

GM LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

SUBJECT: Greater Manchester Independent Inequalities Commission Report

DATE: 20th April 2021

FROM: Vanda Murray, GM LEP Diversity Champion

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides an update on the Greater Manchester Independent Inequalities Commission report published on 26th March which responds to long term systemic inequality issues present in Greater Manchester. It summarises the background and recommendations of the report and highlights how this could inform further development of the LEP's priority of Diversity and Inclusion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The LEP Board is asked to:

- Note the report and provide any feedback on the proposed way forward

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

The GM Independent Inequalities Commission seeks to respond to equalities issues present in Greater Manchester. It developed a detailed evidence base, explored the intersectionalities between equalities characteristics and issues such as health, education, employment, housing and poverty, before making a number of recommendations aimed at tackling systemic discrimination and addressing inequalities between communities.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The work of the Commission will enable the view and representations of members of GM society into the design and delivery of relevant policy and activity, including access to green spaces, sustainable transport options, alternative working models and maintaining and supporting ongoing environmental improvements.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Greater Manchester Independent Inequalities Commission reported on 26th March. The attached slide pack sets out the background the Commission, their analysis and findings, and the recommendations they have made.
- 1.2 This paper sets out the likely next steps on the Commission's work and links to the work of the LEP.

2. THE LEP's ECONOMIC VISION & COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The LEP champions the GM Economic Vision which was launched in Autumn 2020 and represents a bold vision to remodel the city-region's economy through a range of long-term initiatives to help businesses innovate more effectively and become more productive, creating a greener and more resilient economy.
- 2.2 The plan sets out the sort of Greater Manchester we want to help create and includes a commitment to tackle inequalities, embrace diversity and balance profit with people and sustainability to support productive, job rich, fair employment.
- 2.3 This approach reflects the principles highlighted in the Greater Manchester Independent Inequalities Commission report and a number of its key recommendations.
- 2.4 The Commission made 17 recommendations, across 5 areas
 - **An Essential Pivot** – putting wellbeing and equality goals at the heart of the Greater Manchester Strategy and aligning resources, portfolios and performance measures around these goals.
 - **People Power** – the Commission calls for more power to be put in the hands of local people, for example to influence public policy, to advance equalities and community ownership of facilities and businesses. Recommendations include the establishment of an independent GM Anti-discrimination body that works with the GM Equality Panels to tackle breaches of the Equality Act.
 - **Good Jobs, Decent Pay** – expanding the Good Employment Charter, including through procurement and commissioning processes, and setting up 'GM Works' to create good jobs, upskill and reskill people to take up these jobs and provide apprenticeships and 6-month Job Guarantees for disadvantaged groups in key sectors. The Commission also proposes an ambitious target for every employer in Greater Manchester to pay the living wage and offer living hours by 2030.
 - **Building Wealth** – actions which work to maximise community wealth and businesses that generate social impact, provide good employment and put ownership in the hands of employees and communities. Recommendations include a Community Investment Platform to tap into local savings, unlock community investment and build-up assets to share wealth.

- **Services for a Good Life** - move towards universal basic services in which education, health, childcare, adult social care, housing, transport and digital connectivity are provided to all. Recommendations include amplifying the Greater Manchester Model of integrated public services in 10 pathfinder deprived neighbourhoods and piloting an income guarantee.

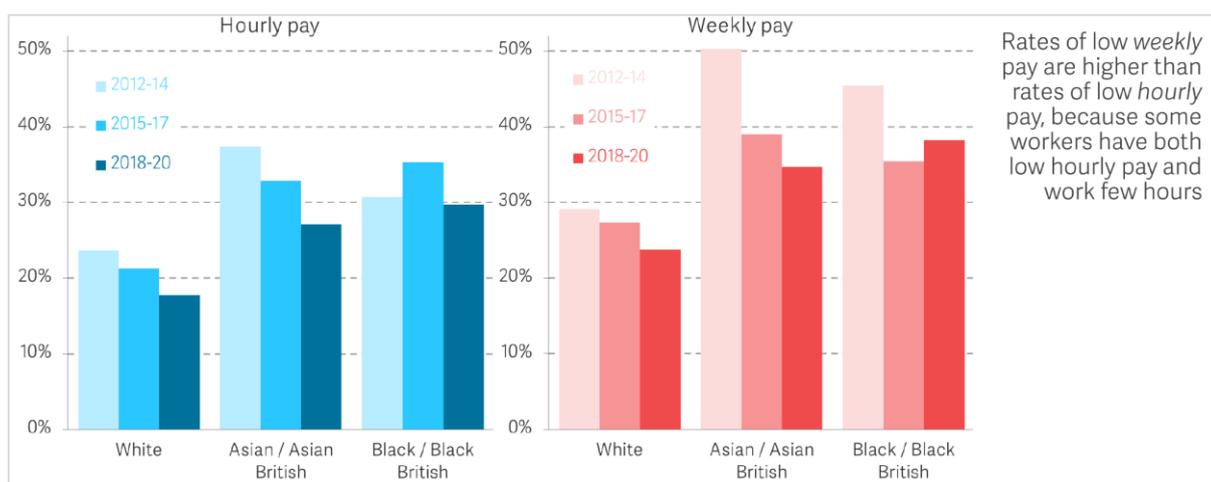
2.5 The recommendations themselves are set out in the attached slides.

2.6 The Commission has called for the creation of a GM Anchor Action Network of organisations who will use their spending, investment and soft power to drive social value, support disadvantaged groups and create good, secure, living wage jobs. This might include larger organisations rooted in Greater Manchester who might take a leadership role on this agenda and have connections with the Local Enterprise Partnership. The recommendation to set a target for every employer in Greater Manchester to pay the living wage and offer living hours by 2030 could also build on the Good Employment Charter, link conditions to access to public goods, services and contracts and require support for businesses in low paid sectors to get there.

2.7 The research and evidence base which was compiled for the Commission provides some insights on diversity and inclusion in the private sector and the starting point for developing a wider assessment and understanding. In particular, the Commission's analysis has shown a range of employment inequalities. Ethnic minority employment in GM is already disproportionately low, with an employment rate of 63% (year to June 2020), compared to 76% for those from a White background. Similarly, the employment rate for working-age residents in GM with a disability was 52% (year to June 2020), compared to 80% for those without a disability. Nearly 40% of GM's self-employed are aged over 50, and women, young people and people from ethnic minorities tend to be over-represented in sectors like hospitality, which have been disproportionately affected by lockdown; and in key worker roles like care and retail, which present higher risks of contracting Covid.

2.8 Figure 1 shows ethnic inequalities in low pay for employees in Greater Manchester (hourly pay in blue, weekly pay in red), and was provided for the Commission by the Resolution Foundation from its recent [research](#) on low pay. Although there has been some reduction in low pay over the period charted (largely down to the introduction of the National Living Wage), this has benefited Black and Black British workers less than others.

Figure 1: Proportion in low pay, Greater Manchester



Source: [Low Pay Britain 2020 • Resolution Foundation](#)

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 The Commission reported just before the pre-election period. The issues which they highlight could be raised during the local election campaign and in commitments made by candidates.
- 3.2 Following the elections, a refresh of the Greater Manchester Strategy is planned, updating the version published in 2017. The findings of the Commission will form part of the work updating the Strategy, informing the priorities and approach agreed through the refresh.
- 3.3 The LEP will be involved in the Strategy refresh, as in 2017, with a key role to play in developing and agreement priorities across a range of areas. One of those is likely to be the role which businesses can play in tackling inequalities, both within businesses and across the wider economy and society of Greater Manchester.
- 3.4 As set out in the Diversity and Inclusion update to the Board in October 2020, the diversity and inclusivity of Greater Manchester's businesses is one of the LEP's priorities and can directly inform the refresh of the Greater Manchester Strategy. Over the coming months the intention is to:
 - Build on the existing research (including the Independent Inequalities Commission report) to better understand the level of diversity in the private sector and any barriers to inclusion.
 - As part of the expansion of the Good Employment Charter, agreed in the Living with Covid Plan, working with the Charter Board to improve diversity and inclusion through the characteristics of good employment they have developed – particularly recruitment, engagement and voice, people management, and a better understanding of pay differentials.

- Set ambitions for improving diversity in businesses across other dimensions (e.g. ensuring that company boards reflect the communities they serve) through the process of setting new outcomes and goals for the Greater Manchester Strategy.
- Prioritise actions within the GM Economic Vision such as the creation a new generation of leaders and managers through a world leading programme of Female Entrepreneurship and significantly increasing the number of female leaders and those from diverse backgrounds.
- Explore how the LEP can use its position to showcase the latest thinking in equalities within business, highlighting best practice and leading voices in this area. This could include hosting a roundtable event, bringing together business, academia and partners to explore key topics and help shape the actions needed to realise greater diversity in the private sector.