

Date: 26th March 2021

Subject: Living with Covid Resilience Plan, Quarter Two Progress Update

Report of: Andy Burnham, Portfolio Lead for Strategy and Eamonn Boylan
Portfolio Lead Chief Executive for Strategy

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To provide a progress update on the implementation of the Greater Manchester Living with Covid Resilience plan, after two quarters of delivery. This report provides an update on the evidenced impacts arising from Covid, an overall assessment of progresses and challenges which remain, an update on the work being undertaken to respond to the inequalities evidenced and exacerbated by Covid, and summary updates on the progresses made against the deliverables in the Living with Covid Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The GMCA is requested to:

Note and comment of the progress update provided on the delivery of the GM Living with Covid Resilience Plan

CONTACT OFFICERS:

Simon Nokes, Executive Director, GMCA
Simon.nokes@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Amy Foots, Head of Implementation, GMCA
Amy.foots@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

BOLTON
BURY

MANCHESTER
OLDHAM

ROCHDALE
SALFORD

STOCKPORT
TAMESIDE

TRAFFORD
WIGAN

Equalities Implications:

The actions contained within the Living with Covid Resilience Plan seek to more fully understand the inequalities evidenced through the pandemic. The actions in the Plan seek as far as possible to mitigate those identified impacts, and includes a series of actions to develop systemic responses and mechanisms to more fully assess, understand and respond to evidenced inequalities.

Climate Change Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures –

The Living with Covid Resilience Plan highlights climate change actions, impacts and improvements observed through the pandemic. The implementation of the plan seeks to retain those initial benefits and also supports the successful delivery of a series of actions which will support GM's climate change ambitions. The development of a comprehensive assessment tool will further support this work, with a systemwide approach to the assessment of impacts arising from propositions and development of appropriate mitigating actions.

Risk Management:

No specific risks associated with the progress report, however the report details risks to the future delivery of strategic priorities and the challenges posed to the GM system going forward to continue to support our people, places and businesses at the scale and pace required due to the impacts arising from the pandemic.

Legal Considerations:

N/A

Financial Consequences – Revenue:

N/A (plan delivered within existing resources)

Financial Consequences – Capital:

N/A (plan delivered within existing resources)

Number of attachments to the report: 0**Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

To be considered at future meetings of O&S Committee

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

The Living with Covid Resilience Plan was agreed by the GMCA at their meeting on 2nd September 2020 <https://democracy.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/documents/s9127/7%20Living%20with%20Covid%20Plan.pdf>

The quarter one progress update of the Living with Covid Resilience Plan was agreed by the GMCA at their meeting on 18th December 2020 <https://democracy.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/documents/s11119/9%20Living%20with%20Covid%20Plan%20Progress%20Update%20-%20GMCA%2018.12.20.pdf>

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-----|
| TRACKING/PROCESS | | |
| Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution | | No |
| EXEMPTION FROM CALL IN | | |
| Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency? | | N/A |
| GM Transport Committee | Overview & Scrutiny Committee | |
| N/A | To be confirmed | |

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 The one year Living with Covid Resilience Plan was agreed in September 2020 by the GMCA and adopted by the GM system as the main delivery document to steer and continue to develop the system wide responses to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. This is the update report for progress and developments after the second quarter delivery of the Plan.

1.2 The Plan is structured under a series of GM deliverables which the system collectively is seeking to attain to deliver a response to the observed impacts arising from the initial outbreak of the pandemic.

1.3 This paper provides:

- An update on the impacts evidenced and experienced across Greater Manchester as the pandemic continues (section 2)
- An update on overall system progresses and challenges around implementation of the Living with Covid Plan, and how these now begin to shape and inform the refresh of the Greater Manchester Strategy (section 3)

- An update on the systemwide response to developing improved assessment and targeting mechanisms to respond to inequalities and environmental impacts (section 4)
A summary update of progresses made against the GM deliverables in the one year plan (section 5)

1.4 It should be noted this progress report relates to activity being delivered under the Living with Covid Resilience Plan, which is distinct from the Greater Manchester Contain Plan. The two plans are complementary, and the system working together to develop and deliver against both. The Living with Covid Resilience Plan's focus is to respond to the issues and wider impacts of Covid on Greater Manchester's people, places and businesses, with the Contain Plan focusing on activities around outbreak management, infection control, vaccination roll out etc. Actions being delivered under both plans will continue to shape and evolve over the coming months as the pandemic continues, responsive to the changing needs. The systemwide evidence and learning from the Plans implementation will inform the refresh of the Greater Manchester Strategy later in the year.

2. UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACTS ARISING FROM COVID

2.1 The Living with Covid Resilience Plan was developed in response to the impacts (both positive and negative) seen during the first wave of the outbreak. At six months into the delivery of the Plan (and 11 months into the pandemic), an updated assessment is provided below of the current status of those observed impacts. This updated assessment is provided to contextualise how the pandemic has impacted on Greater Manchester and how those impacts are likely to shape our actions and responses over the longer term. The below is not intended to provide comment or information on the policy responses and actions delivered.

2.2 The table below shows that the observed impacts arising from Covid, have not significantly changed over the last six months, however, the nature of the presentation of those impacts has, in many cases shifted. For example, some issues may not necessarily now present as urgent and needing an emergency response, but instead are of concern due to a greater understanding of the long term nature, and more likely entrenched impacts arising. There is also a greater number of those observed impacts which are now deemed to be worse than when initially observed, in part recognising the entrenchment of the issues presented, but also significantly due to the pandemic ongoing, significant second / third wave impact and the continuation of local and national restrictions throughout this period. Understanding the changing nature of those impacts, their evolution from short term emergency needs, to medium or long term challenges, will be critical if we are collectively going to

continue to develop effective responses and drive the necessary system changes to resolve them.

2.3 The potential positive impacts seen are also felt to be fewer now than when originally assessed. This is in part explained by the temporary nature of some of those initially perceived positive impacts, not all of which have been retained over this period, and for many where the key issue will be the level to which systems and networks retain changes and improvements gained as we move through release of lockdown and a return to an element of pre-pandemic normality in our operations.

2.4 It is notable that across the observed impacts, there is now a greater understanding of overall increases in levels of poverty, unequal impacts and effects currently being felt and likely to continue over time. There is now also a greater understanding of the far-reaching nature of the impacts arising from Covid and recognition of the complexity and likelihood of those impacts increasing over time, with the additional challenges this poses for our collective ability to meet strategic ambitions. As we move into the refresh of the Greater Manchester Strategy and development of further responses to the pandemic and the post-pandemic period, systemwide we must acknowledge increases in poverty and inequality, and our responses must be intelligent and multi-faceted, responding to the intersectional and complex issues presented.

2.5 Additional to the observed impacts table below, the Greater Manchester Population Survey is now providing regular insight and intelligence to understand the impacts of the pandemic on the lives of Greater Manchester residents. These findings add to our collective understanding of the observed impacts table below and provide more nuanced intelligence to enable a greater understanding of those impacts and a more targeted and tailored response. Three surveys have been completed to date with some of the key messages below from the January 2021 survey, with comparisons to the November 2020 baseline position:

- Overall levels of concerns about coronavirus remain higher in the January 2021 survey than the November baseline
- Increased proportions of respondents have specific concerns for their mental health and finances
- Only around 1 in 8 (13%) of people who needed to self-isolate due to coronavirus have been able to claim financial support
- A significant increase in financial impacts has been reported since December, with higher proportions of respondents stating they or someone in their household has lost their job and/or needed to borrow extra money. More of those in work are working reduced hours.
- More than 8 out of 10 respondents with children are concerned about their education, with 1 in 2 stating this as a 'big concern'

- The proportion of respondents ignoring health concerns or having medical appointments cancelled has risen significantly since the November and December surveys
- The proportion of respondents with 'low ' levels of satisfactions with life is higher than the November baseline, with 16-24 year olds, people out of work and those on furlough among the least satisfied

2.6 The survey intelligence provides detailed disaggregated information on concerns by specific population groups / cohorts, compared to the GM population as a whole. This intelligence demonstrates the significant differences in experiences, concerns and impacts arising from Covid on different communities, places and businesses throughout the pandemic, and highlights further the longer-term nature of the issues and inequalities evidenced that will need to be considered and responded to as GM continues to live with Covid, and moves into recovery and renewal phases.

| | Impacts observed at September 2020 | Impacts update at February 2021 |
|---|---|--|
| Significant and potentially devastating, to be tackled urgently | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health impacts on BAME people, disabled people and older people • Mental health impacts on all ages, shielding people, and those more likely to be isolated • Educational and social impacts in particular on disadvantaged children and families • Fragility of the social care system laid bare • Lack of access to physical and mental health care among disabled people and shielding people • Lack of access to food among poorer communities • Digital exclusion impacts as services shift to online, exclusion and isolation including older people and disabled people • Economic impacts on low paid workers, young people and the self-employed and devastating impact on cultural, hospitality and leisure sectors • Greater Manchester's businesses and economic sustainability and growth has suffered • Homelessness and rough sleeper impacts, as people were housed in hotels • Managing risks for key workers, ensuring safe continuation of essential services • Towns and cities, limited use during lockdown • Fear of starting up 'normal' life again | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health impacts Disproportionate negative impacts and outcomes continue to be seen in non-white ethnicities, older people and disabled people • Mental health Growth in demand for mental health services, impacts seen across all ages. Longevity of ongoing situation impacting on groups and individuals not previously identified as at significant risk. • Lack of access to food Increased demand and need for food services, evidence of newly unemployed, working families, variation on cohorts presenting. VCSE organisations continue to deliver beyond funding and capacity to try to respond to increasing demand. • Educational and social impacts Continued disruption to education, longer term implications apparent and significant social impacts arising. Disproportionate impact on disadvantaged children and families. • Fragility of social care system Continuing issues regarding capacity, funding and support needed for the system to address sustainability and fragilities as part of a joined up health and care system. • Lack of access to physical and mental health care Ongoing pandemic has resulted in restarting of some services, but access remains limited for many. Shielding has ceased and restarted. • Digital exclusion impacts Issues persist amongst some communities and places, impacting on service accessibility for those with greatest needs. • Homelessness and rough sleepers Ongoing significant impacts, development of appropriate and continuous provisions to meet need. • Economic impacts Significant worsening of economic situation, with further worsening anticipated as support schemes end. Significant increase in unemployment, notably young people and older workers. • Greater Manchester's businesses Ongoing significant impacts across businesses and sectors. Growth potential significantly limited and sustainability / viability issues significant across sectors. • Role of and reliance upon VCSE organisations Ongoing need and reliance upon sector as part of systemwide response. Organisations stretched beyond capacity, funding challenges remain and staff fatigue significant. • Towns and cities Use continues to be limited due to ongoing lockdown and restrictions. Opportunities for places reset as part of recovery, but towns and cities will be significantly impacted by business closures, limited leisure reopening etc. • Managing risks for key workers Disproportionate impact of Covid seen on many key worker groups. Risks now better managed through PPE provision, Covid secure workplaces and vaccine roll out. • Fear of starting up 'normal' life again Potentially greater fear and risk than originally observed due to longevity of ongoing restrictions and lockdowns. |
| Challenging but manageable, to be tackled and improve | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in service provision / efficiency, increase in online NHS consultation and delivery of wider services digitally • Greater data sharing across agencies enabled targeted, timely responses • Temporary cleaner air and environmental gains achieved through changes to work and travel patterns, but challenges related to use & capacity of public transport services • Emergence of new community networks and social infrastructure e.g. Community Hubs, closer working with schools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergence of new community networks / Creation of multiagency networks Some informal networks have been 'mainstreamed' as part of ongoing response / BAU. Numbers of volunteers lower after first wave. • Locally controlled devolved resources In some areas this has enabled timely, local provision, however can also cause inconsistencies across GM. Issues remain with Gov not devolving resources and increased competitive bidding approaches. • Temporary cleaner air Gains have been maintained in part due to limited economic reopening and continued low levels of commuting. |
| Positive benefit, to be reinforced and maintained | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of multiagency networks and support systems e.g. PPE sourcing and mutual aid • Locally controlled devolved resources enabled targeted, timely responses • GM Partnerships and ways of working, reinforced and strengthened approaches, delivering effective responses • Digital shift and capabilities, with rapidly developed novel operating models, to be retained and developed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital shift and capabilities Revised approaches embedded and widely utilised as improvements in service provision, or necessary adaptations / changes due to ongoing restrictions. Unclear extent to which some / all will be maintained as restrictions lifted. • Improvements in service provision / efficiency Shift to online and phone service provision continues, unclear to what extent changes will be sustained after restrictions are lifted. • GM Partnerships Continue to be critical to ongoing response. Emergency structures continue to be in place, meeting regularly and responding to changing circumstances. • Greater data sharing Been maintained, and continues to inform partnership responses. • Creation of multiagency networks Continue to deliver as part of ongoing pandemic response. |

3. OVERALL SUMMARY OF PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES AND BEGINNING TO UNDESTAND HOW COVID WILL SHAPE THE FUTURE GREATER MANCHESTER STRATEGY

- 3.1 Across the Greater Manchester system, through both formal and informal networks a huge amount of work, delivery and support continues to be provided to support Greater Manchester's people, places and businesses. The ever-changing circumstances presented by the ongoing pandemic has required a continual level of exhaustive effort, not just to deliver but to continually adapt and flex to meet the changing and growing needs presented.
- 3.2 Emergency governance structures remain in place to lead, coordinate and facilitate our collective response to the pandemic, whilst also seeking as far as possible, to reinstate more 'business as usual' activities, appropriately adapted to deliver in the new context. The emergency response structures will over time transition to focus more on recovery, but activity continues currently (and likely for the rest of the year) around outbreak and pandemic management, with the necessary actions and development of responses within the Contain Plan.
- 3.3 Throughout the updates received to develop this report the strength and resilience and adaptive approaches of our Greater Manchester partnerships and networks have continually been reinforced. Numerous examples were provided of our collective systems ability to adapt and flex to the changing circumstances and to collaborate across agencies, sectors and places to provide the necessary responses to the needs presented. This has been true for service design and delivery as well as strategic coordination and wider evidenced understanding of the collective efforts required to achieve shared outcomes.
- 3.4 Across all agencies and partners staff fatigue is a serious concern. Staff have continued to 'go the extra mile' across all parts of the system, with wide recognition of the physical and mental strains this is now placing on staff teams, and will continue to do so as the impacts of Covid continue to be felt over the coming months. As noted above with the impacts table and insight intelligence, entrenchment and the now widely understood longer term implications of the pandemic and issues arising adds further to the sense of system fatigue and overwhelm as we move forward with further delivery, and the ongoing pandemic management activity which is likely to dominate for the rest of this year at least.
- 3.5 The Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) will be refreshed over this year, and will build on our collective learning and experiences from the pandemic, with structural, systemic and the scale of challenge issues presented through the delivery of this Living with Covid plan being the contextual frame for the GMS refresh. The refresh will provide an opportunity for a Greater Manchester wide review and reimagining of our future post-Covid (building on the new GM Economic Vision developed by the

private sector - led by the LEP - and the CA) with a strong sense of sustainability and equality being a driving force behind the city-regions future resilience and recovery. Learning from the continued development and delivery of the Greater Manchester Contain Plan will also inform the GMS refresh, with any longer-term implications and requirements feeding from the Contain Plan work into our future strategy.

3.6 As part of the refresh of the Greater Manchester Strategy, our collective learning and the insight and intelligence that has been used to shape and tailor Greater Manchester's pandemic response will inform the overarching performance framework for the refreshed GMS. The learning from the implementation of the existing GMS and all the work which has been undertaken in the last year around the Living with Covid Plan and the Contain Plan, will enable Greater Manchester to develop a nuanced and intelligence set of indicators and measures which can support, inform, challenge and shape our local decision making to ensure our policies and interventions are responding to the range of issues across our city-region, more directly responding to the lived experience of our citizens.

3.7 As with the first quarter progress update, the actions contained within the Living with Covid Plan which require system change or more structural responses, progress has been limited due to the ongoing outbreak. The second wave was experienced far worse than the first and the systems, responses and delivery has rightly, continued to be focused on provision of a timely, adaptative emergency response and restart activity wherever possible.

3.8 The understanding and learning, from responding to Covid, of the systemic / structural changes required in GM will be used as far as possible over the coming six months to shape delivery and will form a platform for the refresh of the Greater Manchester Strategy. Other areas of intervention and issues which have been highlighted as part of this progress update process which will shape / feed into the GMS refresh include:

- Embedding / responding to the recommendations of the Independent Inequalities Commission
- Recognition of the progress made in terms of putting in place equalities 'infrastructure', but this has to translate into action embedded across all delivery - not just a governance response
- Greater awareness and understanding of the role of place / resilience / transport on health and healthy outcomes
- Interdependencies between skills, work and health, and of the vital role that skills and employment support will play in recovery, future-proofing our residents and businesses in the longer term, and in ensuring that those who were already marginalised in economic and/or social terms are not further displaced
- The response to the impact on jobs and businesses as Government support is withdrawn, and the role of the Local Industrial Strategy in driving a

recovery which grows GM's world-class strengths and helps address low pay and insecure work in the Foundational Economy

- Development of sustainable food networks and other 'upstream' interventions to provide sustainable solutions, replacing the need for ongoing emergency (sticking plaster) immediate responses
- Fragility and sustainability of social care sector continues to be significant concern, and needs to form a foundation of the refreshed GMS seeking to stabilise and develop the sector (especially post-pandemic)
- Building on the positive work undertaken to develop a social value framework, the GMS needs to take this forward and embed this throughout GM commissioning, design and delivery
- Renewed focus on how we prioritise and target, responding to need but developing further our prevention agenda
- Greater understanding of the need for appropriate accountabilities and leads for developing and delivering on those truly cross-cutting actions, especially where a multiagency response is required.
- Systemwide recognition of the significant financial challenges to come, recognising the need for further innovation, adaptation and partnership working to deliver within a reduced financial envelope. But also wide recognition of the difficulties this will pose for Greater Manchester, not least related to an increase in competitive bidding processes.
- The structural, organisational and delivery changes resulted from NHS reforms and the future shape and form of the GM Health & Social Care Partnership

4. PROGRESS UPDATE ON THE MECHANISMS TO ENABLE GREATER MANCHESTER TO BETTER RESPOND TO INEQUALITIES

4.1 Alongside the adoption of the overall Living with Covid Resilience Plan the GMCA also agreed three core recommendations, which relate to the development of new ways of working and mechanisms enabling Greater Manchester to better respond to inequalities highlighted or exacerbated by Covid. Those core recommendations are:

- **Consider an approach whereby all GMCA reports include recommendations that assess and identify the impact of the proposal on inequalities, environmental and financial issues in relation to the topic. This would be supported by a commitment to collect, analyse and report on data, including community intelligence, to understand that impact.**
- **Building on the recommendation above, develop a mechanism to utilise the established and developing partnership governance for the Age-friendly and Equalities Portfolio to support system wide responses. This would include actions to address equalities issues identified and unresolved through the above assessment process.**

- **Consider whether adopting minimum targets or standards for each locality or neighbourhood would support the effective targeting of resources across all GMCA activity. This would ensure that there is an ongoing recognition that addressing inequalities in all communities is fundamental to the whole of Greater Manchester being able to achieve its collective ambitions.**

4.2 Significant work has been undertaken to progress the above recommendations, with many work areas now moving into delivery and lots of strands coming together to ensure the greatest possible effect of our collective efforts, reducing duplication and maximising impact.

4.3 The development of a comprehensive impact assessment tool to understand the impacts arising from policy developments and propositions is now in the testing phase. This Decision Support Tool allows users to self-assess the possible impacts arising from the proposed policies, initiatives, or services. It is intended to provide decision makers with a high-level assessment of how a decision meets GMCA policy goals, aiming to identify intended and unintended consequences arising from the proposition and facilitating a process for revising decisions to better meet GMCA's strategic agendas. The tool directs the user to complete more detailed assessments as appropriate (notably equalities impact assessment or carbon assessment). Following the testing phase, the designed version of the tool will be rolled out, along with provision of training and support and will ultimately be used to assess all papers provided to the GMCA and LEP for decision.

4.4 The Tackling Inequalities Board, and supporting senior officer executive, have now established a regular meeting cycle and began to examine in detail the inequalities issues presented to the Board on a thematic approach. The Board is Chaired by the Portfolio Lead for Age-Friendly and Equalities. The Governance established through this Board and the supporting infrastructure to the Board, provides system leadership and ownership of the inequalities agenda and provides a strategic, multiagency forum where issues can be examined in detailed and collaborative approaches adopted to the design of solutions. The Tackling Inequalities Board has considered the latest work from the Marmot Review Team and also inequalities associated with housing at their last two meetings. The Tackling Inequalities Board will be a key recipient of the recommendations from the Independent Inequalities Commission, providing the system leadership to drive changes and make sustainable progress in redressing inequalities present across Greater Manchester. The Board, along with the breadth of agencies and groups engaged through that structure need to ensure that those recommendations and the wider work programme around inequalities is embedded across all portfolio areas and actions are being taken which provide really impactful change in this area.

4.5 The establishment and continuation of the GMCA equalities advisory panels has also progressed significantly over the last three months. The advisory panels are now meeting regularly, and work is underway to ensure the greatest possible impact of their work, influencing and embedding their work within GMCA policies/interventions and its wider spheres of influence. Greater coordination of the activities between the panels has been undertaken, enabling collective input into thematic issues, exploring intersectionality issues as well as through individual equalities lenses. Work is underway to determine the most appropriate shape and form the establishment of a Faith advisory panel.

- 4.6 The collective work around inequalities is also seeking to ensure the breadth and depth of all inequalities is understood and considered holistically. There is now wide understanding and recognition of the impact of Covid increasing poverty levels across the city-region. Understanding inequalities through particular communities of identity lenses is important, but the wider acknowledgment that Covid is pushing more people, families and communities into poverty must form the basis of our responses. There is a need for systemwide recognition that we will have to shift to accommodate these changes, responding to financial, food and fuel poverty on a larger scale. There will also be changes in the cohorts of people with need for support.
- 4.7 Work has continued to develop possible revised approaches to targeting to respond to evidenced inequalities. The availability of data, intelligence and information at community level is currently being examined to determine what could be used to form the basis for a place based / equalities targeting approach which will be incorporated as part of the refresh of the Greater Manchester Strategy. The targeted outcomes within the current GMS outcomes framework are high level, and relative to external factors, however the levers within our control to influence them are often limited. Work is underway to develop a basket of measures that will be more directly responsive to our activity and the choices we make, and that will enable us to understand progress in addressing inequality across GM. To do so, we will need measures and targets that report at the neighbourhood level, and that provide intelligence on specific population groups.
- 4.8 Roll out of the impact assessment tool will provide 'bottom-up' evidence on how activity is contributing to reducing inequality across the city-region. This intelligence will be used, alongside that provided by partners and insight from residents, to support a better understanding of differential conditions and outcomes in our neighbourhoods and communities, and to enable more transparent monitoring and reporting of progress against our ambitions.
- 4.9 In October 2020 the GMCA launched the Independent Inequalities Commission to support and influence the city-region's renewal following the Covid pandemic. The Combined Authority has challenged the Commission to be a catalyst for transformation, helping to develop ideas, providing expert opinion, evidence and guidance as Greater Manchester's economy and society reshapes over the coming months and years. The mission of the Greater Manchester Independent Inequalities Commission is to better understand the pre-existing and emerging inequalities in the city-region, consider how tackling these inequalities should feature in a refreshed Greater Manchester Strategy, and outline a small number of specific and hard-hitting recommendations.
- 4.10 The Commission sits independently of all Greater Manchester decision-making structures, and acts in an independent, advisory capacity. Its independence allows the Commission the chance to challenge, to explore powers and levers and to set out a road map for tackling inequality in GM. The Commission has been chaired by Professor Kate Pickett of the University of York, joined by:
- Saeed Atcha MBE DL, CEO of Youth Leads UK, Deputy Lieutenant of Greater Manchester and Government Social Mobility Commissioner
 - Miatta Fahnbulleh, Chief Executive of the New Economics Foundation

- Ruth Lupton, Honorary Professor of Education at the University of Manchester, and former Head of the Inclusive Growth Analysis Unit
- Neil McInroy, CEO of the Centre for Local Economic Strategies
- Lord Simon Woolley, the Director and founder of Operation Black Vote, and cross-bench Peer

4.11 The work of the Commission has been informed by an evidence 'stock take' from across Greater Manchester. This involved bringing together existing evidence, community insights and data to inform the baseline position. The Commission has progressed by meeting with expert witnesses, holding hearings and round table discussions, and commissioning specific evidence and research work. This has been carried out in an inclusive manner – involving community members and those with lived experience of inequality, reaching out across the voluntary and community sector, and utilising both the established equalities engagement infrastructure across GM as well as assembling new participation groups, such as working with Greater Manchester Poverty Action to convene a new Poverty Reference Group.

4.12 During February and March 2021, the Commission is working to finalise its report, which will include a small number of flagship actions to catalyse work to address the root causes of poverty and inequality in Greater Manchester. This report will be presented to the Combined Authority at its meeting in March.

5. PROGRESS UPDATE ON THE DELIVERABLES IN THE LIVING WITH COVID RESILIENCE PLAN

5.1 High level updates are provided for each of the deliverables in the Living with Covid Plan in the table below. The updates are the collective response from across the GM system, with progress representative of the partnership responses to deliver and contributions from a range of agencies to attain the deliverable.

| GM Deliverable | Progress Update |
|--|---|
| <p>Implement a system wide approach to assessing and responding to evidence inequalities in the ongoing management of the Covid response and the design and deliver of recovery and restart activity</p> | <p>The Independent Inequalities Commission has been working at pace, engaging widely across the GM system to understand the issues and frame the Commission’s recommendations. The Commission will set out a vision which describes for GM can create good lives for all in Greater Manchester, describing how we must focus on the foundations of our economy, build public services in partnership with the people who use them, and tackle structural racism and all forms of discrimination by empowering marginalised groups in society. The recommendations to the GM system will be structured around the following principles: Rebalancing Power; Rebalancing Opportunity; Rebalancing Wealth; and Rethinking Public Services. The Commission will report to the GMCA at the end of March.</p> <p>The Tackling Inequalities Board is now well established and providing system leadership to design and oversee delivery of actions across all partners in responding to evidenced inequalities. The GM Reform Board has restarted meetings. The Board has undertaken a stocktake, understanding the extent of inequalities and issues and reshaping reform priorities.</p> <p>The GMCA equalities advisory panels are meeting regularly, and the design work for the shape of the Faith panel continues. The Panels provide a mechanism for effective engagement and insight from particular communities of identity to shape, inform and influence GM policy development.</p> <p>Focus on inequalities has taken place throughout continuation and forward planning of the vaccination programme and is the basis of requests to national team for a flexible approach moving forward. Systemwide oversight and connection across the GM system can be supported by the joint infrastructure created through the Tackling Inequalities Executive and Board.</p> <p>GM Mental Health executive will be looking to do some intensive work on improving outcomes for ethnic minority groups living with Severe Mental Illness.</p> <p>The Humanitarian Assistance Group maintains oversight of the work which has been undertaken to combine datasets to understand and identify vulnerable citizens. It will be important to ensure that governance is in place to continue to oversee this work and take forward actions as appropriate when emergency structure governance is stood down.</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>Data workshops held with all Local Authorities on vulnerability tool, outcome will shape where to target activity and develop structure for measuring outcomes.</p> <p>The GM Ageing Hub has been leading a series of activities to support older people including, the delivery of the Keeping Well this Winter campaign, targeted initially at those who are digitally excluded with magazines distributed via range of community venues. “Talking Tips” video has been produced for frontline workers to better respond to the issues older people would like support with. The GM model has been syndicated in other Local Authorities in the UK as well as places in Spain, Canada and Australia. A significant pension credit top up campaign has been delivered with GM Housing Providers. A partnership between the Hub, GM and DWP has co-designed a pilot funded by the Centre for Ageing Better to support over 50s into employment as part of our work to improve employment outcomes for older workers, piloting different approaches to retraining, upskilling and employment support, aligning with devolved adult skills funding.</p> <p>An expert group has been convened to look at older people physical and mental deconditioning and social isolation. The group will provide advice and information as to what needs to happen in the next 12 months to support reconditioning and overcoming issues associated with isolation.</p> |
| <p>Sustain support to care homes and extend Living Well at Home to strengthen the resilience of adult social care provision</p> | <p>The Stage 2 bid for UK Healthy Ageing Trailblazer was unsuccessful – feedback was that sustainability post-funds was not well enough developed. A new Innovation Partnership on Healthy Ageing, involving Government and UKRI, has been convened and will consider where public-private collaboration can help with Living Well at Home.</p> <p>A number of infection prevention control webinars delivered to cover items such as PPE, visiting, testing and vaccinations etc. Continuing to deliver and co-design content with the care home sector. A GM outbreaks overview dashboard has been produced.</p> <p>Currently finalising GM Market Ambition statement for Living Well at Home. Supporting discharges and wider system with hospital pressures by facilitating joint problem solving and co-producing solutions with partners (discharge forward planner, weekend discharges, mutual aid, VCSE offer, personal budgets, shorter D2A form).</p> <p>Ongoing roll out of digital tool to care homes now up to 130 care homes across 8 localities benefitting over 3,400 residents. Currently piloting access to Summary care record with care homes on the NHSX</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>managed I-pads. Now utilising the remote monitoring funding to equip care homes with remote monitoring kits</p> <p>Soft Launch of 111 First in December 2020 - launch smaller than anticipated following national instruction. 111 service supports effective management of capacity and the GM clinical assessment service continues to redirect patients to the service, reducing 999 demand and delay.</p> |
| <p>Boost physical activity programmes and social prescribing, including for people with long term conditions</p> | <p>Work continues through GM Moving to encourage and support people to move more. Physical activity and access to green spaces continues as part of wider social prescribing model. Work continues to develop the conditions for change, including growing local sports and physical activity assets, bringing people together and looking at positive changes and where barriers exist to participation and uptake of physical activity.</p> <p>A strategic refresh, engagement and conversations are now underway about the key priorities, understanding and articulation of the contribution of physical activity to attaining wide range of outcomes including, health & wellbeing, travel & transport, environment and equalities.</p> <p>Roll out of the elemental social prescribing platform is progressing well. Anecdotal updates suggest greater connection and integration of work led by GM Moving and social prescribing activity at GM and locality levels. Work continues led by the University of Manchester to evaluate social prescribing activity.</p> <p>Further development of social prescribing is underway as part of support for long term condition management, including long Covid. Salford pilot underway for social prescribing and long Covid, adopting a communities of identity lens.</p> <p>GM Working Well (Work & Health Programme) has pivoted support services for residents who are unemployed, including social prescribing, early intervention for those at risk of falling out of work due to health conditions and transforming multi-agency working through joint investment across agencies in the social prescribing platform.</p> <p>Bicycles and cycling kit has been made available to Apprentices in key worker roles to as part of a transport offer.</p> |
| <p>Sustain food availability networks</p> | <p>No child should go hungry campaign continues, having established and sustained an emergency food card provision for October half term, Christmas and February half term. This provide a framework for what could be a sustained food offer available throughout the year. During February half term as part of</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>the No Child Should Go Hungry Campaign each Local Authority received top up funding to enable the distribution of 300 x £5 food vouchers. The 10 x VCSE Infrastructure organisations also received £1,500 each for targeted support to families. The Mayor and GM leaders also signed a letter calling for the ‘Right to Food’ to be enshrined in legislation</p> <p>A notable increase has been seen in the numbers of families eligible for free school meals since the beginning of the pandemic. Significant increases in demand, and expansion of different cohorts using food bank provision is also evident across GM.</p> <p>GM BME Food Network leading a pilot looking at BAME community food poverty and distribution, mapping underway of what is happening around provision of ethnic food and need.</p> <p>Capacity to continue to deliver food banks and community provisions from the VCSE sector is increasingly stretched and struggling to meet continually increasing demands, with more demand anticipated as economic support packages are wound down. Concern within the sector that the free food provision via Defra which is available to end of March will not be continued, there is a risk associated with this around the viability of some of the organisations providing the services, not just the loss of food provision.</p> <p>Wide recognition however that food cards and food banks are a temporary fix to the issue, not a long term solution. Significant upstream preventative actions need to be taken to prevent the need for food banks and emergency food cards. Work needs to be undertaken to develop a sustainable food network across GM, capacity to progress this has been limited due to the ongoing pandemic response. This will inform and shape the refresh of the Greater Manchester Strategy.</p> |
| <p>Complete ‘Everyone In’ and deliver a transition programme and ongoing support for homeless people</p> | <p>Demand for services over winter months was significantly up, and made more challenges and difficult to manage to ensure Covid secure accommodation could be provided. Across the system now carrying increased demand and anticipate further increases as economic support packages are wound down and if evictions ban is lifted.</p> <p>Significant financial challenges continue to provide the levels of support required, and anticipated increases in demand. Significant effort has been spent ensuring winter provision is coordinated and comprehensive, through the knitting together of several funding streams, often made available very late in the day.</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>There is considerable risk in demand for dispersed temporary accommodation due to Home Office methods of Asylum dispersal.</p> <p>Continued successful close partnership working underpins the comprehensive support packages and provision. This close joint working has enabled continuous effective management of changing risks and pivoting responses as required systemically and coherently across agencies.</p> <p>Across the system we continue to see an increase in the numbers of people in temporary accommodation. Currently inflow into temporary accommodation outstrips the rate of moving on from temporary accommodation. This is resulting in expansion of temporary accommodation provision, which has knock on impacts on the overall housing stock available and housing market.</p> <p>Delivery of the vaccine for staff working with homeless people has been a real success. Building on the existing health and homeless offers, vaccine roll out is now being planned for homeless people, those in temporary accommodation and rough sleepers.</p> <p>Accommodation has been established to support Covid positive individuals on discharge from hospital and further improvements to the discharge process and response are being sought with further investment available from DHSC.</p> <p>Despite the challenges presented by Covid, GM is still on track to meet the Housing First target, which will support 240 people into their own tenancies by the end of March.</p> <p>GM Housing Providers continue to support and work collaboratively across agencies to support a reducing in rough sleepers and how this links to longer term supported housing needs.</p> |
| <p>Building on the Community Hubs experience and closer working with schools, develop integrated neighbourhood services, sharing</p> | <p>Community Hub functions continue to be delivered in Local Authorities as part of the ongoing response, with local approaches and models adopted across the districts. This continued focus on provision as part of the ongoing emergency response has meant there has been limited capacity and resource to consider what a future model of locally integrated place based approaches could be.</p> <p>The Community Hub experience provides significant opportunity to move towards integrated neighbourhood working, but it has not been possible to progress this in terms of sharing learning and developing place based working model. A focus must be maintained however to ensure the future role</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>people, data, money and stories</p> | <p>of locally integrated services as part of place based working, and learning developed to shape and inform integrated care systems.</p> <p>Continued work to support the Early Years digitisation will support and feed into any future Community Hub models.</p> |
| <p>Launch a targeted plan to tackle digital exclusion</p> | <p>Following the launch of the Digital exclusion plan, on the 10th December the first GM Digital Taskforce meeting was successfully held and welcomed over 150 attendees and highly engaged contributors from the public, private and VCSE sector. Conversations now underway with Vodafone, TalkTalk and Virgin Media about how we can work together to lobby Government to take steps towards achieving our ambitions for digital inclusion. Options for data gifting are also being explored with telecomms companies, DCMS and Good Things Foundation.</p> <p>Intelligence gathering from Local Digital Inclusion leads about the needs of young learners during this second full lockdown is supporting the GMCA Digital and Work and Skills team to effective channel support to schools and colleges.</p> <p>In response to the January closure of schools and colleges, phase two of the GM Tech Fund was launched, receiving initial donations received from ANS Group, Auto Trader and Arup Group. GMCA partnered with Manchester Evening News to further raise awareness of the GM Tech Fund and drive donations for further support to colleges and school pupils. So far a total of £200,100 has been raised in donations across financial contributions, new technology, data packages and used device donations. The ambition is to scale this to £300,000 which would meet the need for 1,000 devices.</p> <p>Funding has also been made available to tackle digital exclusion for adult learners (£1 million split between GM's devolved Adult Education Budget and LGF), with grants to Local Authorities to provide kit and skills provision, primarily linked to the digital skills entitlement but also supporting access to the wider training offer.</p> <p>A proposal was included in the Spending Review submission for a £30M fund to tackle digital inclusion across all ages. This has been echoed in January's pre-budget response as, without significant and ongoing resource, this issue will be unresolved.</p> |
| <p>Ensure the provision of comprehensive mental health and wellbeing</p> | <p>The support offers to the GM population, reported in November 2020, has been sustained with discussions ongoing to finance all the core support offers throughout 2021/22. We are also expecting substantial additional funding in 2021/22, via NHSE, for mental health that could be in the region of £28m</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>support accounting for the growth in demand and severity across all ages</p> | <p>for GM. This will go towards responding to the longer term impact of Covid-19, including managing excessive waiting lists.</p> <p>The full evaluation report on our digital tools is expected by March 2021. However, the interim report has identified the need to maintain a number of the digital tools that we commissioned in the Spring of 2020, which we are now in the process of clarifying funding.</p> <p>A GM Mental Health Digital workshop is planned in March to agree a digital strategy to support the delivery of the Mental Health LTP over the next three years.</p> |
| <p>Restore proactive care and support for both children and adults for those with long term health conditions and support those who are recovering from Covid</p> | <p>Recovery work was stepped down following NHSE instruction in January to focus on the third wave, Discharge and Vaccination. Work via the Contain Cell has stepped up, and a contain plan has been circulated to the system and tested at COVID Committee. More focus on recovery to follow into spring 2021.</p> <p>A comprehensive information gathering exercise was undertaken during December which asked localities to indicate what services they are currently providing with regards to Post Covid services. The report demonstrates the significant amount of work taking place within Localities however highlights some variation in service provision against both national and GM guidance. There is ongoing engagement with Localities to support mobilisation and to address any variation in provision whilst sharing best practice and learning. A lead commissioner on behalf of GM Directors of Commissioning has been identified to ensure connectivity to localities and facilitate implementation at pace.</p> <p>Given the size of the elective care recovery challenge, we will focus on key priority areas at a GM-level, some of which may be dictated nationally/regionally as planning progresses further. The Elective Recovery and Reform programme in GM is continuing its focus on three priorities: demand/waiting list management, maximising system capacity and transforming delivery. Development of an overarching GM Elective Recovery plan is utilising available intelligence to identify opportunities to reduce health inequalities, ensuring we reform as we recover. This includes proactive support on optimising health and symptom management while individuals are waiting, as well as accessible and supportive communications encouraging people to attend for care when invited.</p> <p>Covid Oximetry@home pathways are now in place in each of the 10 Localities which is an evidence based intervention for enhanced monitoring of patients with Covid using pulse oximetry. There is a</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>Covid virtual ward in place in each of the Acute Trusts which provides a virtual multi-disciplinary team to patients on discharge. This also includes the enhanced monitoring with pulse oximetry.</p> <p>The service specification for GM Long Covid Syndrome service/clinics have been signed off and are now in the process of mobilisation across Greater Manchester. Work continues around collection and analysis of activity data to ensure optimal service provision for the follow up of Covid patients.</p> <p>Through the primary care network Development Programme the business intelligence infrastructure is developing for PCNs, including a priority for understanding population needs and comparators of similar communities, contract compliance and ensuring PCNs are able to tap into all available intelligence from national and local data sources, including Graphnet. A bespoke support package is being developed to offer direct support for PCNs to access and interpret data to meet their needs and move towards a culture of using data and evidence based information.</p> <p>The GM Cancer Alliance has supported the GM system – providers and CCGs / localities – to recover and maintain referral and treatment levels for cancer patients during the pandemic. This has included targeted support in localities where the challenges were most significant. The National Cancer Programme issued a recovery plan in December 2020, which sets the following aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restore demand to at least pre-pandemic levels - Reduce the number of people waiting longer than they should - Ensure sufficient capacity to meet future demand <p>GM Cancer will continue to support the GM system in the ongoing recovery and the delivery of the above aims. This will include a significant piece of work addressing the backlog in diagnostics and treatment . Through the GM Cancer Board the Alliance will take forward a piece of work on Health Inequalities in referrals, access to and uptake of cancer services.</p> |
| <p>Supporting successful return to school and college for all learners, with inclusion of catch up and wellbeing support if needed</p> | <p>School Attendance figures in GM are being monitored and reported on a fortnightly basis. The latest figures suggest that the overall proportion of children in school is higher than the national average. The volume of GM pupils with a social worker in school and volume of pupils with an EHCP is also higher than the national average reflecting the positive targeted local work in this area. GM has reached out to the Government’s newly-appointed Education Recovery Commissioner to arrange discussions; a meeting with the Commissioner and his team is pending.</p> <p>In response to concerns previously highlighted by the pulse surveys around loss of income for Early years providers GMCA officers are working with the Growth Company to explore bespoke additional</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>funding support for PVI settings. EnterprisingYou are also hosting a virtual event on 2nd March aimed at raising awareness of free and fully funded support for childminders who live in Greater Manchester.</p> <p>In response to local analysis suggesting that at least 20,000 learners across the city region may still left in a position where they cannot regularly access online teaching the GM Tech fund was launched and digital skills provision has been stepped up (detailed above).</p> <p>The Young Person’s Guarantee continue to drive over 1,000 commitments to young people and young adults.</p> <p>Tested support for apprentices made redundant during the pandemic to move into new roles and continue their training.</p> <p>Through the GM Apprenticeship & Careers Service (GMACS), over 25,000 young people have been able to participate in virtual employer encounters during lockdown, a vital element of work readiness.</p> |
| <p>Learning from each other on how best to manage any increases in safeguarding for children and young people and vulnerable adults</p> | <p>GM Local Authorities and partners are continuing to share information with each other around how they are supporting children & families during lockdown through established GM, NW and national forums and networks.</p> |
| <p>Deliver GM employment and skills recovery plan with evidence based targeted programmes of support</p> | <p>Over the past year the Employment & Skills Advisory Panel has worked hard to strike a balance between responding to the evolving needs arising from the pandemic and maintaining the necessary focus on the existing priorities, so that those who already faced labour market challenges prior to the pandemic are not displaced or overlooked as an unintended consequence. Employment and skills measures underpin many elements of recovery, as reflected throughout the deliverables within this report. In addition to directly commissioned activity, GM has secured devolution of further employment support through £13m Working Well JETS (Job Entry Targeted Support), additional AEB funding, and is providing system leadership by working with partners to ensure that national interventions such as Kickstart are integrated into the existing GM labour market landscape.</p> <p>Series of activities and funding streams worth in excess of £200m repurposed and pivoted as required to both maintain that focus on existing labour market inequalities and meet change in need presented the pandemic, focused around the following cohorts: Young people & young adults; Apprentices; Retraining & re/Up-skilling; Furloughed workers; Newly unemployed; and, Long-term unemployed & economically</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>inactive. Examples (non-exhaustive) include: the Safe Return to Work programme to support 1,600 residents back to work; the Enterprising You Pilot programme to support self-employed and those working in the gig economy; skills provision and kit for digitally excluded adults; Developed range of provision to support furloughed workers, including for some access to fully funded adult skills provision; Flexed devolved Working Well Work & Health Programme.</p> |
| <p>Immediate implementation of the GM Social Value Framework</p> | <p>The Framework has been published. Implementation and development of priority actions has been hampered by the ongoing pandemic response. Work is underway to consider the immediate actions which could be taken by the GMCA and HSCP. Additional capacity is needed to drive forward this work. Changes to procurement rules now means there is greater opportunity and flexibility in public service contracting processes which would make it easier to get SMEs and social enterprises into supply chains.</p> <p>Understanding our collective commitment to the extent to which we adopt and truly embed the Social Value Framework will shape and inform the refresh of the Greater Manchester Strategy.</p> |
| <p>Appropriately contracted provision from the VCSE sector as part of ongoing networked support infrastructure</p> | <p>Work underway to look at revised commissioning approaches seeking to make the approaches more accessible to VCSE organisations, linked to actions being taken under social value above. Legislation changes should be utilised to greater gain here to drive change about which bit of the market we are seeking to pitch to, and ensure appropriate and accessible to those sectors as relevant.</p> <p>Review of commissioned support from the VCSE sector continues, linked to wider HSCP budget processes.</p> <p>VCSE organisations have made significant use of reserves (where available) to be able to meet the increased and changed service demands resulting from the ongoing pandemic response. This is not sustainable in the long term, yet the need for the service provision will remain. Organisation / sector resilience needs to be ensured if we are to continue to provide a networked, partnership response to the needs presented currently and as they develop and change over time.</p> <p>VCSE colleagues attended GM Directors of Commissioning to share examples of good practice across GM Localities and highlight potential for further development. Continued support of GM Directors of Commissioning to embed the framework.</p> <p>Ongoing work with the University of Manchester who have agreed to conduct the review of Social Prescribing in GM. Extent and design of the review currently being scoped with Uni of Manchester, VCSE colleagues and GM.</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>The review of mental health services has been incorporated into the redesign of community mental health services in each of the 10 Localities for those patients with severe mental illness. This has been a co-designed initiative with VCSE input from the outset along with GPs, CCG Commissioners and Mental Health Service providers. This is aligned to the National Programme for Community Mental Health Transformation expected in 2021/22.</p> <p>VCSE organisations continue to play a key role in engaging adults in skills and employment activity and GM's ESF funded Community Grants programme has been extended with an additional £2.2m to support unemployed and economically inactive residents.</p> |
| <p>Develop systemwide responses to maintain and develop social infrastructure as part of driving more inclusive economic growth in the future, including system changes, investment and formal collaboration with new infrastructure</p> | <p>Systemwide progress and changes around support and development of new infrastructure has not been significantly progressed due to the ongoing emergency response. Further work to be undertaken to ensure health provision through local care organisations is integrated into any local models.</p> <p>Across agencies and partners greater alignment of agendas and understanding of comprehensive governance network to support this is underway (notably working across Tackling Inequalities, Reform and Growth Boards). This alignment and improved coordination and joint oversight of agendas and priorities will support an improved set of conversations and development of actions led, owned, and delivered by the most appropriate part of our governance infrastructure.</p> |
| <p>Deliver housing and public building retrofit programme as part of greener economic recovery</p> | <p>Public sector decarbonisation scheme will retrofit 150 public buildings between March and December. An allocation of £80M was awarded. Programme must be delivered at pace to ensure targets are met within the timescale.</p> <p>GM secured Green Homes Grant funding, enabling the retrofit of homes. £10M was awarded Nov to July, with a further £15M anticipated for July to December. The programme needs to be delivered at pace, to achieve spend within the specified timeline. Covid presents a risk to this, slowing down delivery progress, with limited access to people's homes.</p> <p>Challenges faced on housing retrofit are enormous to meet our environmental objectives. Current levels of Government support are insufficient to meet this challenge. A proposition is being developed for a longer term proposal for greater impact on housing retrofit. Working with the Skills & Employment team, an industry intelligence deep dive has taken place to understand the skills required to deliver major</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>retrofit and green infrastructure programmes; skills provision informed by this work will be commissioned in the Spring as part of GM's £40m ESF Skills for Growth Programme.</p> <p>Strategic work is being undertaken by GM Housing Providers to support the attainment of wider outcomes in the delivery of their activities. Worksteams are being aligned to support health and wellbeing outcomes, including supporting people to live well at home, joint training is being developed between mental health specialists and housing providers, apprenticeship programmes and provision of employment with embedded equalities objectives.</p> <p>Really positive and engaging partnership working continues to support the housing and wider agenda. The signing of the tripartite agreement (GMCA, HCSP and Housing Providers) provides an excellent opportunity to design and delivery together building on that shared commitment.</p> |
| <p>Provide support to enable businesses including social enterprises to innovate and adapt</p> | <p>The GM future economic vision (developed jointly by the private sector led by the LEP, and the CA) has been published and the role, content and priorities of the LIS have been tested and proven to still be correct areas of focus as the pandemic continues and we move into recovery phases. Across the system bending and flexing has been evident to meet the shifting demand and challenges posed by Covid, with many examples of successful partnership working and pivoting of provision to meet the shifted demand. Ongoing coordination activity with GM local authority leads regarding the delivery of Local Authority Discretionary Grants, including criteria for grants. The GM Access to Finance Team (Growth Company) have also been working with SMEs to develop business cases for grants, as well as administering the £10m GM top-up to the Bounce Back Loan scheme; £3m to top-up the national Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme and funds to address lack of finance for start-ups as a result of C-19, focused on opportunities for BAME-founded businesses, young and female entrepreneurs in tech and digital.</p> <p>Growth Company activity continues to support businesses. The Business Productivity and Inclusive Growth programme (providing support to sustain businesses and support growth aspirations) continues and has adapted to provide more support to businesses to safeguard jobs as well as creating them, given the challenges posed by Covid.</p> <p>Skills and employment measures include: development of industry intelligence packs in partnership with employers and industry bodies to inform business-led commissioning of flexible skills provision, targeted support for furloughed workers in SMEs through the Working Well Early Help offer, short retraining programmes for those at risk of redundancy, flexibilities enabling furloughed workers in receipt of low</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>wages to access fully funded adult skills provision, a Safe Returns to Work Programme to train up to 1,600 people, and support for 200 SMEs to produce workforce development plans and create apprenticeship opportunities through extension of the SEDA project.</p> <p>Innovation GM is a new business-led platform, spearheaded by the LEP and supported by GMCA, to unlock an innovation-led recovery and to supercharge post-Covid economic growth – focused on meeting our big challenges such as Net Zero and reducing health inequalities. We are seeking to form a new high impact partnership with Government around an innovation for people and places policy framework, and underpinned by smarter investments science and innovation assets that work for the whole conurbation. The plan is to launch this in the Spring.</p> |
| <p>Targeted support to sectors facing lasting impacts from Covid, and growing sectors with investment where they can exploit new opportunities</p> | <p>Developing a digital cluster strategy which has a strong inclusive growth component. Engagement been undertaken with GM digital strategic leaders, with strong messages from across sectors on the need for inclusive growth to be embedded.</p> <p>Work is underway to develop a series of actions in relation to the Foundational Economy that will create higher pay and better jobs, reduce economic inequality, increase productive investment in GM and encourage local “profit retention”. A variety of stakeholders have been engaged (including GM partners, experts and external organisations) to develop an initial series of policy options. That will be refined and tested by a Working Group. This work is supported by a range of skills and employment measures, including industry intelligence deep dives that are gathering detailed information from employers about occupationally specific skills/competencies needed now and in the future to inform skills commissioning, and commissioning the £7million Skills for Growth SME Support Programme that will support 3,000 SMEs and 15,000 individuals to up-skill in GM’s priority sectors.</p> <p>GM’s devolved employment and skills programmes have been aligned to help move people from unemployment into vacancies within health & social care, including working with the Northern Care Alliance to fill 1,000 vacancies via GM’s Working Well programme, with skills support through AEB.</p> <p>The Growth Company continue to provide support for businesses to increase their ‘digital presence’, including E-Commerce, Digital Operations and ‘Agile’, and have developed a new micro diagnostic tool and report.</p> <p>A new SME Leadership and Management Programme is being developed with GM’s Universities and the Growth Hub to test new ways of increasing this capacity in GM’s business base. An overall funding</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>envelope for this work has been approved, and formal design, build and delivery of the programme is expected to start in 2021</p> <p>To step up action on our Net Zero priorities, an Energy Innovation Agency is in development involving GM universities and commercial actors including SSE and Bruntwood. This will focus on high impact public-private projects that scale up use of clean technologies and overcome business model/cost hurdles. Our LIS is helping to seed fund this initiative. The Pankhurst Institute was launched this year – a new high impact collaborative research centre with a central goal to reduce health inequalities through applied research.</p> <p>ERDF investments are continuing to support businesses to innovate across high growth markets – including an additive manufacturing/print city programme, a sustainable plastics hub, a cyber & AI Foundry, graphene & advanced materials (bridging the gap) programme, energy house 2, a robotics programme, a digital health programme, and a growth company innovation business support programme – investments were confirmed in 2020 and programmes are now live and able to work with over a 1,000 GM SMEs.</p> <p>Covid is having, and will continue to have significant impacts on Greater Manchester’s ability to perform internationally. Our travel, trade and investment opportunities are being impacted, and will continue to be for some time. Ongoing work and dialogue with Manchester Airport continues, to ensure the airport at its wider infrastructure is able to restart when it is safe to do so.</p> |
| <p>Significantly expand the GM Good Employment Charet to drive more secure work, higher pay and better employment standards</p> | <p>The Charter is continuing to expand and be refined to reflect the impacts of Covid on GM’s economy. The programme has recruited a new tranche of members, and now has over 100 supporters. Additional funding has been allocated through retained Business Rates, allowing for further development and expansion of activity into focus areas, particularly those in the foundation economy. Work is ongoing with the Charter Board to determine the shape and nature of the expansion, embedding wider equalities and diversity as part of that expansion.</p> <p>Significant progresses have also been made as Greater Manchester continues to transform into a Living Wage city-region. Work is underway with many employers, business owners and partners to increase the number of accredited Living Wage Employers across all sectors in all ten Local Authorities.</p> |
| <p>Develop and deliver a Cultural Recovery Plan, recognising the role of a</p> | <p>Published the six month Culture Plan, with new one year plan due being developed supported by the final year of cultural funding available.</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>sustainable culture sector as a key driver of wellbeing and a vibrant GM</p> | <p>Significant challenges persist for the sector, phased release of lockdown means slow reopening and further support will be needed over coming months.</p> <p>The sector is disproportionately populated by freelancers and self-employed, where Government support has been minimal or not available. Financial support has been provided to sustain venues, however without the support for workers in the sector there is a real risk that once venues are able to re-open they may not have a workforce to return.</p> <p>The sector is likely to be further impacted by the absence of an agreement for travelling and performance outside of the UK and performers into the UK as part of the EU exit deal.</p> <p>Shift in focus for culture and leisure and opportunity for the development of town centres post-pandemic and during recovery phase. Work is underway with Local Authorities to support local places, local heritage and appreciation of assets, seeking to sustain some of the hyperlocal activity seen during the last year. Bury town of culture is due to go ahead later in the year.</p> <p>Role and significance of culture will play a key role in restoring confidence as we move through unlocking and recovery phases. A focus on culture, arts and health and joint working with HSCP to consider how arts can address some of the mental health challenges GM faces and the anticipated increase in need and demand for such services.</p> |
| <p>Continue the SafeGM campaign to provide reassurance about getting back to work</p> | <p>Ongoing development and delivery of the 'safely managing COVID-19' communications and engagement plan has continued, as a core part of Greater Manchester's ongoing response to the pandemic.</p> <p>Three monthly resident insight surveys have now been completed, with detailed summary reports available from the GMCA website. The research has identified concerns, anxieties and impacts of the pandemic being felt throughout the population, and specific groups of residents who are experiencing these more than the population as a whole. This knowledge is informing new and refined messaging and approaches for residents, for businesses and for the city region's wide network of partners who are together playing a role in stopping the spread of coronavirus and its many and unequal impacts.</p> <p>This work is also providing a richness to our understanding and supporting policy development as well as communications and engagement, having played a key role in shaping GM's leading piece of work to quantify current and future COVID-19 position – in terms of epidemiology and wider economic and social issues – and the city region's collective response to it. The findings and our approach are being shared outside of GM, allowing other areas to benefit from what we are learning. Our work in this area is now</p> |

due to be extended beyond the initial six-month period, to cover the full 'roadmap' period for unlocking and potentially beyond.

The population surveys are also providing a foundation of insight and evidence for taking forward our communications and engagement plan's second key priority, around accessibility and equality. £4.5M of Government funding has been secured, supporting the introduction and development of community champions programmes. This funding, additional to locally committed resources is now being taken forward through locality-led plans, with additional GM activity avoiding duplication and filling identified gaps for parts of the conurbation experiencing higher Covid risks and lower levels of engagement with current communications approaches.

This strand has also seen us collaborate with PHE's Behavioural Sciences and Insight Unit on a mapping exercise of impactful COVID-19 communications and engagement activities across GM, in individual localities and neighbourhoods and beyond our boundaries. The initial report delivered by PHE is further helping us identify under-served parts of the population, and those activities that could most effectively address gaps in provision.

Alongside facilitating targeted community conversations to develop deeper insight and co-designed solutions for the issues identified with these priority audiences, the insight and funding are also being used at GM level to take forward the communications and engagement plan's third priority - of ensuring accessible, engaging and insight-led behaviour change campaigns and communications.

Work is underway with creative leads from TfGM and other system partners to develop a successor to the successful 'TogetherGM', 'Do Your Bit' and 'COVID: It's Not Gone Yet' campaigns, bringing together under a unified brand identity activities by a wide-range of organisations covering the key areas of actions to stop the spread of the virus, test-trace-isolate, vaccinations and information on practical, financial and well-being support.

This approach will ensure the campaign can be owned, adapted and tailored by and for key networks such as businesses, public sector and VCSE partners, as well as for targeted priority audiences in line with GM and locality community champions activities. Proposed activities will respond directly to the findings of our insight work around barriers to access and trust of online / digital information; the value of word of mouth / friends and family and other influential voices in communities; and the language, tone and accessibility of existing approaches. It is intended that this campaign approach will be delivered alongside the gradual lifting of restrictions from March to June, and to address enduring challenges beyond.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Secure infrastructure investment needed to kickstart the economy</p> | <p>Full fibre programme - Virgin Media Business continues to work closely with Contracting Authorities to address concerns and improve roll out efficiencies and quality assurance. GMCA have reached agreement in-principle with DCMS to re-profile and draw-down funding in-advance of Mar21 deadline to secure the full value for programme delivery. In January, all GM local authorities agreed the GM Prospectus, which set out to achieve consistent standards and protocols to accelerate roll out of full fibre across the City Region. This included streamlining the approach to wayleaves, standardising resurfacing and working with other utility providers to “dig once” where possible. The document was prepared following wide consultation with local authorities and was also shaped by providers.</p> <p>Continued delivery of the Advanced Skills Capital grants to support colleges and universities to continue to build high quality learning / training facilities and to link skills infrastructure with future Towns Fund/Levelling Up capital developments.</p> <p>Awaiting details from Government on rules for the UKSPF and the Levelling Up Fund, these are expected in March. It is not currently clear what allocation if any GM will be awarded. A GM pipeline of investable propositions has been developed to ensure we have a strategic pipeline of opportunities which can be brought forward for any future funding opportunities or bidding rounds.</p> <p>Comprehensive Spending Review due later in the year, GM will continue to make the case for longer term devolved funding as part of that and other fiscal events.</p> <p>Browndale housing funds final allocations will be awarded in March, with £81M committed to bring forward housing projects. An additional £15M has been awarded for the Brownfield housing fund.</p> <p>A £54M allocation has been awarded for the Getting Building Fund to deliver a wide-ranging package of projects to boost the local economy. The projects will unlock building space, create job opportunities, bring superfast broadband and create a range of economic opportunities across the city-region.</p> |
| <p>Swiftly progress investment opportunities as part of economic stimulus and push for wider government funding for councils and</p> | <p>A coordinated GM submission to the Spending Review was made, with systemwide input to develop comprehensive package of asks of Government, seeking a multiyear devolved settlement. Following submission, it was confirmed the Spending Review would be a single year settlement, with limited direct funding awarded to GM although £8m for the extension of the North West Made Smarter Pilot and further national roll-out was agreed.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>locally devolved resources</p> | <p>A coordinated GM submission for the March Budget was made, with systemwide input to develop comprehensive package of asks of Government, seeking a multiyear devolved settlement based on the priorities set out in the GM submission in the Spending Review, with economic objectives built around LIS priorities and strategic objectives.</p> <p>Work underway with providers and localities to utilise recently announced social care workforce capacity fund. Further work is required as part on ongoing spending review and budget processes to develop long term funding strategy to stabilise and develop social care sector.</p> |
| <p>Develop sustainable mutual aid and support network that add value locally and provide a better way of working</p> | <p>University led research into mutual aid continues looking at good practice, enabling advice and roll out to enable and value mutual aid activity in GM.</p> <p>Issues persist around funding and capacity to deliver mutual aid. Volunteering and provision of mutual aid is not free for all agencies involved and will need to be factored in to create a more sustainable model of support after the pandemic response activity.</p> <p>Volunteer numbers have been lower in the second wave (after the initial outbreak), and the systemisation of what were reactive, hyperlocal community responses has reduced enthusiasm and support in some spaces. NHS Volunteer responders have been recommissioned for a further six months.</p> <p>Work with United City to mobilise furloughed employees in vaccination centres, currently being piloted with a view to roll out pan GM.</p> <p>The GM Economic Resilience Group is engaging partners and Business organisations as well as national government, LAs and others, in leading a local recovery conversation. The GM Mayor and GM officers continue to work closely with all Business Representative organisations</p> |
| <p>Deliver the Cycling and Walking Plan, and build on positive shift in travel behaviour</p> | <p>As restrictions and lockdown has continued, continues, significantly reduced use and capacity of public transport has also continued. The continued stay at home instructions and limited commuting has sustained good rates of cycling and walking across GM with far more local activity and less travel overall. Schemes have continued to be brought forward and delivery continues on the GM Cycling and Walking programme.</p> <p>There is a risk identified regarding the unlocking / recovery phase as we move forward, with a possibility of this being a car-led recovery, resulting in multiple negative consequences including air quality, health and wellbeing, and congestion, which may affect wider economic activity.</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>Far greater understanding systemically now as to the significant role transport has to play in supporting health and healthy lifestyles. Need to ensure retained understanding of the positive contribution to places, wellbeing and support in reopening the economy and society a sustainable transport network plays.</p> |
| <p>Progress more integrated public transport system with support from DfT</p> | <p>Bus reform public consultation was undertaken over winter, results are currently being considered by the GMCA and detailed bus reform plans will follow.</p> <p>Significant challenges persist for public transport provision. The rail system is being financially supported by DfT grants. Additional government funding continues to be provided on a rolling 12 week cycle to retain the bus network as viable despite low passenger numbers, and to support Metrolink costs. GMCA and TfGM recognise as critical the need for a comprehensive and viable public transport system to support a successful unlocking and recovery phase.</p> <p>However, it is currently unclear how government financial support for bus and Metrolink will be provided and managed through the medium term alongside the move to unlocking and recovery, particularly given uncertainties around passenger demand and flows, the extent to which home working will be retained, changes to peak travel times, modal shift, etc. TfGM/GMCA will continue to work with Government to develop a more predictable funding base for the medium term that allows a return to passenger growth, supports wider economic and social recovery and paves the way for a sustainable long term funding model.</p> |
| <p>Progress GM Clean Air Plan</p> | <p>Consultation undertaken in Autumn now concluded with results being analysed. Additional resource is now expected to be required to support businesses to switch to cleaner vehicles than the previous Government calculations. Original modelling was undertaken pre-pandemic, with now much greater understanding of the financial challenges faced by businesses which will make the switch to cleaner vehicles far more financially challenging for many businesses than was forecast pre-pandemic. A package of support will be required to enable this shift.</p> <p>The pandemic has further reinforced the significance of clean air and inequalities. GM's most vulnerable communities are living in many of the areas with the poorest air quality and are those suffering worst from coronavirus.</p> |
| <p>Progress Environment Plan to reduce carbon emissions and create an</p> | <p>Analysis is ongoing for the development of business models which support increased sustainable urban drainage and new green spaces.</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>improved, more resilient natural environment for socially distanced recreation</p> | <p>Range of locally led activities and redesign of places has been undertaken to try to increase social distancing in urban and natural environments.</p> <p>The Energy Innovation Agency has been launched and is currently recruiting staff.</p> <p>A public sector senior officer workshop has been delivered to consider what a sustainable recovery for Greater Manchester could involve and how we plan and embed sustainability in our recovery from the pandemic.</p> |
|---|---|