

Date: 28th May 2021

Subject: Greater Manchester Economic Dashboard

Report of: Councillor Elise Wilson, Portfolio Lead for Economy & Business

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide GMCA with the latest version of the Greater Manchester Economic Resilience Dashboard.

RECOMMENDATION:

The GMCA is requested to note and comment on the latest update of the Greater Manchester Economic Resilience Dashboard

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Equalities Implications:

There are no direct equalities impacts arising from this report.

Climate Change Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures:

1. *No direct impacts arising from this report.*

Risk Management:

None

Legal Considerations:

None

Financial Consequences – Revenue:

None

Financial Consequences – Capital:

None

Number of attachments to the report: 1

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

The author of the report must include list of those documents on the subject matter which:

- Disclose any facts or matter on which the report or an important part of the report is based;
- Which have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report

TRACKING/PROCESS		[All sections to be completed]
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?		Please state the reason the report is exempt from call-in
GM Transport Committee	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Economic Resilience Dashboard aims to provide up to date intelligence on the conditions in the Greater Manchester economy following the outbreak of Covid-19.

The data is divided into four sections:

- Current Economic Conditions provides leading indicators on the economy and labour market.
- Business and Consumer Confidence provides measures of confidence in the economy as illustrated in retail spending and responses to national surveys.
- Greater Manchester Business Indicators provides data gathered by GM based organisations on business sentiment and confidence.
- Behavioural Insights provides information on the movement of people across GM.

1.2 The available economic data in response to Covid-19 is changing rapidly with frequent new datasets becoming available and others being withdrawn. The dashboard will be updated with the best available data each month.

1.3 The latest version of the dashboard can be viewed live at this link (and is attached as a PDF report):

https://www.gmtableau.nhs.uk/t/GMCA/views/GMEconomicResilienceDashboard/About/jack.james@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/4f3be3e5-759e-47ee-85f9-6c1538fc265c?:display_count=n&:showVizHome=n&:origin=viz_share_link&:isGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y&:embed=y

2. HEADLINE MESSAGES:

2.1 Data for April showed the number of unemployment benefit claimants in Greater Manchester remained stable at 142,000, a month-on-month decrease of 1.5%. The fall in claimants affected all GM districts. It also occurred nationally. Stockport experienced the largest month-on-month fall (-3%).

2.2 There were 168,400 GM residents of furlough on 31st March 2021. This is a decrease of 16,700 (9%) since 28th February 2021 and remains below the 213,300 employments furloughed in July 2020, the earliest data available. Nationally 14% of residents eligible for the scheme were furloughed on 31st March, equal to the take up rate in GM. The level of support available from the scheme will begin to taper down from July with the Government contribution reducing from 80% for hours not worked to 70% and then 60% in August and September.

2.3 The number of online job postings decreased by 10% to 6,076 in week ending 15th May. This is 69% above week ending 16th May 2020. Feedback from the Growth Company suggests that businesses are reporting labour shortages in the tourism, hospitality and leisure,

manufacturing, construction and health and social care sectors. It is currently unclear whether these are short-term due to uncertainty related to changes in restrictions or a longer-term trend.

- 2.4 Since the easing of lockdown restrictions in early April, there has been a rapid increase in transport activity across Greater Manchester. All modes of transport have seen an increase in usage since 5th April, despite a slight decline in between week commencing 19th and 26th April. TfGM data shows that there were more car journeys in week commencing 10th May than in any week since early March 2020. Google data on the number of journeys taking place across GM shows that the reduction in restrictions on April 12 caused a step change in the numbers of visits to retail and recreation locations (including cafés, shopping centres, theme parks, museums, libraries and cinemas). Prior to the restrictions journeys were down around 50% compared to pre-Covid levels. This improved to -26% in the period to 14 May. Journeys to workplaces also recovered, albeit less markedly. There were 32% fewer journeys to places of work in the period to 14 May than the comparator period prior to the pandemic.
- 2.5 The Growth Hub Survey conducted between 29th March and 26th April showed a 5.6% decrease in the number of businesses reporting a 'negative' impact from EU exit with 19.2% of firms reporting a negative impact, 47.1% of firms reported a 'neutral' impact, 27.9% are 'unsure' and 5.8% reported a 'positive' impact. This is a 4.2% increase on the number of businesses reporting a positive impact. There remain a number of issues relating to duties, VAT, haulage costs, labelling and product regulations that are impeding export activity. The lifting of Covid restrictions is also starting to crystallise some of the impacts on export of services. Some businesses are reporting that they do not see the EU as a viable export market because of these issues.
- 2.6 The number of firms that said they were considering making redundancies was 1% in the four weeks to 26th April, down from 2.4% in the four weeks to 29th March. This is the lowest number of firms considering redundancies since the dataset began in September 2020. 4.8% of firms said that they had already made redundancies.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The GMCA is requested to note and comment on the latest update of the Greater Manchester Economic Resilience Dashboard.