Public Document

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

GREATER MANCHESTER CORPORATE ISSUES & REFORM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2020/21

DATE: **Tuesday 14 July 2020**

TIME: **4.00 pm**

VENUE: **Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams Live Event**

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **CHAIRS 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 the start of the meeting.

4. **MINUTES** 5 - 8

To consider the approval of the minute of the meeting held on Tuesday 16 June 2020 as a correct record.

5. **HIGH RISE RESIDENTS SURVEY** 9 - 60
REPORT OF CITY MAYOR PAUL DENNETT, SALFORD CITY COUNCIL

6. **GMCA & LOCAL AUTHORITY FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF COVID 19** 61 - 84
REPORT OF STEVE WILSON, GMCA TREASURER

7. **WORK PROGRAMME** 85 - 86
REPORT OF JOANNE HERON, GMCA STATUTORY SCRUTINY OFFICER

BOLTON	**MANCHESTER**	**ROCHDALE**	**STOCKPORT**	**TRAFFORD**
BURY	**OLDHAM**	**SALFORD**	**TAMESIDE**	**WIGAN**

Please note that this meeting will be livestreamed via www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk, please speak to a Governance Officer before the meeting should you not wish to consent to being included in this recording.

FOR INFORMATION

8. GMCA REGISTER OF KEY DECISIONS

https://democracy.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteeId=386

9. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

All meetings to be held virtually at 4.00 pm on:

- 8 September 2020 (two invites sent – one will be cancelled)
- 6 October 2020
- 10 November 2020
- 15 December 2020 (to be re-arranged to 8 December 2020)
- 19 January 2021
- 9 February 2021
- 16 March 2021

COMMITTEE	**MEMBERSHIP**	**2020/2021**
Councillor Paula Appleby	Manchester	Labour
Councillor Tanya Burch	Salford	Labour
Councillor Anne Duffield	Trafford	Labour
Councillor Beverley Fletcher	Bolton Council	Conservative
Councillor Chris Goodwin	Oldham	Labour
Councillor David Jolley	Salford	Labour
Councillor Joanne Marshall	Wigan	Labour
Councillor John McGahan	Stockport	Conservative
Councillor Colin McLaren	Oldham	Labour
Councillor Dave Morgan	Trafford	Conservative
Councillor Kallum Nolan	Rochdale	Labour
Councillor Tim Pickstone	Bury	Liberal Democrat
Councillor Dena Ryness	Stockport	Labour
Councillor Teresa Smith	Tameside	Labour

For copies of papers and further information on this meeting please refer to the website www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk. Alternatively, contact the following Governance & Scrutiny Officer: Jenny Hollamby, Senior Governance & Scrutiny Officer
✉ jenny.hollamby@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

This agenda was issued on 6 July 2020 on behalf of Julie Connor, Secretary to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Churchgate House, 56 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 6EU

CORPORATE ISSUES & REFORM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
TUESDAY 14 JULY 2020

Declaration of Councillors' Interests in Items Appearing on the Agenda

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Minute Item No. / Agenda Item No.	Nature of Interest	Type of Interest
		Personal / Prejudicial / Disclosable Pecuniary
		Personal / Prejudicial / Disclosable Pecuniary
		Personal / Prejudicial / Disclosable Pecuniary
		Personal / Prejudicial / Disclosable Pecuniary

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

QUICK GUIDE TO DECLARING INTERESTS AT GMCA MEETINGS

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 notified within 28 days. Personal interests that should be on the register include:

- Bodies to which you have been appointed by the GMCA
- 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:

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

If the answer to that question is 'No' – then that is the end of the matter. 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 PREJUDICIAL?

A personal interest becomes a prejudicial interest:

- where the well being, 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.
- 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	FOR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS
YOU MUST • Notify the governance officer for the meeting as soon as you realise you	**YOU MUST** • Notify the governance officer for the meeting as soon as you realise you

have an interest • Inform the meeting that you have a personal interest and the nature of the interest • Fill in the declarations of interest form **TO NOTE:** • 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.	have a prejudicial interest (before or during the meeting) • Inform the meeting that you have a prejudicial interest and the nature of the interest • Fill in the declarations of interest form • Leave the meeting while that item of business is discussed • 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 GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY
CORPORATE ISSUES AND REFORM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD TUESDAY 16 JUNE 2020 VIRTUAL MEETING VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

PRESENT:

Councillor Tom Pickstone	Bury (Chair)
Councillor Greg Stanton	Manchester (Substitute)
Councillor Hazel Gloster	Oldham (Substitute)
Councillor Sam Hamdani	Oldham (Substitute)
Councillor Colin McLaren	Oldham
Councillor Kallum Nolan	Rochdale
Councillor Ray Dutton	Rochdale (Substitute)
Councillor Tanya Burch	Salford
Councillor David Jolley	Salford
Councillor Sean Anstee	Trafford (Substitute)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Andrew Lightfoot	Deputy Chief Executive, GMCA
Joanne Heron	Statutory Scrutiny Officer, GMCA
Jenny Hollamby	Senior Governor & Scrutiny Officer, GMCA
Jim Wallace	Chief Fire Officer, GMFRS
Dawn Docx	Deputy Chief Fire Officer, GMFRS
Tony Hunter	Assistant Chief Fire Officer, GMFRS

The Statutory Scrutiny Officer opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the first virtual meeting of the Greater Manchester Corporate Issues & Reform Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The meeting was being livestreamed to members of the public in line with the latest legislation enabling meetings to take place virtually during the Coronavirus pandemic.

CI&R/1/20 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anne Duffield (Bolton), Chris Goodwin (Oldham), John McGahan (Stockport), Dave Morgan (Trafford), Dena Ryness (Stockport), Teresa Smith (Tameside) and Pat Sullivan (Rochdale).

CI&R/2/20 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR 2020/21

The Statutory Scrutiny Officer invited nominations for the role of Chair for the 2020/21 Municipal Year. This was subject to meeting the requirement that the Chair and Vice-Chair were not Members of the same political party of which, the Mayor was a Member.

The Committee agreed the appointment of Councillor Tim Pickstone (Bury) as Chair for the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED/-

That Councillor Tim Pickstone (Bury) be appointed as Chair for the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

CI&R/3/20 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR 2020/21

The Chair asked for nominations for the role of Vice-Chair for the 2020/21 Municipal Year. This was subject to meeting the requirement that the Chair and Vice-Chair were not Members of the same political party of which, the Mayor was a Member.

The Committee agreed the appointment of Councillor John McGahan (Stockport) as Vice-Chair for the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED/-

That Councillor John McGahan (Stockport) be appointed as Vice-Chair for the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

CI&R/4/20 MEMBERSHIP OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER CORPORATE ISSUES & REFORM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee noted its Membership for the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

The Chair advised that there were still two vacancies (Bury and Manchester) and it was hoped that Districts would make their appointments as soon as possible.

RESOLVED/-

That the Committee Membership be noted.

CI&R/5/20 MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT AND ANNUAL DECLARATION FORM

Consideration was given to a reported that reminded Members that the GMCA's Member Code of Conduct set out high expectations with regard to Members' conduct. As Members of the GMCA's Overview & Scrutiny Committees were co-opted on to a GMCA Committee, the GMCA Code applied to them when they were acting in this capacity. Members were also asked to complete the Annual Register of Interest Form, which would be sent electronically to them following the meeting.

RESOLVED/-

1. That Members note the GMCA's Member Code of Conduct (Appendix A of the report).

2. That Members complete the Annual Register of Interest Form and return it to the GMCA.

CI&R/6/20 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee noted its Terms of Reference for the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED/-

That the Terms of Reference be noted.

CI&R/7/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

CI&R/8/20 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 FEBRUARY 2020

RESOLVED/-

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2020 be approved as a correct record.

CI&R/9/20 GREATER MANCHESTER VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE (VCSE) ACCORD

This item was deferred to the next meeting on 14 July 2020.

RESOLVED/-

That the item be deferred to the next meeting.

CI&R/10/20 WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered a report that set out the Committee's Work Programme for Members to develop, review and agree. As there were only five Members of the Committee present at the meeting, the Chair proposed and Members agreed that an informal workshop (including Substitute Members) would take place to develop items for Work Programme prior to the next meeting on 14 July 2020.

The agenda items agreed for the next meeting on 14 July 2020, were noted as:

1. Greater Manchester Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Accord

2. High Rise Resident's Survey

3. GMCA Budgets

4. COVID19 Recovery

RESOLVED/-

1. That a Work Programme informal session be organised.

2. That the above agenda items be considered at the next meeting on 14 July 2020.

CI&R/11/20 MEMBERS ARE ASKED TO AGREE DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates of future meetings were agreed as:

- 14 July 2020
- 8 September 2020
- 6 October 2020
- 10 November 2020
- 15 December 2020
- 19 January 2021
- 9 February 2021
- 16 March 2021

Regarding times of meetings, it was agreed that an email proposing three different times would be sent to Members to find out what worked best for them. Members needed to find a time to enable the Committee to be quorate.

A Member suggested that more onus should be placed on Committee Members to help find substitutes should they not be able to attend meetings.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the dates of meetings be agreed.

2. That Members be consulted about the times of future meetings.

GREATER MANCHESTER HIGH RISE RESIDENTS SURVEY

SUMMARY REPORT

HIGH RISE TASK FORCE PARTNERS

GREATER MANCHESTER HIGH RISE RESIDENTS SURVEY

Following the fire at Grenfell Tower in June 2017, the Greater Manchester High Rise Task Force was established to ensure Greater Manchester was prepared to respond in the event of a major incident, that all high rise buildings are safe from fire, and residents feel safe.

To support the work of the Task Force, research was commissioned to gather and analyse information about experiences and perceptions of fire risk amongst residents living in high rise buildings. While it is methodologically complex to identify whether perceptions and experiences have changed as a direct consequence of the Grenfell Tower fire, it is possible to gain an understanding of the retrospective impact of such a tragedy.

The research was undertaken to inform the future work of the High Rise Task Force and provide a clear evidence base of the issues and concerns faced by residents living in high rise buildings across Greater Manchester.

At the time of the survey 57 high rise residential buildings had adopted interim measures to support a change in the evacuation strategy. Since the survey closed there has been an increase in the number of buildings affected and this reflects the increasing scale of fire safety defects being identified following invasive surveys and specialist reports which is not restricted to the risk of external fire spread posed by certain cladding systems. Although the number of buildings affected fluctuates it is now consistently in the region of 80 high rise buildings at any one time.

The High Rise Task Force ran this survey from July 2019 until September 2019. Responses received in the first few weeks were used as part of the High Rise Task Force response to the Government's Building a Safer Future consultation to ensure the experiences and views of residents were included.

172 residents responded to the survey from 95 buildings. Just over 50% were received from leaseholders. 27% of responses were from residents who rent their flat from a housing association or the council. A further 17% were from residents who rent from a private landlord.

METHODOLOGY

The aim of this research was to understand residents' views on fire safety in the building where they live, and understand whether residents had experienced any problems, issues or concerns in their building following the Grenfell Tower fire.

The survey was focused on the following areas:

- How do residents perceive risk and what has influenced these perceptions?
- Have residents' perception of fire risk and safety changed following the Grenfell Tower tragedy?
- Do residents feel that issues around fire safety are communicated to them in an appropriate and timely fashion?
- Have residents experienced any health or financial impact following the Grenfell Tower and remedial activities that have been ongoing since then?

Online surveys were used as the method of collecting information. Online surveys are an easy and cost effective method of capturing information.

However it is recognised that it can be difficult to capture qualitative information from residents using online surveys. Residents were asked some open questions in the online survey, which allowed them to provide feedback in their own words.

The online survey was hosted on Citizen Space, which is the system used by Greater Manchester Combined Authority for online surveys. Electronic submissions were able to be made between Monday 8th July and Sunday 15th September 2019.

FIRE SAFETY

In this section residents responding to the survey were asked about their concerns around and understanding of fire safety in their building.

65% of residents responding to the survey said they were concerned about having a fire in their home.

Residents who owned their flats were more concerned about having a fire than those who rent their property from a housing association or from a private landlord.

When asked about their concerns regarding risk of fire in their building

77% of residents who lived in a building where cladding was identified as a risk were concerned.

This compared to...

48% of residents living in a building where the cladding has not been identified as a risk were concerned.

Although residents were concerned about having a fire, generally they felt confident that they were putting measures in place to prevent a fire happening in their own flat.

70% of residents thought they were either 'not very likely' or 'not at all likely' to have a fire

They were concerned that others living in the building may not take similar precautions, making them worried about a fire happening in their building.

FIRE SAFETY

98% of residents responding to the survey have working smoke alarms fitted in their flat.

However the frequency that residents tested their smoke alarms varied. Just over a quarter of residents responding to the survey said they test their smoke alarms either monthly or weekly.

30% of residents responding to the survey said they test their smoke alarms less frequently or never test their smoke alarms.

80% of residents responding to the survey said their building is fitted with a fire alarm system.

However, almost 12% of residents responding said they were unsure whether their building was fitted with a fire alarm system.

INFORMATION ABOUT EVACUATION

Some residents commented that they had forgotten their evacuation procedure and others incorrectly stated the evacuation strategy for their building. This was followed up immediately for affected buildings.

1/3 When asked to comment on the evacuation procedures for their building, 1/3 of residents responding to this question didn't know the evacuation strategy for their building.

When this was analysed by tenure, approximately;

2/3 of residents who incorrectly stated their buildings' evacuation procedures were owner occupiers. The other third rent from a social landlord.

This suggests that there is proportion of residents in these buildings who believe they know the correct procedures, but do not, whereas residents in privately rented properties are more likely not to know the evacuation procedures at all.

Some residents commented that they had forgotten their evacuation procedure and others incorrectly stated the evacuation strategy for their building.

60% of residents responding to the survey said they would be able to evacuate safely in the event of a fire.

However, almost 20% said they would not be able to evacuate safely and a further 20% were unsure whether they would be able to evacuate safely.

FIRE SAFETY ADVICE

Residents were asked whether they have ever sought advice about fire safety.

40% had previously sought advice.

96.5% said they would trust GMFRS to provide advice

Residents were asked which formats they would prefer to use to access fire safety advice...

Almost 65% of residents said the would prefer face to face visits.

63% of residents said they would like to access fire safety content on the internet.

50% of residents said they would like to receive fire safety information via leaflets

Accessing information about fire safety via newspapers, TV and the radio were less popular formats.

Other residents said they would like to receive information via emails, text messages, meetings, online videos and social media.

FIRE SAFETY INFORMATION

Residents were asked how frequently they receive information from their landlord or managing agent about fire safety procedures in their block.

30%

of residents said they receive information at least every few months.

14%

of residents said they receive information every 6-12 months

55%

of residents said they receive information less frequently or never receive information from their landlord or managing agent about fire safety procedures in their block.

Those renting their property from a housing association felt more informed about the fire safety procedures within their building.

- 43% said they receive information at least every few months.

HEALTH IMPACTS

Some residents commented that the fire safety of their home environment and the associated financial costs have had an impact on their mental health and wellbeing.

- Some residents commented that this worry and stress is preventing them from sleeping properly.
- Other residents said they are worried about being able to sell their flat because of cladding and fire safety issues.

Residents were asked if they were able to keep their flat comfortably warm during the cold winter months.

83% of residents stated that they were able to keep their flat comfortably warm.

The majority of residents (72%) stated that they noticed no difference in indoor temperature last winter compared with the winter before.

However, approximately 12% of residents found their flats harder to heat.

> "...we have now been told that our property is worth zero which has had a very damaging effect on our relationship and mental health."

FUTURE COST CONCERNS

Residents were asked whether actions had been taken in response to the Grenfell Tower fire.

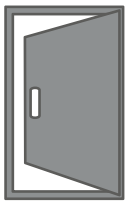
36% of residents said their building has used a waking watch over the past 18 months

12% of resident said there has been removal or replacement of cladding on their building over the past 18 months

9% said fire doors have been replaced in their building over the past 18 months

5% said sprinklers have been installed in their building over the past 18 months.

In addition, residents also commented on additional remedial works that have occurred in their building.



These include:

- Installation of fire alarms systems
- Fire extinguishers
- Removal of car parking spaces directly under the building
- Works related to internal compartmentation of flats.

FINANCIAL IMPACT FOR LEASEHOLDERS

Analysis of the free text responses provided showed what problems and concerns were faced by residents living in high rise properties.

The analysis showed that residents living in their own flats were most concerned about the financial impact related to fire safety works.

Residents commented that increasing service charges to cover the costs of fire safety remedial work and replacement of cladding was causing significant problems.

400%

Some residents commented on an increase in service charges of over 400%.

Other residents commented that they have been presented with significant bills to cover the costs of remedial works

"I've been charged £10,000 for works"

"My service charge has increased from £90 per month to £480 per month to cover cladding replacement"

FUTURE COST CONCERNS

Some residents commented that they have not experienced increased costs yet, but were anticipating costs increasing in the future:

"The work to my building has not started, but the management company has proposed the costs of works to be added to our maintenance charge. This will be approximately £1,000 extra per month."

"Each flat might have to pay £30,000 to have the cladding removed"

Residents also explained other impacts as a results of increased costs.

"We are having to cut back to be able to afford increased costs, and I can't afford to save to buy a house because of increased costs"

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Some residents commented on the perception of paying for a service they do not receive.

> "We pay for a service we do not get, for example, we pay for 24/7 onsite security, but we're lucky if we get them a few days per week and our security gates are often broken"

Finally, residents were asked if they had tried to sell or remortgage their home within the past 18 months.

- Approximately 17% of residents responding to the survey said they have tried to sell or remortgage their home.
- A number of these residents said they experienced problems or issues when trying to sell or remortgage.
- Others commented that they would like to sell their flat, but they are aware that others have experienced problems, therefore have deliberately not perused this until there is more clarity on what documentation is required for any potential buyers to secure a mortgage.
- A significant number of residents commented that they were unable to sell or remortgage without proof that the cladding on their building was non-combustible.

> "Our buyer is not able to proceed without a building certificate"

> "Applied for additional borrowing to cover cost of S20... This was denied on the basis of not having a fire safety certificate"

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Other residents commented that the sale of their flats have fallen through because lenders are unwilling to offer mortgages, or will not offer a mortgage until there is a guarantee on what type of cladding is on the building.

"I have been trying to sell my apartment for the past 15 months. Two buyers have backed out of the sale as there was no cladding report...I'm still finding it hard to sell my apartment and move on."

"I was unable to sell due to a large number of fire safety issues. I only discovered this after having an offer accepted on a house and having found a buyer for the flat."

"The sale fell through as we didn't have a fire safety certificate. We have now been told that our property is worth zero."

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GREATER MANCHESTER
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

GREATER MANCHESTER HIGH RISE TASK FORCE

High Rise Residents Survey

February 2020

Completed by Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service on behalf of the Greater Manchester High Rise Task Force

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Document Version Control

Document Version Control		
Document Version	**Date**	**Document Authors**
V1.0	December 2019	Dr Emma Dean, Research & Evaluation Officer
V2.0	January 2020	Dr Emma Dean, Research & Evaluation Officer (Amended following comments from Jenni Seex)

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Executive Summary

Following the fire at Grenfell Tower in June 2017, a High Rise Task Force was established in Greater Manchester to ensure every residential high rise tower block in Greater Manchester was safe from fire, and residents living in these tower blocks received appropriate fire safety advice. To support the work of the Task Force, a research project was proposed, which aimed to gather and analyse information about experiences and perceptions of fire risk amongst residents living in high rise buildings. While it is methodologically complex to identify whether perceptions and experiences have changed as a direct consequence of the Grenfell Tower fire, it is possible to gain an understanding of the retrospective impact of such a tragedy. In addition, commissioning a formal research project about residents' views and experiences allows the Task Force to collect information on key topics in a structured and robust way.

The findings of this survey should help the High Rise Task Force understand some of the issues and concerns faced by residents living in high rise buildings across Greater Manchester. In summary, the results from the survey have identified the following:

- Generally, residents living in buildings with cladding that has been identified as a risk are concerned about fire. Residents living in taller buildings were also more concerned about having a fire than those living in buildings with fewer storeys.
- Typically, residents are concerned about fire, but they generally think their likelihood to have a fire is low. Residents tend to be concerned that other residents living in the building do not take the same fire safety precautions as they do. Residents are concerned that fires happening elsewhere in the building may affect them and their home.
- There was a significant proportion of residents who did not know the correct evacuation procedures for their building. Some residents commented that they could not remember what they were, and others incorrectly said they should 'stay put', however the evacuation procedures had changed to a full evacuation. In addition, a large proportion of residents commented that they rarely receive information from their landlord or managing agent about fire safety in their building. This may suggest that more communication and engagement with residents is needed to ensure they receive timely and up to date information about fire safety matters in their building.
- Residents commented that Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) would be the most trusted source to provide information and guidance about fire safety. In addition,

residents commented that they would prefer to receive this information face to face (i.e. during meetings or visits), via the internet and social media or through posters and leaflets.

- Based on previous research completed by the Fuel Poverty Action Group[1], it was anticipated that residents may have experienced issues with cold homes due to cladding being removed but not yet replaced. However, this did not seem to be a significant issue to residents responding to this survey, with the majority of residents commenting that they were able to keep their home warm during the cold winter months. Questions related to the health and wellbeing impact of the Grenfell Tower fire were linked with the cold homes question. This means that only residents who said they experienced problems heating their home were asked questions about health impact. It is well researched that cold homes can impact negatively on respiratory and cardiovascular health, and the small number of residents who had issues heating their home also felt that their cold home had a negative impact on these conditions. Residents who completed this section of the survey also commented on their mental health and wellbeing during the period following the Grenfell Tower fire. In addition, many residents commented on their mental health and wellbeing in other parts of the survey. Residents commented on feelings of stress, anxiety and worry. It is recommended that more work is completed in this area to understand the impact fully.
- Residents discussed the financial impact they are experiencing because of fire safety remedial work at great length. Residents commented that they are experiencing financial problems because of increasing costs and they are feeling worried and anxious about how they will be able to afford increasing costs. Residents who own their property commented on how they are finding it difficult to sell their flat, which makes them feel 'trapped', and how this is also negatively impacting on relationships and their overall wellbeing.

[1] Fuel Poverty Action briefing: Cladding – A national emergency. Available at: https://www.fuelpovertyaction.org.uk/research/

1. Introduction

Following the fire at Grenfell Tower in June 2017, a High Rise Task Force was established in Greater Manchester to ensure every residential high rise tower block in Greater Manchester was safe from fire, and residents living in these tower blocks received appropriate fire safety advice.

Since it was established, the work of the High Rise Task Force has included:

- Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) inspecting every residential high rise in Greater Manchester to ensure they comply with fire regulations. GMFRS officers have worked, and continue to work, with local authorities, social landlords, managing agents and residents to address fire safety concerns.
- Offering advice and support to residents on staying safe in their homes by offering Safe and Well visits to residents in affected blocks.
- Submitting evidence to the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety and Greater Manchester's view that the building regulations system is not fit for purpose and needs to be overhauled.
- Lobbying government to provide clear guidance and the necessary funding to ensure Greater Manchester buildings and residents are safe. This includes supporting housing providers and building owners with interim fire safety measures and the replacement of cladding systems, ensuring GMFRS has the resources needed to effectively enforce fire safety legislation, and protecting residents.
- Carrying out the Greater Manchester High Rise Residents Survey to gain a better understanding of the issues and concerns of residents, which will help direct and inform the future work of the Task Force.
- Submitting a Task Force response to the Government's Building a Safer Consultation, using resident views gathered from the resident survey and focus group to inform the response.
- Holding Civil Contingencies workshops for every borough in Greater Manchester to support contingency planning for significant events in high rise buildings.
- Working with housing providers to develop Greater Manchester standards and developing a procurement framework for fire alarms and retrospective installation of sprinklers.
- Salix Homes, one of the housing providers from the High Rise Task Force, are participating in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Early Adopter Programme to trial

ways of working in line with the recommendations of Dame Judith Hackitt's review of building regulations.

At the time of conducting this research, 57 high rise residential buildings were in interim measures across Greater Manchester. At the time of publishing this research, the number of buildings in interim measures has increased to 80 across Greater Manchester. This reflects the increasing scale of fire safety defects being identified following invasive surveys and specialist reports which is not restricted to the risk of external fire spread posed by certain cladding systems.

A key area of work for the High Rise Task Force was to commission some research to understand residents' views in relation to their perception of risk and safety within the building where they live. There was some anecdotal evidence in the media and presented at the High Rise Task Force[2] suggesting that residents had concerns about fire safety in the building where they live. However, there was no formal process for residents to provide feedback on this in a structured way. Therefore, it was recognised that a study was required to understand this in more detail. It was anticipated that understanding residents' perceptions of risk and safety will help with future communications and engagement provided to residents living in high rise buildings.

While it is methodologically complex to identify whether perceptions and experiences have changed as a direct consequence of the Grenfell Tower fire, it is possible to gain an understanding of the retrospective impact of such a tragedy. In addition, commissioning a formal research project about residents' views and experiences allows the Task Force to collect information on key topics in a structured and robust way.

2. Methodology

The aim of this research was to understand residents' views on fire safety in the building where they live, and understand whether residents had experienced any problems, issues or concerns in their building in the period following the Grenfell Tower fire.

[2] Anecdotal evidence from residents regarding their views about fire safety in high rise buildings:

- Manchester Evening News – 24/06/17: https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/what-residents-think-cladding-being-13233036
- ITV News Tonight Programme – 06/07/17: http://www.itv.com/news/2017-07-06/how-safe-are-our-high-rises/
- BBC News – 22/10/17: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41666753
- Manchester Evening News – 31/10/2019: https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/greater-manchester-tower-blocks-grenfell-17173253

As such, the following research questions were addressed through this research:

- How do residents perceive risk and what has influenced these perceptions?
- Has residents' perception of fire risk and safety changed following the Grenfell Tower tragedy?
- Do residents feel that issues around fire safety are communicated to them in an appropriate and timely fashion?
- Have residents experienced any health or financial impact following the Grenfell Tower and remedial activities that have been ongoing since then?

Online surveys were used as the method of collecting information. Online surveys are an easy and cost effective method of capturing information. There are a number of advantages of using online surveys for this research. Online surveys have the ability to be distributed to a large audience relatively quickly and easily. In addition, online surveys can be conducted remotely by participants, preventing geographical dependence or dependence on the availability of researchers to conduct face to face interviews with participants. Finally, using online surveys provide an opportunity to repeat this research at a later date to understand whether residents' views have changed over time.

However, it is recognised that it can be difficult to capture qualitative information from residents using online surveys. Residents were asked some open questions in the online survey, which allowed them to provide feedback in their own words. In addition, it is anticipated that further qualitative research will be completed following the publication of the survey findings. The aim of this is to explore some of the key findings in more detail. This phase of the research will be delivered via focus group sessions with residents. Focus groups bring together a number of participants to explore and discuss a particular issue or theme. Open-ended questions and prompts are used by the facilitators to generate discussion amongst the group, encouraging self-reflection.

The online survey was hosted on Citizen Space, which is the system used by Greater Manchester Combined Authority for online surveys. Electronic submissions were able to be made between Monday 8th July and Sunday 15th September 2019. This provided sufficient time for the survey to be circulated to residents and give them an opportunity to complete. The survey was briefly paused on 28th July 2019 to allow for responses to be exported and considered within the Greater Manchester High Rise Task Force response to the Building a Safer Future consultation.

During this time, the survey was promoted via the following methods:

- Promoted to members of the High Rise Task Force to be distributed through their networks;
- Regular promotion on GMFRS social media channels (Facebook and Twitter);

- Promotion through the High Rise Residents' Forum.

In the overall development of the survey, a range of stakeholders were involved in bringing it to fruition. Table 1 shows a list of stakeholders who were involved in the development of the residents' survey.

Table 1 - Stakeholders involved with the High Rise Resident's Survey

Element	Stakeholders
Initial consultation about the development of a residents' survey	Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service High Rise Taskforce members GMCA Research team
Development of a question set	Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service High Rise Taskforce members GMCA Research team GMCA Communications and Engagement team
Data Protection support and guidance[3]	GMCA Information Governance Team
Advice on technical solution for distributing the survey	GMCA Communications and Engagement team
Promotion of the survey	High Rise Taskforce Communications
Handing of the raw data	GMFRS Research & Evaluation
Analysis of the data	GMFRS Research & Evaluation
Reporting on the data	GMFRS Research & Evaluation
Dissemination of findings	Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service High Rise Taskforce Communications High Rise Taskforce members

[3] Support provided for the development of a Data Protection Impact Assessment for this research.

3. Research Findings

The following sections of this report outlines the findings from the online survey. This presents both the qualitative and quantitative responses that were provided by residents. Where relevant, some responses have been cross referenced with others to provide a greater understanding of potential issues or concerns that residents may be facing.

The report illustrates findings from the survey in a number of tables and graphs, with a narrative summarising the findings. In addition, quotes from residents have been included within this report. These are shown in *blue italic* font.

3.1. Building demographics

This section of the report aims to understand more about the buildings that residents who responded to the survey live in. In particular, this section aims to understand the following:

- Whether residents responding to the survey are leaseholders, or rent from a private landlord or housing association;
- Whether residents responding to the survey are living in high rise blocks of flats;
- Which floors of the building residents live on;
- How long residents have lived in their flat.

Understanding the building demographics was important to help understand residents' experiences. In addition, it was important to be able to differentiate whether, for example, residents who were leaseholders had a different experience from those who rented. This will help the Greater Manchester High Rise Task Force draw conclusions and make recommendations from the findings of this survey.

A total of 172 responses were received to the resident survey from 95 high rise buildings in Greater Manchester. Just over 50% of responses were received from leaseholders. Twenty-seven percent of responses were from residents who rent their flat from a housing association or the council and a further 17% were from residents who rent from a private landlord. Smaller proportions of responses were from residents who live rent free, rent from family or friends or have shared ownership of their flat. This is illustrated in Table 2. This is broadly representative of tenure across Greater Manchester,

where approximately 60% of properties are owner occupied, 22% are rented from a housing association and 17% are privately rented[4].

Table 2 – Responses to the question "Do you own or rent your home?"

Tenure	Proportion of responses
Live rent free	1.2%
Other	1.2%
Own (outright or with a mortgage)	51.7%
Rent from a housing association or the council	27.3%
Rent from a private landlord	17.4%
Rent from family or friends	0.6%
Shared ownership	0.6%

Seventy-seven percent of residents responding to the survey live in buildings taller than seven storeys. To break this down further, 22% of residents live in buildings that have between seven and ten storeys; 21% live in buildings that have between 11 and 14 storeys and 34% live in buildings with more than 15 storeys. Almost 95% of residents responding to this survey who rent from a housing association live in buildings taller than seven stories, compared with 83% of residents who privately rent and 68% of residents who own their property. When asked which floor they live on, approximately 25% of residents responding to this survey live on floors one to three, 26% live on floors four to six and 27% live on floors seven to ten. Twenty-two percent of residents responding to this survey live on the 11th storey or higher within their building. This is illustrated in Table 3 below.

Table 3 - Responses to the question "Which floor do you live on?"

Which floor do you live on?	Proportion of responses
1 – 3	25.0%
4 – 6	26.2%
7 – 10	26.7%
11 – 14	13.4%
15 +	8.7%

[4] Greater Manchester Housing Strategy: https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/2257/gm-housing-strategy-2019-2024.pdf

Seventy-six percent of residents participating in the survey have lived in their flat for longer than two years. When this is analysed by tenure, 87% of residents who own their flat and 81% of residents who rent from a housing association have lived in their flat for longer than two years. This compares to 37% of residents who privately rent who have lived in their flat for longer than two years. Approximately 54% of residents responding to this survey who privately rent have lived in their flat for less than one year. This is illustrated in Table 4 below. It was important to understand this as it shows whether the resident was living in their flat at the time of the Grenfell Tower fire. This may assist with our understanding of residents' feelings and experiences, which are explored later in this report.

Table 4 - Responses to the question "How long have you lived in your flat?"

Length of time lived in flat	Less than 6 months	Between 6 months and 12 months	Between 13 months and 18 months	Between 19 months and 24 months	Longer than 24 months
Own (outright or with a mortgage)	1%	3%	6%	3%	87%
Rent from a housing association or the council	0%	6%	6%	4%	81%
Rent from a private landlord	27%	27%	10%	0%	37%

Over 70% of residents responding to this survey said their building has cladding. When this was analysed by tenure, approximately 82% of residents who own their flat said their building has cladding. In addition, approximately 47% residents who privately rent their flat said their building has cladding. However, almost 37% of residents who privately rent their flat said they were unsure whether their building has cladding. Finally, approximately 66% of residents living in properties rented from a housing association said their building has cladding.

Of those who said their building has cladding, approximately 70% said their cladding has been identified as a risk following a fire risk assessment. This equates to approximately 50% of the total number of responses to this survey.

As described previously, this information can be used to understand more about residents' experiences and views of fire safety within the building where they live.

3.2. Fire safety in individual properties

This section explores residents' responses to questions related to fire safety within their flats. The following questions were asked:

- Are you concerned about having a fire in your home?
- How likely do you think you are to have a fire in your home?
- Do you take any measures to prevent fire in your home?
- Do you have working smoke alarms in your home?
- How often do you test your smoke alarms?

Approximately 65% of residents responding to the survey said they were concerned about having a fire in their home. When analysed by property tenure, leaseholders were more concerned about having a fire than those who rent their property from a housing association or from a private landlord. Seventy-three percent of leaseholders were concerned about having a fire compared with 53% of those renting from a housing association and 50% of those renting from a private landlord. Generally, those living in taller buildings were more concerned about having a fire than those living in blocks of flats with fewer storeys. Approximately 71% of residents living in blocks of flats with 15 or more storeys were concerned about having a fire, compared to 61% of residents living in blocks of flats with six or fewer storeys.

Residents who live in buildings with cladding were more likely to be concerned about having a fire than those who live in buildings without cladding. In addition, residents living in buildings where the cladding was identified as a risk during a fire risk assessment were more worried about having a fire than residents who live in buildings where the cladding was not identified as a risk. This is illustrated in Figure 1. Approximately 77% of residents who live in a building where cladding was identified as a risk were worried about having a fire. This compared to 48% of residents living in a building where the cladding has not been identified as a risk.

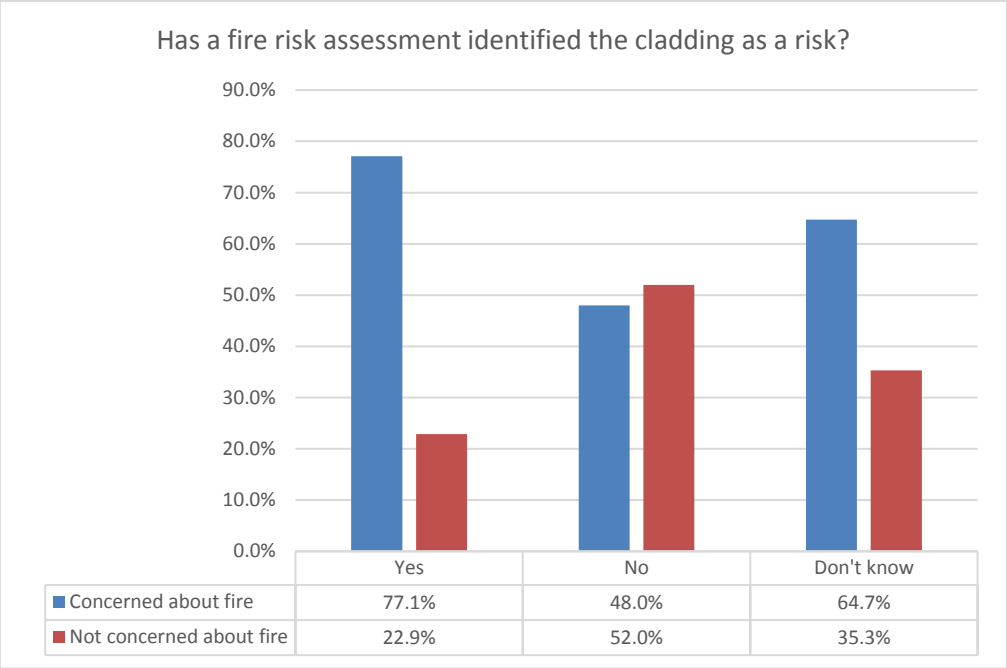


Figure 1 - Responses to the question "Has a fire risk assessment identified the cladding as a risk?" analysed by the question "Are you concerned about having a fire?"

Approximately two thirds of residents who are concerned about fire have sought fire safety advice. Accessing fire safety advice will be explored further in Section 3.4 of this report.

Although residents were worried about having a fire, over 70% thought they were either 'not very likely' or 'not at all likely' to actually have a fire. Eighteen percent of residents thought they were either 'likely' or 'very likely' to have a fire. There was a significant difference in residents' perception of their likelihood to have a fire when analysed by property tenue. Approximately 21% of residents renting their flat from a housing association thought they were 'likely' or 'very likely' to have a fire compared with 13% of residents renting from a private landlord. This is illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5 - Responses to the question "How likely do you think you are to have a fire in your home?"

How likely do you think you are to have a fire in your home?	Likely or very likely	Unlikely or very unlikely
Own (outright or with a mortgage)	16.9%	73.0%
Rent from a housing association or the council	21.3%	70.2%
Rent from a private landlord	13.3%	76.7%

However, when analysed by the building demographics, residents who responded to this survey and who live in taller buildings tended to believe they were very likely to have a fire. Approximately nine percent of residents who live in a building taller than 15 storeys and six percent of residents living in a building with between 11 and 14 storeys thought they were very likely to have a fire in their home. There were no residents living in buildings under ten storeys who thought they were very likely to have a fire.

While the majority of residents thought they themselves were 'unlikely' or 'very unlikely' to have a fire, they were concerned about other residents in the building not taking the same fire safety precautions. Residents were more concerned about a fire occurring elsewhere in the building that may affect their home than a fire occurring within their own flat.

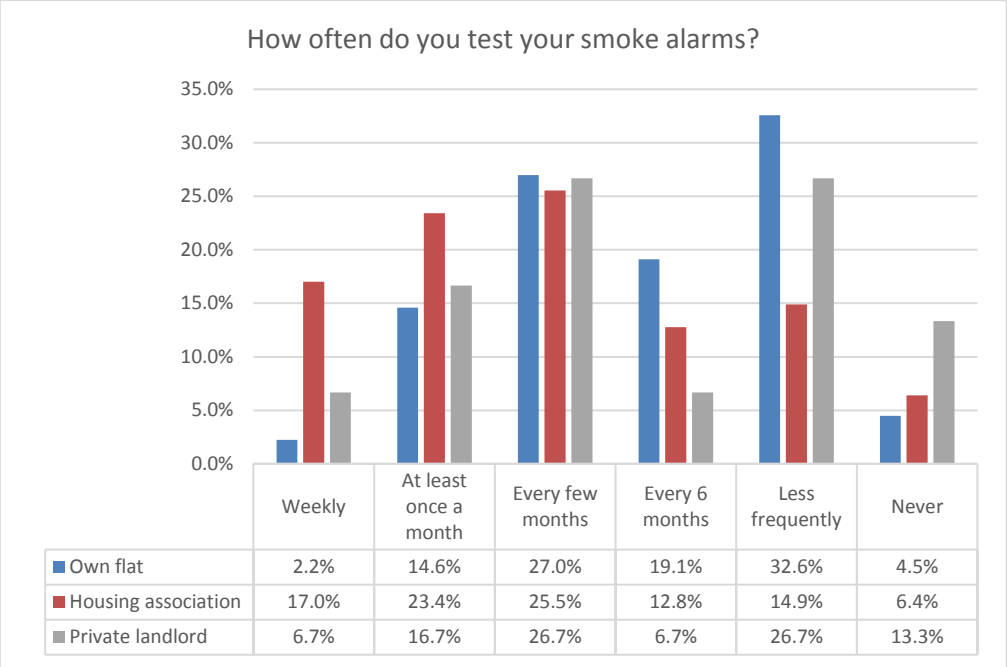
Almost all residents (98%) responding to the survey said they have working smoke alarms fitted in their flat, however the frequency that residents test their smoke alarms varied. This is illustrated in Table 6. Just over a quarter of residents responding to the survey test their smoke alarms either monthly or weekly (as recommended by the Fire Kills campaign and GMFRS). A further 40% test their smoke alarms at least every six months. However, just over 30% of residents responding to the survey said they test their smoke alarms less frequently or never test their smoke alarms.

Table 6 - Responses to the question "How often do you test your smoke alarms?"

How often do you test your smoke alarms?	
Weekly	8.7%
At least once a month	17.4%
Every few months	25.6%
Every 6 months	15.1%
Less frequently	26.2%
Never	6.4%
Not Answered	0.6%

When analysed by property tenure, those renting their flat from a housing association were more likely to test their smoke alarms more frequently that those who either owned their flat or rented from a private landlord. Approximately 40% of residents completing this survey who rent their flat from a housing association test their smoke alarms at least monthly, compared with 23% of residents who rent from a private landlord and 17% of residents who own their flat. Residents who rent their flat from a private landlord were most likely to respond to say they never test their smoke alarms when

compared with leaseholders or those who rent from a housing association. This is illustrated in Figure 2.



	Weekly	At least once a month	Every few months	Every 6 months	Less frequently	Never
Own flat	2.2%	14.6%	27.0%	19.1%	32.6%	4.5%
Housing association	17.0%	23.4%	25.5%	12.8%	14.9%	6.4%
Private landlord	6.7%	16.7%	26.7%	6.7%	26.7%	13.3%

Figure 2 - Analysis of smoke alarm testing by tenure

3.3. Fire safety in high rise buildings

This section explores residents' responses to questions related to fire safety within their building. The following questions were asked:

- Does your building have a fire alarm, and does it extend into your flat?
- Do you know the evacuation procedures for your building?
- Can you evacuate safely in the event of a fire?
- Have you participated in a fire drill in your building?

Approximately 80% of residents responding to the survey said their building is fitted with a fire alarm system. Of those who said their building has a fire alarm system, 28% of residents said the fire alarm extended into their flat. However, almost 12% of residents responding said they were unsure whether their building was fitted with a fire alarm system.

When this is analysed by tenure, residents renting their properties from a housing association were more likely to know if the fire alarm extended into their flat when compared with residents who own

their flat or rent from a private landlord. Thirty-two percent of residents who rent from a private landlord and 30% of residents who own their flat were unsure whether the fire alarm extended into their property. This compares with just eight percent of residents renting from a housing association who were unsure whether the fire alarm extends into their flat.

Residents living in a building with a fire alarm were asked whether they have ever heard it being tested. Forty-six percent of residents said they have heard their fire alarm being tested and the same proportion said they have not heard their fire alarm being tested. Approximately 60% of residents who rent their flat from a housing association say they have heard their fire alarm being tested. This compared with 40% of those who either rent from a private landlord or own their flat.

Residents were asked if they knew the evacuation procedures for their building. Approximately three quarters of residents who own their flat said they knew their buildings' evacuation procedures. A similar proportion of residents who rent from a housing association also said they know their buildings' evacuation procedures. However, only 30% of residents who privately rent their property said they know their buildings' evacuation procedures. For those who privately rent their property, residents who did not know their buildings' evacuation procedures were more likely to have lived in their flat for less than one year. The opposite was true for residents who owned their property or rented from a housing association. Residents who said they did not know their buildings' evacuation procedures were more likely to have lived in their flat for over two years.

Residents were asked to comment on the evacuation procedures for their building. This was analysed against the correct evacuation procedure for the building. Approximately one third of residents responding to this question incorrectly stated the fire evacuation procedures for their building. When this was analysed by tenure, approximately two thirds of residents who incorrectly stated their buildings' evacuation procedures were owner occupiers. Approximately one third of residents who incorrectly stated their buildings' evacuation procedures rent from a housing association. Some residents commented that they were told the evacuation procedures when they signed the tenancy agreement, but could no longer recall what they were. A number of residents commented that their building had a 'full evacuation', or they would evacuate regardless, even though the recommended procedure for their building was 'stay put'. A small number of residents incorrectly thought the evacuation procedures for their building was 'stay put', however it had been changed to a full evacuation.

Almost 60% of residents responding to the survey said they feel that they would be able to evacuate safely in the event of a fire. However, almost 20% said they would not be able to evacuate safely and

a further 20% were unsure whether they would be able to evacuate safely. When this was analysed by self-declared disability, approximately 30% of residents living with a disability said they would not be able to safely evacuate in the event of a fire and a further 16% said they were unsure whether they would be able to evacuate safely.

There did not appear to be any correlation between ability to evacuate in the event of a fire when analysed by the floor of the building the resident lives on. Approximately 70% of residents living on the 15th storey or higher felt that they would be able to evacuate safely in the event of a fire. However, 21% of residents living on the 15th storey or higher felt that they would not be able to evacuate safety in the event of a fire. This compares with 60% of residents who live on the seventh floor or lower who feel that they could evacuate safely in the event of a fire and 17% of residents who feel they could not evacuate safely.

Of those residents who do not feel they are able to evacuate safely in the event of a fire, approximately 30% informed their landlord or managing agent about their concerns. These residents were invited to share what advice they had received from their landlord or managing agent. Some residents commented that they have been put on a list of 'vulnerable residents' within the building, which would be shared with emergency services in the event of a fire. Other residents commented that their landlord or managing agent provided advice, and ensured they understood the evacuation procedure and fire safety advice for their building. Some residents stated that they have been advised to 'stay put' and await help from the emergency services. Although advice has been given to some residents, a number were unhappy or uncomfortable with this advice as they still worried about what would happen in the event of a fire. In addition, a number of residents commented that they raised concerns about their ability to evacuate, but no plans have been put into place in case of an emergency.

Residents left the following comments in the survey.

"[I've told my landlord / managing agent] many times until I'm blue in the face. [They are] not interested"

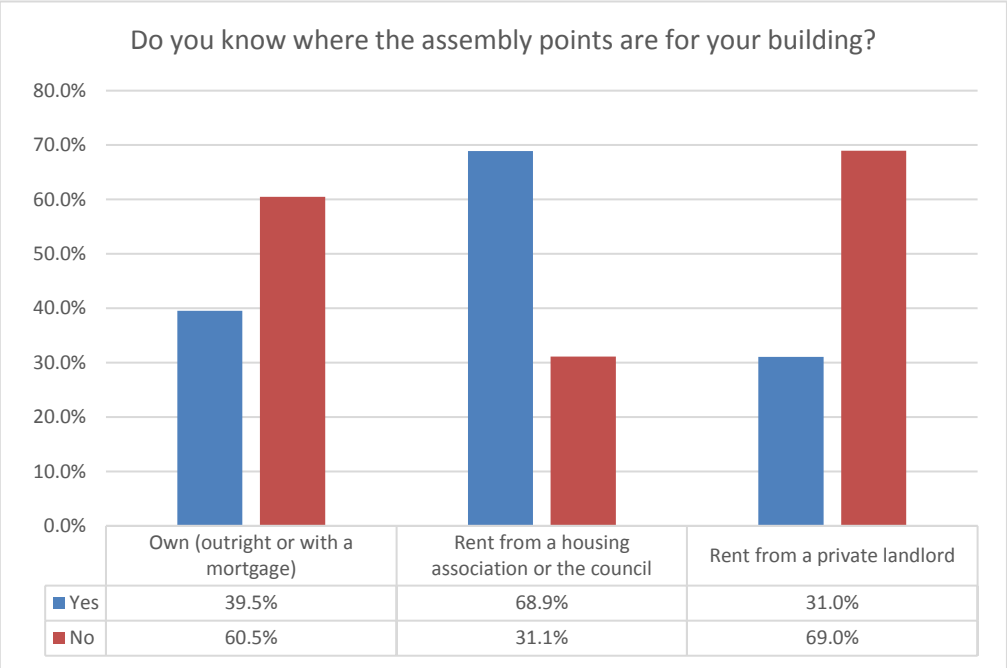
"They [landlord / managing agent] don't listen"

"I've been waiting since Feb 2019 to see Fire Risk Assessment document"

Residents were asked to comment on whether they have participated in a fire drill within their building. The majority (92%) of residents responding to this survey have not participated in a fire drill. Of the small proportion that have participated in a fire drill:

- 33% commented that the fire drill occurred within the past month;
- 17% commented that the fire drill occurred within the past two to three months;
- 25% commented that that the fire drill occurred within the past four to six months;
- 25% commented that the fire drill occurred longer than six months ago.

When residents were asked if they knew where their building's assembly point is, 47% said they did know where the assembly point is and 53% commented that they did not know where it is. Residents who rent their property from a housing association were more likely to know where assembly points are located when compared with residents who own their property or rent from a private landlord. This is illustrated in Figure 3.



	Own (outright or with a mortgage)	Rent from a housing association or the council	Rent from a private landlord
Yes	39.5%	68.9%	31.0%
No	60.5%	31.1%	69.0%

Figure 3 - Responses to the question "Do you know where the assembly points are for your building?" analysed with property tenure

Approximately 10% of residents responding to the survey said their building frequently has obstructions that would impede their escape in the event of a fire. The obstructions within buildings include pushchairs and prams in communal areas, large amounts of rubbish, boxes and bin bags within the building and people sleeping in doorways of buildings. In addition, some residents commented that fire doors are propped open in some buildings, which may result in a spread of smoke in stairwells if there was a fire within the building.

3.4. Communication and engagement with residents

This section explores residents' responses to questions about accessing advice about fire safety, and their preferred methods of communication and engagement. The following questions were asked:

- Have you ever sought fire safety advice?
- Who would you trust to provide fire safety advice?
- Which formats would you prefer to use to access fire safety advice?
- Do you receive fire safety advice from your landlord or managing agent?

Residents were asked whether they have ever sought advice about fire safety. Approximately 40% had previously sought advice. When this was analysed by property tenure, residents who rent their property from a housing association were most likely to have sought advice previously. Residents who rent from a private landlord were least likely to have sought advice previously. This is illustrated in Table 7. In addition, approximately 50% of residents living in buildings where cladding was identified as a risk have accessed fire safety advice. Again, this was highest amongst residents living in housing association properties (70%) and lowest in residents renting from a private landlord (20%).

Table 7 - Responses to the question "Have you ever sought advice about fire safety?"

	Have you ever sought advice about fire safety?	
Tenure	**Yes**	**No**
Own (outright or with a mortgage)	40.4%	59.6%
Rent from a housing association or the council	51.1%	48.9%
Rent from a private landlord	10.0%	90.0%
Other	50.0%	50.0%

Residents who have received fire safety advice were asked where they accessed this advice from. Approximately 42% have received a visit from GMFRS and a similar proportion have received advice from their managing agent. In addition, 30% received advice from Government fire safety campaigns. This is illustrated in Table 8.

Table 8 - Responses to the question "Where did you receive fire safety information from?"

Where did you access fire safety information from?	
Received a visit from GMFRS	42.4%
Managing agent	42.4%
Government fire safety campaigns	30.3%
Landlord	27.3%
Visited the GMFRS website	22.7%
Friends and family	22.7%
Other	12.1%
Visited another FRS website	10.6%

Further analysis showed that of those who have received a visit from GMFRS, 45% were delivered to residents who own their home and 45% were delivered to those who rent from a housing association. Only seven percent of visits were delivered to residents who rent from a private landlord.

Residents were asked who they trusted most to provide advice about fire safety. The majority of residents (96.5%) said they would trust GMFRS to provide advice. Smaller proportions of residents said they would trust sources such as Government websites, their local council or their managing agent. A small proportion suggested other sources of information they would trust, such as the Fuel Poverty Action group, residents associations and fire engineers. This is illustrated in Figure 4.

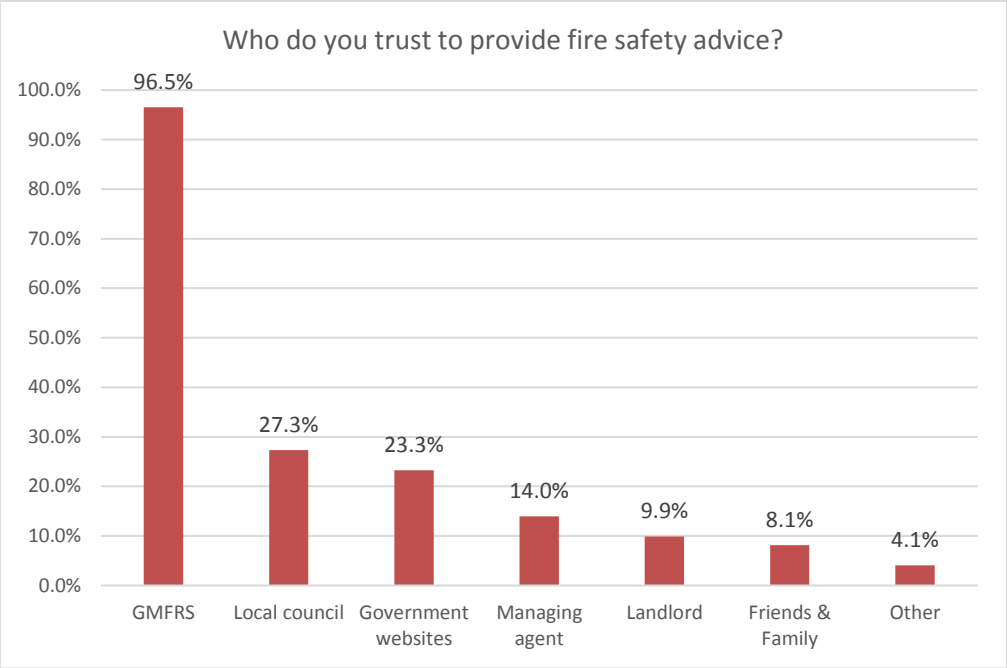


Figure 4 - Responses to the question "Who do you trust to provide fire safety advice?"

Residents were asked which formats they would prefer to use to access fire safety advice. Almost 65% of residents said they would prefer face to face visits. Sixty-three percent of residents said they would like to access fire safety content on the internet. Leaflets were also a popular format for receiving fire safety advice, with just over 50% of residents commenting that they would like to access information in this way. Accessing information about fire safety via newspapers, TV and radio were less popular formats. In addition, some residents commented that they would like to receive information via emails, text messages, meetings, online videos and social media. This is illustrated in Figure 5.

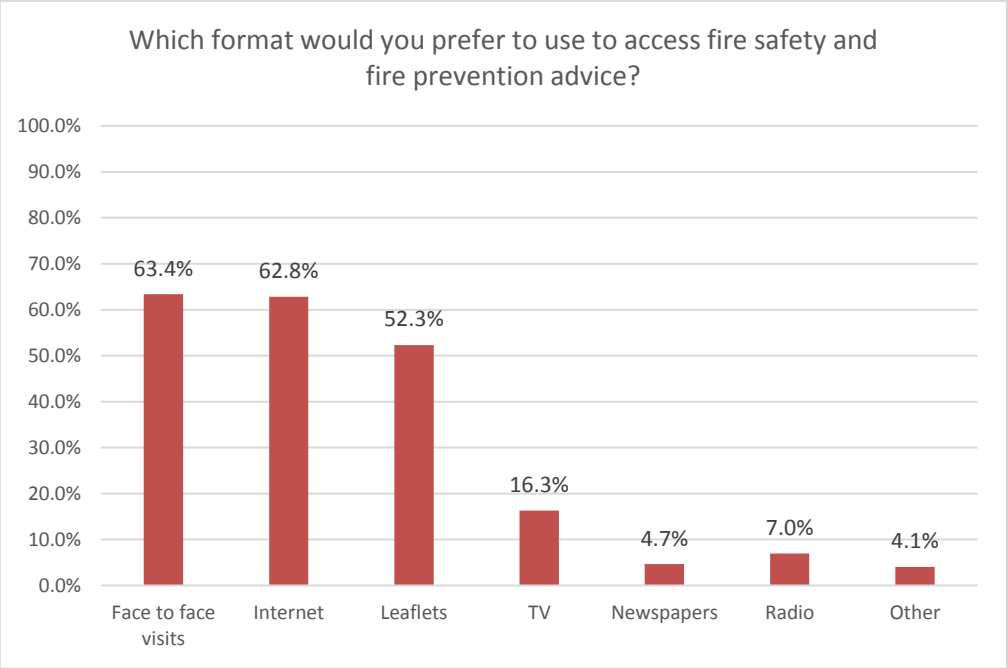
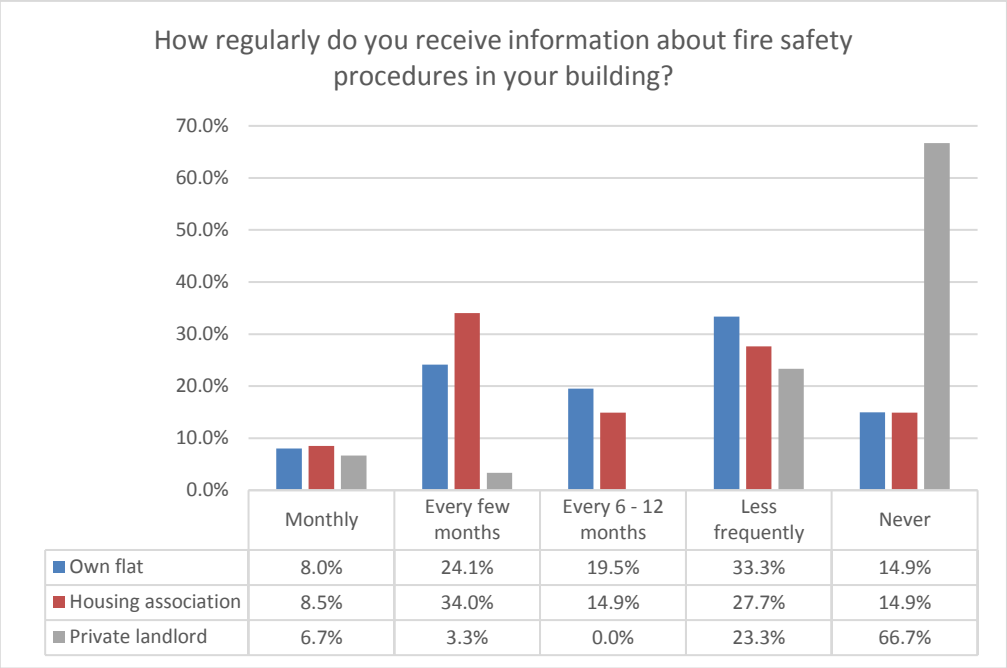


Figure 5 - Responses to the question "Which format would you prefer to use to access fire safety and fire prevention advice?"

Residents were asked how frequently they receive information from their landlord or managing agent about fire safety procedures within their building. Approximately 30% of residents responding to the survey receive information at least every few months. In addition, 14% receive information every six to twelve months. However, approximately 55% of residents said they receive information less frequently or never receive information from their landlord or managing agent about fire safety procedures within their building. Residents who rent their property from a private landlord were more likely to say they never receive information from their landlord or managing agent about fire safety when compared with those who own their property or rent from a housing association. Those renting their property from a housing association felt most informed about the fire safety procedures within their building, as 43% said they receive information at least every few months. However, there were large proportions across all tenures who felt they were not well informed about fire safety within their building. This is illustrated in Figure 6.



	Monthly	Every few months	Every 6 - 12 months	Less frequently	Never
Own flat	8.0%	24.1%	19.5%	33.3%	14.9%
Housing association	8.5%	34.0%	14.9%	27.7%	14.9%
Private landlord	6.7%	3.3%	0.0%	23.3%	66.7%

Figure 6 - Responses to the question "How regularly do you receive information from your landlord or managing agent about fire safety procedures in your building?"

3.5. Cold homes

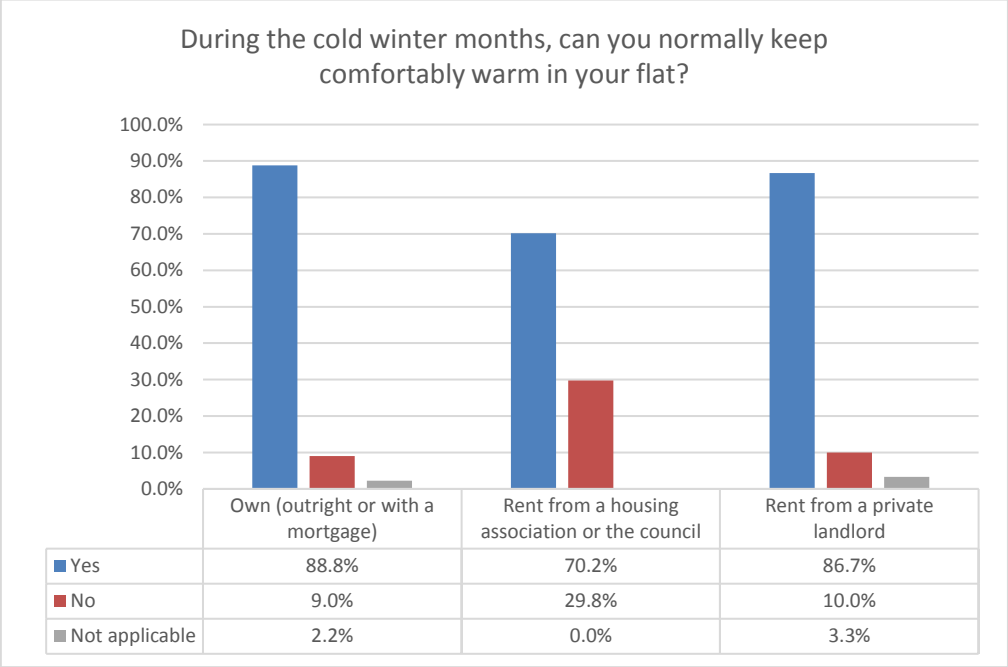
This section explores residents' responses to questions related to indoor temperature within their flat. Nationally, there has been some evidence to suggest buildings where cladding has been removed (or partially removed) are difficult to heat in the winter months and residents are feeling the effects of the cold[5]. Therefore, residents were asked questions about the following topics to understand if this was an issue within Greater Manchester:

- Can you keep your home comfortable warm during the cold winter months?
- How did indoor temperature last winter compare with the winter before?
- Does indoor temperature impact on existing health conditions?
- Does the indoor environment in your flat impact on your mental health and wellbeing?

Residents were asked if they were able to keep their flat comfortably warm during the cold winter months. Approximately 83% of residents stated that they were able to keep their flat comfortably

[5] Fuel Poverty Action briefing: Cladding – A national emergency. Available at: https://www.fuelpovertyaction.org.uk/research/

warm. Those who rent their property from a housing association were more likely to say they have problems keeping their property warm than those who own their flat or rent from a private landlord. Approximately 30% of residents living in a flat rented from a housing association said they have problems keeping their flat warm compared with nine percent of residents who own their flat and ten percent of residents who rent from a social landlord. This is illustrated in Figure 7.



	Own (outright or with a mortgage)	Rent from a housing association or the council	Rent from a private landlord
Yes	88.8%	70.2%	86.7%
No	9.0%	29.8%	10.0%
Not applicable	2.2%	0.0%	3.3%

Figure 7 - Responses to the question "During the cold winter months, can you normally keep comfortably warm in your flat" analysed by property tenure

Residents were then asked how their indoor temperature last winter compared with the winter before. Seventy-two percent of residents completing this survey said that they noticed no difference in indoor temperature last winter compared with the winter before. However, approximately 12% of residents found their flats harder to heat. When this was analysed by the storey the resident lived on, residents living on lower storeys within their building were more likely to say their flat was harder to heat than residents living on higher storeys of the building. Approximately 30% of residents living on storeys one to seven of a high rise block found their flats harder to heat, compared with 11% of residents living on storeys eight or higher.

3.6. Health impact

Residents who said they had problems heating their home in the winter months were then asked whether they had experienced any health problems as a result of their home being cold. As the majority of residents said they had no issues keeping their home warm during the winter months, only a small number of residents completed this question (15% of the total number of residents responding to the survey).

Initially residents were asked whether anyone living in the property has experienced any respiratory conditions, cardiovascular conditions and/or arthritis. Cold living environments are known to aggravate these conditions.[6]

Approximately half of residents who were asked this question said they have experienced these conditions. Of those who have experienced these conditions, approximately 60% felt that their housing environment impacts negatively on their health. When asked to explain why, residents commented that cold temperatures affects their breathing because they are living with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or asthma. Other residents commented that heating their flat is expensive, therefore are reluctant to switch on their heating during the cold weather, which then impacts on their health.

Residents were also asked whether their home environment has an impact on their mental health and wellbeing. Two thirds of residents responding to this question said that their home environment does have an impact on their mental health and wellbeing. This rate may be higher as a large proportion of residents did not complete this question, but commented on feelings of worry, anxiety and stress elsewhere in the survey. Some residents who completed this question commented that they are feeling worried that a fire may break out in their building and spread in a similar way to the fire at Grenfell Tower. Some residents commented that this worry and stress is preventing them from sleeping properly. Other residents said they are worried about being able to sell their flat because of cladding and other fire safety issues that are present within the building.

[6] Institute of Health Equity report "The Health Impacts of Cold Homes and Fuel Poverty". Available at http://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/the-health-impacts-of-cold-homes-and-fuel-poverty

3.7. Financial impact

This section explores whether residents have experienced any financial implications as a result of remedial fire safety works that have occurred in their building following the Grenfell Tower fire. In addition, this section explores whether residents who own their flat have experienced any problems when trying to sell or remortgage their property. These problems have been reported widely in the press and residents have informed the High Rise Taskforce about the problems they have been experiencing via social media and at High Rise Resident Forum meetings. The aim of this subset of questions is collect information on this topic in a more robust, standardised way.

Residents were asked whether any actions had been taken in their building in response to the Grenfell Tower fire.

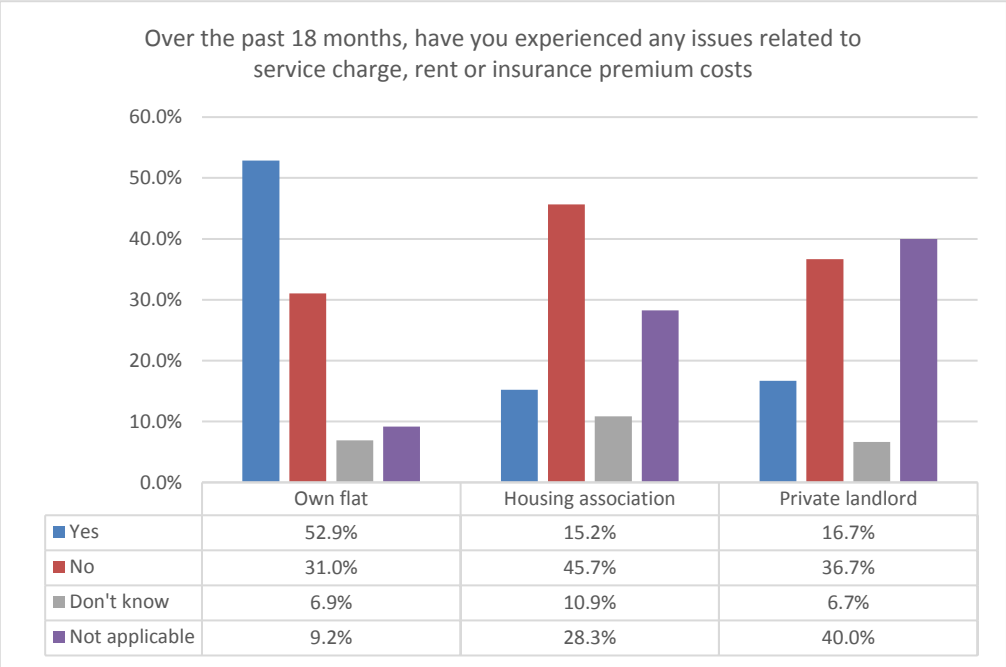
- Thirty-six percent of residents, across 27 buildings, said their building has used a waking watch over the past 18 months.
- Twelve percent of residents, across 16 buildings, said there has been removal or replacement of cladding on their building over the past 18 months.
- Nine percent of residents, across 13 buildings, said fire doors have been replaced in their building over the past 18 months.
- Five percent of residents, across eight buildings, said sprinklers have been installed in their building over the past 18 months.

In addition, residents also commented on additional remedial works that have occurred in their building. These include:

- Installation of fire alarms systems;
- Provision of new fire extinguishers;
- Removal of car parking spaces directly under the building;
- Works related to internal compartmentation of flats.

However, a number of residents commented that they were unaware whether any remedial works have taken place. All of the residents who said they were unsure whether any remedial works had taken place have lived in their flat for over two years, however said they did not receive regular information about fire safety from their landlord or managing agent. Approximately half of the residents who said they were unaware of any remedial works owned their flat, and the other half said they rent from a private landlord.

Residents were asked whether they have experienced any problems related to the costs of their service charge, rent or insurance premiums over the past 18 months. Approximately 35% said they have experienced problems because of costs and 36% said they have not experienced problems. Approximately 20% said this question was not applicable to them because they have lived in their flat for less than 18 months. When analysed further by property tenure, residents who own their flat were most likely to say they have experienced problems because of costs over the past 18 months when compared with residents who rent their flat. Fifty-three percent of residents who own their flat said they have experienced problems because of increasing costs over the past 18 months. This compares to approximately 15% of those who rent from a housing association and 17% who rent from a private landlord. This is illustrated in Figure 8.



	Own flat	Housing association	Private landlord
Yes	52.9%	15.2%	16.7%
No	31.0%	45.7%	36.7%
Don't know	6.9%	10.9%	6.7%
Not applicable	9.2%	28.3%	40.0%

Figure 8 - Responses to the question "Over the past 18 months, have you experienced any issues related to service charge, rent or insurance premiums" analysed by tenure

Analysis of the free text responses provided showed what financial problems and concerns residents living in high rise properties were facing. The analysis showed that residents who owned their flat were most concerned about the financial impact of increasing costs. Residents commented that increasing service charges to cover the costs of fire safety remedial work and replacement of cladding was causing significant problems. Some residents commented on an increase in service charges of over 400%. Other residents commented that they have been presented with significant bills to cover the costs of remedial works.

"Additional service charge from £90 per month to £480 per month to cover cladding replacement"

"[I have] been charged £10,000 for works"

Some residents commented that they have not experienced increased costs yet, but were anticipating costs increasing significantly in the future.

"Each flat might have to pay £30,000 to have the cladding removed"

"Work has not started but [Management Company] has proposed cost of works to be added to our maintenance charge. Approximately an extra £1000 per month"

Finally, some residents commented that they were faced with costs for remedial works, but this was withdrawn following a campaign from residents.

"…attempted to charge us for remedial cladding works, but the threat was withdrawn after public pressure"

Residents living in privately rented flats also discussed the financial impact experienced as a result of increasing costs. For some, this has resulted in them looking to live elsewhere. However, others commented that they have had to review their budget to be able to afford increasing costs.

"Aside from the increases, no issues but it is forcing us to move"

"We are having to cut back to be able to afford increased costs, and I can't afford to save to buy a house because of increased costs"

However, residents living in flats rented from a housing association commented more on the perception of paying for a service they do not receive. The comments provided did not mention that increased costs were causing problems financially, however there was a frustration that costs appeared to be increasing, but the service provided was less than what they would expect to receive.

"We pay for a service we do not get, for example, we pay for 24/7 onsite security, but we're lucky if we get them a few days per week and our security gates are often broken"

Finally, residents were asked if they had tried to sell or remortgage their home within the past 18 months. Approximately 17% of residents responding to the survey said they have tried to sell or remortgage their home. A number of these residents said they experienced problems or issues when trying to sell or remortgage. Some residents also commented that they would like to sell their flat, but they are aware that others have experienced problems, therefore have deliberately not pursued this until there is more clarity on what documentation is required for any potential buyers to secure a mortgage. A significant number of residents commented that they were unable to sell or remortgage without proof that the cladding on their building was non-combustible. Some residents commented that they needed a fire safety certificate, others commented that they needed a 'cladding report', therefore it was evident that residents are unsure about what is required to be able to proceed with a sale or remortgaging.

"Applied for additional borrowing to cover cost of S20... This was denied on the basis of not having a fire safety certificate"

"Buyer not able to proceed without building certificate"

Some residents have commented that they feel 'trapped' because they are unable to sell their properties. A number of residents commented that they would like to move on, but cannot until fire safety issues are resolved and more clarity is provided to lenders and potential buyers.

"My wife and want to move out but due to cladding, we cannot sell or get a mortgage on a new property so we are 'stuck'"

"[I feel] trapped here until the cladding is sorted"

Other residents have commented that the sale of their flats have fallen through because lenders are unwilling to offer mortgages, or will not offer a mortgage until there is a guarantee on what type of cladding is on the building. Even with the correct paperwork, some residents are still finding it difficult to sell their flat.

"I have been trying to sell my apartment for the past 15 months. Two buyers have backed out of the sale as there was no cladding report…I'm still finding it hard to sell my apartment and move on."

"I was unable to sell due to a large number of fire safety issues. I only discovered this after having an offer accepted on a house and having found a buyer for the flat."

"Tried to sell but buyer's mortgage lenders requested a document that [managing agent] couldn't provide… the buyer has since dropped out."

Those residents who were able to find buyers commented that they were offered significantly less than the property was worth. However, some residents commented that their property has become 'worthless'. As a result, residents are being faced with a decision to either not sell their property, or if they can find a buyer, sell their property and experience a significant financial impact.

"Only cash buyers at 30% discount to normal price"

"The sale fell through as we didn't have a fire safety certificate. We have now been told that our property is worth zero."

However, a common theme for many residents responding to this question was that that their experiences of trying to sell or remortgage was having a negative impact on their mental health and wellbeing. Some residents commented that their mental health was affected because they are unable to find a buyer for their property and move on. Others commented that they are stressed and worried because being unable to sell is impacting on their longer term plans. Finally, some residents commented that the stress and worry of trying to sell their property, combined with fire safety concerns about their building, is having a damaging effect on relationships with family and friends.

"I was unable to sell due to a large number of fire safety issues. I only discovered this after having an offer accepted on a house and having found a buyer for the flat. This has caused a huge amount of distress and worry."

"…we have now been told that our property is worth zero which has had a very damaging effect on our relationship and mental health."

4. Conclusions and recommendations

The findings of this survey should help the High Rise Task Force understand some of the issues and concerns faced by residents living in high rise buildings across Greater Manchester. In summary, the results from the survey have identified the following:

- Generally, residents living in buildings with cladding that has been identified as a risk are concerned about fire. Residents living in taller buildings were also more concerned about having a fire than those living in buildings with fewer storeys.
- Typically, residents are concerned about fire, but they generally think their likelihood to have a fire is low. Residents tend to be concerned that other residents living in the building do not take the same fire safety precautions as they do. Residents are concerned that fires happening elsewhere in the building may affect them and their home.
- There was a significant proportion of residents who did not know the correct evacuation procedures for their building. Some residents commented that they could not remember what they were, and others incorrectly said they should 'stay put', however the evacuation procedures had changed to a full evacuation. In addition, a large proportion of residents commented that they rarely receive information from their landlord or managing agent about fire safety in their building. This may suggest that more communication and engagement with residents is needed to ensure they receive timely and up to date information about fire safety matters in their building.
- Residents commented that Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) would be the most trusted source to provide information and guidance about fire safety. In addition, residents commented that they would prefer to receive this information face to face (i.e. during meetings or visits), via the internet and social media or through posters and leaflets.
- Based on previous research completed by the Fuel Poverty Action Group, it was anticipated that residents may have experienced issues with cold homes due to cladding being removed but not yet replaced. However, this did not seem to be a significant issue to residents responding to this survey, with the majority of residents commenting that they were able to keep their home warm during the cold winter months. Questions related to the health and wellbeing impact of the Grenfell Tower fire were linked with the cold homes question. This means that only residents who said they experienced problems heating their home were asked questions about health impact. It is well researched that cold homes can impact negatively on respiratory and cardiovascular health, and the small number of residents who had issues heating their home also felt that their cold home had a negative impact on these conditions. Residents who completed this section of the survey also commented on their mental health and wellbeing during the period following the Grenfell Tower fire. In addition, many residents commented on their mental health and wellbeing in other parts of the survey. Residents

commented on feelings of stress, anxiety and worry. It is recommended that more work is completed in this area to understand the impact fully.

- Residents discussed the financial impact they are experiencing because of fire safety remedial work at great length. Residents commented that they are experiencing financial problems because of increasing costs and they are feeling worried and anxious about how they will be able to afford increasing costs. Residents who own their property commented on how they are finding it difficult to sell their flat, which makes them feel 'trapped', and how this is also negatively impacting on relationships and their overall wellbeing.

It is recommended that the following activities are considered as a result of the findings of this survey:

- High Rise Task Force members review this report and findings;
- Produce a summary report, which can be circulated with residents and other stakeholders who are interested in the research findings;
- Produce an action plan of what will be completed as a result of the research findings. This should be compiled into a 'you said, we did' style document to be shared with residents so they can understand that actions are being taken following the feedback they provided;
- Further research to explore the findings in more detail. The direction of this research should be agreed amongst members of this High Rise Task Force;
- Consider exploring the mental health and wellbeing impact on residents living in high rise buildings. Residents shared examples of where their mental health and wellbeing has been negatively impacted, and further research using interviews or focus groups with residents could help understand this impact better.

Appendix A – Survey Questions

Question No.	Data Item	Notes
Q1	What is the name of the building where you live?	Free text; mandatory question
Q2	Do you own or rent your home?	7 categories; mandatory question
Q3	How many floors are in your building?	6 categories; mandatory question
Q4	Which floor do you live on?	6 categories
Q5	How long have you lived in your flat?	5 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'
Q6(a)	Does your building have cladding?	3 categories, mandatory question
Q6(b)	If yes, has a fire risk assessment identified the cladding as a risk?	3 categories
Q7	Are you concerned about having a fire in your home?	3 categories
Q8	How likely do you think you are to have a fire in your home?	5 categories, plus free text box
Q9	Do you think you are more or less likely to have a fire in your home compared to other people?	5 categories, plus free text box
Q10	Do you take any measures to prevent fire in your home?	7 categories, plus free text box
Q11(a)	Do you have working smoke alarms fitted in your home?	3 categories; mandatory question
Q11(b)	If yes, how often do you test your smoke alarms?	6 categories
Q12(a)	Is there a fire alarm in your building?	3 categories
Q12(b)	If yes, does the fire alarm extend into your flat?	3 categories
Q13	If your building has a fire alarm, have you heard the fire alarm being tested?	4 categories
Q14(a)	Have you even sought advice about fire safety and fire prevention?	2 categories
Q14(b)	If yes, who did you get this advice from?	8 categories, plus free text box
Q15	Who would you trust most to provide information about fire safety and fire prevention?	7 categories, plus free text box
Q16	Which format would you prefer to use to access fire safety and fire prevention advice?	7 categories, plus free text box
Q17	How regularly do you receive information from your landlord or managing agent about fire safety procedures in your block?	5 categories
Q18	Do you know the evacuation procedure for your building?	2 categories, plus free text box
Q19(a)	Do you feel able to evacuate safely in the event of a fire?	3 categories

Q19(b)	If no, have you discussed this with your landlord or managing agent?	3 categories
Q19(c)	If you have discussed this with your landlord or managing agent, what advice did they provide?	Free text
Q20(a)	Have you participated in a fire drill in your building?	3 categories
Q20(b)	If yes, when did the last fire drill in your building take place?	4 categories
Q21	Do you know where the assembly points are for your building?	2 categories, plus free text box
Q22	Are there frequent obstructions within the communal areas of your building?	2 categories, plus free text box
Q23	Is there anything else you would like to tell us about fire safety in your building?	Free text box
Q24	During the cold winter months, can you normally keep comfortably warm in your flat?	3 categories, plus free text box; mandatory question
Q25	How did your indoor temperature last winter compare with the winter before?	3 categories
Q26(a)	Has anyone living in the property ever experienced any respiratory conditions, cardiovascular conditions and/or arthritis?	2 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'
Q26(b)	If yes, do you think your housing environment impacts on your health?	3 categories, plus free text box
Q27	Do you think your indoor home environment has an impact on your mental health and wellbeing?	3 categories, plus 'prefer not to say' and free text box
Q28	Over the past 18 months, has any of the following been done in your building?	5 categories, plus free text box
Q29	Over the past 18 months, has your service charge:	5 categories
Q30	Over the past 18 months, has your rent:	5 categories
Q31	Over the past 18 months, have your insurance premiums:	5 categories
Q32	Over the past 18 months, have you experienced any issues related to service charge, rent or insurance premium costs	4 categories, plus free text box
Q33	Over the past 18 months, have you tried to sell or re-mortgage your home?	3 categories, plus free text box
Q34	Age	8 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'
Q35	Ethnic group	18 categories plus 'prefer not to say'
Q36	Religion	8 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'
Q37	Gender	5 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'
Q38	Trans/transgender identity	3 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'

Q39	Sexual orientation	5 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'
Q40	Disability	7 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'
Q41	Lastly, how did you hear about this survey	7 categories, plus free text box
Q42	If you wish to participate in future research, please tell us your contact details and we will be in touch to discuss further	3 categories, all free text boxes

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

CORPORATE ISSUES AND REFORM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: 14 July 2020

Subject: GMCA & Local Authority Financial Implications of COVID 19

Report of: Steve Wilson, GMCA Treasurer

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

The purpose of this paper is to update the Scrutiny Committee on the financial implications of COVID 19 for the ten Greater Manchester local authorities. It includes the impact of measures put in place to support residents and businesses through the Covid-19 crisis including the financial implications from both the loss of income and additional expenditure.

The paper also looks at the role of local authorities and the CA in delivering a sustainable recovery from COVID 19 and helping Greater Manchester to *Build back Better*.

It identifies a number of areas where further support is required for Greater Manchester, both in terms of Government funding but also in increased flexibilities and some potential technical changes.

The detail of this paper was presented to the Combined Authority at a special meeting to consider financial issues on 24 June 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to note the content of the paper including the impact of COVID 19 pandemic on the finances of GM local authorities and combined authority and the proposed response to that impact

CONTACT OFFICERS:

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GMCA & Local Authority Financial Implications of COVID 19

1. Introduction

1.1 The Impact of COVID 19 across the World has been seismic with the UK facing its biggest challenge since the end of the Second World War.

1.2 Greater Manchester faces an even greater challenge with an infection rate and death rate greater than the UK average.

1.3 There is significant variation in the impact of the Coronavirus by region. The prevalence of the virus and the impact it has both in terms of health and wellbeing as well as socially and economically varies dependent on the levels of deprivation, the prevalence of underlying conditions as well as factors such as the age profile of the population and the number of care homes in an area. The recent study by Public Health England has also found a disproportionately high death rate from COVID 19 for people with BAME backgrounds.

1.4 As of the 8th June 2020 there had been 10,270 diagnosed cases of COVID 19 across the City Region with total deaths from the disease recorded as 1,919.

1.5 The role of local government in responding to the challenges presented by COVID 19, alongside local partners such as the NHS, is crucial. The virus has had an immediate impact on the health and wellbeing of our citizens but it has also had a profound impact on the economy of Greater Manchester and the financial sustainability of local institutions including those within the public sector.

1.6 This financial impact is against the backdrop of a number of years of budget cuts for Local Government during the period of austerity which following the 2008 Worldwide economic downturn.

1.7 The purpose of this paper is to consider in detail the impact on the financial sustainability of local government across Greater Manchester. This includes the ten GM local authorities but also services provided at a GM wide level through the GMCA including the Fire and Rescue Service and GM transport services such as Buses and Metrolink.

1.8 The paper seeks to build up a detailed and comprehensive analysis of the impact on local government finances; looking at the immediate cost of responding to the crisis; the longer term costs of supporting the city region as it moves into recovery phase and the significant loss of revenue streams which would have otherwise sustained local delivery of essential core services.

1.9 It examines this financial impact alongside the critical role that local government has played in managing the crisis and crucially the unique role we will play in delivering an effective and sustainable recovery.

2. Financial impact on Greater Manchester Authorities

2.1 Analysis undertaken by the 10 GM local authorities and the Combined Authority indicate that based on current assumptions the cost of the impact of the virus and the associated actions taken to manage the pandemic will be in the region of £732m by the end of 2020/21 alone. This is made up of additional costs faced in delivering the GM response to the crisis of £236m together with lost revenues of £496m.

2.2 Whilst there are a number of assumptions that have to be made in forecasting what the financial impact of the virus will be, it is important to note that this is not a worst-case scenario. Rather it is an estimate of the most likely impact based on current rates of infection and expectations around Lockdown.

2.3 The overall impact is summarised in the table below:

Table 1: Financial Impact of COVID 19 across GM authorities

Description	Additional Costs (£m's)	Lost Income (£m's)	Total (£m's)	Funding to date (£m's)	Net Costs (£m's)	Potential Reserves (£m's)	Gap after Reserves (£'ms)
GM Local Authorities	225	409	634	244	390	92	298
GMCA (Exc Metrolink)	10	31	41	3	38	-	38
Metrolink	-	57	57	25	32	-	32
Total	**236**	**496**	**732**	**272**	**460**	**92**	**368**

3. Key Assumptions

3.1 There are a number of key assumptions that have an impact on the expected level of costs. The costs analysed in the table above and considered in more detail below are particularly sensitive to the timing and the nature of the relaxation of lockdown restrictions. The assessment presented is done so on the basis of what we know about the forthcoming changes to lockdown, including the opening of non-essential retail shops from 15th June, as well as an assumption about continued relaxation of rules in the coming months.

3.2 It is crucial to note that the additional costs and the lost revenues **do not** assume there will be a second wave of cases or any increases in restrictions because of increased cases or an increased R number.

4. Analysis of Additional Local Authority Costs

4.1 The ten local authorities across Greater Manchester have estimated that they will face additional costs by March 2021 of £225m.

4.2 These are the costs of providing an immediate response to the crisis and the ongoing support provided through many of the councils' services.

4.3 The impact is broken down by each of the 10 districts and by spend area in figure 1 and then the combined cost across Greater Manchester is shown by spend area in figure 2.

Figure 1: Analysis of Additional Costs by GM Local Authority

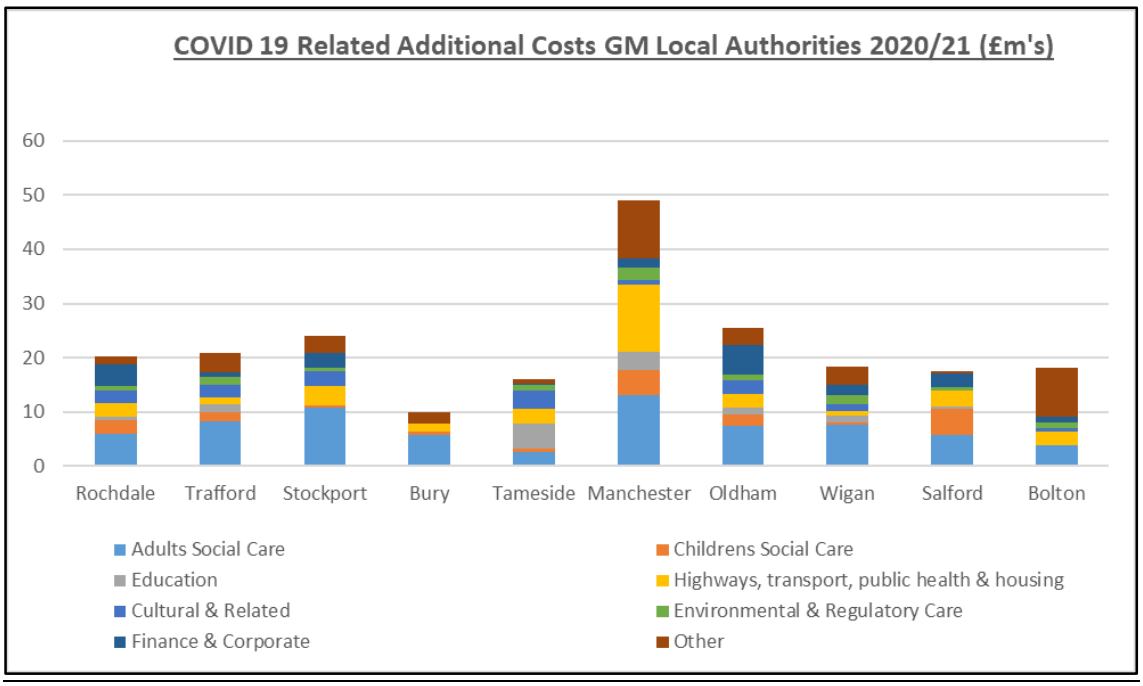
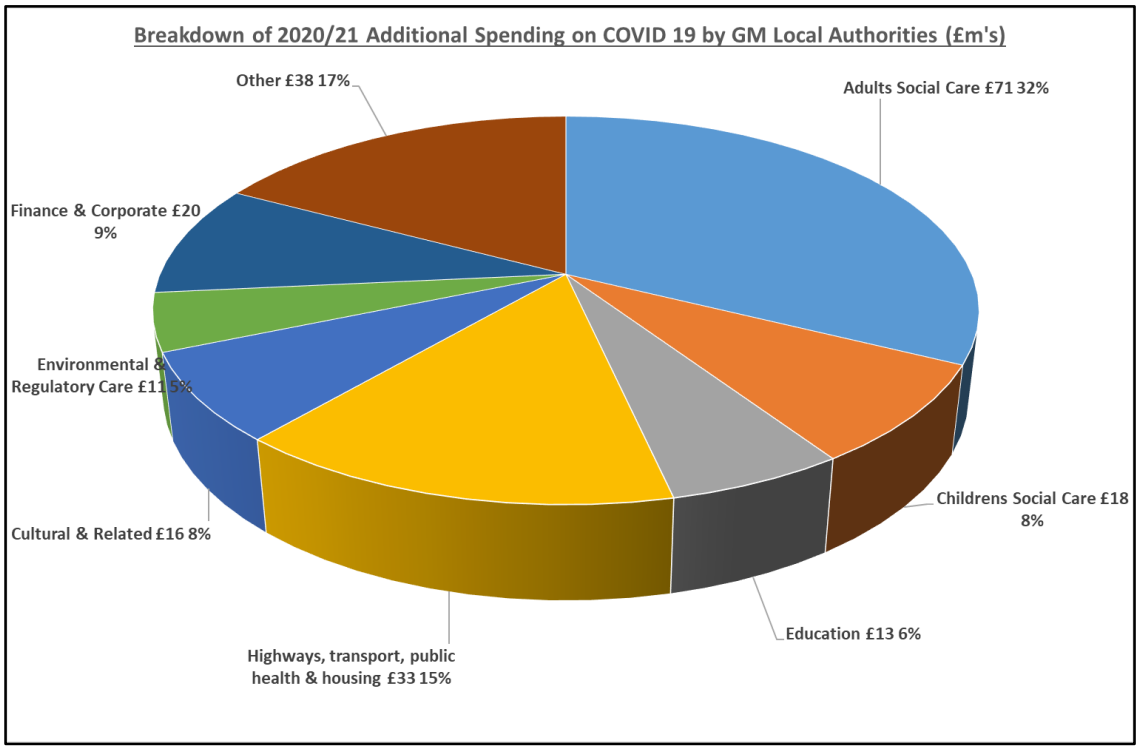


Figure 2: Share of Additional Costs by Spending Area



4.4 This analysis shows that whilst the largest impact falls against adults and children's social care, totaling 40% of overall costs, there are additional costs across a wide range of public services.

i) Adult's Social Care

Spending on Adult Social Care accounts for 32% of spending pressures. This is split between supporting the Adult Social Care market and other Adult Social Care costs. In total, the additional costs are £71m. The impact of austerity on council funding against a backdrop of an ageing population, means that the budget position within adult social care prior to COVID 19 was already challenging. An ambitious programme of transformation has been undertaken within adult social care across GM as part of a commitment to whole system reform and integration. However, delivery has been constrained by funding availability. For 2019/20, GM Councils were required to support £86m of additional expenditure over budget in Adults and Children services through use of reserves and non-recurrent funding.

COVID 19 has added significant cost pressures to the challenge within adult social care – now and potentially longer-term. Pressures include:

- Support for additional provider delivery costs - required to prevent provider failure in an already fragile care market.
- The direct purchase and distribution of personal protective equipment to ensure the safety of residents and the wider care workforce.
- Increased demand for care and support.
- Reduction in charging income i.e. day support,
- Impact on savings and transformation programmes – including embedding of an asset-based approach to deliver improved outcomes from services at reduced costs, with a further circa £16m planned for 20/21.

Continuation of unfunded COVID 19 costs added to future demand pressures and the impact of a rise in the living wage, risks the ability of local authorities to adequately resource adult social care into the future. As a pre-requisite component of a sustainable health and care system, this could have significant impact on the demand for, and cost of, NHS services.

The pandemic has exposed and increased the fragility of an already vulnerable adult social care system, being underpinned in-part by temporary grants i.e. the Improved Better Care Fund, Winter Pressures and Social Grant – currently confirmed to the end of 2020/21. There is evident requirement for additional and sustainable funding into councils to support adult social care, including investment to enable accelerated transformation.

The pandemic has re-highlighted the need for a radically different and reformed model of support at scale. The GM Living Well at Home programme makes the case for investment and change targeted at independence and choice, built around a stronger and more resilient health and care workforce.

The total additional investment in adult social care by the Greater Manchester Local Authorities has been offset by a contribution from local CCGs to support the discharge of patients from hospital to ensure capacity was available for COVID 19 admissions.

ii) Children's Services

Children's social care services account for 8% of the total additional GM COVID 19 costs in 2020/21 at £18m. Greater Manchester Councils continue to have a high number of children in care. Since the COVID crisis and lock down we have seen an increase in looked after children despite a reduction in the number of referrals into the social care system. This is of concern along with national concerns around the issues of Children Sexual Exploitation and domestic abuse during lockdown. There is also a concern that once children return to school and are more visible to agencies there will be a further increase in referrals and children entering the social care system. Coupled with this, efforts to return looked after children to their Districts, develop in house provision and edge of care services have also been delayed due to the coved restrictions, making it harder to exit children from the system.

iii) Education

Education (non-delegated budgets) accounts for 6% of the costs (£13m). Education has been impacted by schools not buying back services from local authorities. The timing of the lockdown at the start of the financial year has meant that a number of schools have not bought into to LA delivered traded services resulting in an income shortfall. In addition, pressures continue around the vulnerable children who require home to school transport. Social distancing and the continued attendance of those pupils at specialist settings has put further pressure on an already pressured budget.

iv) Public Health

There are also significant costs for public health services, this includes working with the social care sector to ensure the correct use and provision of PPE as well as other infection control input into services especially social care. The total expected to be invested in public health across GM to support management of the COVID 19 pandemic is £18.5m.

Local Investment Case Study – Community Hubs in Bury
A key part of Bury Council's COVID 19 emergency response has been the establishment of five Community Hubs to provide the infrastructure to support vulnerable people. The initial priority was to support those who are classed as extremely clinically vulnerable (shielded) for a period of 12 weeks. The Hubs follow the footprint of the existing health and social care Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs), with a remit to provide support for extremely vulnerable people who have no natural support from friends, family or neighbours with local volunteers to do shopping, collect medication and offer a befriending service. That remit has since expanded to the sub shielded group of socially vulnerable people who are self-isolating, are over 70 or need support from other services that the hubs can link them to e.g. food banks, welfare advice, community mental health support. A comprehensive operational model that flows from the Contact Centre to hubs to volunteers, supported by the corporate data team, has led to a seamless approach to emergency provision. *The Hubs will provide support any returning travellers to Bury who may need to be quarantined and to people who need to self-isolate as part of the Test, Track, Trace, Isolate Policy which may increase demand for the hubs' services.*

Each hub has a named lead officer - employees temporarily redeployed to the COVID 19 response. Alongside the lead are a number of other staff from non-priority 1 services who have also been temporarily redeployed. A total of 150 staff have been temporarily redeployed to the hubs. Contact with the hubs is through a central number, 9am-5pm seven days a week. Outside of these hours, calls are monitored by the Council's Emergency Control Room.

To date the Community Hubs have:

- *received over 2267 calls;*
- *provided direct support to 1361 residents*
- *of which 715 received shielded support*
- *engaged more than 800 volunteers providing support to vulnerable people*
- *dealt with over 1650 food shopping and medication collection tasks by volunteers*
- *distributed in excess of 440 emergency food parcels via Porchbox.*

Community Hubs have been rolled out across all the GM local authority areas.

5. Analysis of Income Losses by Local Authorities

5.1 Local authorities across Greater Manchester have estimated that they will face significant losses in revenues in 2020/21 and beyond. The shortfall in income against the expected levels have a direct impact on the services the council are able to afford.

5.2 The income councils receive come in a number of different forms and it is important to understand each of these in a little more detail, especially the income received outside of business rates and council tax.

5.3 The overall impact by local authority of this lost income is shown in figure three with the split by income type across GM as a whole shown in figure four.

Figure 4: Analysis of Reduced Revenue by GM Local Authority

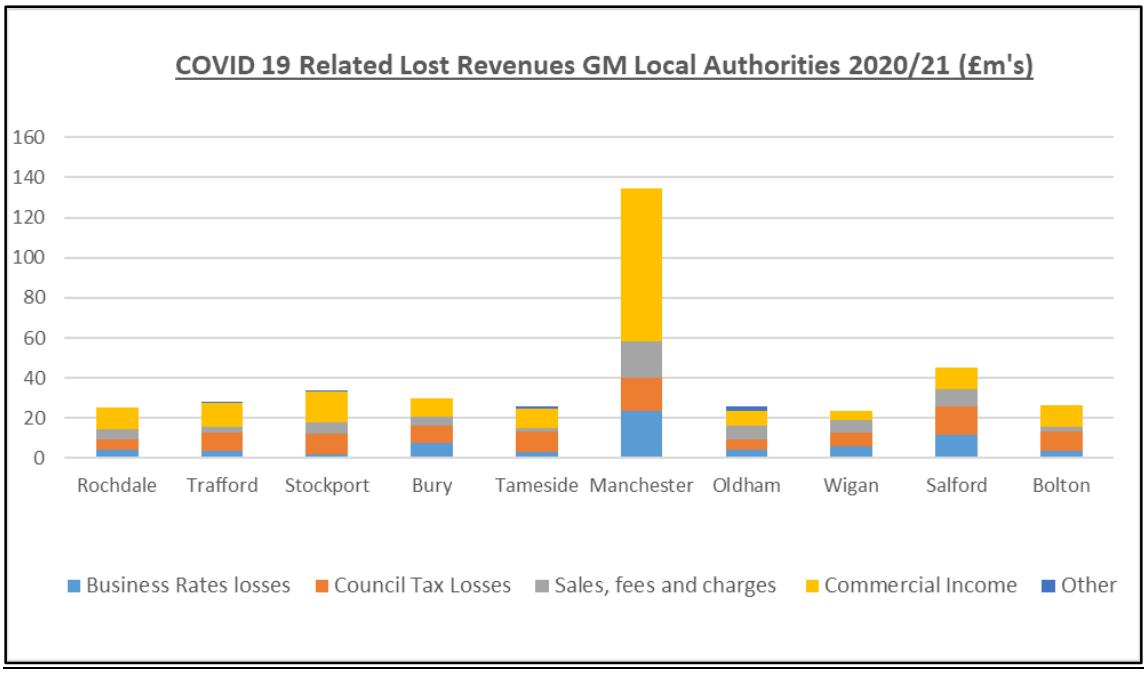
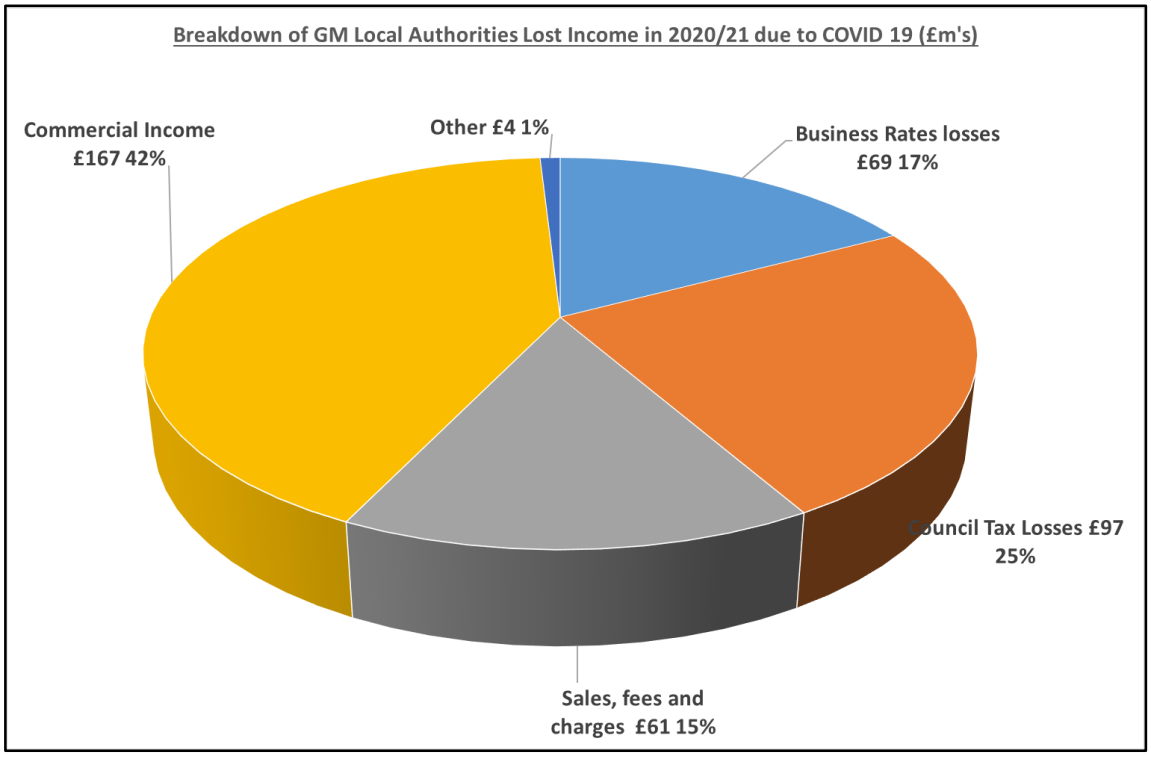


Figure 4: Share of Lost Revenue by Spending Area



i) Business Rates cash receipt losses (net of Relief)

Business rates losses are expected to be significant across greater Manchester as business struggle to meet their obligations and as more businesses fail to survive the COVID 19

related downturn. Whilst losses across GM are significant for the 20/21 financial year at £69m, this is a net impact after being mitigated this year by the leisure and retail rates reliefs given to businesses that were forced to close during lockdown and for which the Councils were compensated in full. Whilst these reliefs are welcomed, unless they are applied again for 21/22 the GM Councils can expect further losses as retailers struggle to survive.

ii) Council tax receipt losses

Lost council tax revenues represent 25% of the expected overall loss in revenues at £97m. Across GM authorities. Councils' budgets are underpinned by a substantial amount of locally raised income, of which council tax makes up a significant proportion. Most metropolitan districts are circa 49% reliant on council tax income (based on net expenditure after grants inside AEF) and, in some GM authorities, this is as high as 67%

There are two main reasons that COVID 19 will impact council tax receipts:

- People's incomes and livelihoods have been adversely affected by COVID 19, leading to sharp increases in the numbers eligible for council tax support. This is likely to be further exacerbated when furloughing and other government schemes come to an end. This income loss will be significant and irrecoverable, and it is likely to take several years before numbers return to pre-COVID 19 levels.
- We are also seeing material reductions in council tax collection rates as people struggle to cover their bills and defer or default on payments. Some of this might ultimately be recoverable (i.e. a cashflow issue) but it's also inevitable that a sizable proportion will be irrecoverable.

iii) Sales, fees and charges

The GM authorities are also suffering the loss of a number of fees and charges normally collected for the provision of council services. Because the cost of the services is largely fixed, for example staffing, the loss of income cannot be mitigated by a reduction in costs. This includes areas such as highways income, parking fees, planning charges and fees for leisure services.

The loss of sales, fees and charges income across the ten GM authorities totals £61m and makes up 15% of the total lost revenue.

iv) Commercial Income

Greater Manchester local authorities, along with councils across the country, make investments from which an income stream is derived. The lost commercial income as a result of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic is £167m and represents 42% of the overall lost revenue.

Commercial investments by local authorities can be a controversial subject and there has been criticism of some of the investments made by some authorities as speculative and potential unwise use of public funds.

It is important to understand the nature of the investments made across Greater Manchester by the councils. The investments made are neither speculative nor could they be considered unwise. These investments relate to the strategic development of local places and are part of wider regeneration and economic development strategies.

Catalytic or transformational projects within Greater Manchester will generally require significant enabling investment to secure the land and create the development platform, indeed this will be even more important to stimulate the economy post COVID 19.

These investments will include:

- Strategic acquisitions of property to support regeneration and/or development outcomes. This could include acquisition of relocation property for tenants, sites for future commercial development. Early acquisition of tenanted investment property within an intervention area.
- Investment into economic or socially important physical assets within the administrative area
- Site Remediation and Facilitation works.
- Green/Blue, Physical and Social Infrastructure[1].
- Zero Carbon intervention.
- Placemaking
- Any physical development to support Council objectives, including operational property, housing (market and social), employment, leisure, cultural, etc etc
- Enhancement/strengthening of an existing asset providing that asset or asset base is within [adjacent to] boundary of the administrative area.
- Investment into commercial enterprise to support innovation and development.
- Investment decisions should continue to be within the administrative area unless there is an exceptional portfolio level rationale for supporting existing assets/commercial investments/businesses within the administrative area.

Whilst the additional income generated from the 'commercial activities' has supported both the capacity to deliver the approach outlined above and front line service delivery, this has been done in a careful and planned way.
The most significant element of the lost commercial income relates to the investment made by all ten GM authorities in the Manchester Airport Group (see case study below).

Commercial Investment Case Study 1

Manchester Airport Group

COVID 19 has had a rapid and severe impact on the aviation industry, including Manchester Airport Holdings Limited (MAG). As a result MAG's revenue and profit performance has been significantly impacted. There is currently no industry wide support package in place for the aviation industry. Manchester Airport is an important strategic and economic asset for Greater Manchester, playing a vital economic role in the region and providing jobs for 20,000 people on site and a further 25,000 indirectly. The Greater Manchester authorities play a key role in formulating the strategic direction of the Airport, including promoting wider regeneration, social value principles and influencing their response to government priorities and policy objectives in particular on economic, employment and environmental issues.

The anticipated income lost from MAG to GM local authorities totals over £100m from dividends alone. The most severely affected Council, with a 35% equity stake, is Manchester Council (MCC). It is worth noting MCC have always taken a very prudent view on how investment income is used with the majority of the dividend income being used a year in arrears to provide a cushion for economic shocks. The scale of the impact of COVID 19 is unprecedented and the financial impact of the loss of at least two years dividend cannot be sustained without a significant impact on the Council's budget position. There is now the combined impact for the GM local authorities and MCC in particular, of the loss of income and due to the lack of a support package from Government, the need to step in, along with the private sector investment partner, to fill this gap and provide significant additional shareholder support.

It is worth noting that this support is entirely consistent with the draft 'PWLB' guidelines and with the GM Authorities desire to continue to support/investment in local airport infrastructure has a direct positive impact on the local economy. Whilst one of the drivers for the investment is to protect the local authority equity stake and future yield, the Airport is an asset of major strategic importance to Greater Manchester with a key role in the economic growth and underpinning infrastructure development of the region.

Commercial Investment Case Study 2

Manchester Central

Manchester Central is a wholly owned joint venture that was originally established by GM authorities to convert a disused station into a convention centre as major driver of regeneration delivering jobs in the conference and hospitality sector. Local Authority investment enabled the redevelopment and was structured through share capital and loans. This led to the creation of a highly successful conference venue, which has hosted many political party conferences and provides a profit rental to Manchester City Council of c£1.2m per annum. At present over 75% of Manchester Central staff are furloughed due to the loss of conferences and events, and the key question is around how quickly businesses will begin to organise large conferences. The venue is currently the Nightingale Hospital and discussions are currently ongoing with NHSE regarding the terms of occupation for its potential use as a hospital is extended beyond July. The profit rental will not be paid in 2020/21 and is likely to be less in 2021/22.

6. Local Authority COVID 19 Funding from Central Government

6.1 Central Government has, through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, provided two tranches of funding for councils across England.

6.2 A third tranche of funding of £500m was announced on 2nd July 2020. The details of how that money will be allocated have not been confirmed as yet and that has not been factored into the assumptions at this stage.

6.3 The two allocations are detailed in table 2 below together with allocations to fund the track and trace process and to support the management of infection control in care homes:

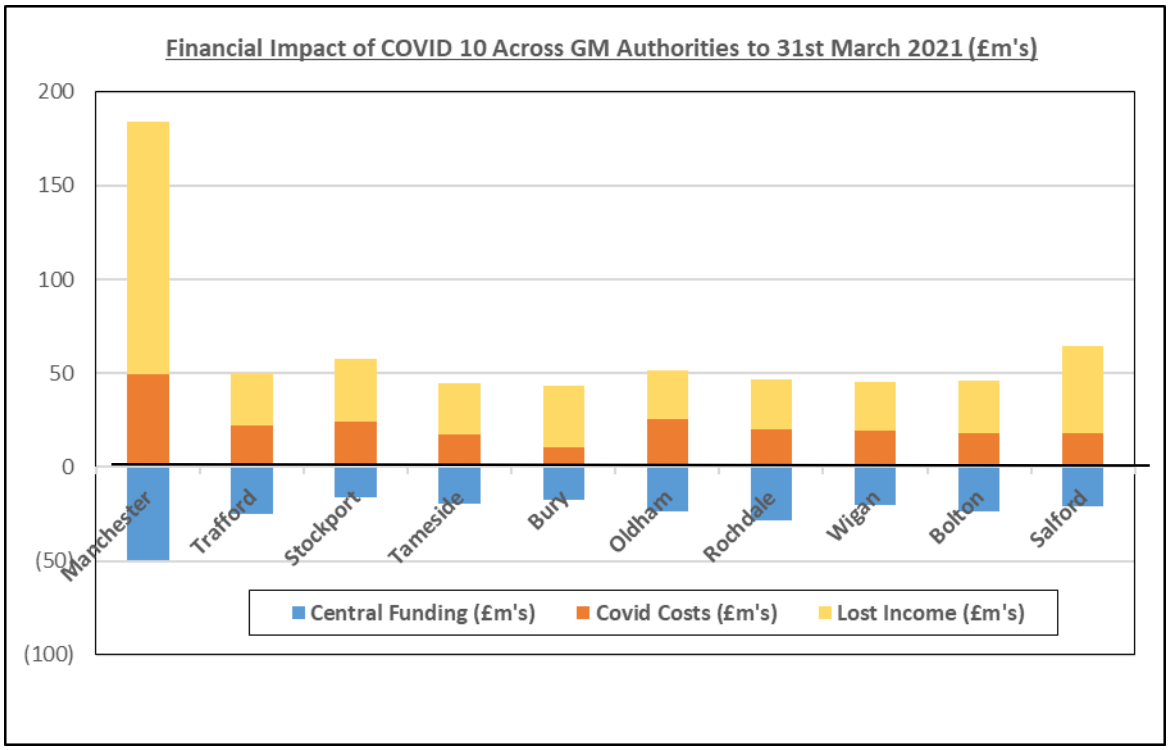
Table 2: Government Allocations

Description	Allocations (£m's)						
	Tranche 1	Tranche 2	Total	Track and Trace	Infection Control	Hardship Grants	Overall Total
National Funding	***1,600.00***	***1,600.00***	***3,200.00***	***300.00***	***600.00***	***500.00***	***4,600.00***
Manchester	18.59	15.17	33.76	4.84	3.34	7.46	49.40
Bolton	9.25	7.86	17.11	1.99	2.30	3.46	24.86
Bury	5.36	5.25	10.62	1.08	2.40	1.89	15.98
Tameside	7.68	6.23	13.91	1.42	2.13	2.16	19.62
Trafford	6.12	6.54	12.66	1.16	2.27	1.56	17.65
Stockport	8.28	8.05	16.33	1.47	3.11	2.46	23.37
Wigan	10.47	9.00	19.47	2.39	2.94	3.51	28.31
Rochdale	7.50	6.12	13.62	1.59	2.16	3.06	20.43
Salford	8.91	7.14	16.05	1.98	1.94	3.58	23.55
Oldham	7.64	6.53	14.17	1.56	2.32	3.02	21.06
GM Total	**89.79**	**77.89**	**167.68**	**19.48**	**24.91**	**32.15**	**244.21**

6.4 Greater Manchester was allocated a larger proportion of the first wave of local Authority COVID funding as the first tranche was largely based on adult social care weighting factors which includes a weighting to deprivation. The second tranche was based more of overall population levels.

6.5 The funding provided of £244m reduces the impact on the GM local authorities from £634m to £390m but this still leaves a significant gap in each authority as shown in the chart below:

Figure 5: Financial Impact and Government Funding Across GM Authorities



7. Reserves Funding from Local Authorities

7.1 Local Authorities were asked, in their COVID cost returns to MHCLG, to estimate the amount of reserves available to support the financial pressures faced in 2020/21.

7.2 GM authorities identified a total of £92m funding from reserves which could support the short term financial position. This came from a variety of both earmarked and general reserves including for example insurance reserves and smoothing reserves to manage the impact of volatility in the level of dividend payment from the Manchester Airport Group.

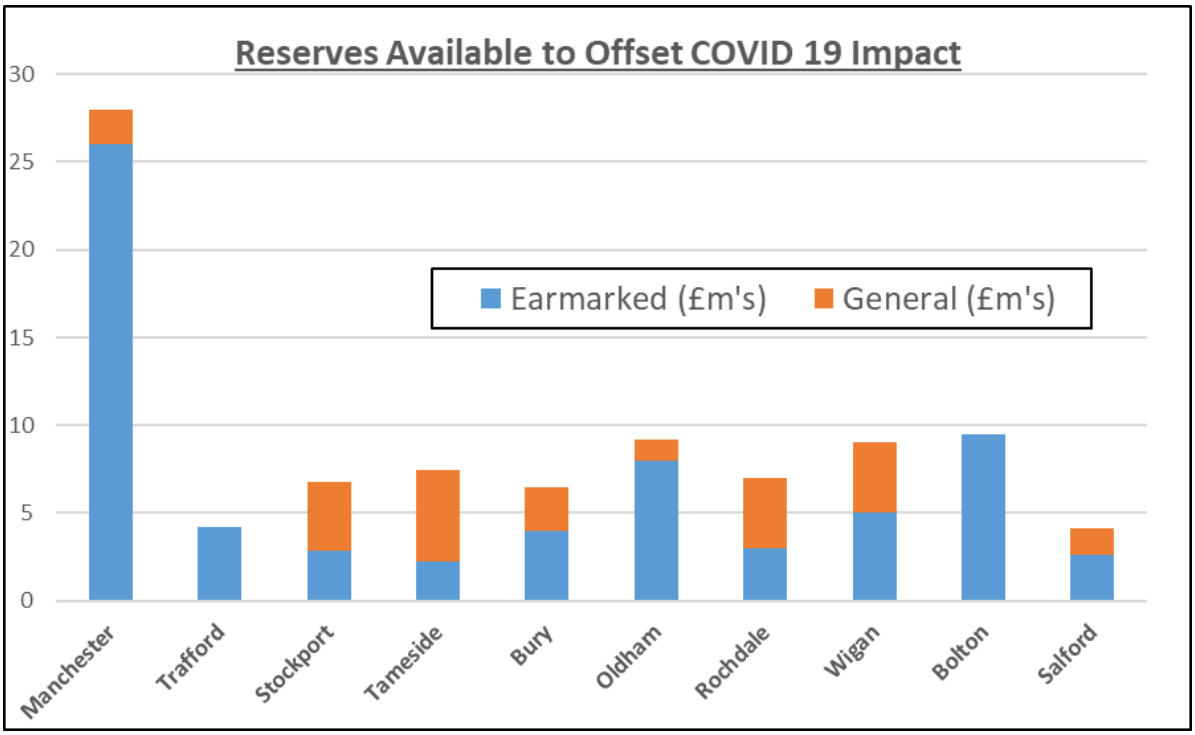
7.3 Local authorities understand that some of these reserves are held for the unprecedented events which have sadly become a reality in 2020.

7.4 However, the position on reserves is different across the different GM authorities and regardless of the short term benefit from their use, the majority of reserves, including all general reserves will have to be "topped up" for 2021/22 if section 151 officers are going to certify them as sufficient for the council's requirements.

7.5 Council reserves can therefore be part of the short-term management solution but are neither a long term nor a permanent solution to the financial challenges councils face.

7.6 The table below shows the split of the £92m across the 10 authorities and between earmarked and general. The application of these reserves would reduce the impact in 2020/21 to £298m across the 10 councils.

Figure 6: Reserves available across GM Authorities



8. Council Finances and Section 114 of the Local Government Act

8.1 Councils have a legal requirement to deliver a balanced budget. If spending is likely to exceed the available resources for a council the officer charged with responsibility for the effective financial management of the council, the so-called section 151 officer, must issue a notice under the relevant section of the Local Government Act, section 114.

8.2 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) has issued modified guidance to council CFOs to allow councils under budgetary pressure due to COVID-19 the time and space to explore alternatives to freezing spending via a section 114 notice.

8.3 The guidance recognises these are extraordinary times and business as usual rules will not work. Indeed the usual mitigating actions required to balance a council's book following the issuing of a section 114 notice would damage the coronavirus response required by Government from local authorities.

8.4 The temporary modifications to guidance proposed by CIPFA would mean that it should not normally be necessary for S.114 notices to be issued while informal discussions with government are in progress.

8.5 The institute is proposing two specific modifications:

- At the earliest possible stage a CFO should make informal confidential contact with MHCLG to advise of financial concerns and a possible forthcoming S.114 requirement.

- The CFO should communicate the potential unbalanced budget position due to COVID-19 to MHCLG at the same time as providing a potential S.114 scenario report to the council executive (cabinet) and the external auditor.

9. Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) & Transport for Greater Manchester (TFGM)

9.1 As table 1 showed this financial impact across local government in GM is not limited to the ten local authorities. The services provided across GM by the Combined Authority and Transport for Greater Manchester have also been impacted on by the virus and have also incurred additional costs as well as suffering reduced income.

9.2 The total additional costs incurred across GMCA and TFGM excluding Metrolink services which we will deal with separately are estimated to total £10.21m for 2020/21 with a further impact from a reduction in income of £30.50m for the same period, a total impact of £40.71m.

9.3 The GM Fire and Rescue service (GMFRS) has received allocations of £2.672m as part of the MHCLG funding of £3.2bn which reduces the overall impact for the pan GM services to £38.04

Table 3: GMCA and TFGM Financial Impact 2020/21

Description	Additional Costs (£m)	Reduced Revenue (£m)	Total Impact (£m)	Funding (£m)	Net Impact (£m)
Waste	2.00	0.00	2.00		2.00
TFGM	1.50	6.50	8.00		8.00
Fire & Rescue	2.01	0.00	2.01	2.67	(0.66)
Other GMCA inc PPE & Homeless	4.70	24.00	28.70		28.70
Total	**10.21**	**30.50**	**40.71**	**2.67**	**38.04**

9.4 The breakdown of costs and lost income is shown in figure 6 and figure 7 below.

Figure 7: GMCA and TFGM Additional Costs 2020/21

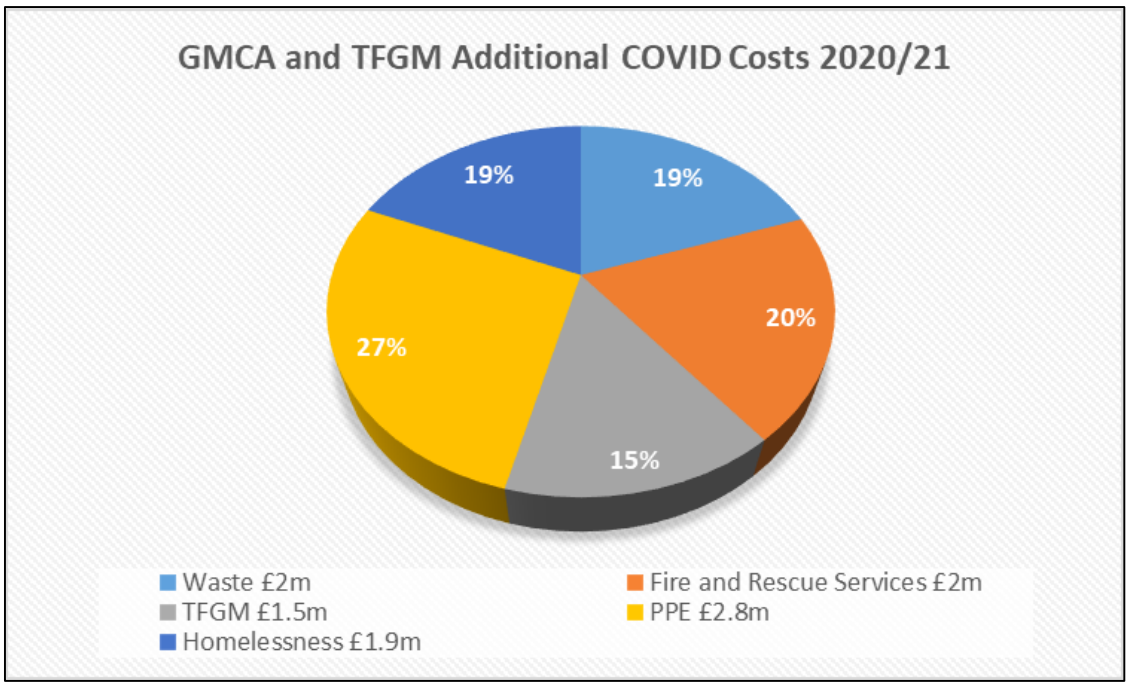
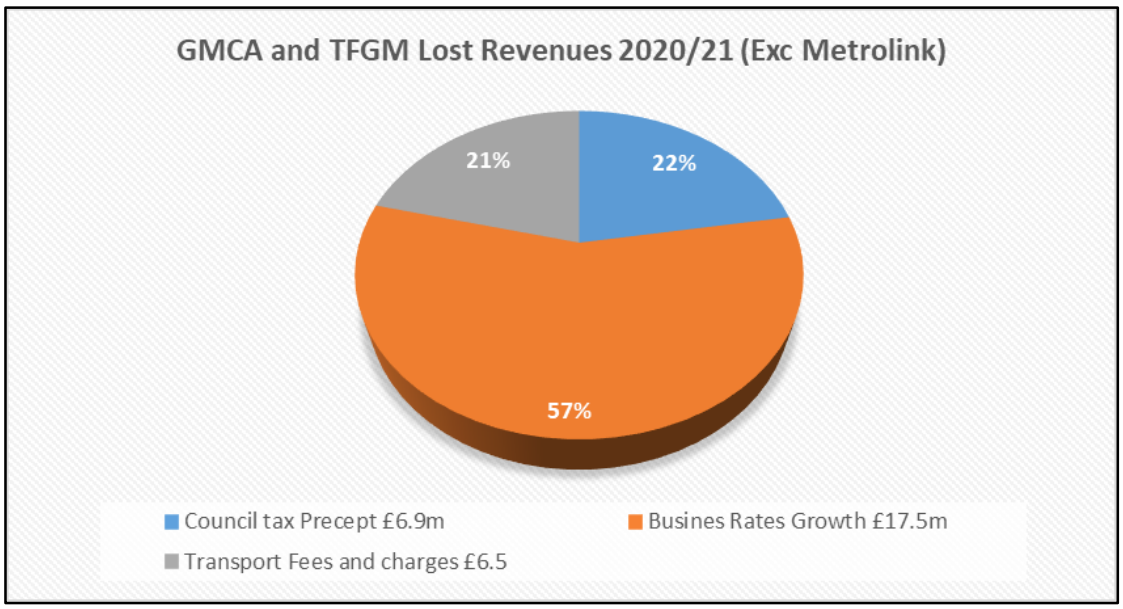


Figure 8: GMCA and TFGM Lost Revenues



i) Waste

The GM waste disposal service has suffered through increased levels of residual waste and reduced recycling together with delays in delivering service improvements. This is estimated to cost £2m for the financial year.

ii) GMFRS

The Fire and rescue service have faced increased costs totaling £2.012m including staff overtime, support for additional GM services and purchase of PPE

iii) PPE

Additional personal and protective equipment has been purchased to support a variety of GM wide services. This highly collaborative approach to managing scares PPE resources across GM has been identified as best practice through the CORONA crisis

iv) Homelessness

GM invested £1.9m in hotel accommodation to support the "everybody in" policy to facilitate social distancing amongst those rough sleeping. This funding was on top of and complimentary to significant investment from the ten GM districts.

v) Other TfGM net income impacts

TfGM is experiencing significant reductions in its non-grant income streams and increases in costs due to COVID 19 that are expected to impact the budget for the current year and Into subsequent years. This includes fare income on some bus services, departure charges and other commercial income. There are also a number of areas of increased costs for TFGM.

In addition; and in response to COVID 19, Government introduced emergency funding arrangements to support bus operators via payments through the Coronavirus Commercial Bus Services Support Grant (CBSSG). Two tranches of CBSSG funding have been announced to date. This support has totalled c. £3.5 million per month for GM bus operators with the second tranche covering the period until early August.

As part of these arrangements Local Transport Authorities, including GMCA, have been expected to continue to make payments to operators for subsidised services and concessionary fare reimbursement at pre Covid rates. This has meant paying for some concessionary passengers who, because of COVID 19, are not travelling; and paying for some socially necessary bus services, including school services, that, because of COVID-19, are not being provided fully. Whilst this does not represent a net increase in costs, it does prevent any savings accruing to offset the costs described above.

Despite the gradual easing of the lockdown, bus revenues and patronage are unlikely to return to their pre-COVID-19 levels in the short or medium term; and there will therefore be a requirement for continuing, likely significant, public sector financial support in GM and elsewhere, from a combination of both local and national funds.

In addition to funding, GM also need the coordinating powers to plan and influence transport provision, in accordance with GM's needs, during recovery in order to ensure that bus funding can be better directed to support local needs.

10. Metrolink (GM Light Rail/Tram System)

10.1 Following lockdown, Metrolink patronage reduced significantly and subsequently 'stabilised' at approximately 5% of pre COVID 19 levels. The reduction in patronage at this level continued through to late May, with volumes now increasing back to c 10% - 15% of budgeted levels following the 'easing' of Lockdown restrictions.

10.2 During Lockdown, the significantly reduced levels of farebox revenues resulted in monthly deficits (after financing costs) of c.£5.3 million, compared to the budgeted break-even position, after financing costs. For the period to 8th June 2020, this position was mitigated, in part, through an £11.6 million grant from DfT which funded c. £4 million (around 73%) of this monthly deficit position.

10.3 On 23rd May DfT announced an additional £13.3 million of financial support for the period from 12 May to 3 August 2020. This resulted in total grant funding of £24.97 million phased across the 20 week period to 3 August. Based on current and forecast volumes and the revised operating patterns, the DfT funding package will result in a forecast deficit, compared to budget, for the period to 3 August of £1.8m.

10.4 There is still a great deal of uncertainty as to how public transport provision will, and will be expected to, recover over the coming months. However, our current sensitivity analysis projects that, without any further government support, we can expect to experience further deficits of between £30 million to £40 million (or potentially higher) for the remainder of the financial year (from early August 2020 to 31 March 2021). This forecast includes the current cost estimate of operating an increased frequency and the additional costs of managing the network as ridership increases; but does not include any material cost of enforcing social distancing. Discussions are continuing with DfT regarding the position beyond 4th August 2020.

10.5 The overall impact on the Metrolink financial position in 2020/21 is shown in table 4 below, this is before any, currently unquantified, 'exceptional' costs to manage social distancing are included':

Table 4: GMCA and TFGM Net Revenue Shortfall (Current forecast)

Description	Amount (£m's)
Reduced Net Revenues to 4th Aug 2020	26.70
DFT Funding	24.97
Net Position to 4th Aug 2020	1.73
Reduced Net Revenue - Aug 2020 - Mar 2021	30.00*
Total	**31.73**

*- Could be as high as £40m

11. Potential Impact Beyond 2020/21 and Financial Legacy

11.1 This Paper focuses on the financial impact of COVID 19 in 2020/21. It is clear however that there will be a significant ongoing financial impact both in terms of continued higher costs and an ongoing continued suppression of income.

11.2 Whilst it is too early to present estimates of the ongoing impact and there are currently too many unknown variables, the impact is likely to be felt in the following areas.

- Reduced council tax base and lower levels of growth
- Reduced business rates base and lower future growth
- Supressed levels of income from a variety of sources
- Increased demands on social care, public health and other council budgets
- Increased cost of ensuring financially stable social care market
- Shift back to private vehicle use reducing income across public transport
- Impact of social distancing on efficiency and capacity of council services

11.3 This is by no means an exhaustive list and will add up to significant ongoing costs. Any move towards reductions in government funding such as a reduced revenue support grant would have a compounding impact on these issue

12. Local Government and the Economic Recovery - Impact on Capital Programmes, Regeneration and Employment

12.1 For the humanitarian, economic and financial recovery from COVID 19 to be effective local Government will have to be at the heart of local plans.

12.2 Local government play a unique role in local place based delivery of economic regeneration and development and across GM the 10 local authorities and the combined authority have a track record of working collaboratively to deliver growth and prosperity.

12.3 The successful delivery of schemes such as the Metrolink expansions including the second city crossing and most recently the Trafford Park line, together with deliver of other major infrastructure programmes like the Manchester Airport Relief Road show GM can deliver major schemes on time and on budget. GM recently passed the latest 5 year gateway review on the gainshare/earnback funding mechanism showing the delivery of tangible major schemes ahead of all other combined authorities.

12.4 In addition the GM Housing Investment Fund (HIF) has committed £466m to schemes to date, supporting the construction of 6,343 new homes.

12.5 GM has drawn up an ambitious infrastructure plan which would see the potential for multi billion pound investment across major transport schemes, infrastructure schemes including the recovery of brownfield sites to facilitate further housing (A consistent "Brownfield First" approach protecting greenbelt), business and retail development, and investment in decarbonising the public estate across Greater Manchester.

12.6 Conversation are ongoing with government about the funding of the Greater Manchester Infrastructure Programme (GMIP) as well as other "shovel ready" schemes which will deliver on the Government's own objectives.

12.7 The local authorities and the combined authority can only deliver these schemes and the associated benefits to employment and economic growth, if it is on a sound financial footing. It is essential for recovery that councils and the CA are able to play a full role across all its facets.

13. Building Back Better

13.1 Local and regional government also have a crucial role in delivering a recovery that takes advance of the opportunities for working differently in many areas of our economy and our society. This includes:

- Creating a sustainable and effective market for care services
- Driving further integration of health and care provision
- The delivery of radical digital solutions that don't just apply new technologies but challenge previous approaches, cultures and service design
- Delivering an increase in partnership and collaborative working between the public and private sector
- An opportunity to accelerate the work to tackle climate change and deliver on the clean air agenda

13.2 Civic and public leadership will be essential in delivering a recovery which is both strong and agile, responding to the ongoing management of the COVID crisis which will remain with us for some time to come.

13.3 This leadership will need be combined with a supportive approach to community resilience, proper recognition of the role of the VSCE sector, inclusive employment in the public services and putting social value at the heart of public sector procurement.

14. Further Support for the Greater Manchester Financial Position

14.1 It is recognised that support for the local authorities across GM and for GMCA will come in a number of forms and that the public bodies across GM should work together to ensure all opportunities are maximised in seeking to recover from the financial impact of the CIOVID 19 pandemic.

14.2 Clearly Local Authorities are seeking compensation for all the additional costs incurred and loss of income. However, it is recognised that the support to local authorities is likely to be a blend of measures which recognise the direct financial costs and loss of fees and charges due to COVID-19, the indirect impact such as the challenges in delivering planned transformation and savings and the impact on the Council's resource base and commercial income.

14.3 As well as direct financial support that recognises the costs and loss of income this could include:

- Greater certainty on the future financial position (accepting the constraints of the SR process). This should include early confirmation of the plans for the New Homes Bonus as well as confirmation of roll forward of core funding and grants to give local authorities a basis upon which to plan.

- A range of measures to help the local authority manage the time limited financial impacts on for example the Collection Fund alongside other measures such as tightening the business rates safety net during this period.

- Confirmation of the position for the business rates reset and for the continuation of the 100% business rates pilot during this period. Given the deferral of Fairer Funding it is vital that the GM local authorities and the combined authority can capture any growth achieved during this period. We have already seen from the pilot so far the benefit of work undertaken across the 10 local authority areas to invest this funding both individually and collectively to support local growth strategies and in turn increase the business rates base across the city region.

- Measures to help sustain cash flow and the capital programme which will be important to the recovery plans. This should include early announcement of capital grants where possible to enable capital projects to progress, retention of full Right to Buy receipts to invest in housing and the removal on restrictions for their use, the ability to capitalise costs associated with developing the capital programme during the recovery period

which would otherwise fall on revenue and consideration of bringing forward the reduction in PWLB rates for schemes that will support the economic recovery.

- Specific support related to the financial position of Manchester Airport and the aviation industry

14.4 Given the high levels of risk and uncertainty the planned Spending Review will be important in determining the future needs and resource envelope for local government. However, given the severity of the position the sector cannot afford to wait until the Finance Settlement in December to understand what the resources for 2021/22 will be.

14.5 Some of the measures that would assist with the financial position include:

- Providing certainty for planning: Confirming a further roll forward of core funding and grants for 2021/22 to provide a basis on which authorities can plan, given Fairer Funding and Business Rates reforms have been deferred.
- Early confirmation of the plans for New Homes Bonus.
- Protecting our resource base (Business Rates and Council Tax): Business rate bases will contract further with an increasing number of businesses likely to go into liquidation, an increase in the bad debt position and a growing number of appeals and claims for relief. Potential measures could include tightening the safety net to cover 100% of reductions and reflect the growth achieved since the last reset; and extending EZs and ADZs for a minimum of five years taking into account the likely downward impact on the economy.
- Confirmation that the business rates reset is deferred along with the financial funding reforms and continuation of the 100% business rates pilot during this period – given the deferral on the fair funding review this vital source of funding for the GM local authorities and the combined authority must be extended for 2021/22. We have already seen from the pilot so far the benefit of work undertaken across the 10 local authority areas to invest this funding both individually and collectively to support local growth strategies and in turn increase the business rates base across the city region.
- The Council Tax position is facing the combined impact of: increasing numbers of people requiring Council Tax Support; a reduction in collection rates; and a slow-down/reversal of growth in the council tax base. Consideration should be given to how cash flow support for the Collection Fund position could be provided until the position recovers or to enable local authorities to have a longer period, for example five years, in which to bring the Collection Fund back into balance.
- Full recognition of new burdens: There will be additional responsibilities such as sustaining resilience measures, contact tracing and PPE and increasing costs in areas such as Social Care and homelessness that will continue beyond the lockdown period, including the need to stabilise the care market. These will require funding.
- Measures to sustain local authority capital investment and economic recovery planning: further measures to sustain capital investment could be considered including:

- Freeze Right to Buy Receipts for 3 years or waiving the restrictions on their use;
- The ability to capitalise certain costs associated with recovery work (noting that this only a limited part of the solution and would require freedoms from current technical finance restrictions such as MRP) and providing flexibility to allow the capitalisation of costs relating to the capital programme which have been incurred due to COVID-19 and would ordinarily be classed as revenue;
- Early payment of capital grants to support cash flow; providing extensions to existing grant conditions e.g. where grant has to be spent by a certain date; and a clear timetable for future capital grant schemes in areas such as schools and transport to allow for decisions to be made now on projects which otherwise might need to be cancelled;
- Consideration of bringing forward a reduction in PWLB rates, linked to the government cost of borrowing, where local authorities need to unwind internal borrowing to support their cash flow and for planned capital schemes and investments that are not purely for yield.
- Consideration of a one year MRP holiday which would support the revenue position in 2021/22 when the financial impact is at its greatest

- Flexibilities in the rules around existing funding streams which would allow GM to work with Government to create significant local investment potential to help drive economic recovery and to "Build Back Better" in line with GMs longer term ambition to build a more inclusive, greener and productive economy.
- A commitment to roll out the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, recognising the needs of cities and city regions and considering wider investment packages that would support developing public transport infrastructure and recyclable investment funds.
- A specific discussion about the impact that the C-19 impact on Manchester Airport and the Aviation Industry has had on the financial position of the City Council and to a lesser extent, the other District Councils within GM.

15. Conclusions

15.1 The impact of the COVID 19 global pandemic on the residents, business and public authorities of Greater Manchester has been simply enormous.

15.2 The impact across the conurbation has been felt disproportionately here compared with other parts of the country with the prevalence of the virus and the mortality rates influenced by age, deprivation and other demographics.

15.3 The Financial impact on the ten local authorities of Greater Manchester and Greater Manchester Combined Authority has been equally significant with an expected impact in 2020/21 alone of £732m with funding from government announce so far of £272m.

15.4 The impact of these financial losses after the long period of austerity will, without further funding and other flexibilities, leave councils facing huge financial challenges.

15.5 Those challenges come at a time when the role of councils and public services in supporting the recovery from COVID and helping the region build back better is critical

16. Recommendations

16.1 Recommendations are included at the start of the report

WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

FOR CORPORATE ISSUES AND REFORM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The table below sets out the Corporate Issues and Reform Scrutiny's work programme for Members to develop, review, and agree. This is a 'live' document and will be reviewed and, if necessary, updated at each meeting to ensure that the Committee's work programme remains current.

For information, items taken previously to Corporate Issues and Reform Scrutiny in 2019/20 are listed in Appendix 1.

The Committee will receive the GMCA's register of key decisions whenever it is updated and the GMCA's monthly decision notice.

MEETING DATE	TOPIC	CONTACT OFFICER	REASON FOR SUBMISSION TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
14.7.20	• High Rise • GMCA Finance and the impacts of the pandemic	Paul Dennett Steve Wilson	
8.9.20	• VCSE Accord	Anne Lythgoe	
6.10.20			
10.11.20	• Waste Budget and Levy Report • Living with COVID19/ Building Back Better • Brexit	Steve Wilson TBA TBA	As agreed at the Work Programme discussion. As agreed at the Work Programme discussion.
15.12.20 Rearranged to 8.12.20	• Full Fibre/Digital	TBA	As agreed at the Work Programme discussion.
19.1.21	• Budgets 2021/22	Steve Wilson	
9.2.21	• GMCA Budget Reports	Steve Wilson	
16.3.21			

Appendix 1

Items considered in 2019/20 by the Committee

18.6.19	• Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) Implementation Plan and Performance Update
16.7.19	• Annual Performance Report 2018/19 • Programme for Change Outline Business Case
17.9.19	• Unified Public Services for the People of Greater Manchester • Consultation Report for the Programme for Change Outline Business Case
15.10.19 CANCELLED	• GMS Implementation and Performance Update • Age-Friendly Greater Manchester Update Report • Greater Manchester Local Full Fibre Network Programme
19.11.19	• High Risk Task Force • School Readiness Update • Waste Budget and Levy Report • GMS Implementation and Performance Update • Greater Manchester Brexit Preparations Update
21.1.20 CANCELLED	• Budgets 2020/21
11.2.20	• GMCA Budget Reports
17.3.20 CANCELLED	• High Risk Residents Survey Report • Greater Manchester Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VSCE) Accord Report • GMS Refresh Report