

**PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 DECEMBER 2020**

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mayor Paul Dennett	GM Portfolio Holder – Chair
Councillor Suzanne Richards	Manchester City Council
Councillor Hannah Roberts	Oldham Council
Councillor David Mellor	Stockport Council
Councillor Ged Cooney	Tameside Council
Councillor James wright	Trafford Council
Jane Healey Brown	Arup
Matthew Harrison	Great Places Housing Association

ADVISORS/OTHER ATTENDEES

Helen Telfer	Environment Agency
Derek Richardson	Greater Manchester Ecology Unit
Roy Hymas	Natural England
Steph Everett	Homes England
Carl Moore	Homes England
Councillor Alan Quinn	Bury Council
Councillor Mandie Shilton-Godwin	Manchester City Council

SUPPORT OFFICERS

Steve Annette	GMCA Governance Team
Lindsay Dunn	GMCA Governance Team
Lee Teasdale	GMCA Governance Team
Molly Bishop	GMCA Homelessness Lead
Steve Fyfe	GMCA Planning & Housing Team
David Hodcroft	GMCA Planning & Housing Team
Jill Holden	GMCA Planning & Housing Team
Aisling McCourt	GMCA Planning & Housing Team
Anne Morgan	GMCA Planning & Housing Team
Steve Rumbelow	GM Housing, Homelessness and Infrastructure Lead Chief Executive

14/20 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Tony Cummings, Bury Council, Toby Hewitt, Bolton Council, Derek Antrobus, Salford City Council, Councillor Linda Robinson, Rochdale Council, Terry Halliwell, Wigan Council and Bernadette Elder, Inspiring Communities.

15/20 CHAIR

The Commission noted that as GM Portfolio Holder for Housing, Homelessness and Infrastructure, Mayor Paul Dennett is ex-officio Chair of the Commission.

16/20 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

Nominations were sought for the appointment of a vice-chair of the Commission. Matthew Harrison being proposed, and there being no other propositions made, it was

RESOLVED/-

That Matthew Harrison be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Commission for 2020/2021.

17/20 MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION

RESOLVED/-

To note the membership of the Planning and Housing Commission for 2020/2021 as follows:

District	Member
Bolton	Councillor Toby Hewitt
Bury	Councillor Clare Cummins
Manchester	Councillor Suzanne Richards
Oldham	Councillor Hannah Roberts
Rochdale	Councillor Linda Robinson
Salford	Councillor Derek Antrobus
Stockport	Councillor David Mellor
Tameside	Councillor Gerald Cooney
Trafford	Councillor James Wright
Wigan	Councillor Terry Halliwell
Arup	Jane Healey-Brown
Great Places HA	Matthew Harrison
Inspiring Communities	Bernadette Elder

18/20 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

There were no Chair's announcements or items of urgent business.

19/20 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

20/20 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Steve Fyfe, Head of Housing Strategy, GMCA explained the rationale behind including the broadest wide-ranging membership for the Commission to incorporate representation across a range of sectors and providers.

RESOLVED/-

To note the Terms of Reference of the Planning and Housing Commission.

21/20 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 24 JANUARY 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2020 were presented for consideration.

RESOLVED/-

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2020 be approved.

22/20 GM SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

Anne Morgan, Head of Planning Strategy, GMCA provided members with an overview of the GM Spatial Framework. She brought the meeting up to date following the recent decision by Stockport Council not to participate further with the Joint Plan, but to withdraw to prepare its own Local Plan.

She indicated that the immediate priority for the officers had been that of interrogating the legislative framework in order to be satisfied that it was possible to continue following the removal of a constituent authority and had confirmed that it was, so long as the overall impact on the remaining authorities was substantially the same. Being reassured, the officers were now proposing to explore the principle of proceeding to develop a Joint Development Plan with the remaining council partners.

There remained a strong shared belief that a joint approach remained crucial to managing growth and development in a planned and sustainable way, and as an important element of Covid recovery. Further consideration now needed to be given to establishing a new Joint Committee of the nine authorities, and its relationship with the Commission.

The Chair then updated the meeting on the discussion at the meeting of AGMA Executive held earlier in the day that had agreed a three-pronged approach going forward, viz –

- (i) supporting in principle the preparation of a Joint Development Plan document of the nine remaining authorities.
- (ii) requesting a report addressing the issues in terms of 'next steps', and
- (iii) commending the nine remaining authorities to establish a Joint Committee, with delegated authority to coordinate and develop a Joint Plan on their behalf.

The Chair indicated that he was saddened that a consolidated GM approach was no longer achievable following Stockport's decision. He was also concerned that recent Government announcements to revisit the housing need methodology could lead to additional housing development pressures for the Midlands and the North; that developments in terms of zonal approaches to planning would effectively dilute local influence, and about the perceived drift in relation to permitted development rights. As a city region he considered that it was important that close collaboration with Stockport should continue in terms of other Greater Manchester strategies for the good of the economic development of the City Region.

The meeting then being opened for discussion, the decision to proceed with the joint approach was welcomed by members whilst recognising the impact for the nine remaining authorities in terms of absorbing additional quotas. Members indicated that as the Joint Plan could no longer be styled as a Greater Manchester Plan efforts needed to be made to rename and re-brand the plan in a way that gave greater emphasis to the wide range of local benefits in terms of employment, environment, transport, health and regeneration, as well as housing, and it was suggested also that there was a need for strengthened governance arrangements to be in place in taking the new plan forward.

Anne Morgan indicated that the name change issue had already been highlighted. The Joint Committee would be a joint committee of the nine with representation from each. The new housing need methodology review was imminent and would need to be reflected in the preparation of the new joint plan, and that the issues raised in relation to governance arrangements going forward were well noted. It was hoped that building on all the work already undertaken it would be possible to commence consultation on a published plan in June or July 2021, with a planned submission to Government of an agreed Plan by end of 2021.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the decisions of the AGMA Leaders as now reported be supported.
2. That the Commission places on record its thanks to the officers for their work in taking the process to this stage; their timely and effective response to the recently emerging situation, and their commitment to taking the process forward with minimal impacts for the previously planned timeframe.

23/20 PLANNING WHITE PAPER

Anne Morgan, Head of Planning Strategy, GMCA introduced a presentation, focussing on the key points and the impacts of the discussion of the previous item.

Many elements of improvement and streamlining of planning processes were broadly welcomed. Many development management policies would become national policies, including setting binding housing need development targets, and this would remove scope for local management policies and remove local consultation mechanisms. The proposals were radical and further work was necessary to quantify the full and issues for the city region as further details emerge and as linkages to the Devolution White Paper become clearer.

Members referred to the move towards the development of a greater number of modular homes and the need to develop skills packages and for construction industry training to become more focussed on non-traditional forms of building and retro-fitting skills necessary to render fit the existing stock of dwellings.

The Commission heard of innovative collaborative working by a range of GM housing providers to look at investment in volume modular home development combining both skills innovation and local infrastructure and local industrial strategies. Other members highlighted elements within the proposals overall of increased centralisation which appeared contradictory with the decentralisation agenda. Members also highlighted contradictions between this White Paper and the Social Housing White Paper from a supply and affordability perspective, and totally failed to address the homelessness crisis.

In terms of the Infrastructure Levy, concerns were raised that without ring-fencing there was scope for the Levy to be manipulated by Governments to force councils to build as a means of suppressing Council Tax or precept levels.

RESOLVED/-

To note the report at this stage.

24/20 GM HOUSING STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Steve Fyfe, Head of Housing Strategy, GMCA provided members with an update on the GM Housing Strategy Implementation Plan. He reported that the strategy was published in June 2019 and that it had been developed through an extensive co-production process.

The Strategy recognised the importance of housing issues to the achievement of the overall Greater Manchester Strategy objectives, and as a result set out a broad and ambitious approach to respond to the housing crisis. It included a commitment to the development of a publicly available Implementation Plan, updated on a six-monthly basis which would provide an update for activity between January to June 2020, and shared progress and next steps. Like the strategy itself, it focused on action that can most usefully be led or assisted by working at a Greater Manchester scale, and did not seek to capture the various workstreams at district and neighbourhood level.

The plan had been populated through discussion with relevant policy leads in GMCA and GM Health & Social Care Partnership, and with other key partners including GM housing providers' representatives, each of which were involved in the development of the Strategy. It therefore captured activity already underway, as well as new lines of work to be commenced in coming months.

RESOLVED/-

That the report be noted, and that the achievement of annual housing delivery of 13700 across GM, a 19% uplift on the previous year, and an 18% uplift on affordable housing, be welcomed.

25/20 FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

Jill Holden, GMCA provided members with an update on activity and improvements made to governance arrangements, and a slide presentation was given that provided an update on the delivery of the capital programme and the opportunities being pursued through Innovation Funding.

Improvements made in data collection, data storage and collaborative sharing of that data were also highlighted, together with public engagement which would form the basis of a report to a future meeting. Work had commenced to develop a Strategy on Climate Change that would establish a long-term strategy that would move the focus from reactive protection measures to a long-term resilience approach. The Commission was advised of grant in aid that was likely to deliver £126.5m over 6 years for Greater Manchester to support 93 projects. A 2% increase in the local levy had also been made to support key projects.

A member indicated that the contribution to the local levy was a key lever in securing matched funding for key local flood protection schemes in Greater Manchester, but also supporting nature-based and sustainable drainage systems as part of mainstream infrastructure developments.

The Chair requested that the slide presentation be prepared in a report format that he could share with Leaders.

RESOLVED/-

That the report and the progress being made at a number of levels be welcomed.

26/20 HOMELESSNESS COVID 19 UPDATE

A report was considered that provided an update on the ongoing homelessness response to Covid-19 and outlined the planned approach into winter 2021, with recommendations for further collective action to be considered.

The Chair highlighted that 1000 homeless people were currently in rough- sleeper relief, and 3600 households were in temporary accommodation across GM and he highlighted concerns about the Home Office's response to asylum seekers, and that these pressures had to be set against the need reflected by 100k households on council waiting lists. All of which reinforced the need for more affordable housing on the region.

RESOLVED/-

That the report be noted.

27/20 HOMELESSNESS UPDATE

Molly Bishop, Homelessness Strategic Lead, GMCA provided a detailed update on activities and strategic developments relating to the Homelessness Covid response, the next steps accommodation programme including the first tranche of capital funding to increase provision, and homelessness prevention strategies.

RESOLVED/-

That the update be welcomed, and the Commission recognises the complex and challenging set of needs that fall to be addressed in dealing with the crisis of homelessness and rough sleeping across the GM region, and the range of strategic approaches being developed to meet those challenges as detailed in the report submitted.

28/20 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Friday 22 January 2021	2.00 pm – 4.00pm
Tuesday 23 March 2021	10.00 pm – 12 noon