

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

DATE: Tuesday 16 March 2021

TIME: 4.00 pm

Please can Members join the meeting at 3.30 pm. The meeting will go live to the public at 4.00 pm

VENUE: Live Teams Event

AGENDA

1. **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS**
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** 1 - 4

To receive declarations of interest in any item for discussion at the meeting. A blank form for declaring interests has been circulated with the agenda; please ensure that this is returned to the Governance & Scrutiny Officer 48 hours before the meeting.
4. **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 9 FEBRUARY 2021** 5 - 14
5. **EARLY YEARS DIGITISATION AND SUPPORT FOR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION** 15 - 22

Report of Councillor Sean Fielding, Portfolio Lead Leader for Digital City Region and Sara Todd Portfolio Lead Chief Executive for Digital City Region
6. **RESETTING THE WAY WE WORK AT THE GMCA** 23 - 36

Presentation by Mallicka Mandal, Assistant Director, Workforce Strategy & Talent, GMCA

BOLTON	MANCHESTER	ROCHDALE	STOCKPORT	TRAFFORD
BURY	OLDHAM	SALFORD	TAMESIDE	WIGAN

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7. WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

37 - 40

Report of Joanne Heron, Statutory Scrutiny Officer, GMCA

8. REGISTER OF KEY DECISIONS

<https://democracy.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=386#>

9. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

To be advised.

Committee Membership 2020/21		
Name	Organisation	Political Party
Councillor Paula Appleby	Manchester	Labour
Councillor Tanya Burch	Salford	Labour
Councillor Karina Carter	Trafford Council	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 Democrats
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 8 March 2021 on behalf of Julie Connor, Secretary to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Broadhurst House, 56 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 6EU

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CORPORATE ISSUES & REFORM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
16 March 2021

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

YOU MUST

- Notify the governance officer for the meeting as soon as you realise you

FOR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

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 HELD TUESDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 4.30 PM
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

PRESENT:

Councillor Tim Pickstone	Bury (Chair)
Councillor Sam Al-Hamdani	Oldham
Councillor Colin McLaren	Oldham
Councillor Kallum Nolan	Rochdale
Councillor Tanya Burch	Salford
Councillor David Jolley	Salford
Councillor John McGahan	Stockport
Councillor Dena Reyness	Stockport
Councillor Teresa Smith	Tameside
Councillor Sean Anstee	Trafford
Councillor Karina Carter	Trafford
Councillor Joanne Marshall	Wigan

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Andy Burnham	GM Mayor
Steve Wilson	Treasurer, GMCA
Joanne Heron	Scrutiny Officer, GMCA
Matt Berry	Governance & Scrutiny, GMCA
Jenny Hollamby	Governance & Scrutiny, GMCA

CI&R/13/21 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all those present.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Leech (Manchester), Hazel Gloster (Oldham), Ray Dutton (Rochdale), Patricia Sullivan (Rochdale), Dave Morgan (Trafford) and Karen Garrido (Salford).

An apology for absence had also been received from Kevin Lee (GMCA).

CI&R/14/21 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

Whilst there was no urgent business, the Chair explained that supplementary agendas were published and circulated to Members on 2 and 3 February 2021, which contained the budget reports.

CI&R/15/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the meeting.

CI&R/16/21 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 19 JANUARY 2021

RESOLVED/-

That the minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 19 January 2021 be approved as a correct record.

CI&R/17/21 BUDGET 2021/22

The Chair welcomed the GM Mayor to the meeting and asked for an overview of the broad elements of the budget. The GM Mayor explained that decisions had been taken to minimise the impact on residents and in-light-of District's financial positions. In different ways, everybody was feeling the financial pressure in January 2021 caused by the pandemic. The GM Mayor took the decision late last year to freeze the mayoral precept, recognising there were on-going priorities that needed to be funded from the mayoral general precept. There was funding to continue A Bed Every Night (ABEN), which had supported 520 people. Government had provided funding for rough sleeper work, but this did not provide the level of funding needed in terms of the number of people requiring help. The eviction ban was potentially coming to an end, which would present significant challenges. There were almost 400 people in Everyone In accommodation from the first lockdown and thousands more in temporary accommodation. Currently, the housing situation across Greater Manchester was precarious. There was also funding for Our Pass; Leaders had agreed to extend the pilot to support young people coming out of the pandemic. The pilot period would now run until the summer of 2022, which would be followed by an evaluation period.

In terms of public transport and bus reform, it was envisaged that a decision on the future of buses would be made later this year. However, there was uncertainty in the budget and the Committee would consider the implications at a future meeting. At the present time, the consultation was being evaluated.

Regarding the fire budget, the GM Mayor informed Members that the fire service and its sustainability had been under scrutiny for the last two years. The Programme for Change had helped understand the finances of the fire service. There were healthy

reserves, therefore there was no need to increase the precept to support ambitions. Following events in late 2019 at the Cube in Bolton, safe levels of fire cover had been reconsidered. The commitment in this budget was to keep levels at 50 pumps with five crew on single pump stations and four on two pump stations; this level could be sustained on the mayoral general budget precept for next year and future years. The Programme for Change savings that had been identified and could be realised in future, but the GM Mayor would prefer not to have to go back to those savings. A new Chief Fire Officer was in post and work would take place with him to support the front line.

The GM Mayor advised that over all the precept was £90.95 for a band D property. There was pressure on Districts and council tax across the borough; there was also pressure to freeze the precept. A vast amount of work had taken place by the GMCA's Treasurer to reduce the burden on Districts and to minimise costs this year.

The GMCA's Treasurer reported that the Police and Crime Panel last week confirmed the proposal to increase the police precept by £10 for a band D property. This was the only precept that was changing for 2021/22.

Members scrutinised the budget reports, which were due for consideration by the GMCA on 12 February 2021. The budget reports were presented by the GMCA's Treasurer. The GM Mayor presented his mayoral budget report.

The budget reports set out the detailed proposals for each budget area including:

- The GM Mayor's final proposal for his general budget, consistent with a precept of £90.95 and the detailed budget and statutory calculations following receipt of final information from Districts.
- Contributions from Districts in relation to the transport levy, waste levy and GMCA costs

The main points referred:

- The Chair enquired about transport and budget risks around Metrolink, subsidised buses and post pandemic patronage. The GM Mayor confirmed that there was risk in-light-of the Government renewing the Metrolink funding deal a few months at a time. Currently, costs would be funded by Government until the end of the financial year, but this remained an on-going concern. About patronage, it was assumed that social distancing on public transport would remain in place for a good part of this year. Thought should also be given to the relaxation of restrictions and how this did not guarantee the return of passengers because people's working patterns had changed with more people working from home. It was envisaged that the return of passenger numbers would be slow. Regarding the bus network, Government was funding the bus operators. They were being asked if they could reduce costs by reducing the network coverage; so far, the loss of services had not been noticeable. Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) had asked operators to consider frequency rather than the loss of routes. Some risks had been absorbed

and there was a small amount of funding due to underspends in the concessionary budget that could be potentially helpful, but it was an on-going challenge. The GM Mayor saw this as an opportunity to reform public transport.

- A Member thanked the GM Mayor for his work over the past 12 months under such difficult circumstances specifically in terms of help for the homeless, the extension of Our Pass and the continuation of the bus reform. Youths and children in the Members ward would appreciate the support as they had also suffered during the pandemic. The GM Mayor explained that he was keen for Leaders to agree to extend the Our Pass pilot because this would benefit year 11 pupils now who had been severely disrupted during the pandemic. It was hoped this would allow young people to attend the colleges of their choice. The pass had also been extended to care leavers in Greater Manchester from the age of 21 as they faced numerous pressures and challenges. The ambition around the Greater Manchester network similar to that of the London style transport system remained in place and as part of that there would be a number of capital improvements to the infrastructure in Greater Manchester. The message to Government was that levelling up needed to form part of the recovery.
- Linked to the GM Mayor's point about levelling up, a Member asked about Greater Manchester's position and the clarity of its asks. Reference was made to the £200k to be spent on lobbying around the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). The GM Mayor was asked for his view on the receptiveness on Government departments to align with Greater Manchester's policy positions and what else could be done to support some of Greater Manchester's ambitions. The GM Mayor explained that the damage to Greater Manchester's economy through the pandemic had been profound and the furlough scheme could be masking a redundancy situation. Greater Manchester needed to build on the success of the vaccine programme and plan a roadmap out of the pandemic using every part of the capacity in the system to start levelling up and making it real for people; this was the GM Mayor's message to Government. Recovery would require all parts of the UK, national Government, and local Government to work together to face the challenge. The GM Mayor drew attention to the work of the city region to set a course towards 2038 for carbon neutrality. There were detailed plans that underpinned that ambition. To reach that target, retrofitting had to take place in every property in Greater Manchester by 2038 and that could potentially create thousands of quality jobs for young people. Work would need to take place with colleges to support the development of that workforce. All this needed to be joined together and co-ordinated, which could not be carried out by Government and was a perfect opportunity for levelling up. Reference was also made to the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, later this year; the GM Mayor suggested that Greater Manchester was well placed to be put in the spotlight by Government at that event and to bring forward the investable opportunities to build a green economy. Discussions were taking place with Government on this basis. In terms of the CSR and lobbying, this work had been put back and a short-term budget was being considered in early March 2021. There had been no news from Government about the funds being unlocked to get recovery moving. Clarity about recovery was crucial.

- In relation to bus franchising, a Member commented that it was sensible to await the outcome of the consultation evaluation and analysis on patronage post pandemic before making any decisions. The GM Mayor was asked to share the latest analysis about what the potential costs could be in the future and what the impacts on the mayoral precept might be. The GM Mayor advised that it was dependent on the Government's decision regarding revenue funding. The GM Mayor was making the argument that the Government should leave in some revenue subsidy in the Greater Manchester public transport system as the way London had benefitted for many years. If there was no support, then there would be an impact on the precept, but this was all dependent on how much the Government supported Greater Manchester. Constructive discussions were taking place and it was hoped Government would be persuaded to put in place support. The Government was talking about recovery partnerships across the country with all the urban and suburban areas, where bus revenue funding was in place. There was also an intention to move all public transport into a reformed place as part of this either as a partnership or a franchising arrangement. Reform to the rail system was starting to happen. There was certainly an intention to reform all public transport coming out of the pandemic. The implications for the mayoral precept would be dictated by the extent to which Greater Manchester could persuade Government to leave funding in. If that was not possible, then there would be implications, but they were manageable.
- In terms of the temporary support mentioned by the GM Mayor especially around transport such as reimbursement for concessionary agreements, a Member asked if the temporary support was no longer available from March 2021, how long would it be before the impact was felt on travel in Greater Manchester. The GM Mayor was asked for the latest information on Government thinking in terms of the Metrolink and bus support beyond March 2021. The GM Mayor agreed that should support not be received then there would be serious implications for public transport. There was a worrying time earlier in the pandemic when funding for the Metrolink took time to come through. The GM Mayor highlighted that Greater Manchester had never been helped, in the way London had been helped. If passenger revenue declined, then there was a problem. Never having investment was an issue for Government and Greater Manchester needed relieving of the borrowing costs. This was a product of how transport outside London was funded. Government had understood this and was working with Greater Manchester but at the present time there was no long-term certainty.
- A Member asked about the long-term sustainability of crewing levels, use of reserves and council tax freezes. The GM Mayor explained that this was an exceptional year in terms of the incomes of residents in Greater Manchester and that council tax was a regressive tax. It was not ideal, but it was borne out of the necessity of the time. That said, increases had been given over recent years. There was a £2m underspend in the budget for 2020/21 so there was some headroom; the proposal was sustainable for now. The Programme for Change had anticipated further cuts from the central Government grant and the need to look at further reductions. Thought would be given to this next year. In-light-of the

experience at the Cube in Bolton, the GM Mayor did not want to drop below 50 pumps across Greater Manchester.

The GMCA's Treasurer added, that the fire service was in a strong position because the precept was increased in 2020/21 and reserves remained unused and reserves had not been used to balance the books this year. The budget set for next year also did not draw down reserves. There had been some savings delivered outside of the role of the fire fighter work so that meant the budget set did not require reserves in 2021/22. The fire service would be in a reasonably strong position going into 2022/23. The decision to forego an increase 2021/22, could be dealt with on a recurrent basis. Further thought would be given to these areas moving forward. The big issue for 2022/23 was around funding received annually without any long-term commitment for pension costs, which was about £5m. Funding was available for 2021/22 but it was difficult to plan-ahead. A long-term settlement around pensions was needed.

- A Member enquired about the Greater Manchester Strategy and performance monitoring. The GM Mayor explained that the work of the GMCA had been realigned due to the pandemic and agreed to raise performance monitoring with Officers outside of the meeting and report back to the Committee. Individual schemes could account for all the funding and its achievements.
- A Member drew attention to the GM Mayor's attendance at a full Council meeting in Trafford to discuss policing in-light-of Greater Manchester Police (GMP) being put into special measures and asked that the GM Mayor attend a similar meeting in Stockport. The GM Mayor agreed to the request. In terms of the police precept, it was explained that a decision had been taken to allow increase front line numbers by 325 this year and hopefully this would repair some of the damage to front line services and address the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMIC) report. Having considered GMP over the last decade, the GM Mayor believed that cuts had damaged the force but so had the forces' implementation of the cuts leading to today's current position. There was an opportunity to hear views from all levels and to open-up a new era for GMP.
- There would be a £10 increase in the police precept and £7.25m would be put into reserves, taking reserves up to £92.6m. A Member suggested it was a vast amount of money to be set aside and potentially not be used. The GM Mayor explained that when the Government announced its funding plan, this was the first year there had been a significant uplift in the Government grant to GMP to pay for extra officers. It was assumed the precept would be £15. However, most but not all authorities had done that. When the public was consulted, there was a strong message about challenge and using resources effectively. Hence, the precept was agreed at £10, which would deliver 325 extra officers this year. Combined with the 670 officers that had come into post since 2017, there would be, by the end of the next financial year 1k officers back from the 2k officers lost in 2010. Regarding the reserves, this was contingency funding for the on-going programmes round the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOP) report and to improve the reporting of crime. The GMCA's Treasurer explained the £7m was a net draw down from

reserves in 2021/22. The biggest issue around that was when the settlement came in from last year the Home Office front loaded some of the funding for the infrastructure to support police recruitment, which had been spread over several years. There would also be other one-off costs to support recruitment such as extra computer equipment and cars. The net movement in 2021/22 was a draw down from reserves that was previously set aside for recruitment to the new officer numbers. There were also several other movements from reserves that reflected other factors. There was a Covid reserve that had been put aside to cover potential on-going costs of the pandemic moving forward. It was a net figure that covered movements in and out of reserves.

- A Member raised the issue of anti-social behaviour and engagement with young people. It was suggested that young people were provided with opportunities to deter them from anti-social behaviour and petty crime. The Member asked if there were strategies in place with GMP to work with partners to provide opportunities and could importance be placed on engagement with young people to make streets safer. The GM Mayor said this was about making neighbourhood policing as strong as possible. There was a commitment for a named contactable PC and PCSO in every ward to make the connection between the police and communities stronger. There was also a plan, which had received some criticism, for school-based police officers within the budget. This was not about enforcement in schools but connecting young people and pathways to opportunities. There was Home Office funding to look at serious youth crime and community led pilots were being considered to support young people at risk of being drawn into crime or being a victim of crime. How to empower local community organisations and the voluntary sector was being given serious thought. In terms of opportunities for young people, the GM Mayor raised Our Pass and how this supported young people with the ability to travel to get to the opportunities that they wanted. The GM Mayor informed Members about the Greater Manchester Apprenticeship & Careers Service (GMACS), which was a single portal for all apprenticeships and career opportunities in Greater Manchester, which was now in place. Also picked up was a strong core for mental health support through the pandemic and new digital mental health services for young people were now available and been widely used. Improved support for young people was a challenging picture. As part of the GMCA's life ready work a survey had been carried out with Year 10 pupils; the results were challenging in terms of young people reporting the loss of hope for the future, the disruption of plans, problems with mental health and wellbeing. An urgent response was needed.
- The Committee thanked the GM Mayor for the hard work and support received from the GMCA's Treasurer and team throughout the year, which was very much appreciated.

CI&R/18/21

GMCA BUDGET OVERVIEW

The report presented an overview of the proposed GMCA budgets for 2021/22. It summarised the position on the mayoral general budget and precept proposals, the

GMCA general budget, GMCA transport budgets including transport levy and statutory charge and the GM waste services levy.

The report set out the implications of the proposed budgets and the resultant charges on Districts and the mayoral precept.

RESOLVED/-

Members endorsed the report for consideration by the GMCA on 12 February 2021.

CI&R/19/21 MAYORAL GENERAL BUDGET AND PRECEPT PROPOSALS

The report set out the GM Mayor's proposals for the mayoral general budget (including fire and rescue) and sought approval for the mayoral general precept for 2021/22.

The report recommended the setting of the revenue budget for 2021/22 as required under Section 42A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (updated in the Localism Act 2011) and the precepts and relevant levels of Council Tax required under sections 40, 42B and 47 of the Act.

RESOLVED/-

Members endorsed the report for consideration by the GMCA on 12 February 2021.

CI&R/20/21 GMCA TRANSPORT REVENUE BUDGET

The report set out the transport related GMCA budget for 2021/22. The proposed transport levy to be approved for 2021/22 was included within the report together with the consequent allocations to Districts.

RESOLVED/-

Members endorsed the report for consideration by the GMCA on 12 February 2021.

CI&R/21/21 GMCA GENERAL REVENUE BUDGET

The report set out the GMCA general budget for 2021/22. The proposed District contributions to be approved for 2021/22 of £8.603m were included within the report together with the consequent allocations to Districts. This was a reduction of £437k on the contribution for 2020/21.

RESOLVED/-

Members endorsed the report for consideration by the GMCA on 12 February 2021.

CI&R/22/21 GM WASTE BUDGET

This report sought Member's comment on the budget and levy for 2021/22 and on the medium-term financial plan (MTFP) for the three-year period to 2024/25. Those plans were delivered by:

1. A total levy requirement for 2021/22 of £162.4m, which represented an average 2.9% decrease over 2020/21.
2. The MTFP then proposed levy charges of £163.1m in 2022/23, £164.8m in 2023/24 and £167.6m in 2024/25.

RESOLVED/-

Members endorsed the report for consideration by the GMCA on 12 February 2021.

CI&R/23/21 GMCA CAPITAL BUDGET

The report presented an update in relation to the GMCA's capital expenditure programme for transport and economic and regeneration functions.

RESOLVED/-

Members endorsed the report for consideration by the GMCA on 12 February 2021.

CI&R/24/21 WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

The work programme for the 2020/21 Municipal Year was presented to Members for population for future meetings.

At the next meeting the Chair advised that work force issues and working from home during the pandemic and the return to work and to review of the scrutiny process that would potentially take place in the next Municipal Year.

RESOLVED/-

That the work programme be updated following the meeting.

CI&R/25/21 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would take place on 16 March 2021 at 4.00 pm via Microsoft Live virtual event.

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Corporate Issues and Reform Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 16 March 2021

Subject: Early Years Digitisation and support for Digital Transformation

Report of: Cllr Sean Fielding, Portfolio Lead Leader for Digital City Region; Sara Todd Portfolio Lead Chief Executive for Digital City Region

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the digitisation of Early Years across Greater Manchester and wider support for Digital Transformation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Corporate Issues and Reform Overview & Scrutiny Committee is requested to:

- Review progress against Early Years digitisation ambitions for Greater Manchester.
- Review with impact of wider digital transformation and support provided via this programme.

CONTACT OFFICERS: Phil Swan, GM Digital Chief Information Officer; Kieran Smith, GM Digital Programme Manager, GMCA

Equalities Implications:

Regular portfolio level reviews and corresponding Equality Impact Assessments of the GM Digital Portfolio are undertaken. These reviews highlight where there may be a detrimental impact on individuals with protected characteristic, where there may be additional need to target activity to advance equality of opportunity and what activity should be undertaken to foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who don't. The outputs of the review and Equality Impact Assessment are shared with the GM Digital Portfolio Delivery Executive members and the GM Digital Steering Group.

BOLTON
BURY

MANCHESTER
OLDHAM

ROCHDALE
SALFORD

STOCKPORT
TAMESIDE

TRAFFORD
WIGAN

Climate Change Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures –

This work has positive climate change implications in two respects. The shift from paper to digital ways of working not only reduces printing but has the potential to reduce travel as staff do not need to return to offices so frequently. Parents / guardians can see assessment results digitally further reducing the need for materials posting.

The technology solutions re-use parent / guardian mobile devices and the software is cloud hosted, making use of large-scale efficient technology hosting capabilities. The potential to offset these using carbon credits is being investigated.

Risk Management:

Risks to delivery are closely managed via the GM School Readiness Board, which reports to the GM Reform Board, and the GM Digital Platform Leadership Group which reports to the GMCA Digital Portfolio Executive and Steering Group which monitor and respond to escalated risks.

Legal Considerations:

None

Financial Consequences – Revenue:

None

Financial Consequences – Capital:

None

Number of attachments to the report: 0

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Related GMCA paper, June 2019: <https://democracy.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/documents/s3406/19%20Digital%20Early%20Years%20and%20Data%20Sharing%20Capability%20-%20GMCABoardReportPartA%20v3.pdf>

1 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In early 2019 and in the context of the Greater Manchester Strategy, the GMCA agreed £6.8M for an investment in a programme to digitise paper elements in Early Years services and establish capabilities that could join up data across the public sector, supporting other funded use cases. This report provides an update on progress, the support provided during the pandemic and forward plans.

2 SCHOOL READINESS IN GREATER MANCHESTER

- 2.1 School readiness in Greater Manchester is lower than the national average with almost two in every five children not reaching a good level of development at age five years; this increases to one in every two children in receipt of free school meals and lower for boys on free school meals. Overall, it is estimated that approximately 12,000 Greater Manchester children start school each year without sufficient skills to learn out of a cohort of approx. 40,000. Critically, data on development over the critical 0 - 2.5 year period is difficult to obtain as much of it is on paper. Referrals are also slow, parent access to data is poor and professionals have little visibility of records across sectors.
- 2.1 This has both impacts for the life chances of individuals and is linked with longitudinal underemployment in Greater Manchester. The GM School Readiness programme is directly targeted at this issue and was established in 2017 in line with its status as a priority in the Greater Manchester Strategy.
- 2.2 School Readiness has almost certainly been negatively impacted by the pandemic - health visitors have been pulled into acute settings; providing care for some vulnerable children has been challenging; and the economic impact has placed increased pressures on households. As over 8,500 statutory health visiting checks have been missed since April 2020, the GM Mayor emphasised the need to make ground back on this at the GMCA Reform Board on 15 January 2021.
- 2.3 The Early Years digitisation workstream is a cross-cutting enabler of the wider School Readiness programme, based on the need to shift from highly paper-based working and to provide greater support for child development up to school age with the intent of creating an Early Years Record for all 200,000 children aged 0-5 in Greater Manchester at any one time.
- 2.4 There are several target outcomes of the digitisation work: improving school readiness by providing early years professionals with better tools and data to make better informed and more timely decisions; enabling better commissioning and analysis; accelerating referrals; enabling professionals across settings to have visibility of child development; and giving parents / carers access to child development data.
- 2.5 All areas in Greater Manchester have agreed to adopt this solution as it sits on top of the existing 8 stage Early Years model used across all 10 localities. The localities agreed to digitise the model once, together and consistently, rather than 10 times.

- 2.6 The pilot of this initiative with Salford Council demonstrated a productivity uplift of over 30% in health visitors, amongst other benefits, and further work estimated a net GM wide productivity uplift of over £27M over five years, enabling more effective and prioritised family support.
- 2.7 Consequently, the scope of Early Years Digitisation work, as agreed with the School Readiness Board, is:
- *An Early Years Application*: To work with professionals and parents to create a mobile application and then support adoption across all 10 boroughs, all the paper-based assessment forms used by parents / carers and health visitors for children aged 0 – 2.5 years (Ages and Stages Questionnaires and WellComm Assessments) as part of the GM Early Years Delivery Model and Healthy Child Programme.
 - *An Early Education Application*: To work with early years' professionals to create a mobile application for speech and communication pathways and to digitise assessments in early education settings (including childminders) and then support adoption across all 10 boroughs.
 - *An Early Years Integrated Digital Solution: An Early Years record for Greater Manchester*. To: a) Enable the Early Years Application to be connected with the NHS Patient Demographic Service (PDS) and; b) connect the applications with each area's local community health systems and provide professionals a joined-up view of child development and school readiness data.

3 EARLY YEARS DIGITISATION PROGRESS

- 3.1 Following the completion of procurements in August 2019 and after intense co-design work with a wide range of front-line GM users, the Early Years App was due to go live in March 2021 in Bury and Rochdale. An "agile" approach to this work was used, based on working with frontline staff to capture and support typical user journeys and multiple short development sprints to ensure that delivery aligned with user expectations for usability and functionality. Figure 1 illustrates the scale of this activity.
- 3.2 To achieve this, Greater Manchester also worked with the Dept of Health & Social Care to negotiate the UK's only digital (as opposed to paper) licenses for Ages & Stages Questionnaires used as standard across the country.

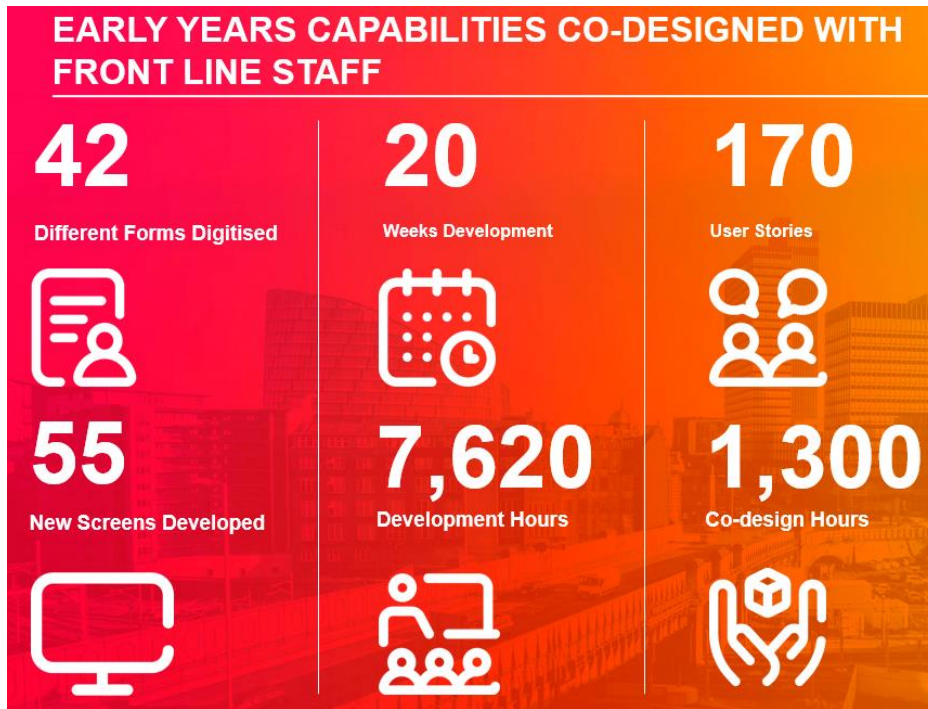


Figure 1. Early Years applications development

- 3.3 As with so many areas, COVID-19 impacted plans and both the GM School Readiness Board and individual localities opted to postpone go-live as early years professionals were drawn into COVID-19 response.
- 3.4 Early Years go-live was rescheduled for September 2020 with professionals in Bury and Rochdale, not least because it was perceived that online completion of child development forms by parents / carers was helpful in a social distancing context. The service was launched then and has been used with the first 2,000 families successfully. Families are also encouraged to download the App from either the Apple or Google application stores and through this they can both complete responses and see evaluations.
- 3.5 The focus now is on scale and impact. All localities areas are engaged in projects to go live with this and additional capabilities in 2021-22 as shown in Table 1. A benefits realisation study is also underway with Bury and Rochdale.
- 3.6 The Early Education version of the App for education settings and childminders is due to go live in Bolton, Rochdale and Salford in March 2021. Everyone involved is however working around the evolving pressures caused by Covid-19.

Locality	1. The Early Years Application alone	2. The Early Education Application alone	3. Both Apps live and integrated	
			Integration into national maternity datasets	Planned Integration into local systems**
Bury	Sep-20		Phase 1, end of Mar 2021	Jan-22

Bolton		end Mar 2021		May-21
Manchester				Nov-21
Oldham	Est. early 21-22*			May-21
Rochdale	Sep-20	end Mar 2021	Phase 1, end of Mar 2021	Jan-22
Salford		end Mar 2021		May-21
Stockport				Aug-21
Tameside				Aug-21
Trafford				Nov-21
Wigan				Nov-21

* Dates being confirmed as a result of ongoing COVID pressures.

** Discovery projects underway to capture requirements. Dates provides are indicative and for planning purposes only. All implementation plans will be formally approved through appropriate governance.

Table 1. Planned Early Years go-live dates.

3.7 Additional user requests are being captured and managed through a change management process and include bringing in automated updates on new births from NHS systems and additional content for parents like the BBC’s “Tiny Happy People”.

4 WIDER ACTIVITY SUPPORTED THROUGH THE GM DIGITAL PLATFORM PROGRAMME

4.1 Whilst Early Years digitisation is the agreed focus of the GMCA’s investment, the initiative also intended to create a re-usable set of technical capabilities that would support not only this area but other priorities.

4.2 This ambition was shared by the Greater Manchester Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and so both GMCA and HSCP co-invested in several of the underpinning technologies. During the pandemic these have been called on to support Covid-19 related support activities including:

- Providing the data gathering system that underpins the Covid-19 Situation Reporting analytics that gathers data from over 2,700 organisations in Greater Manchester on a daily or bi-weekly basis.
- Providing a Covid-19 Community Hub volunteer management system with Bury Council that was taken up by Rochdale Council also. This used some additional Microsoft software.
- Setting up a Greater Manchester wide C19 Complex Case Management system for Tier 1B cases. The information governance work on this underpinned the subsequent Track & Trace Hub activity. This also used some additional Microsoft software.
- Providing support for the deployment of the GM-Think homelessness system with localities.

- 4.3 Health Innovation Manchester have also successfully re-used parts of the technology to provide a Smoking Cessation App as part of the Greater Manchester Smokefree Pregnancy Programme¹. This draws on elements in the Early Years App's development in particular.
- 4.4 The security of the underlying technologies and architecture has been thoroughly explored and a large amount of information governance work has been undertaken to comply with data protection legislation, taking into account the legal powers of different organisation and resident access.

5 LOOKING AHEAD

- 5.1 The primary focus for this work is the successful digitisation of Early Years and the improvement of School Readiness in Greater Manchester with the plans for this described above. Effort also continues to ensure that additional value is gained from the underpinning technical assets. Currently work is underway in the following areas:
- Digitally enabling Victim's Services: A GM solution design and business case has been prepared through the sponsorship of the GM Police & Crime Commissioner.
 - Strengthening analytics of Vulnerable Families. Working with the GM Reform programme, a study has been completed into managing existing data flows more effectively and improving understanding of families at risk.
 - Supporting a bid for a Health Aging pilot to Innovate UK from GMCA, Manchester Local Care Organisation, industry partners and Health Innovation Manchester.
 - Engaging with individual localities on ways to improve data flows and integration.
- 5.2 In addition, there is national interest in Greater Manchester's Early Years solutions which are being discussed with Dept of Health & Social Care.

6 GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT

- 6.1 The GM School Readiness Board, chaired by Christine McLoughlin (DCS, Stockport Council), oversees the Early Years Digitisation work via the Early Years Digitisation Sub-Group (chaired by Rebecca Bibby, Early Help and School Readiness, Salford City Council) and includes early years professionals from all localities.
- 6.2 In addition, the cross-cutting programme and technology aspects are governed through the GM Digital Platform Leadership Group which is jointly chaired by GMCA and Salford Royal Foundation Trust, as the lead delivery organisations for underpinning work. This jointly reports into the GMCA Digital Portfolio and HSCP as per HSCP's memorandum of understanding with Salford Royal Foundation Trust. These arrangements are currently being refined to take into account changes to the HSCP Digital programme.

¹ [Greater Manchester Smokefree Pregnancy Platform - Health Innovation Manchester](#)

7 CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

- 7.1 Digital transformation at scale and across multiple organisations is challenging, however the Early Years work is demonstrating that it is achievable and impactful. This initiative has also shown that an approach based on re-usable underlying technologies is effective and the wider potential for this has begun to be explored. As Greater Manchester emerges from COVID-19 and pressures on public services continue, there will continue to be significant focus on the opportunities this work creates.



Resetting the way we work at the GMCA

Mallicka Mandal

Assistant Director – Workforce Strategy & Talent

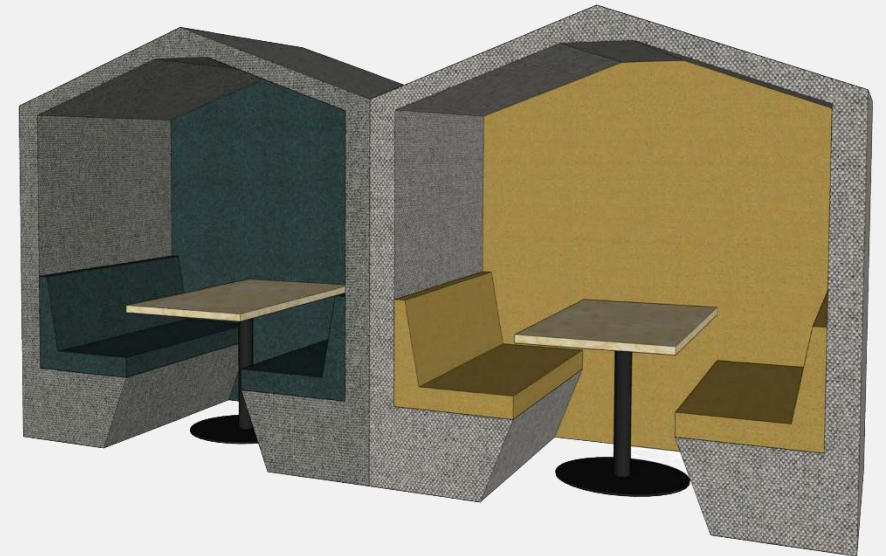
AGILE WORKING AND HOW WE USE OUR OFFICE SPACE

“Work isn't about sitting at a desk all day; it's about activities - collaborating, studying, conversing, sharing ideas, challenging, communicating, presenting and working with others; whether that be in large or small groups”

Worksetting Types & Spaces



Worksetting Types & Spaces



Worksetting Types & Spaces



Core Principles Adopted

- **Safety First**
- **Alignment with the principles of GM**
- **Ensuring business of GMCA is delivered**
- **Supporting health and well-being of staff**
- **Ensuring connectivity in a digital world**
- **Focussing on outcomes**
- **Enabling maximum flexibility**
- **Ensuring inclusivity**

How our approach to Resetting was developed:

- **Setting up the Resetting the Way We Work Task Group – April 2020**
- **Survey of staff led by managers on understanding suitability for home working – May 2020**
- **Feedback from a test group on Covid secure office arrangements – June 2020**
- **Employee engagement survey with specific questions on well-being – June 2020**
- **Team Engagement through line managers – through Oct and Nov 2020.**
- **5 Engagement Sessions with staff – Festival of Learning - Jan/Feb 2021**

Learning from the Pandemic

Positive Impacts:

- Increased Choice
- Catalyst for Change
- Increased productivity
- Significant cost savings - for individuals and organisations
- Reduction in sickness absence
- Ability to work flexibly
- Reduction in commute time
- Suited to a range of personality types
- Caring for others
- Work – Life Balance
- Environmental Impact

Negative Impacts:

- Work Demands
- Social Isolation
- Work Intensity
- Work-family conflict
- Loss of peer support systems
- Physical environment for working
- Loss of commuting as a break
- Loss of identity
- Managing remote teams
- Loss of informal L&D
- New Starters

STARTER FOR 10 PROPOSITION – FUTURE DESIGN OF OUR WORK

Ensure the business of the CA continues to be delivered effectively

We will sustain our impact and delivery by being clear about our work objectives and focussed on delivery, whilst resetting the way we work. We will;

- **Focus on the delivery of our key outcomes and priorities whilst introducing new ways of working.**
- **Work with our colleagues to ensure consistency of our approach across directorates and teams**

Ensure our staff are safe and supported

We will be an exemplary employer acknowledging and responding to both physical and mental stresses of the new working environment and supporting the health and wellbeing of our staff. We will;

- **Develop a working protocol which sets out guidelines for home/office working including healthy remote working guidelines, with advice and support for maintaining healthy behaviours whilst working from home.**
- **Ensure equality and inclusivity by always considering that staff have differing personal circumstances that should be accommodated wherever possible. This may include caring responsibilities, health issues, travel difficulties etc.**
- **Provide resilience support to our colleagues where necessary.**

Enable maximum flexibility in our work practices

We will allow people maximum flexibility in working patterns to enable more working from home whilst guarding against being ‘permanently at work’. We will;

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- **Utilise lead-edge technologies (existing and yet to be created) to make the CA workable, including collaboration, creativity, and productivity tools.**
- **Allow staff to opt-out of ‘blended working’, once restrictions are eased, if they wish to work completely from the office.**
- **Develop a policy framework to support blended working e.g., changes to the flexi-time scheme.**

Clarify how we will work practically in the Churchgate House office space and in the wider estate of the CA, TfGM and the FRS

We will work with colleagues to clarify how to utilise our office accommodation as restrictions are eased. We will;

- **Agree use of our office accommodation that enables effective supervision and support, and cross-team and project working, whilst enabling informal interaction.**
- **Make more effective use of the GMCA estate with office hubs where staff can meet for project work, collaboration and in-house meetings and satellite locations for use by staff as and when needed.**
- **Develop a longer-term accommodation strategy that realises savings from our new ways of working and realises longer term efficiencies through collaboration with GM partners.**

Learn as we go

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We will engage our colleagues in changing the way the CA works in the months ahead through testing new ideas, learning and adaptation. We will;

- **Review our ways of working and systems regularly to ensure they are evolving safely and effectively in these fast-changing times.**
- **Encourage our colleagues in co-creating new ways of working through practical suggestions and recommendations.**
- **Provide managers with the support and learning they need to make the new ways of working successful.**

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Rise • GMCA Finance and the impacts of the pandemic 	Paul Dennett Steve Wilson	
8.9.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCSE Accord • HWRC Access Policy Report • Financial Impacts of COVID19 	Anne Lythgoe David Taylor Steve Wilson	For scrutiny before submission to GMCA.
6.10.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID Recovery Plan • Spending Review • Update on White Paper • GM Inequalities Commission 	Andrew Lightfoot John Wrathmell	
10.11.20 Mayor to attend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste Budget and Levy Report • Living with COVID19/ Building Back Better 	Steve Wilson/David Taylor Andy Burnham	As agreed at the Work Programme discussion.
15.12.20 Rearranged to 8.12.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GMCA , and Transport Budgets 	Steve Wilson	As agreed at the Work Programme discussion
19.1.21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgets 2021/22 • Waste Strategy • Brexit • Full fibre/ digital 	Steve Wilson David Taylor John Wrathmell Phil Swan/ Alison Gordon	Deferred from December 20 Deferred from December 20

<p>9.2.21</p> <p>Mayor to attend</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GMCA Budget Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ GMCA Budget Overview ○ GMCA General Revenue Budget ○ GMCA Transport Revenue Budget ○ Mayoral General Budget ○ GM Waste Budget ○ GMCA Capital Budget 	<p>Steve Wilson</p>	
<p>16.3.21</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Scrutiny arrangements • Early Years Digitisation and Support for Digital Transformation • Workforce Issues/impact on GMCA • Biowaste Strategy 	<p>TBA</p> <p>Sean Fielding</p> <p>Mallicka Mandal</p> <p>David Taylor</p>	<p>For scrutiny before GMCA</p> <p>Considered by the Housing, Planning & Environment O&S Committee on 4.2.21</p>

Items considered in 2019/20 by the Committee

18.6.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) Implementation Plan and Performance Update
16.7.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Performance Report 2018/19 Programme for Change Outline Business Case
17.9.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unified Public Services for the People of Greater Manchester Consultation Report for the Programme for Change Outline Business Case
15.10.19 CANCELLED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GMS Implementation and Performance Update Age-Friendly Greater Manchester Update Report Greater Manchester Local Full Fibre Network Programme
19.11.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budgets 2020/21
11.2.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GMCA Budget Reports
17.3.20 CANCELLED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Risk Residents Survey Report Greater Manchester Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VSCE) Accord Report GMS Refresh Report

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