struggling with debt.

Members commented that it was important to ensure member representation on Housing Association Boards as currently in some areas there was no political oversight, and homes were continuing to be demolished and sold which was further diminishing the social housing stock. Members asked if anything could be done to ensure a minimum number of Councillors were appointed on the boards. The City Mayor advised that, at the moment, there was no data to explore this as it does not include how many LHA (Local Housing Association) homes and below were being built so there was no complete stock total. In relation to the Housing Association Boards, the City Mayor advised that a piece of work was taking place to look at the democratic oversight of these and a report would be presented to GM Leaders with a



view to them to advising of the next steps. The City Mayor recommended that members speak to their Leaders about this to ensure it was on their agenda.

Members asked about the benefits of a partnership with Homes England, compared to the national model. The City Mayor advised that the benefits of the partnership were closer working relationships and collaboration. That close working allowed GM to access funding streams and investments that sit outside the partnership which Homes England manage and oversee.

Members asked if the new funding arrangements would impact on GM's ability to deliver more housing. The City Mayor advised that £500m has been allocated to the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) for one year. This was important as schemes were stalling and progress was not being made as GM had already exhausted the previous AHP funding. The City Mayor advised that a significant increase in funding was needed in the next spending review, to address the challenges in viability, and gap funding was also critical to allow GM to deliver affordable housing.

Members commented that Salford City Council had been successful in delivering more affordable homes within private housing developments and asked if that success could be transferred wider. The City Mayor stated that Salford had made housing a priority and had developed their own housing company, using commuted sums from other developments, land holding and unsupported borrowing from PWLB (Public Works Loan Board) to build council housing at a very high standard. This was a lengthy process, taking over a year to establish the legal and group structure. He commented that Local Authorities had to take an active role in tackling the housing crisis, as the Government did post WW2; that was the only time that homelessness was rendered statistically insignificant.

Members were concerned that there was no mention of the Nature Recovery Strategy in the report, and how this links in with the need to build new homes whilst preserving green spaces. The City Mayor advised that the Spatial Plan for GM prioritises urban density to protect our green spaces. Bringing access to green spaces into the urban environment was very important and should continue to be a

priority and the benefits of green spaces on health and wellbeing should be available to all residents of GM.

Members asked how private landlords would provide cost-of-living advice to their tenants. The City Mayor explained that parts of the public sector would offer this advice, ensuring landlords have access to information about available schemes, such as warm homes. He confirmed that officers were incorporating this into the Good Landlord Charter.

Members expressed concerns about Landlord Selective Licensing, noting that some landlords might neglect necessary home repairs to meet the Good Landlord Charter standards. They also highlighted that these landlords would not ensure homes were energy efficient and questioned how the Good Landlord Charter would address these issues. The City Mayor recognised concerns about inconsistencies in the Government's approach to selective licensing and the 20% limit. While we were not advocating for landlord licensing across GM, we need to assess the interest in this area to determine if it could add value, as it falls under local authorities' jurisdiction. Regarding the Good Landlord Charter, GM have the authority under the Housing Act, to require property checks and recharge landlords for necessary work. However, there were capacity issues within local government to carry out this work, necessitating significant efforts to enhance skills and capacity.

Members noted the ambition in GM to build 10,000 net zero affordable homes and enquired whether these would be allocated through Places for Everyone at 1,000 per borough. They also questioned the consequences if local authorities failed to meet this target. The City Mayor responded that this would be addressed in the local plan, with each local authority working with partners. However, he emphasised that collectively, GM must achieve this target and is committed to doing so.

Members expressed concerns in relation to GMCVO (Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisations) going into administration and the implications of this on the Housing First initiative. The City Mayor advised that he was aware of the situation and noted that the GMCA was working with the administration to understand the

impact of this. At the moment our priority was supporting those staff that might be facing redundancy.

Members expressed concern that debt advice and support was not within the City Mayor's remit and questioned whether an affordable living approach could be adopted within his portfolio. The City Mayor emphasised that housing and service charges were the main drivers of poverty. By making housing more affordable, issues related to food, transport, and debt could be addressed. He noted that while there were many initiatives targeting food poverty and improving access to good food at the local level, there was currently no strategic approach to integrate all these efforts. However, focusing on affordable living could provide a comprehensive solution.

Members observed inconsistencies in how residents reported housing disrepair and enquired about ways to remove barriers for a more streamlined approach. The City Mayor responded that this issue would be addressed as part of the Good Landlord Charter, in collaboration with partners and local authorities.

Members remarked that the Local Plan should ensure local homes were reserved for local residents. The City Mayor explained that each district has its own lettings system and policy, which dictated property allocation but there was some variation across GM. While there was ongoing work on issues including a GM policy for out-of-borough placements, there was currently no intent in establishing a unified GM-wide lettings policy.

Members emphasised the importance of recognising the connection between housing and health, noting that people need to live in healthy homes to lead healthy lives. They welcomed the focus on delivering this objective.

Members enquired about the possibilities of establishing a GM affordability standard and what additional measures could be taken to assist people in temporary accommodation, such as implementing social tariffs for utilities to prevent crises. The City Mayor responded that part of the definition would involve ensuring homes were

available for those on housing benefits. He acknowledged that this was a growing issue and highlighted the challenge of accessing social rents without an increase in government allowances. While he agreed that a GM affordability standard would be beneficial, he noted that it would be difficult to implement.

Members expressed concerns about the challenging delivery targets of affordable homes. The City Mayor responded that GM was performing exceptionally well compared to other regions and was leading the way. He acknowledged the delivery challenges, citing the impact of Grenfell and housing standards, which have diverted significant capacity to upgrading existing housing stock. Additionally, there were workforce, skills, and education challenges in the construction sector that needed to be addressed to better align industry needs with educational offerings. He emphasised that there was no Plan B, as non-collaborative efforts would not suffice; therefore, prioritising joint working was essential to deliver the homes the city region needs.

**RESOLVED /-**

That the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Task and Finish Report on Affordable Living update be noted.

**O&SC 53/24**

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

**RESOLVED /-**

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

**RESOLVED /-**

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

- 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
- April 2025 – to be confirmed
- June 2025 - to be confirmed

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## GMCA Scrutiny Committee

Date: 29 January 2025

Subject: Addressing Digital Inequity in Greater Manchester

Report of: Councillor Nick Peel, Portfolio Lead Leader for Digital City Region, and;  
Tom Stannard, Portfolio Lead Chief Executive for Digital City Region

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### Purpose of Report

This report provides members of the Committee with an overview of the progress towards delivery of the Greater Manchester Digital Inclusion Agenda for Change programme.

### Recommendations:

Committee Members are requested to:

- Note the progress, risks and opportunities on Greater Manchester’s Digital Inclusion Agenda for Change
- Consider how support for the Digital Inclusion agenda could be strengthened in localities.

### Contact Officers

Phil Swan (GMCA), Beena Puri (GMCA), Chris Pope (GMCA)

## **Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:**

**N/A**

## **Risk Management**

**See section 7**

## **Legal Considerations**

**N/A**

## **Financial Consequences – Revenue**

**See section 7**

## **Financial Consequences – Capital**

**N/A**

**Number of attachments to the report: 0**

## **Background Papers**

- Feb 2024, GMCA: [Public Switched Telephone Network \(PSTN\) Switchover Update](#)
- Sept 2023, GMCA: [Public Switched Telephone Network \(PSTN\) Switchover](#)
- Greater Manchester [Digital Inclusion Social Impact Report 2023](#).
- Greater Manchester Residents Survey (Wave 15, November 2024)

## **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 exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?

N/A



# 1. Introduction/Background

We want Greater Manchester to be a place where everyone can live good lives, grow up, get on and can thrive in a greener, fairer and more prosperous city-region. Our Greater Manchester Strategy is enabled by our Digital Blueprint, placing people and businesses at the heart of our regional ambitions with aims for more inclusive and sustainable outcomes, building on our region’s greatest assets.

Our Digital Inclusion Agenda for Change is one of the underpinning priorities of our world-leading digital ambitions, where every resident has access to the essential skills, tools and support to benefit from the digital world and technology amplifies public service innovation in-hand with ensuring digital services are accessible to all.

# 2. The state of digital exclusion

The residual impact of the pandemic plus ongoing cost-of-living pressures mean that many people are having to manage increasingly challenging social and economic factors. These factors are made worse by the growing extent of the UK’s digital and social divide. As many services go online, digital exclusion - and the need to address - it has rapidly increased. Digital exclusion is a new layer of vulnerability has been highlighted, with residents and families unable to stay connected, access vital services and education, let alone participate in the economy. Figure 1, taken from the Digital Inclusion Social Impact Report 2023, illustrates the current state of Digital Exclusion in Greater Manchester.

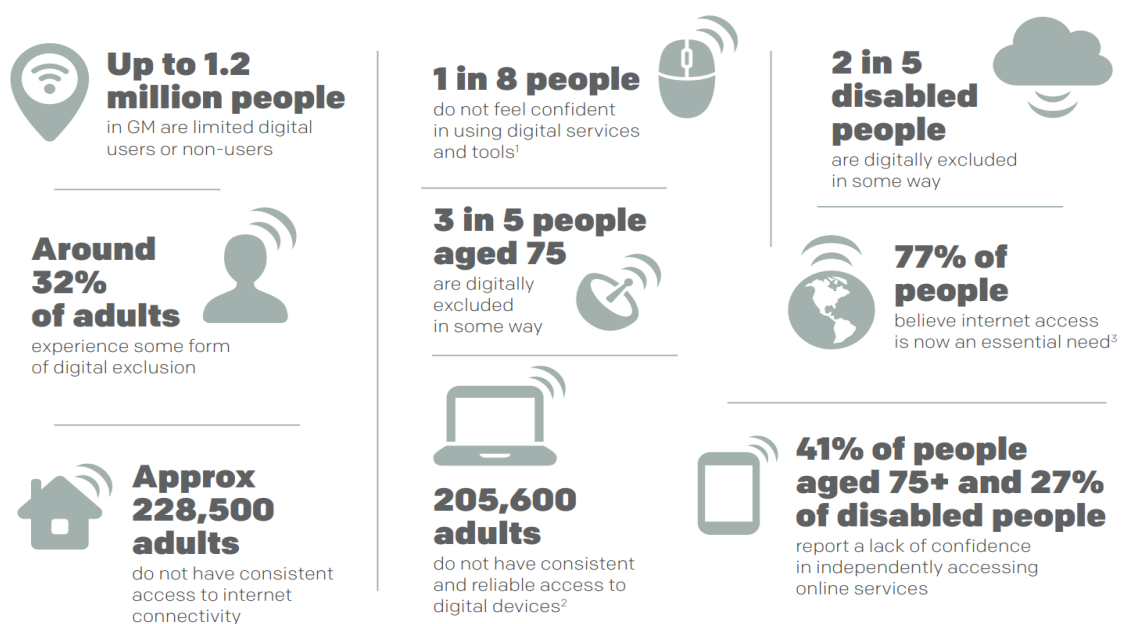


Figure 1. The State of Digital Exclusion in Greater Manchester

The Greater Manchester Resident [Survey](#) (November 2024) highlighted:

- Since May 2024, over a third (36%) of respondents have said that their household experiences some form of digital exclusion.
- Whereas the proportion of respondents experiencing any form of digital exclusion overall has remained stable, there have been increases in digital exclusion reported by 16–24-year-olds, those 75+ and disabled respondents. Our renewed understanding of digital exclusion amongst these groups is now as follows:
  - **73% of those aged 75+ now say they have experienced one or more aspect of digital exclusion**, compared to 70% in surveys 10-12
  - **59% of disabled respondents report experiencing at least one form of digital exclusion**, compared to 56% in surveys 10-12
  - **32% of 16–24-year-olds now say they have experienced one or more aspect of digital exclusion**, higher than the 27% reported in surveys 10-12.
- A slightly reduced proportion of GM residents have been cutting back on home broadband and/or mobile plans as a response to ongoing increases in the cost of living – when comparing surveys in the last six months to those conducted at earlier points in the cost-of-living crisis. **In the most recent survey 11% of respondents said they were cutting back on broadband/mobile plans** (broadly like the proportions in fieldwork in May, July and August 2024). This compares to 16-17% of respondents in earlier surveys.

### 3. The fiscal and social opportunity

Using data from the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR)<sup>1</sup> we estimate the total cost of not improving basic digital skills over the next ten years in Greater Manchester to be approximately £700M. This includes:

- Cost offset by approximately £139M with efficiency savings, increased tax revenue, and NHS savings

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<sup>1</sup> [Cebr \(2022\), The economic impact of digital inclusion in the UK, via Good Things Foundation](#)

- Time savings equating to approximately £195M, for individuals from use of digital services, plus £175M saved through online shopping
- £177M benefit to businesses through filling basic digital skills vacancies, increased earnings, use of technology adoption and environmental benefits

Impacts are not only financial. Research in France suggests that using refurbished rather than new smartphones can save up to 90% of CO2 emissions from smartphone production - preventing 77.6kg of carbon emissions per device, while producing only 7.61kg of CO2 emissions end-to-end<sup>2</sup>.

There are also personal social benefits from increasing digital connectivity and inclusion. More than three-quarters (78%) of respondents to Ofcom's Media Use and Attitudes Report<sup>3</sup> use the internet to support their wellbeing, while 77% say the internet helps them tackle loneliness and stay connected with family and friends.

According to the Good Things Foundation, improving digital inclusion can unlock £13.7 billion to the UK's economy.

## 4. Mapping risk of digital exclusion in Greater Manchester

Inspired by Salford City Council's work, the development of the Digital Exclusion Risk Index (DERI) was undertaken by GMCA to cover the city region plus the wider UK in response to discussions with local authorities around the country who faced the same challenges and has proved beneficial for areas across the UK to understand their own areas of need. As shown in Figure 2, the diagram brings together information relating to deprivation, demographics, and broadband availability. This information has been used in work to focus support to get online. It is openly available at: [Digital Exclusion Risk Index \(DERI\) - Greater Manchester Combined Authority](#)

Since availability of superfast (>30MBS) broadband in Greater Manchester now exceeds 99% of the city region, and similar 4G coverage, the main factors impacting access are increasingly affordability (including of devices), skills and motivation.

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<sup>2</sup> [Richard, C \(2022\), The environmental impact of refurbished tech, Backmarket via ADEME](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Ofcom \(2023\), Adults' Media Use and Attitudes Report](#)

3.830

Low risk



High risk

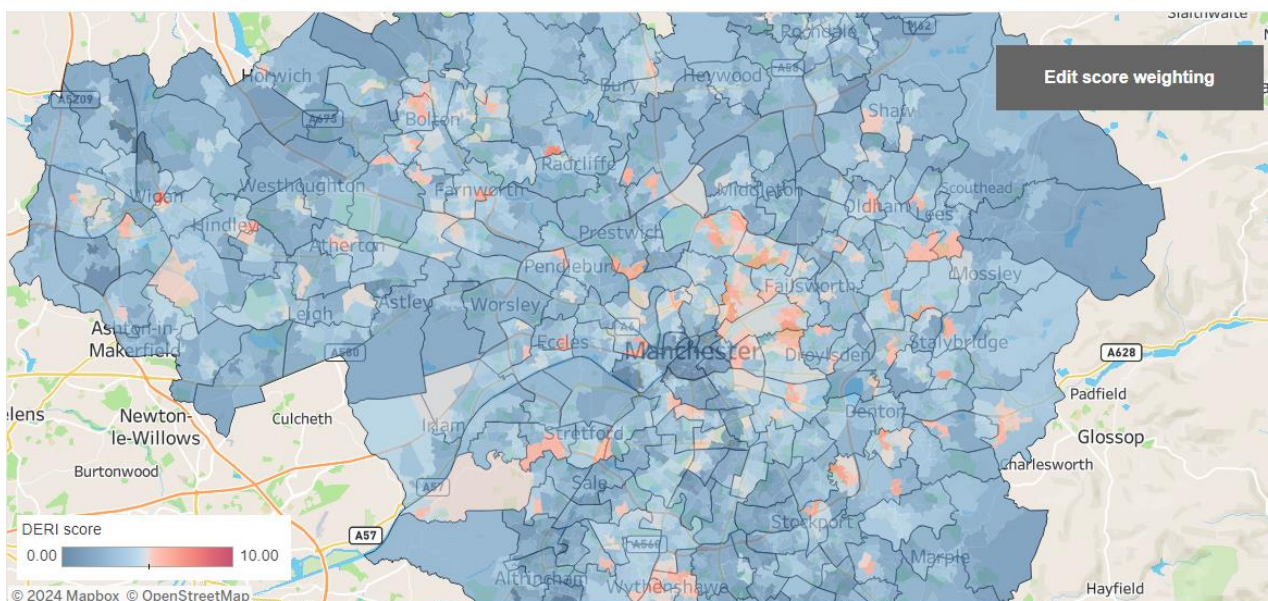


Figure 2. Information available in the Digital Exclusion Risk Index.

## 5. Improving digital equity in Greater Manchester

Efforts to improve digital equity and catalyse positive regional impact requires a bold and multifaceted approach, with the flexibility to adapt and create the conditions for continuous improvement. Greater Manchester's regional ambition is ecosystem-led, focused on tackling barriers and improving system leadership and ownership, underpinned by building capacity, galvanising resources, sharing learning and best practice and improving access to digitally enabled public services and resident support.

Our approach is centred around localising digital inclusion so it speaks to and engages local residents; in a way which maximises efficiency and value for money, delivering core functions at a regional rather than borough level.

In the city region, this is led through three groups:

- The **Digital Inclusion Taskforce**, a 250 strong, cross-sector member group that meets bi-monthly and works collaboratively to showcase best practice, build partnerships, identify need and target action to address the interrelated barriers to digital inclusion and ensure no one is left behind.
- A **Digital Inclusion Action Network** which was set up and is sponsored by the GM Mayor to lead targeted action with a specific focus on supporting under-25s, over-75s and disabled people. It meets monthly.

- The **Digital inclusion Local Authority Leads Group**, a regional working group, joining up activity, learning and resource across the ten boroughs to remove barriers and ensure a locally-led, long-term sustainable focus which is embedded in services and communities. This has been supported through activity funded through the Adult Education Budget and Retained Business Rates.

Together these groups have convened and instigated a broad range of actions at local, regional and national levels. Summaries of recent locally led impacts can be found in the Digital Inclusion Impact Report 2023. At a regional level, progress includes:

### **MISSION ONE: Tackling Digital Poverty**

- **Greater Manchester Databank** - working with Good Things Foundation and the telecoms industry to provide free 20GB SIM data cards to eligible residents in need. As of December 2024, the latest data shows that 53,290 data SIMs have been distributed by GM Databanks across 10 boroughs. There are now 291 community centres that are Online Centres and Databanks in GM, against a target of 75 set in 2023, which include GM libraries, community organisations, food banks, etc.
- **Device Lending Libraries in Local Authorities** Most GM Local Authorities have established device lending library schemes for residents and families to borrow devices so they may access services, look for jobs, or continue their learning and education.
- **Digital inclusion pilot for social housing residents** - five of the UK's largest internet service providers collaborated with five GM housing organisations in 2023 in a study tackle digital exclusion through increased uptake of social tariffs. This study was published by University of Liverpool in late 2023 and highlighted even though awareness of social tariffs needed to be raised, they were still unaffordable for many people in social housing. 495 residents took up connectivity offers during the pilot; 136 residents gained digital skills support provided by ISP volunteers; and two community centres were given free connectivity.
- **GM social housing wayleave** – Following the successful pilot, referred to above, several telecoms and housing organisations collaborated to streamline broadband installation in Greater Manchester's social housing through a common, standardised wayleave agreement. Previously, varying wayleave agreements and lengthy approval processes caused delays and increased costs, discouraging telecoms investment in the sector.
- In summer 2024, Greater Manchester's 20 largest housing organisations agreed the Greater Manchester standardised wayleave agreement, launched at Connected

Britain in September. This innovative approach is now being explored by telecommunication providers and regions across the UK, paving the way for broader adoption and improved digital connectivity.

## **MISSION TWO: Targeted support for priority groups**

- **Go GM Care Leavers project** - 1,087 care leavers have been supported since the project's inception, generating 1753 offers of personalised assistance. This includes the distribution of 796 free data SIMs, gifting of 551 devices, engagement with 173 individuals through the Learn My Way programme, 155 care leavers participating in the Salford Foundation Money Matters initiative and involvement of 77 care leavers in Digital Skills Bootcamps led by IN4.0/Skills City. Currently, over 25% of care leavers aged 18-25 in Greater Manchester have engaged with at least one aspect of this initiative.
- **Doing digital in later life** – in conjunction with the GM Aging Hub, Citizens Advice and Age UK, new resources and guidance were published in 2023 designed for anyone to support someone they know to do digital in later life.
- **Get Online Greater Manchester** – a guide to digital support for disabled people booklet and BSL video. The guide brings together digital support for people with disabilities into one place, including assistive technology, connectivity and digital skills training.

## **MISSION THREE: Building digital skills, confidence and capabilities for all with trusted faces in trusted places**

- **Get Online GM Digital Skills and Support Finder map**: this map, based on the DERI tool with input from GM Local Authority DI Leads, highlights digital skills activities, databanks, and online centres in community spaces across each local borough. Empowering residents, sectors, and services, it connects people to essential digital skills activity and support. This tool is being used by GM Job Centres to signpost job seekers to improve their digital skills and complete applications confidently.

Three additional new initiatives are currently underway:

### **5.1. Digital Champion Volunteer Network**

Launched in October 2024, this 'train the trainer' program, a collaboration funded by telecoms organisation Cellnex, and delivered by social enterprise, Starting Point, empowers community volunteers with the confidence and skills to teach and advance

digital inclusion across Greater Manchester. Volunteers will gain the skills to help those at risk of digital exclusion—under-25s, over-75s, and disabled individuals—develop essential digital skills.

The initiative aims to boost digital confidence, improve access to online services, and enhance social connectivity for vulnerable residents. By fostering a network of skilled and confident volunteers, the program seeks to build a more empowered, connected, and inclusive community, scaling its impact region-wide.

## **5.2. Strengthening Communities Digital Inclusion Fund**

This is a dedicated financial resource, backed through Retained Business Rates agreed by GMCA, established to support community-led initiatives aimed at reducing digital exclusion within 1km/ 15 minutes walking distance for residents in underserved areas of support.

This fund seeks to empower local boroughs to develop and implement projects that enhance face to face digital skills activity and access to technology, with a particular focus on support being available for residents in areas of high risk of digital exclusion that remain underserved with digital inclusion face to face activity and support.

Applications have been received from every local authority in GM and £70k grants have been issued to most boroughs. It will be formally announced at the end of January.

## **5.3. Technology Refurbishment Schemes in Local Boroughs**

Most Local Authority boroughs have a technology refurbishment partner as a sustainable method to combat digital poverty through device redistribution, reducing e-waste and environmental impact.

## **6. Addressing concerns over PSTN switchover**

The switch-off of the Public Switched Telephony Network (PSTN) continues to be a significant concern for Greater Manchester. As reported to the GMCA in both September 2023 and April 2024, the primary issues revolve around vulnerable people who heavily rely on landline services being cut-off. There are concerns over how the transition may disrupt access to essential services for some, less digitally savvy people, and that telecare users are left without working devices.

We have made considerable representation to Government and industry on this subject, including a co-signed letter in March 2024 from several Mayoral Combined Authorities and led by GMCA to the Secretaries of State for Health & Social Care; Science, Innovation & Technology; and Housing, Communities & Local Government. Following Government

intervention, BT has delayed its rollout by 13 months until January 2027, however concerns remain about resident communications and engagement, consistency of working practices, and a common definition of vulnerability.

These were emphasised at a further GM roundtable event in November 2024 where key stakeholders were gathered to take stock of progress and discuss the ongoing risks and concerns. Industry and Government engagement continues.

## **7. Opportunities and Risks**

The new Government's commitment to writing a national digital inclusion strategy, the first since 2014, offers a tremendous opportunity and GMCA is actively collaborating with the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) to ensure that Greater Manchester's needs and strengths are well-represented in this strategy.

Similarly, digital inclusion has been embedded in the emerging model for "LiveWell" in Greater Manchester, a key theme in our priority planned and of government engagement.

The strength of community working on digital inclusion in GM is very strong, powered by local resource but too often in a fixed-term manner. Financial pressures on individual organisations make it challenging to prioritise digital inclusion. Despite these constraints, industry support continues to be strong and welcome although securing this support through meaningful collaborations takes time, energy and has its limitations. Procurement that emphasises social value remains an important means of ensuring sustained support.

The ongoing digital inclusion efforts in Greater Manchester present many opportunities and challenges, however this topic is undoubtedly an ongoing issue that requires continuous focus. The continued commitment of local councils to improve access to services and focus resource on actively coordinating local networks to strengthen capability and resilience are key to overcoming these challenges. Advancing digital equity in the region is a considerable driver for improved health and wellbeing outcomes, better jobs and economic empowerment, and a request will be being made for continued funding support in 2025/6 for a multi-year programme commitment and continued commitment to ensure the development of local economic plans prioritise digital equity. Whilst Prime Minister Kier Starmer announces a [blueprint](#) to turbocharge AI, improve productivity and cost savings by digitising health services and processes, it is important to do this in hand with recognition on the responsibility to those who are not online and provide alternative non-digital ways for people to interact with them. Whilst there is a push to digitisation, we have a responsibility to ensure that individuals can feel these benefits too.





# Greater Manchester: Digital update Report for Overview & Scrutiny January 2025

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**GREATER  
MANCHESTER**  
**DOING DIGITAL DIFFERENTLY**

# Our Digital Blueprint, 2023-26

- We want to better the lives our people, to live well and to be empowered by the opportunities a digitally-fuelled city-region brings.
- We want to use technology and data better to make this a greener, fairer, more prosperous city region, with our residents at the heart.
- The Greater Manchester Digital Blueprint sets our 2023-26 ambitions and our approach to meeting them.



**Andy Burnham**  
Mayor of Greater  
Manchester



**Cllr Nick Peel**  
GMCA Lead for Digital; Leader of  
Bolton Council



**Lou Cordwell**  
OBE, Chair of Greater  
Manchester Business  
Board (LEP)



## CURRENT STATE OF DIGITAL EQUITY IN GM



**Up to 1.2 million people**

in GM are limited digital users or non-users

**Around 32% of adults**

experience some form of digital exclusion



**Approx 228,500 adults**

do not have consistent access to internet connectivity

**1 in 8 people**

do not feel confident in using digital services and tools<sup>1</sup>



**3 in 5 people aged 75**

are digitally excluded in some way



**205,600 adults**

do not have consistent and reliable access to digital devices<sup>2</sup>



**41% of people aged 75+ and 27% of disabled people**

report a lack of confidence in independently accessing online services

**2 in 5 disabled people**

are digitally excluded in some way



**77% of people**

believe internet access is now an essential need<sup>3</sup>



# EMPOWERING PEOPLE: GREATER MANCHESTER'S DIGITAL INCLUSION AGENDA

## POWERED BY:

- The **Digital Inclusion Taskforce**, a 250 members group that works collaboratively to join up activity across the region, maximise capabilities, identify need and target action to address the interrelated barriers to digital inclusion, and ensure no one is left behind.
- A **Digital Inclusion Action Network** set up to lead targeted action with a specific focus on supporting under-25s, over-75s and disabled people.

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The **Local Authority DI Leads Group**, joining up approach and resources across the region. **A KEY OUTCOME OF THE COLLABORATIVE APPROACH HAS BEEN "GET ONLINE GREATER MANCHESTER", A CAMPAIGN INCLUDING INITIATIVES SUCH AS:**

- **Greater Manchester Databank** - working with Good Things Foundation to tackle data poverty for people at risk of digital exclusion
- **Digital inclusion pilot for social housing residents** - five of the UK's largest internet service providers, collaborating with the public and housing sector to tackle digital exclusion, and developed a standardised Wayleaves Agreement for the UK
- **Care leavers digital inclusion initiative** - a comprehensive package of digital support for care leavers
- **Doing digital in later life** - new resources designed for anyone to support someone they know to do digital in later life
- **Digital Champion Volunteer Network**- building a network of skilled community champions, embedded in communities



**“If Greater Manchester is truly going to be a world leading digital city region, we have to make a big commitment to fix the digital divide, the consequences of not doing so are severe”**

**Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester**



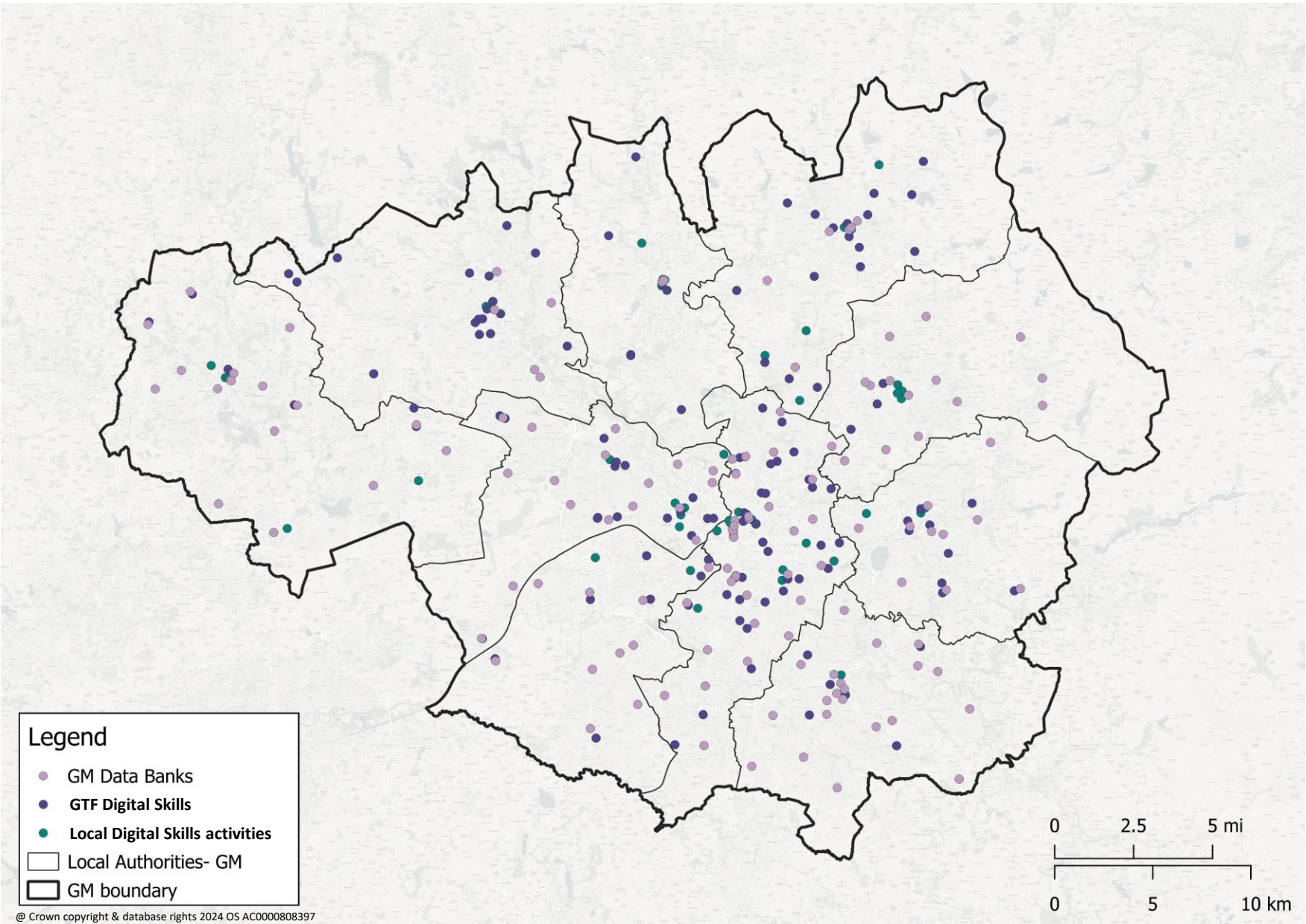
# Get Online Resources

136 Data Banks

228 GTF Digital Skills Online Support

276 Local Digital Skills activities

*Data up to date as of end-March 2024 and refers to resources that are open and published to the public*



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## CURRENT STATE OF DIGITAL INCLUSION: GET ONLINE GREATER MANCHESTER ANALYSIS

### 3 elements to think about:

#### Digital inclusion support zones

- **Accessibility** – *essential services and amenities within a short walking distance*
- **Community Connectivity** – *the connectivity and integration of neighbourhoods within the broader urban boundaries*
- **Walkability** – *this promotes physical activity, reduced the reliance on cars and fosters vibrant street life*
- **Environmental Sustainability** – *reduce carbon emissions associated with commuting and promoting active travel*
- **Social Equity** – *helps identify disparities in access, ensuring residence have equitable access to essential services*

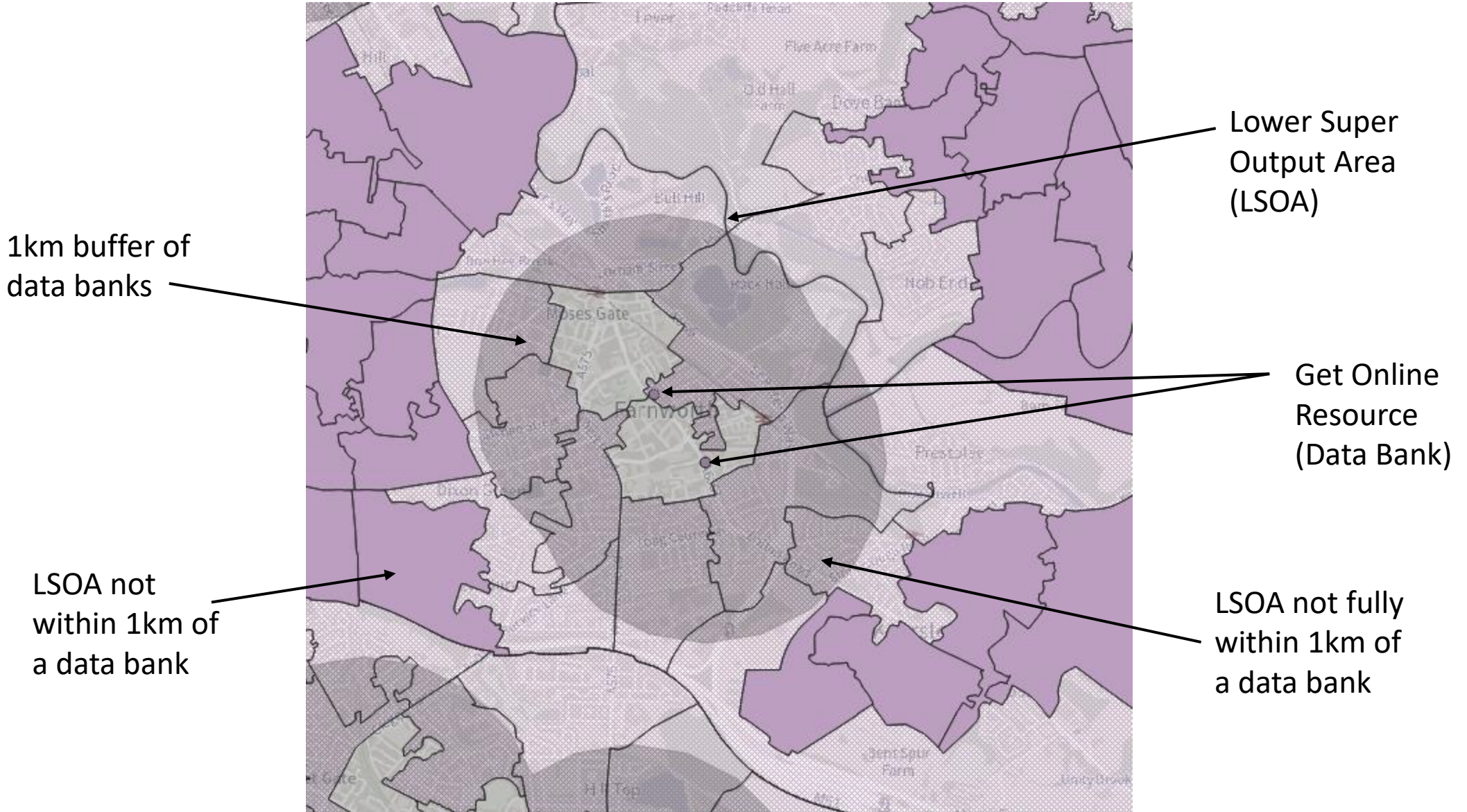
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#### 1km Buffer

- This is the average distance someone can walk in 15 minutes
- Gives us an indication of the outreach the resource could have

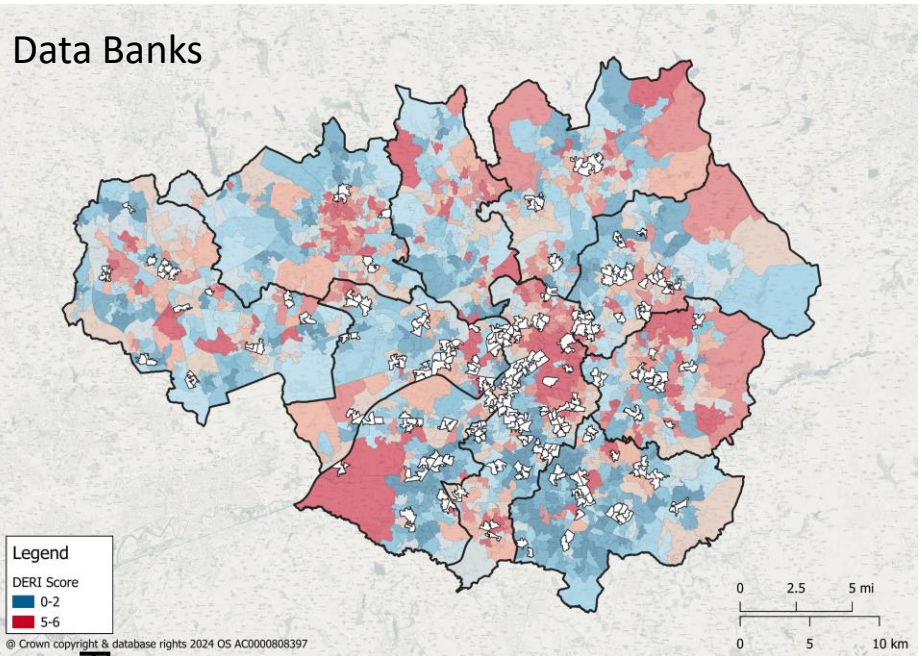
#### Geospatial Distribution

- Using what we already know about GM and seeing how this aligns with the Get Online resources we have available

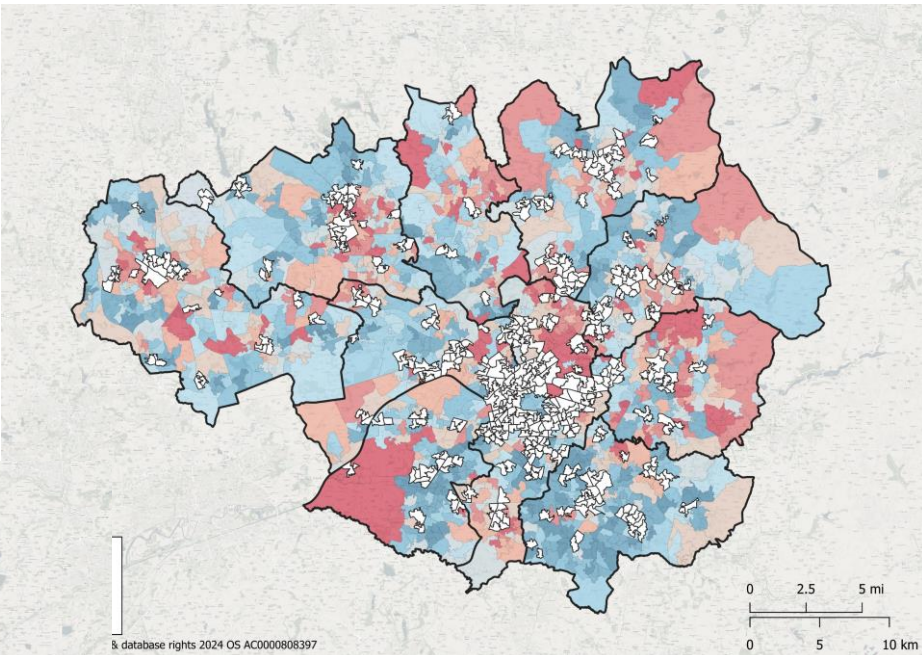




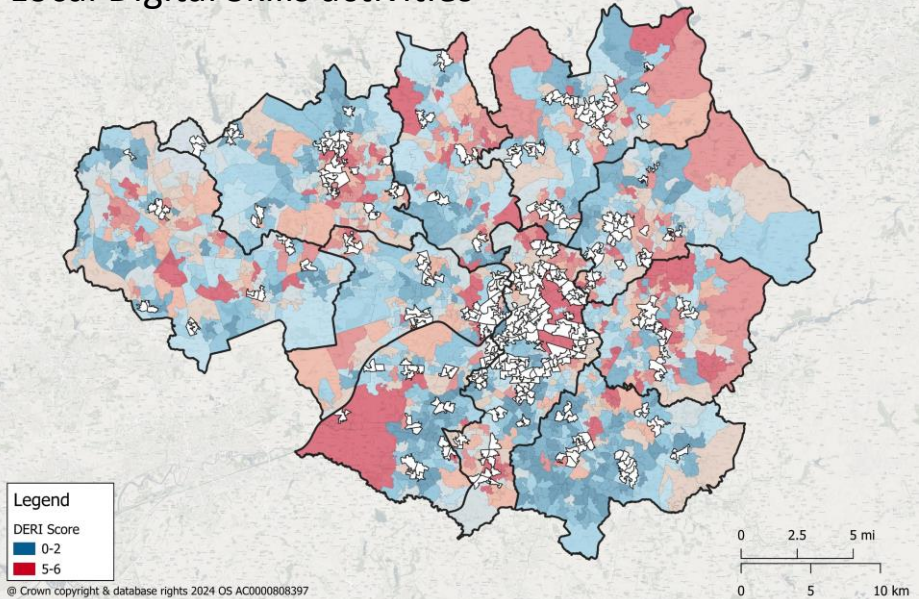
### Data Banks



### GTF Digital Skills Online



### Local Digital Skills activities

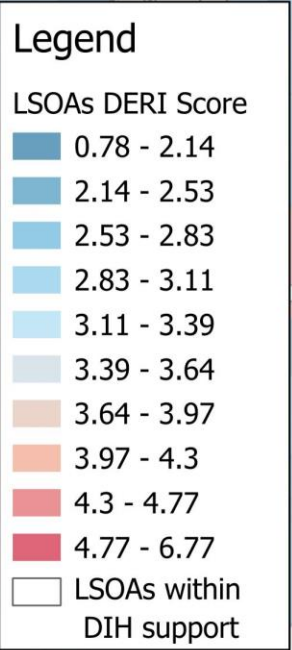


**1,113 LSOAs in Greater Manchester have areas where resident would not be within 1km of a GM Online Resource**

**68% of LSOAs**

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LSOAs that lack at least some access to GM Digital Inc Hub Support



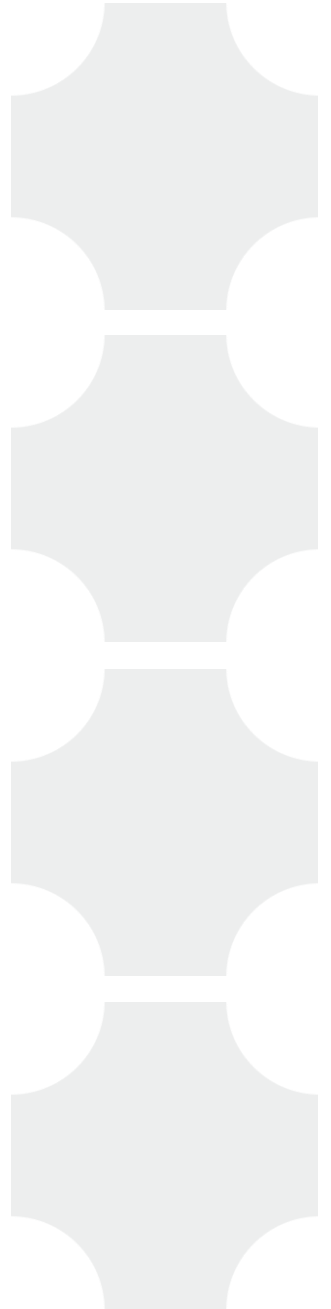
## EMPOWERING PEOPLE: OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS

### Opportunities

- The new government's commitment to a new Digital Inclusion Strategy. GM hosted the ministerially led Digital Inclusion All Party Parliamentary Group on 16th January hosted by Mayor Andy Burnham and other UK regions. GM working closely with Dept Science, Innovation and Technology to emphasise the importance of a locally-led approach to developing a national strategy.
- Grant structure established for the Strengthening Communities Digital Inclusion Fund offers scalable potential as a national trailblazer approach.
- Recognised as an important component in GM's "LiveWell" strategy
- Continued locality, academic, VCFSE, and industry support and action

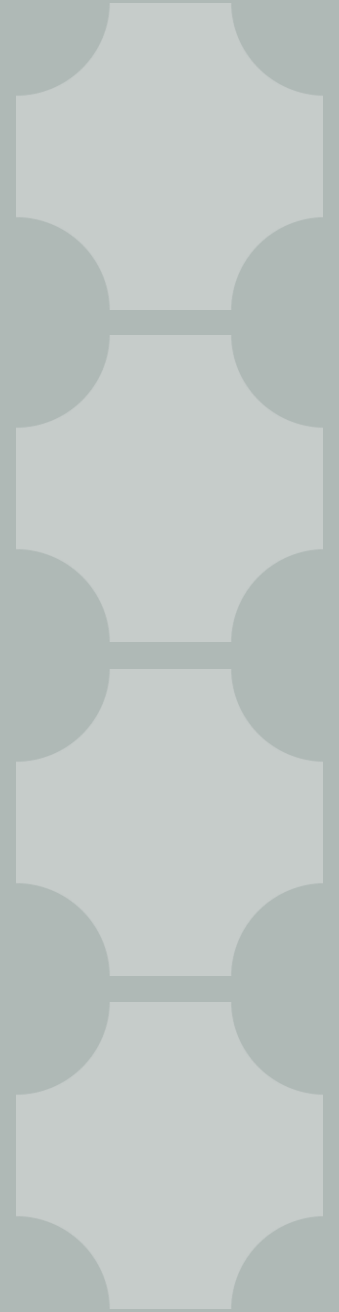
### Risks

- Support for this agenda continues to be funded via short-term mechanisms and goodwill, therefore is quite fragile and with inconsistent support across GM.



# End

Questions?



## Supporting slide: PSTN requests of Gov't taken to GMCA 23 Feb 2024:

A National Action Plan overseen by Government is urgently needed to ensure that the telecommunications industry's guarantee, that no vulnerable person is left disconnected, can be demonstrably achieved. It is proposed this should include as a minimum:

- A mandatory requirement that any of the 600+ communication providers which are implementing switchover sign up to the **PSTN Charter** before continuing implementations, and that the **common definition of vulnerability** referenced in the Charter is established before work continues. **AGREED AND IN PROGRESS**
- An agreed **Telecare Industry Charter** setting out the switchover responsibilities of that sector to sit alongside the PSTN Charter agreed with telecommunication providers. **IN PROGRESS**
- A national **communications plan** that is Government fronted and financed. **NOT YET AGREED.**
- An agreed, joint, and adopted LGA, NHS, telecommunication and telecare sectors **“On the Day” process** for public and privately funded telecare users, and other people at higher risk. **AGREED AND IN PROGRESS**
- **A centrally co-ordinated approach to data sharing** that enables proactive PSTN switchover support, between public and private telecare providers and telecommunications sector and in relation to households with vulnerable people. **NOT RESOLVED**
- Enforcement and implementation of a **reporting mechanism** to record and escalate serious issues as they arise. **AGREED BY OFCOM**
- One-off Government **capital funds** to assist organisations such as housing associations and care providers to invest in digital equipment for the purpose of switching over the telecare service. **NOT RESOLVED.**

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## Greater Manchester Combined Authority

### Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 29 January 2025  
Subject: Mayoral General Budget and Precept Proposals  
Report of: Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester

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#### Purpose of Report

To set out the proposals for the Mayoral General Budget and precept for 2025-26 for consideration by the members of the GMCA. The proposals being made include the budget for the Fire Service which had previously fallen to the GM Fire and Rescue Authority to determine. The report includes details supporting the proposed precepts for the Mayoral General Budget as shown at paragraph 3.

#### Recommendations:

The GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to:

Consider and comment on the report and note the recommendations which will be considered by the GMCA at its meeting on the 31 January 2025 as below.

The GMCA is requested:

1. To consider my proposal to increase the Mayoral General Precept by £16 to £128.95 (for a Band D property), comprising of:
  - i) Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Services - precept of £86.20 (**£5 increase**);
  - ii) Other Mayoral General functions - precept of £42.75 (**£11 increase**).
2. To note and comment on:
  - i) the overall budget proposed for the Fire and Rescue Service,

- ii) the use of the reserves to support the revenue and capital budgets, and the assessment by the Treasurer that the reserves as at March 2026 are adequate,
  - iii) the proposed Fire Service capital programme and proposals for funding,
  - iv) the medium-term financial position for the Fire and Rescue Service covered by the Mayoral precept
3. To note and comment on the detailed budget proposals for other Mayoral functions;
  4. To note and comment on the use of reserves as set out in Paragraph 3.3 of the report;
  5. To consider whether they would wish to submit any written comments to the Mayor in line with the legal process and timetable described in this report; and
  6. To note that at its meeting on 7 February 2025 there will be an updated budget submitted, consistent with the precept proposals, to reflect final tax base and collection fund calculations and the final baseline funding settlement.

## Contact Officers

Name: Steve Wilson, Group Chief Financial Officer to GMCA

E-Mail: [steve.wilson@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:steve.wilson@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

Name: Claire Postlethwaite, Director of Operational Finance to GMCA

E-Mail: [claire.postlethwaite@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:claire.postlethwaite@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)



## **Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:**

N/A

## **Risk Management**

An assessment of the potential budget risks faced by the authority are carried out quarterly as part of the monitoring process. Specific risks and considerations for the budget 2025/26 insofar as they relate to the Fire Service are detailed in Part 2.

## **Legal Considerations**

See Appendix 1 of the report.

## **Financial Consequences – Revenue**

The report sets out the planned budget strategy for 2025/26 and future years.

## **Financial Consequences – Capital**

Proposals for Fire and Rescue Services capital spend are set out within Part 2 of the report.

## **Number of attachments to the report: 0**

## **Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

The report will be reviewed by the overview and scrutiny committee on 29th January with feedback provided to CA meeting on 31st January

## **Background Papers**

GMCA – Mayoral General Budget and Precept Proposals 2024/25 – 9 February 2024

## **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?

N/A

## **Bee Network Committee**

N/A

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

29<sup>th</sup> January 2025

# Mayoral General Budget and Precept Proposals

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to notify the GMCA of the Mayor's draft budget for 2025/26, setting out proposed funding to meet the costs of Mayoral general functions. The GMCA must review the draft budget and report before 8<sup>th</sup> February to confirm whether it would approve the draft budget in its current form or make alternative recommendations. If no such report is made before 8<sup>th</sup> February, then the draft budget shall be deemed to be approved.

1.2 The Mayoral General Budget 2025/26 is set out in two parts:

### Part 1 - Mayoral General Budget 2025/26 (excluding Fire and Rescue).

1.2.1 There is a **proposed £11 (Band D) increase** to the Mayoral General precept for 2025/26. The increase represents the final element of the Bus Reform business case (November 2020) which has been delivered on time and on budget across Greater Manchester with the final tranche of franchising being delivered on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2025. The increase is slightly below the original funding proposals. The existing precept of £31.75 will therefore rise to £42.75. Alongside bus reform, the precept will continue to be used to support:

- The 'A Bed Every Night' emergency response scheme to reduce rough sleeping in Greater Manchester and continue to support local schemes and homelessness partnerships to end rough sleeping. This scheme is supplemented by financial support from the Greater Manchester Integrated Health and Care Partnership, Probation Service and other partners across Greater Manchester.
- The 'Our Pass' scheme, providing free bus travel within Greater Manchester for 16-18 year olds.
- Care Leavers concessionary pass providing free bus travel in Greater Manchester for young people who have been in care.

**Part 2 - Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 – 2027/28.**

1.2.2 There is a **proposed £5 (Band D) increase** to the GMFRS element of the mayoral precept. The precept increase is required to ensure, given the impact of the Provisional Settlement on the Service’s Medium Term Financial Plan for 2025/26, together with anticipated increases in inflationary pressures on both pay and non-pay budgets, there is no adverse impact on frontline services.

1.3 The Mayor therefore proposes an increase to the Mayoral Fire Precept for the financial year 2025/26. If the proposal is accepted, the Mayoral Precept will increase by £10.67 (21 pence per week) to £85.97 for a Band A property split between £57.47 (£1.11 per week) for the fire and rescue service and £28.50 (55 pence per week) for other Mayoral-funded services (an increase of £16.00 to £128.95 for a Band D property, with the fire and rescue service accounting for £86.20 and £42.75 for non-fire).

1.4 Although it is required to set a precept specifying the Band D Charge, by far the majority of properties (82%) in Greater Manchester, will be required to pay less than this amount. The following table outlines the amounts to be paid by each band and the proportion of properties which fall into each band.

<b>2025/26</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
Mayoral Other	28.50	33.25	38.00	42.75	52.25	61.75	71.25	85.50
Mayoral Fire	57.47	67.04	76.62	86.20	105.36	124.51	143.67	172.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>85.97</b>	<b>100.29</b>	<b>114.62</b>	<b>128.95</b>	<b>157.61</b>	<b>186.26</b>	<b>214.92</b>	<b>257.90</b>
Proportion of Properties	44.4%	19.9%	17.7%	9.7%	4.9%	2.1%	1.2%	0.2%

1.5 The Mayoral General Precept is part of the overall council tax paid by Greater Manchester residents and used to fund Greater Manchester-wide services for which the Mayor is responsible.

- 1.6 Income from Business Rates, both a share of the income collected by GM Councils and a 'top up' grant, is received. As the GMCA is part of the 100% Business Rates Pilot, the previous receipt of Revenue Support Grant has been replaced by equivalent baseline funding through an increased Business Rates top up.
- 1.7 At the present time, both Council Tax and Business Rates income is subject to confirmation by local authorities, and the estimate of the Business Rates 'top up' grant will be confirmed in the final settlement.

## **2. Background to the Budget Process**

- 2.1 The functions of the GMCA which are currently Mayoral General functions are:
- Fire and Rescue
  - Compulsory Purchase of Land
  - Mayoral development corporations
  - Development of transport policies
  - Preparation, alteration and replacement of the Local Transport Plan
  - Grants to bus service operators
  - Grants to constituent councils
  - Decisions to make, vary or revoke bus franchising schemes
- 2.2 The sources of funding for Mayoral costs, to the extent that they are not funded from other sources, are precept or statutory contributions (not Fire). A precept can be issued by the Mayor to GM Councils as billing authorities. The precept is apportioned between Councils on the basis of Council Tax bases and must be issued before 1st March.
- 2.3 Constituent councils can make statutory contributions to the Mayor in respect of Mayoral functions where authorised by a statutory order but they require at least 7 members of the GMCA (excluding the Mayor) to agree (Fire cannot be met from statutory contributions).
- 2.4 In terms of timetables, I must, before 1st February, notify the GMCA of my draft budget in relation to the following financial year. The draft budget must set out the proposed spending and how I intend to meet the costs of my General functions.
- 2.5 The GMCA must review the draft budget and may make a report to the Mayor on the draft. The Authority must make such a report before 8th February and must set out whether it would approve the draft budget in its current form or make alternative recommendations. If no such report is made before 8th February then the draft budget shall be deemed to be approved.

2.6 A full, legal description of the process is attached at Appendix 1.

### 3. Mayoral General Budget Summary 2025/26

3.1 The table below shows the summary of gross and net budget for Mayoral General Budget including GMFRS budget for 2025/26:

<b>Budget Summary 2025/26</b>	<b>Gross Expenditure £000</b>	<b>Gross Income £000</b>	<b>Net Estimate £000</b>
Fire Service Budget	148,160	0	148,160
Other Mayoral General Budget	138,850	15,010	123,840
Capital Financing Charges	2,544	0	2,544
Contribution from balances/reserves	0	2,758	-2,758
<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>289,554</b>	<b>17,768</b>	<b>271,786</b>
Localised Business Rates		11,347	-11,347
Business Rate Baseline		52,024	-52,024
Services Grant		0	0
Section 31 Grant - Business Rates		9,211	-9,211
Section 31 Grant - pensions		4,769	-4,769
Transport - Statutory Charge		86,700	-86,700
Collection Fund surplus/-deficit	0	854	-854
<b>Precept requirement</b>	<b>289,554</b>	<b>183,580</b>	<b>105,974</b>

3.2 The full calculation of aggregate amounts under Section 42A (2) and (3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as updated in the Localism Act 2011 is shown at Appendix 2.

3.3 Taking account of the budget proposals outlined in this paper, the reserves for both Mayoral and GMFRS for 2024/25 are as follows:

Mayoral and GMFRS Reserves	Closing Balances 31 March 2024 £000	Transfer out/(in) 2024/25 £000	Projected Balance March 2025 £000	Transfer out/(in) 2025/26 £000	Projected Balance March 2026 £000
General Reserve	-12,093		-12,093		-12,093
Mayoral Reserve	-5,421	1775	-3,646	1,339	-2,307
A Bed Every Night	-2,488	2,488	0	0	0
Capital Reserve	-13,386	233	-13,153	2,034	-11,119
Capital Grants Unapplied			0		0
Earmarked Budget Res	-4,592	1,658	-2,934	1,419	-1,515
Revenue Grants Unapplied	-1,619		-1,619		-1,619
Insurance Reserve	-2,128		-2,128		-2,128
Business Rates Reserve	-870	93	-777		-777
Restructuring Reserve	-418		-418		-418
Innovation & Partnership	-127		-127		-127
Transformation Fund	-3,604		-3,604		-3,604
<b>Total</b>	<b>-46,745</b>	<b>6,247</b>	<b>-40,498</b>	<b>4,792</b>	<b>-35,706</b>

3.4 The current General Fund Reserve balance stands at £12.093m, this is considered an appropriate level and there is no planned use of this reserve.

## 4. Mayoral General Budget Summary 2025/26

4.1 In coming to decisions in relation to the revenue budget, I have various legal and fiduciary duties. The amount of the precept must be sufficient to meet the Mayor's legal and financial commitments, ensure the proper discharge of my statutory duties and lead to a balanced budget.

4.2 In exercising my fiduciary duty, I should be satisfied that the proposals put forward are a prudent use of my resources in both the short and long term and that they are acting in good faith for the benefit of the community whilst complying with all statutory duties.

- 4.3 Given that I intend to make firm proposals relating to the Fire Service budget at the February meeting, there will be a need to reassess the overall prudence of the budget, but at this stage, there are sufficient reserves available to ensure a balanced budget is set.

#### **Duties of the Chief Finance Officer**

- 4.4 The Local Government Finance Act 2003 requires the Chief Finance Officer to report to the Mayor on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. I have a statutory duty to have regard to the CFO's report when making decisions about the calculations.
- 4.5 Section 28 of the Local Government Act 2003 imposes a statutory duty on the Mayor to monitor during the financial year the expenditure and income against the budget calculations. If the monitoring establishes that the budgetary situation has deteriorated, I must take such action as I consider necessary to deal with the situation. This might include, for instance, action to reduce spending in the rest of the year, or to increase income, or to finance the shortfall from reserves.
- 4.6 Under Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, where it appears to the Chief Finance Officer that the expenditure of the Mayoral General budget incurred (including expenditure it proposes to incur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to it to meet that expenditure, the Chief Finance Officer has a duty to make a report to the Mayor.
- 4.7 The report must be sent to the GMCA's External Auditor and I/the GMCA must consider the report within 21 days at a meeting where we must decide whether we agree or disagree with the views contained in the report and what action (if any) we propose to take in consequence of it. In the intervening period between the sending of the report and the meeting which considers it, the GMCA is prohibited from entering into any new agreement which may involve the incurring of expenditure (at any time) by the GMCA, except in certain limited circumstances where expenditure can be authorised by the Chief Finance Officer. Failure to take



appropriate action in response to such a report may lead to the intervention of the External Auditor.

### Reasonableness

- 4.8 I have a duty to act reasonably taking into account all relevant considerations and not considering anything which is irrelevant. This Report sets out the proposals from which members can consider the risks and the arrangements for mitigation set out below.

### Risks and Mitigation

- 4.9 The Treasurer has examined the major assumptions used within the budget calculations and considers that they are prudent, based on the best information currently available. A risk assessment of the main budget headings has been undertaken and the level of reserves is adequate to cover these.

## 5. Part 1 – Proposed Mayoral General Budget 2025/26 (Excluding Fire & Rescue)

5.1 This section provides the proposed Mayoral General Budget (excluding Fire & Rescue) for 2025/26. The Mayoral General Budget funds the Mayor's Office and Mayoral functions including Transport. The budget for 2025/26 is a proposed £183.850m to be funded from Precept income, Transport Statutory Charge, reserves, grants and external income.

5.2 The table below sets out the 2024/25 budget and 2025/26 proposed budget:

Mayoral Budget	2024/25 Original Budget	2025/26 Proposed Budget
	£000	£000
<b>Employee Related</b>	500	<b>510</b>
<b>Supplies and Services</b>	15	<b>15</b>
<b>Travel Related</b>	15	<b>15</b>
<b>Corporate Recharge</b>	851	<b>876</b>
<b>Mayoral Priorities</b>		
A Bed Every Night	2,400	2,400
Equality Panels	350	350
Other Mayoral Priorities	300	1,405
<b>Total Mayoral Priorities</b>	3,050	<b>4,155</b>
<b>Mayoral Transport</b>		
Bus Reform	15,895	13,500
Our Pass	17,229	17,229
Care Leavers	550	550
Bus Service Operators Grant	11,750	11,750
TfGM Revenue Grant	90,250	90,250
<b>Total Mayoral Transport</b>	135,674	<b>133,279</b>
<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	140,105	<b>138,850</b>
<b>Funded by:</b>		
Mayoral Precept	-25,558	-35,338
Collection Fund Surplus /-Deficit	-463	-463
BSOG grant	-13,150	-13,150
Mayoral Capacity grant	-1,000	-1,010
Statutory charge	-86,700	-86,700
Earnback Grant	-11,045	0
Other Grants	-1,339	-1,339
External Income	-850	-850
<b>Gross Income</b>	-140,105	<b>-138,850</b>

5.3 In relation to the level of the precept to be levied for Mayoral functions it is proposed an increase of £11 to £42.75 for a Band D property which will be used to support Mayoral priorities as set out below. This equates to a £10.67 increase for a Band A property or 21 pence per week.

5.4 The Mayoral Precept funds a variety of Mayoral priorities including but not limited to:

5.4.1 Continuation of the A Bed Every Night (ABEN) programme, which over the last 5 years has contributed to a reduction in rough sleeping in Greater Manchester and provides accommodation for around 550 people every night. Alongside other funding streams, this contribution is part of a three-year plan to enable greater investment in other areas of homelessness response and prevention.

5.4.2 The “Our Pass” scheme which provides free bus travel within Greater Manchester for 16-18 year olds and direct access to other opportunities in the region. The scheme is funded from a combination of Precept, reserves and other income. A budget of £17.2m is proposed for 2025/26 with a risk reserve held by TfGM if costs increase during the year, in line with the original funding strategy for the scheme agreed by the GMCA. Following the full franchising of bus services in Greater Manchester, the totality of the mayoral funding for “Our Pass” can be used to support the bus network rather than re-imbursing operators as happened in the non-franchised system.

5.4.3 The mayoral precept has also made a contribution to bringing bus services under local control through a franchising scheme to deliver passenger benefits including simpler fare and ticketing and joined-up planning between bus and tram journeys.

5.4.4 Following the successful completion of the bus franchising programme, on budget and on time on 5th January 2025, and in line with the original and revised (post covid) business case (November 2020) the final precept contribution to the reformed bus service across GM will increase by £11 taking the total contribution to the service from the mayoral budget to £13.5m.

5.4.5 The Bee Network has already delivered lower bus fares, new buses, higher standards, improved punctuality and greater customer satisfaction - and it will continue to improve and grow. Fully integrated 'pay as you go' Contactless capped fares will be rolled out across trams and buses from late March 2025 and eight commuter rail lines will be brought into the Bee Network by 2028.

5.4.6 Other Mayoral priorities include:

- Care Leavers concessionary pass to providing a free bus travel in Greater Manchester for young people 18-21 years old that have been in care.
- Equality panels facilitated by appropriate voluntary organisations, enabling investment in organisations which work in partnership with public services and the wider community, contributing to tackling the inequalities agenda.

Statutory Transport Charge

5.4 The Mayoral Transport includes TfGM Revenue Grant budget met from the statutory transport charge of £86.7m and the Bus Service Operators Grant. Following the GMCA (Functions and Amendment) order being laid in April 2019, I was given further powers for transport functions and a £86.7m statutory charge to GM Councils (with a corresponding reduction in the Transport Levy). The order also states that this amount (£86.7 million) can only be varied with the unanimous agreement of the members of the GMCA. The full breakdown by local authority is shown below:

<b>Transport Statutory Charge 2025/26</b>			
<b>Local authority</b>	<b>Population Mid 2023</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>£</b>
Bolton	302,383	10.26%	8,891,105
Bury	195,476	6.63%	5,747,670
Manchester	579,917	19.67%	17,051,564
Oldham	246,130	8.35%	7,237,073
Rochdale	229,756	7.79%	6,755,620
Salford	284,106	9.64%	8,353,698
Stockport	299,545	10.16%	8,807,658
Tameside	234,666	7.96%	6,899,991
Trafford	237,480	8.05%	6,982,733
Wigan	339,174	11.50%	9,972,888
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,948,633</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>86,700,000</b>

## **6. Part 2 – Proposed Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Revenue and Capital Budget 2025/26**

- 6.1 The following information provides details supporting the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service Revenue and Capital Budgets.
- 6.2 The Provisional Local Government Settlement was published on 18th December 2024 and the MTFP has been updated based on this. The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to 2027/28 has been updated, based on the 2024/25 baseline updated for pay and price inflation, known cost pressures and agreed savings.
- 6.3 The Chancellor announced the Spending Review in December 2024 which presented a one-year settlement. In relation to Fire and Rescue Services, the announcements covered the following:
- Fire & Rescue services receive an average 2.8% increase in core spending power.
  - The increase in spending power for all Fire and Rescue Authorities is funded entirely through the assumed council tax increase with a small year on year reduction in grant funding from the Government. Fire and Rescue Services have experienced a reduction in funding as a result of removal of the Services Grant and the Funding Guarantee from 2025/26 onwards.
  - Flexibility on council tax precept for standalone Fire and Rescue Authorities of £5.
  - Services Grant and Funding Guarantee reduction of 100%
  - Fire and Rescue Pensions Grant now included within core spending power.
  - A further Fire and Rescue Pensions Grant payable via the Home Office, amounts for 2025/26 not yet confirmed. NIC Compensation to total £515m for all local government, including Fire and Rescue, based on Net Current Expenditure.
- 6.4 The increase in core spending power assumes that all Fire and Rescue Services utilise the full £5 council tax flexibility, the maximum permitted for stand-alone fire and rescue authorities, will be required to protect front line service delivery
- 6.5 The NIC Compensation is not expected to fully cover costs. The current assumption is 50% of costs will be compensated through the grant.
- 6.6 Final confirmation of the funding position will be confirmed in the Local Government Final Settlement due for late January / early February.
- 6.7 Home Office funding is yet to be announced and is anticipated the allocations will be announced alongside the final settlement. Home Office grants are in relation to the pensions grant and protection grants. The MTFP currently assumes the grants will be allocated on a flat cash basis in line with 2024/25 allocations.

6.8 The table below presents the budget requirements incorporating pressures and savings from 2024/25 onwards:

Medium Term Financial Plan	Original 2024/25	Revised 2024/25	Proposed Budget 2025/26	Indicative Budget 2026/27	Indicative Budget 2027/28
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Fire Service	125,437	125,437	143,449	148,160	154,040
Pay and price inflation	5,005	10,112	5,226	5,880	5,437
Savings	-1,629	-1,629	-0,677	0	0
Cost pressures and variations	6,651	9,529	0,162	0	0
<b>Cost of service</b>	<b>135,464</b>	<b>143,449</b>	<b>148,160</b>	<b>154,040</b>	<b>159,477</b>
Capital Financing Charges	3,800	1,468	2,544	5,287	6,031
Transfer to Earmarked Reserves	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Net Service Budget</b>	<b>139,264</b>	<b>144,917</b>	<b>150,704</b>	<b>159,326</b>	<b>165,507</b>
<b>Funded by:</b>					
Localised Business Rates	11,347	11,347	11,347	11,347	11,347
Baseline funding	51,281	51,281	52,024	52,024	52,024
SFA - Services Grant	0,204	0,224	0	0	0
Funding Guarantee	0	1,185	0	0	0
Section 31 - Business rates related	10,017	8,711	9,211	9,211	9,211
Section 31 - Pension related	0	4,769	4,769	4,769	4,769
NI funding increase			0,854	0,854	0,854
Precept income (at £86.20 Band D)	65,555	65,555	70,636	70,636	70,636
Collection Fund surplus/deficit	0,444	0,444	0,444	0,444	0,444
	<b>138,848</b>	<b>143,516</b>	<b>149,285</b>	<b>149,285</b>	<b>149,285</b>
					0
<b>Shortfall</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>1,401</b>	<b>1,419</b>	<b>10,041</b>	<b>16,222</b>
<b>Shortfall Funded by:</b>					
<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>	416	1,401	1,419	0	1,000
<b>General Reserves/Precept Increase</b>	0	0	0	10,041	15,222
<b>Use of Earmarked &amp; General Reserves/Precept</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>1,401</b>	<b>1,419</b>	<b>10,041</b>	<b>16,222</b>

## **REVENUE BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS**

### **Funding**

- 6.9 The baseline funding from revenue support grant and top-up grant has increased by £0.743m, however, the removal of the services grant and funding guarantee reduces the funding allocations by £1.409m.
- 6.10 The multiplier compensation grant is calculated based on the top-up grant figure using a formula, however, since the changes introduced in 2024/25 it is difficult to pre-empt the funding, as a major preceptor, due to the split of small and standard businesses, which attracted different formulas, as this will fluctuate across the 10 billing authorities. An assumption of circa £0.500m has been used in the MTFP.
- 6.11 Home Office funding is yet to be announced and is anticipated the allocations will be announced alongside the final settlement. Home Office grants are in relation to the pensions grant and protection grants. The Fire and Rescue Pension grant is a Home Office grant to compensate for the changes arising from the increase in firefighter employer pension rate from 28.8% to 37.6% which is estimated at a £5.612m increase in budget requirement within 2024/25. In 2024/25 the Service was allocated £4.769m resulting in a budget pressure of £0.843m. The MTFP currently assumes the grants will be allocated on a flat cash basis in line with 2024/25 allocations
- 6.12 Localised business rates and Section 31 business rates relief grant are assumed at the same level of income as last year, with information from local authorities not yet available to determine next year's position at this stage. Billing authorities will submit their business rates information on or before the statutory deadline of 31st January 2025 including surplus and deficits.
- 6.13 Precept income has been included at the increased rate of £57.47 per Band A property, equivalent to £1.11 per week (£86.20 per household at Band D equivalent, or £1.66 per week) which ensures frontline fire cover is maintained. This is an increase of £5 at Band D equivalent, or 10p per week. The estimated taxbase for 2025/26, i.e. the number of households paying council tax, has seen an increase when compared to levels assumed in 2024/25, however, final taxbase numbers are to be confirmed.
- 6.14 Collection Fund surplus/deficits are to be confirmed by local authorities as soon as the information is available. Early indications show that business rates are expected with a small surplus which has been reflected in the draft medium term financial plan.

### **Pay and Pensions**

- 6.15 The original pay inflation in respect of 2024/25 included 5% for uniformed and 3% for non-uniformed staff. Negotiations in respect of uniformed pay concluded in May 2024 with a 4% pay offer. In relation to non-uniformed staff, pay award was agreed at £1,290 per annum.
- 6.16 On calculating the 2025/26 pay budget requirements, assumptions have been made of a further 2% pay inflation for uniformed staff and 2% for non-uniformed staff.
- 6.17 Pay inflation includes the national insurance changes announced in the Autumn Statement which are an increase in employers' contribution rate from 13.8% to 15% plus a decrease in the threshold from £9,100 to £5,000.

### **Pressures and savings**

- 6.18 Savings have been calculated on the basis of prior year National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC) guidance which set a target of 2% of non-pay budgets, however, it should be noted that the baseline figure includes corporate recharges. The savings target has been proposed at £0.677m.
- 6.19 Budget pressures have been identified as set out below:
- Pay award – budget pressures of £5.226m have been calculated on the basis of a 2% increase for uniformed staff and 2% for non-uniformed staff as noted at paragraph 6.13.
  - National Insurance Funding - based on the Chancellor's statements at the time of the budget, was that this would be fully funded in for all public sector employers. The initial evidence suggests that this may not be the case for the Fire and Rescue service. Indicative numbers and analysis by ourselves and the NFCC suggest there could be as much as a 50% shortfall in funding. For GM this would equate to the costs of one fully staffed fire engine. Having recently taken steps, through local funding, to increase our provision with two additional fire engines, the potential need to reduce fire cover in response to a shortfall in NI funding would be extremely challenging.
  - Funding of pensions costs which in 2024/25 have caused a cost pressure of over £800k to the service that we understand will not be reviewed despite a disproportionate impact on some authorities. This funding has a significant impact on the spending power of the service and we have asked for the review allocations for 2024/25 to be re-considered as well as seeking assurances that the 2025/26 allocations will not leave authorities facing further shortfalls.
  - Capital financing costs have been calculated on MRP only due to the ability of internal borrowing. As at quarter 2 2024/25 capital reporting, MRP was calculated based on forecasts at a cost of £2.544m which is an increase of £1.076m in comparison to the 2024/25 budget.



- The budget for 2025/26 has a pressure of £1.4m. Which will need to be met from reserves based on current figures. This will be reviewed again in late January / early February pending final confirmation of the Local Government Final Settlement.
- This pressure could further increase if the funding for the increase in employer national insurance contributions (NICs) is not fully funded by the Government.

### **Budget Risks**

- Funding in relation to the 2024/25 pension increases are yet to be announced
- Funding in relation to Protection grants are yet to be announced.
- Future government funding beyond 2025/26 has not been confirmed.
- Pay inflation is negotiated at a rate in excess of the assumptions set out in the MTFP.
- Delivery of sufficient savings to meet the requirements of the MTFP.
- Future costs arising from the Grenfell Inquiry and proposed support in relation to Emergency Medical Response.
- As no capital grants are available to FRSs, future schemes in the capital programme will be funded by a combination of revenue underspends and borrowing. The costs associated with additional borrowing will have to be met from the revenue budget.
- Funding formula changes proposed to be implemented for 2026/27 onwards may change GMFRS share of the funding.

## **CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

6.20 GMFRS have reviewed capital investment requirements for the Fire estates, Fire ICT schemes and operational vehicles and equipment. As the current approved budget ends at 2027/28, estimates to 2032/33 have been included to be agreed in principle. The proposed capital programme requirements are set out below:

<u>Revised Capital Programme</u>	<u>2024/25</u>	<u>2025/26</u>	<u>2026/27</u>	<u>2027/28</u>	<u>2028/29</u>	<u>Future Years to 2032/33</u>	<u>Total</u>
Estates	10,066,528	31,058,661	21,761,056	3,482,419	906,462	57,675,849	124,950,975
Transport	3,069,952	7,030,342	4,095,000	275,000	135,000	7,612,500	22,217,794
ICT	756,116	350,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	600,000	2,156,116
Equipment	3,316,093	981,027	1,505,000	801,098	170,000	1,570,403	8,343,622
Sustainability	325,000	275,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	300,000	1,125,000
Health & Safety	370,643	0	0	0	0	0	370,643
Waking Watch Relief Fund	2,429,000	0	0	0	0	0	2,429,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,333,332</b>	<b>39,695,030</b>	<b>27,586,056</b>	<b>4,783,517</b>	<b>1,436,462</b>	<b>67,758,752</b>	<b>161,593,149</b>

6.21 A long-term estates strategy has been formulated, the approved phase 1 of the scheme with plans for new builds, extensions, refurbishments and carbon reduction schemes is underway with expected completion by 2027/28.

6.22 In 2024/2025 a full budget review of the Phase 1 Estates Strategy and linked programmes of work has been undertaken and approval of additional funding of £13.0m was given by the Deputy Mayor to take into account the significant cost pressures arising from significant supply chain inflation, site specific conditions and highways related costs emerging across the Estates programme.

6.23 Phase 2 of the Estates Strategy is expected to cover period 2028/29 to 2032/33, to align to the proposed extended capital programme timeline.

6.24 Alongside the estates strategy is a refresh programme of work to replace and update fitness equipment and enhance the facilities across stations in line with the Service's managing contaminants guidance. The investment for the full rollout of rest facilities across the service of £3.4m was approved, forecasting to start in 2025/26.

6.25 On 20 September 2024, ISG Construction Ltd, our main contractor for the construction of two new fire stations at Whitefield and Blackley entered administration. This led to an immediate halt to all works on site and termination notices to ISG were issued. Implications from delays caused by ISG construction entering administration are still to be fully determined and this continues to be discussed with administrators. A Stage 1 award has been granted for a contractor

for the Blackley and Whitefield sites with an estimated costing expecting by late January 2025.

- 6.26 Transport and equipment replacement programme budgets are profiled in accordance with expected need and delivery profiles allowing for lead times where supply chains require orders to be placed up to 18 months prior to goods being delivered. The replacement profile of vehicles beyond the current approved capital programme has been included at estimated costs including an allowance for inflation.
- 6.27 Following the successful roll out of the Waking Watch Relief Fund, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) requested further support from GMFRS to assist with the delivery of the Waking Watch Replacement Fund. This is due to come to an end within 2024/25.
- 6.28 The figures will be updated to reflect the quarter 3 2024/25 position once the information is available.
- 6.29 The Capital programme will be reviewed following confirmation of the final local government funding settlement and any updates to the MTFP.

### **BUDGET RISKS**

- 6.30 Future budget risks are set out below:
- Future government funding beyond 2025/26 has not been confirmed and is likely to be announced within the next Comprehensive Spending Review.
  - Any changes arising from the Fair Funding Review specifically impacting on the Fire Formula, currently subject to a consultation exercise.
  - Pay inflation for firefighters and local government employees in excess of the assumptions set out in the report.
  - Funding beyond 2025/26 has not yet been confirmed in respect of the pension increases.
  - McCloud/Sargeant Remedy – the judgement refers to the Court of Appeal's ruling that the Government's 2015 public sector pension reforms unlawfully treated existing public sectors differently based upon members' age. The implications of the remedy are being determined but are likely to be significant in future years.
  - Fire and Rescue Pension Grants continue to be paid at current levels, resulting in ongoing shortfalls.

- Delivery of sufficient savings to meet the requirements of the medium-term financial strategy, and dependent on availability of resources to deliver a change programme.
- Emergency Services Mobile Communications Project (ESMCP) – a national project to procure and replace the emergency services network has been paused but may create budget pressures in future years.
- Any changes required following the recommendations from the Grenfell Inquiry Phase 2 report and wider building safety crisis and ongoing work to deliver GMs remediation acceleration plan.
- Any business continuity arrangements that require funding which are not part of the base budget.
- As no capital grants are available to FRSs, future schemes in the capital programme will be funded by a combination of revenue underspends and borrowing. The costs associated with additional borrowing will have to be met from the revenue budget.

## LEGAL REQUIREMENTS, MAYORAL PRECEPT – GENERAL COMPONENT

- 1.1 The Finance Order sets out the process and the timetable for determining the general component of the precept.

### Stage 1

- 1.2 The Mayor must before 1<sup>st</sup> February notify the GMCA of the Mayor's draft budget in relation to the following financial year.

- 1.3 The draft budget must set out the Mayor's spending and how the Mayor intends to meet the costs of the Mayor's general functions, and must include "the relevant amounts and calculations".

- 1.4 "The relevant amounts and calculations" mean:
- (a) estimates of the amounts to be aggregated in making a calculation under sections 42A, 42B, 47 and 48;
  - (b) estimates of other amounts to be used for the purposes of such a calculation;
  - (c) estimates of such a calculation; or
  - (d) amounts required to be stated in a precept.

### Stage 2

- 1.5 The GMCA must review the draft budget and may make a report to the Mayor on the draft.

- 1.6 Any report:
- (a) must set out whether or not the GMCA would approve the draft budget in its current form; and
  - (b) may include recommendations, including recommendations as to the relevant amounts and calculations that should be used for the financial year

- 1.7 The Mayor's draft budget shall be deemed to be approved by the GMCA unless the Combined Authority makes a report to the Mayor before 8<sup>th</sup> February.

### Stage 3

- 1.8 Where the GMCA makes a report under 1.5, it must specify a period of at least 5 working days within which the Mayor may:
- (a) decide whether or not to make any revisions to the draft budget; and
  - (b) notify the GMCA of the reasons for that decision and, where revisions are made, the revised draft budget

### Stage 4

- 1.9 When any period specified by GMCA under 1.8 has expired, the GMCA must determine whether to:
- (a) approve the Mayor's draft budget (or revised draft budget, as the case may be), including the statutory calculations; or
  - (b) veto the draft budget (or revised draft budget) and approve the Mayor's draft Budget incorporating GMCA's recommendations contained in the report to the Mayor in 1.5 (including recommendations as to the statutory calculations).
- 1.10 The Mayor's draft budget (or revised draft budget) shall be deemed to be approved unless vetoed within 5 working days beginning with the day after the date on which the period specified in 1.8 expires.
- 1.11 Any decision to veto the Mayor's budget and approve the draft budget incorporating the GMCA's recommendations contained in the report to the Mayor in 1.5 must be decided by a two-thirds majority of the members (or substitute members acting in their place) of the GMCA present and voting on the question at a meeting of the authority (excluding the Mayor).
- 1.12 Immediately after any vote is taken at a meeting to consider a question under 1.9, there must be recorded in the minutes the names of the persons who cast a vote for the decision or against the decision or who abstained from voting.

**CALCULATION OF AGGREGATE AMOUNTS UNDER SECTION 42A (2) AND (3)  
OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT 1992 UPDATED IN THE  
LOCALISM ACT 2011)**

**BUDGET SUMMARY 2025/26**

<b>Budget Summary 2025/26</b>	<b>Gross Expenditure £000</b>	<b>Gross Income £000</b>	<b>Net Estimate £000</b>
Fire Service Budget	148,160	0	148,160
Other Mayoral General Budget	138,850	15,010	123,840
Capital Financing Charges	2,544	0	2,544
Contribution from balances/reserves	0	2,758	-2,758
<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>289,554</b>	<b>17,768</b>	<b>271,786</b>
Localised Business Rates		11,347	-11,347
Business Rate Baseline		52,024	-52,024
Services Grant		0	0
Section 31 Grant - Business Rates		9,211	-9,211
Section 31 Grant - pensions		4,769	-4,769
Transport - Statutory Charge		854	-854
Collection Fund surplus/-deficit	0	86,700	-86,700
<b>Precept requirement</b>	<b>289,554</b>	<b>183,580</b>	<b>105,974</b>

**CALCULATION OF TAX BASE**

The Tax Base is the aggregate of the Tax Bases calculated by the GM Councils in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992. These are currently estimated as:

<u>Local authority</u>	Council Tax Base
Bolton	81,201.0
Bury	58,269.8
Manchester	136,962.0
Oldham	60,270.7
Rochdale	59,377.5
Salford	77,872.8
Stockport	99,872.5
Tameside	65,693.3
Trafford	80,552.4
Wigan	99,368.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>819,440.7</b>

## AMOUNTS OF COUNCIL TAX FOR EACH BAND

2025/26	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Costs for Band £	85.97	100.29	114.62	128.95	157.61	186.26	214.92	257.90

## CALCULATION OF BAND D EQUIVALENT TAX RATE

	<b>£000</b>
Net expenditure	289,554
Less funding	182,673
	<b>106,881</b>
Adjusted for estimated surplus (-)/deficit on collection funds	-907
Net budget requirement to be met from Council Tax	<b>105,974</b>
Net budgetary requirement	105,974
Aggregate tax base	819,440.7
Basic tax amount at Band 'D'	<b>£128.95</b>



## GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 29 January 2025

Subject: Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme  
and Forward Plan of Key Decisions

Report of: Nicola Ward, Statutory Scrutiny Officer, GMCA

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### Purpose of Report:

To provide an opportunity for the Committee to review their draft Work Programme for January 2025 – March 2025 (Appendix A) and provide the Committee with the latest Forward Plan of Key Decisions (Appendix B) to ensure that they are informed of the forthcoming decisions to be taken by the GMCA, GM Mayor or any delegated officer or committee.

This report also includes the areas of interest gathered through a recent work programming activity by members and substitutes of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee and suggests areas for a task and finish review.

### Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to –

1. Consider the proposed Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme for January 2025 - March 2025.
2. Use the Forward Plan of Key Decisions to identify any potential areas for further scrutiny.

**Contact Officer:**

Nicola Ward, Statutory Scrutiny Officer, GMCA

[nicola.ward@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.ward@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

## GMCA Overview and Scrutiny draft Work Programme Jan – March 25

29 January

<b>Item</b>	<b>Lead officer/member</b>	<b>Trajectory of item</b>	<b>Ask of scrutiny</b>
Digital inclusion	<b>Nick Peel</b> / Beena Puri / Phil Swan		In response to request from members to provide an update on work being undertaken to address digital inclusion
Mayoral budget proposals	<b>GM Mayor</b> / Steve Wilson	GMCA January	To consider the proposals set out within the Mayoral budget and precept.

**TBC** February: Information briefing

5 February

<b>Item</b>	<b>Lead officer/member</b>	<b>Trajectory of item</b>	<b>Ask of scrutiny</b>
GM budgets	David Molyneux / Steve Wilson	GMCA February	To consider the GM budget proposals including the GMCA General Budget, GMFRS budget, GM Waste Budget and GM Transport budget.

26 February

<b>Item</b>	<b>Lead officer/member</b>	<b>Trajectory of item</b>	<b>Ask of scrutiny</b>
School readiness task and finish	<b>Mark Hunter</b> / Miriam Loxam		

recommendations update			
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**TBC March: Information briefing**

26 March

<b>Item</b>	<b>Lead officer/member</b>	<b>Trajectory of item</b>	<b>Ask of scrutiny</b>
Integrated Water Management T&F Review follow up	Andrew McIntosh		
Culture Portfolio Update	<b>Neil Emmott</b> / Marie-Claire Daley		

**Items to schedule as requested by elected members:**

- Homelessness
- The development of co-operatives
- Social cohesion
- The regeneration of Greater Manchester's high streets
- Activities and opportunities for young people
- GMCA relationship with schools/academies - how we support them as they take on so much more support - the increasing amount of SEND provision needed - the increase in bullying - the increase in NEETs
- Water quality

## What is a Forward Plan of Key Decisions?

The Register is a published list of the key decisions which are due to be taken by the:

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)
- Greater Manchester Elected Mayor
- Joint GMCA & AGMA Executive Board
- Transport for Greater Manchester Committee
- GMCA Resources Committee
- GMCA's Waste & Recycling Committee
- Statutory Officers of the GMCA

These decisions must be published on the Register at least **28 clear days before the decision is to be taken**, whether in public or private. The Register is updated at least once a

## What is a Key Decision?

A key decision defined by 'the Order' is a decision which, in the view of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, would result in any of the decision makers listed:

- (i) incurring expenditure over £500,000, or making significant savings of £500,000 or more relating to the budget for the service area to which the decision relates; or
- (ii) be significant in terms of its effects on persons living or working in an area of more two or more wards or electoral divisions of Greater Manchester.

## How to find out more on these proposed decisions

The report (other than those which contain confidential or exempt information) relating to these decisions will published on the GMCA's website five working days before the decision is to be made see [www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](http://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk).

For general information about the decision- making process please contact:

Julie Connor - Secretary to the GMCA  
[julie.connor@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:julie.connor@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

<p>month.</p> <p>This Register of Key Decisions has been prepared in accordance with <a href="#">Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017</a> ('the Order').</p> <p>The Register is published on the GMCA's website <a href="http://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk">www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk</a> and hard copies are available at the offices of:</p> <p>Greater Manchester Combined Authority &amp; Greater Manchester Mayor Tootal Buildings Oxford Street Manchester M1 6EU</p>	<p>The GMCA's has an Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee whose role is to contribute to the development of GMCA's strategies and policies, to scrutinise decisions of the decision-makers listed above and to consider any matter affecting those who live, work, study or run businesses in Greater Manchester.</p>	
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Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
<b>Green City Region</b>							
Net Zero Housing Retrofit Framework Agreement P309275	The Low Carbon Team, in conjunction with the Department for Energy and Net Zero's regional Net Zero Hubs, intends to put in place a national Framework	Group Finance Officer	March 2025		Councillor Tom Ross		Nic Langman nic.langman@greetermanche r-ca.gov.uk

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
Page 76	Agreement for the retrofit of housing with energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures under several government grant funding schemes. The framework will be for a total of 4 years and be self-funding through an Activity Based Income stream						



Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
Page 77	of 1% of contracted spend through the framework charged to suppliers once they secure their first call off contract from the agreement.						
Joint Minerals & Waste Plan: Options Report	To consider the options to review the existing joint Plans and confirm a preferred option.	AGMA Executive Board	January 2025	Report with recommendations	City Mayor Paul Dennett		David Hodcroft david.hodcroft@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
<b>Transport</b>							
Bus Franchising  Page 78	To approve the award of:  (i) the franchise contracts relating to bus franchising; (ii) contracts for the provision of various franchise scheme related services and goods	Group Chief Executive  GM Mayor  Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025  Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025  Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with recommendations	GM Mayor Andy Burnham  GM Mayor Andy Burnham  GM Mayor Andy Burnham		Steve Warrener steve.warrener@tfgm.com

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 79</p>	<p>(including all contracts for the provision of equipment, hardware, software and background IT infrastructure that are required to support and/or facilitate the delivery, and ongoing operation, of franchised bus services and the overall franchising</p>						

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
Page 80	scheme); and (iii) contracts for the acquisition and/or lease of land, sites or other assets (comprising real estate or otherwise) in connection with the delivery, and ongoing operation, of franchised bus services and the overall franchising						

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
	scheme.						
City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS)	To approve allocations and Governance and Assurance arrangements for specific schemes as and when required.	Group Chief Executive Bee Network Committee Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025  Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025  Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report and recommendations	GM Mayor Andy Burnham  GM Mayor Andy Burnham  GM Mayor Andy Burnham	Group Chief Executive	Steve Warrener steve.warrener@tfgm.com
Bus Depot Acquisitions	To negotiate and approve procedural changes for the acquisition of bus depots	Group Chief Executive Greater Manchester Combined	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025  Between 1 Jan 2025 and	28 Delivering the Bee Network - Bus Fares Fleet Depots and CRSTS	GM Mayor Andy Burnham  GM Mayor Andy Burnham		Steve Warrener steve.warrener@tfgm.com

<b>Decision title</b>	<b>What is the decision?</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Planned Decision Dates</b>	<b>Documents to be considered</b>	<b>Portfolio Lead</b>	<b>Lead Director</b>	<b>Officer Contact</b>
Page 82	to support Tranches 2 and 3 bus franchising, within previously approved capital and revenue budgets for bus franchising.	Authority	31 Mar 2025				
	Bus Depot Leases Tranche 2 and 3	To agree the final terms of leases of bus depots both in respect of interim leaseback	Group Chief Executive	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	12 Delivering the Bee Network	GM Mayor Andy Burnham	Jacqueline Elliott Jacqueline.Elliott@tfgm.com

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
Page 83	arrangements to existing operators and the franchise depot subleases to be granted to the franchise bus operators for Tranches 2 and 3.						
	Bus Depot Acquisitions Treasurer Decision Tranches 1, 2 & 3	To agree the terms of any agreement between GMCA and TfGM to bring Tranche 1 leases in line	Group Finance Officer	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	12 Delivering the Bee Network	GM Mayor Andy Burnham	

<b>Decision title</b>	<b>What is the decision?</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Planned Decision Dates</b>	<b>Documents to be considered</b>	<b>Portfolio Lead</b>	<b>Lead Director</b>	<b>Officer Contact</b>
	with Tranches 2 and 3.						
Subsidised Services	To approve forthcoming changes to subsidised bus services.	Bee Network Committee  Group Chief Executive	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025  Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with Recommendations	GM Mayor Andy Burnham  GM Mayor Andy Burnham	Group Chief Executive	Stephen Rhodes stephen.rhodes@tfgm.com
Active Travel Programme	Approval to release funding to progress the development and delivery of cycling and walking schemes and	Bee Network Committee	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with Recommendations	GM Mayor Andy Burnham	Group Chief Executive	Richard Nickson richard.nickson@tfgm.com



Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
	programmes.						
Local Growth Deal ( 1, 2 and 3) six monthly progress update	To grant Full or Conditional Approval and/or release funding / approve expenditure and allocate/reallocate funding across the programme for schemes within the Growth Deal 1,2,3 and/or the Transforming	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with Recommendations	GM Mayor Andy Burnham	Group Chief Executive	Steve Warrener steve.warrener@tfgm.com

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
	Cities Fund.						
Transport Network Planning and Review Process Page 86	<p>To approve the proposed approach to reviewing and developing the franchised bus network through a programme of network reviews.</p> <p>To approve the proposed network planning guidelines.</p>	Bee Network Committee	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with recommendations	GM Mayor Andy Burnham		Stephen Rhodes stephen.rhodes@tfgm.com

<b>Decision title</b>	<b>What is the decision?</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Planned Decision Dates</b>	<b>Documents to be considered</b>	<b>Portfolio Lead</b>	<b>Lead Director</b>	<b>Officer Contact</b>
	To approve the 12-month programme of network reviews.						
Bee Network Advertising Policy	To review the Bee Network Advertising Policy to ensure it aligns with and support the objectives of the Greater Manchester Strategy.	Bee Network Committee	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with recommendations	GM Mayor Andy Burnham		Steve Warrener steve.warrener@tfgm.com
Integrated Measures Ticketing and	To approve Final Business Cases and	Bee Network Committee	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with recommendations	GM Mayor Andy Burnham		Helen Humble helen.humble@tfgm.com

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
Customer	CRSTS funding to progress the development and delivery of Integrated Measures Ticketing and Customer schemes and programmes.						
Manchester Electric Vehicle Infrastructure	To approve the full business case and CRSTS funding to progress a number of Electric	Bee Network Committee	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with recommendations	GM Mayor Andy Burnham		Clare Kenyon clare.kenyon@manchester.gov.uk

<b>Decision title</b>	<b>What is the decision?</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Planned Decision Dates</b>	<b>Documents to be considered</b>	<b>Portfolio Lead</b>	<b>Lead Director</b>	<b>Officer Contact</b>
	Vehicle infrastructure schemes.						
City Centre Bus and Streets for All Connectivity Programme	To approve CRSTS funding to continue to progress development of the City Centre Bus and Streets for All Connectivity Programme.	Bee Network Committee	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with recommendations	GM Mayor Andy Burnham		Anthony Murden Anthony.murden@tfgm.com
Stockport Greek Street Bridge Streets for All	To approve the Full Business Case and CRSTS	Bee Network Committee	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with recommendations	GM Mayor Andy Burnham		Sue Stephenson sue.stephenson@stockport.g

<b>Decision title</b>	<b>What is the decision?</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Planned Decision Dates</b>	<b>Documents to be considered</b>	<b>Portfolio Lead</b>	<b>Lead Director</b>	<b>Officer Contact</b>
	funding to deliver Phase A and B of Stockport's Greek Street Bridge Streets for All scheme.						ov.uk
Whitefield Tunnel Renewal	To approve CRSTS funding to enable the Whitefield Tunnel renewal to be undertaken.	Bee Network Committee	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with recommendations	GM Mayor Andy Burnham		Ian Davies ian.davies@tfgm.com
Bee Network Fares and Ticketing Products	To approve changes to Bee Network fares and	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Jul 2025	Report with recommendations	GM Mayor Andy Burnham		Fran Wilkinson fran.wilkinson@tfgm.com

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
	ticketing products						
<b>Technical Education &amp; Skills</b>							
ESF Skills for Growth Commission	To proceed with the procurement and contracting of providers and activity relating to the GM Skills for Growth programme.	Group Chief Executive	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with recommendations	Councillor Eamonn O'Brien	Group Finance Officer	Gemma Marsh gemma.marsh@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk
Skills Bootcamps 2024 - 2025:	To extend current contracts of	Group Finance Officer	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2026	National Skills Funding (CA report Feb	Councillor Eamonn O'Brien		Hannah Vincent hannah.vincen

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
Contract extensions for wave 4 providers to continue delivery into wave 5. Wave 5. Wave 6 commissioning	wave 4 providers to continue to deliver into wave 5 of the Skills Bootcamps Programme  To proceed with the procurement and contracting of providers and activity relating to the GM Skills			2023)			t@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

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Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
	Bootcamps Programme.						
<b>Resources and Investment</b>							
Greater Manchester Business Funds Page 93	To conditionally approve business investments to proceed to due diligence and/or note commercial changes to existing investments, including where relevant negotiated	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with Recommendations	Councillor David Molyneux	Group Chief Executive	Kirsteen Armitage kirsteen.armitage@greatermanchestre-ca.gov.uk

<b>Decision title</b>	<b>What is the decision?</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Planned Decision Dates</b>	<b>Documents to be considered</b>	<b>Portfolio Lead</b>	<b>Lead Director</b>	<b>Officer Contact</b>
	settlements.						
GM UKSPF Programme - Progress and Performance Management Process	Share progress to date on the GM UKSPF programme and seek agreement for a programme management process for 2024/5	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with recommendations	Councillor David Molyneux		Alison Gordon alison.gordon@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk
Revenue and capital budget updates	Approve revisions to revenue budget and capital programme.	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	28 Feb 2025	Report with recommendations	Councillor David Molyneux		Steve Wilson Steve.Wilson@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
<b>Housing</b>							
GM City Deal Receipts - Investment Approval Recommendations	The approval of investments funded with City Deal Receipts received from Homes England.	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report	City Mayor Paul Dennett		Michael Walmsley Michael.Walmsley@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk
GM Brownfield Programme	The allocation of funding from GMCA's brownfield programme to residential developments in GM.	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with recommendations	City Mayor Paul Dennett		Michael Walmsley Michael.Walmsley@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

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<b>Decision title</b>	<b>What is the decision?</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Planned Decision Dates</b>	<b>Documents to be considered</b>	<b>Portfolio Lead</b>	<b>Lead Director</b>	<b>Officer Contact</b>
Greater Manchester Housing Funds	To conditionally approve housing investments to proceed to due diligence and/or note commercial changes to existing investments	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with Recommendations	City Mayor Paul Dennett	Group Chief Executive	Michael Walmsley Michael.Walmsley@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk
Agreement to using further Greater Manchester Housing Investment Loan Fund	To agree the further use of Greater Manchester Housing Investment Loan Fund	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with Recommendations	City Mayor Paul Dennett	Group Chief Executive	Michael Walmsley Michael.Walmsley@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
surpluses	(GMHILF) surpluses to support the delivery of the GM Housing Strategy						
Greater Manchester Property Funds	To conditionally approve property investments to proceed to due diligence and/or note commercial changes to existing investments.	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Between 1 Jan 2025 and 31 Mar 2025	Report with Recommendations	City Mayor Paul Dennett	Group Chief Executive	Andrew McIntosh andrew.mcintosh@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Decision title	What is the decision?	Decision Maker	Planned Decision Dates	Documents to be considered	Portfolio Lead	Lead Director	Officer Contact
<b>Digital</b>							
Award contract for the North West Secure Data Environment (SW) - Target Operating Model Implementation	To award contract for a Northwest Secure Data Environment Target Operating Model Implementation	Group Finance Officer	Not before 16th Jan 2025		Councillor Nicholas Peel		Kieran Smith Kieran.Smith@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk