

Date: 30th July 2021

Subject: Greater Manchester Equality Panels

Report of: Cllr. Brenda Warrington, Portfolio Leader for Age-friendly Greater Manchester and Equalities, and Pam Smith, Portfolio Lead Chief Executive for Age-friendly Greater Manchester

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

This report presents the 2020-21 Annual Reports and updates from Greater Manchester Equality Panels for consideration. Based on the activities and outcomes presented, the report seeks support to secure funding for 2022/23 to continue their positive impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Leaders are requested to:

1. **Note the Annual Reports provided by the Disabled People's Panel, LGBTQ+ Panel and Youth Combined Authority, and updates from the Race Equality Panel, Women and Girls Panel, and Faith and Belief Panel.**
2. **Note that recurrent funding of £350,000 will be required from the Mayoral Budget from 2022/23 to continue the work of the Equality Panels**

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BOLTON
BURY

MANCHESTER
OLDHAM

ROCHDALE
SALFORD

STOCKPORT
TAMESIDE

TRAFFORD
WIGAN

Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

Impacts Questionnaire			
Impact Indicator	Result	Justification/Mitigation	
Equality and Inclusion	G	<p>There are seven Equality Panels, focused on improving outcomes and reducing discrimination faced by people from communities-of-identity (protected characteristics); Faith, Race, Women and Girls, Older People, Young People, Disabled People, LGBTQ+</p> <p>People experiencing inequality often face multiple issues, including social and economic disadvantage. The Panels focus on those most at risk in society</p> <p>Access, experience and outcomes from public services are not equal, and making this equitable is a priority for the Panels</p> <p>Membership of the Panels are residents with lived-experience, or representatives of voluntary organisations that support residents. Engaging the Panels in decisions and services that affect them at the earliest stage leads to better outcomes and value for money</p> <p>The Panels bring together diverse community voices, strengthening understanding and collaborating to celebrate Greater Manchester's culture of social inclusion</p>	
Health	G	<p>The Equality Panels provide insight into the access, experience and outcomes of diverse communities. This should help public services develop more effective policies and deliver more efficient services. The Panels cover a range of topics across Health and Wellbeing, enabling communication, codesign and collaboration between public services, voluntary sector and residents. For example the Disabled Peoples Panel have supported the Community Hub response to the pandemic</p>	
Resilience and Adaptation	G	<p>The Equality Panels enable public services to communicate and engage with diverse communities. Reducing inequality in these communities builds resilience. Tackling discrimination will enable public services to become more representative of their communities, building trust and confidence. Hate Crime is a cross-panel priority</p>	
Housing	G	<p>The Equality Panels have contributed to the new Homelessness Prevention Strategy, providing valuable insight to policy makers on the lived-experience of people from diverse communities, including those fleeing domestic abuse from ethnic minority communities, people with no recourse to public funds and those requiring supported housing due to health or disability</p>	
Economy	G	<p>The Equality Panels provide insight into the access, experience and outcomes of diverse communities. This should help public services develop more effective policies and deliver more efficient services. The Panels cover a range of topics across Economy and Employment, enabling communication, codesign and collaboration between public services, voluntary sector and residents. For example, the Panels are informing the Good Employment Charter and Workforce Race Equality Strategy</p>	
Mobility and Connectivity	G	<p>There is a specific focus in the new Digital Taskforce on Older People and Disabled People. The Ageing Hub (Older Peoples Panel) and Disabled Peoples Panel are directly supporting this activity, providing professional expertise and connectivity into their communities. This will ensure solutions meet the needs of target group</p>	
Carbon, Nature and Environment	G	<p>The Equality Panels provide insight into the access, experience and outcomes of diverse communities. This should help public services develop more effective policies and deliver more efficient services. The Panels cover a range of topics across Environment, enabling communication, codesign and collaboration between public services, voluntary sector and residents. For example, the Youth Combined Authority contribution to the Green Summit.</p>	
Consumption and Production			
Contribution to achieving the GM Carbon Neutral 2038 target			
Further Assessment(s):	Equalities Impact Assessment		
 Positive impacts overall, whether long or short term.	 Mix of positive and negative impacts. Trade-offs to consider.	 Mostly negative, with at least one positive aspect. Trade-offs to consider.	 Negative impacts overall.

Carbon Assessment				
Overall Score				
Buildings	Result	Justification/Mitigation		
New Build residential	N/A			
Residential building(s) renovation/maintenance	N/A			
New Build Commercial/Industrial	N/A			
Transport				
Active travel and public transport	N/A			
Roads, Parking and Vehicle Access	N/A			
Access to amenities	N/A			
Vehicle procurement	N/A			
Land Use				
Land use	N/A			
No associated carbon impacts expected.	High standard in terms of practice and awareness on carbon.	Mostly best practice with a good level of awareness on carbon.	Partially meets best practice/ awareness, significant room to improve.	Not best practice and/ or insufficient awareness of carbon impacts.

Risk Management:

N/A

Legal Considerations:

N/A

Financial Consequences – Revenue:

£350,000 investment will enable the GMCA and partners to engage people experiencing inequality through the Equality Panels, facilitated by commissioned culturally appropriate organisations. Effective Equality Panels support public service resources to be invested in ways that are more targeted to those most at risk, reducing costs and achieving better outcomes.

Financial Consequences – Capital:

N/A

Number of attachments to the report: Five

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

<https://democracy.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/documents/s14066/9%20GM%20Equality%20Panels%20final%20-%20GMCA%20March%202021.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?	Please state the reason the report is exempt from call-in	
GM Transport Committee	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
[Date considered at GM Transport Cttee if appropriate]	[Date considered by the relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee]	

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Greater Manchester Equality Panels help tackle the structural and organisational prejudice and discrimination that causes inequality and injustice in society, through the advancement of equity and fairness in decisions, policies and services across all sectors and communities.

1.2 The Panels:

- **Champion** Greater Manchester's cultural heritage and history of community inclusion and social justice
- **Advise** the Mayor of Greater Manchester and the Greater Manchester Lead for Ageing and Equalities of the challenges and opportunities faced by people linked to their identity.
- Constructively **challenge** political and system leaders to tackle prejudice and discrimination within their organisations and structures
- Proactively **support** the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and its public, private and voluntary sector partners to develop effective solutions that tackle inequality and increase equity.

1.3 Panels do this by

- providing **insight** into our diverse communities, enabling political leaders and public bodies to listen and engage with people in a more targeted and appropriate way
- **communicating** messages to their communities as trusted sources
- **designing** more effective policies with public bodies, improving outcomes for individuals, reducing inequality and preventing expenditure in other parts of the system
- facilitating positive **collaboration** between communities and public services, supporting an asset-based approach, highlighting new opportunities and challenges

1.4 There are seven panels – Race Equality Panel, Disabled People's Panel, Faith and Belief Advisory Panel, LGBTQ+ Panel, Women and Girls Panel, Youth Combined Authority, and Older People's Panel (to be established shortly). In addition to focusing on specific issues, they work together to ensure intersectionality is considered.

2. EQUALITY PANELS AND GREATER MANCHESTER STRATEGY

2.1 The role of the Equality Panels was a significant feature of the Independent Inequalities Commission (IIC) report and recommendations, highlighting their valuable contribution and the opportunity for them to do more given the right framework to work within.

- 2.2 The Commission “*heard a clear message that people want to be more involved in decisions that affect them, and that decision-making could be improved by drawing on the lived experience of people worst affected by inequality.*” This includes “*a specific focus on groups who face particular oppressions or injustices because of their identity*”
- 2.3 The Equality Panels provide this space for participation, where they can set the agenda and be partners in delivering it. By having effective Panels and panel members, GMCA and its partners can hear the needs of diverse communities and work collaboratively with local people, maximising use of local assets and targeting resources where they will deliver greatest impact.
- 2.4 The Commission recommends providing the Panels a stronger mandate and resources to co-develop policy, influence issues and decisions, and constructively challenge GMCA (and other public bodies) to deliver equality commitments.
- 2.5 The recommendations from the IIC, and more recently the Marmot City-Region programme, put wellbeing and equality at the heart of the refreshed Greater Manchester Strategy. This places even greater responsibility on policymakers to engage early and genuinely with the Equality Panels and their supporting networks.
- 2.6 This has begun immediately, with a series of thematic engagement sessions with Equality Panel members and delivered by GMCA policy leads, to gain insight on inequality of access, experiences and outcomes within each topic area, and explore how to tackle these by working with residents and voluntary, faith and community organisations.
- 2.7 The Chairs of the Equality Panels are members of the Tackling Inequality Board, ensuring a strategic connection between the Panels and political and organisational leaders. The Board provides oversight and leadership of the equality agenda and programme of work, across the themes and structures of Greater Manchester.

3. ANNUAL REPORTS

3.1 Greater Manchester Disabled People’s Panel (GMDPP) (Appendix 1)

- 3.2 The GMDPP is a pan-impairment Panel, made up of 13 Disabled People’s Organisations and is convened by the Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People. The aim of the Panel is to ensure that disabled people are involved in all aspects of running and planning for the future of the city region. The Panel has been supporting the development of other Disabled People’s Panels in other cities who are keen to copy the Greater Manchester model.
- 3.3 From the outset of the pandemic, member organisations of GMDPP have been working to support disabled people. At the beginning of the crisis when GMDPP was raising issues and proposing solutions, it was asked for the evidence of disabled people’s experiences. This led to the commissioning of the GM Big Disability Survey – Covid 19. The survey was one of the first in the country and addressed some of the early challenges faced by disabled people. The final survey report contained recommendations to the ten Greater Manchester local authorities, the GMCA and national Government.

3.4 During the Covid pandemic, the Panel has worked with Greater Manchester partners to influence policy in many areas including: shielding, accessibility of the Covid Vaccination Programme, exemptions for face mask wearing on public transport, mental wellbeing (with Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership), the GM Good Employment Charter, with the Mayor, Andy Burnham, to advise the BBC on improving the accessibility of its channels of communication, and returning to city and town centres. The Panel also successfully advocated for a text service for Greater Manchester Community Hubs which has now been extended.

3.5 The Panel has used its knowledge to identify key priorities for 2021-2022. These are Intersectionality and Strategic Infrastructure, Access and the Built Environment and Transport, Covid-19, Social Care Charging, Employment, Digital Exclusion, Mental Health, Political Inclusion, and the National Disability Strategy and engagement with national Government.

3.6 Youth Combined Authority (YCA) (Appendix 2)

3.7 The YCA was the first established Youth Combined Authority in England and it continues to be the strongest, based on its structure, reach and impact. Its evolution over the last four years is at a point where the members now feel comfortable to meaningfully challenge decision-makers in a mature and respectful way.

3.8 The current cohort has listened, grown, amplified, and worked on complex projects. The YCA creates space to share concerns as well as offer advice on a variety of topics. The Annual Report (Appendix 2) highlights the important role that the YCA has played in developing Our Pass, supporting the 2020 Green Summit and providing constructive challenge to Greater Manchester Police (GMP) proposals for School Engagement Officers, as well as acting as a key conduit for the voice of young people throughout the pandemic.

3.9 The Annual Report also describes the significant diversity of young people represented within the YCA, a source of great pride for its members, as well as the creation of a new, elected Leadership Team that guides its work and meets with the Mayor on a regular basis. New membership intake has included organisations that were not part of the original YCA, including the Rio Ferdinand Foundation and Caribbean and African Health Network (CAHN). The new organisations have helped ensure that young people from a variety of different backgrounds get involved.

3.10 Next year, the YCA, facilitated by Youth Focus North West, will work on themes identified by young people: Health and Wellbeing, Covid Recovery, Equity and Equality, the Environment, and Children and Young Peoples Voice

3.11 LGBTQ+ Panel and Adviser (Appendix 3)

3.12 The LGBTQ+ Advisory Panel was established in 2018, with a diverse membership who represent the full spectrum of the LGBTQ+ community, bringing a wealth of experience and skills to the Panel. The panel involves business leaders, public sector inclusion and equalities leads, and representatives from charities and campaigning organisations, as well as the LGBTQ+ Adviser to the Mayor of Greater Manchester. Over the last year the membership has evolved to strengthen connection into the Trans community.

- 3.13 The Panel has three main areas of focus
- Engaging the LGBTQ+ community in delivering the priorities of the Greater Manchester Strategy. This year this has focused on the impact of Covid on the LGBTQ+ community, including health, wellbeing and community safety
 - Ensuring that the city region has strong and diverse leadership, supporting employment and workforce development programmes
 - Improving LGBTQ+ awareness, through Pride and cultural events, and education, promoting good practice in schools and services.
- 3.14 Working alongside the Panel is Carl Austin-Behan, the LGBT Adviser to the Mayor of Greater Manchester. The LGBT Adviser has been extremely active in all ten local authority areas, promoting activity and events to support the community, such as National HIV Testing Week, gathering insight into the impacts of the pandemic for the Hidden Figures report, encouraging completion of the Census 2021 which for the first time had questions on sexual orientation and gender identity, and establishing a Greater Manchester LGBTQ+ School Staff Network Partnership to share good practice, resources and overcome barriers in education together.
- 3.15 Women and Girls Panel (Appendix 4)
- 3.16 Launched in December 2020, the Women & Girls' Equality Panel aims to accelerate gender equality, enabling women and girls to have their best life in Greater Manchester. Enthusiasm and commitment from the Panel members has been excellent, providing a valuable voice to a breadth of views and experiences of women and girls.
- 3.17 The Panel is working to understand the issues and inequalities affecting women and girls' lives and recognise their experience of COVID. A series of 1-to-1 discussions were held with all panel members prior to the first meeting of the full panel in December. Nineteen priorities were initially flagged, highlighting the scale of challenges people face, and following discussion at the meeting it was agreed to initially focus on two key areas: Education, Skills and Employment, and Gender-Based Abuse.
- 3.18 Education, Skills and Employment – key areas of interest explored with policy makers include Foundation Economy, childcare, education and skills pathways, Good Employment, co-operatives, entrepreneurship and self-employment. Examples of issues identified include the cost and access to childcare, including addressing cultural barriers and for children with, and the importance of family friendly working practices.
- 3.19 Violence Against Women and Girls Working Group - the working group has already played a significant role in shaping the Greater Manchester Gender Based Violence Strategy and will continue influencing this as the strategy is finalised and implemented. The working group are also looking at wider issues facing the women's sector in Greater Manchester, such as underfunding, capacity, current political and media narratives and government policies, workforce overwhelm and barriers to access for women from gatekeepers, and how the Panel can use its collective voice to influence these issues.
- 3.20 Race Equality Panel (Appendix 5)

- 3.19 Launched in December 2020, the Race Equality Panel has a huge amount of professional experience, across public, private and voluntary sectors, and personal experience campaigning for equality and against discrimination for many years. The 24 Panel members were appointed following an open recruitment process which attracted 163 applicants. Whilst the discussions with policymakers can be challenging, they are constructive, with panel members committed to supporting public services to make positive changes.
- 3.21 The objectives of the Panel are to support and challenge public agencies to tackle all forms of racism and discrimination within their organisation and the structure they contribute to, including through a proactive approach to their Public Sector Equality Duty. Through their engagement, the Greater Manchester Strategy will tackle inequality and increase equity for ethnic communities, and champion Greater Manchester's cultural heritage and history of community inclusion and social justice. The Panel aims to promote positive role models, particularly in leadership positions in civic society and in the business community, and diversity of the public service workforce, including volunteers and senior leadership, is increased.
- 3.22 In their first six months, the Panel contributed significantly to the IIC, in which the need to tackle structural racism was recognised (unlike the Government Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities). The Panel have focused on race equality in crime and policing, exploring policing in schools within the Violence Reduction Strategy and the impact of gender-based abuse on women experiencing racial inequality. In addition, they have met with the new Chief Constable and Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester to explore inequality in policing, including stop and search and use of force, and in Greater Manchester Police, in terms of recruitment and retention.
- 3.23 Moving forward, the Panel will be focusing on health and wellbeing inequality, working closely with the Health and Social Care Partnership to ensure the Integrated Care System is representative and recovery from the pandemic is equitable, on employment and leadership supporting the Good Employment Charter and Workforce Race Equality Strategy, and exploring educational inequalities with the Children's Board.
- 3.24 Faith and Belief Panel
- 3.25 The Faith and Belief Panel was launched in March 2021. It acts as a 'network of networks' bringing together representatives from the ten district Interfaith bodies with key individuals from single faith networks. The Panel is inclusive, with a rich diversity of members including the Council of Mosques, Jewish Strategic Group, Buddhist, Baha'i, Jain and Humanist.
- 3.26 The Panel aims to strengthen the partnership between public services, faith and belief organisations and wider society, through collaboration on shared missions, unlocking assets and resources in the community and the powers available through devolution. There are a range of policy areas public services can benefit from closer working; children and youth services, older peoples care, supporting those most at-risk including the homeless, cohesion and community development.
- 3.27 In addition, the Panel creates the space for the faith and belief sector to input into decision-making, helping political and policy decision-makers to overcome barriers and

embrace new relationships, creating an environment where faith organisations are seen as a valued partner.

3.28 Older Peoples Panel

3.29 The Older Peoples Panel will be launched later this year, led by the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub. It will connect existing networks with new champions, strengthening insight and influence in policy making and creating new opportunities for innovative delivery.

4. FACILITATION AND RESOURCES

4.1 The Equality Panels are facilitated by appropriate voluntary organisations, demonstrating financial commitment to their role, and enabling investment in the voluntary sector and in culturally relevant organisations. They work in partnership with GMCA officers to ensure a strong, effective panel, that acts as a bridge between public services and the wider community and contributes to a broad tackling inequalities agenda.

4.2 Commissioning of the facilitating organisations uses the same specification and budget to ensure consistency of approach across the panels. This strengthens the support to panel members, creating strong foundations that enable greater flexibility within the Panel to focus on the issues that are most important to their communities.

4.3 The Equality Panels are facilitated by

- LGBTQ+ Panel - LGBT Foundation
- Women and Girls Panel - Manchester Women's Aid (and Pankhurst Trust)
- Race Equality Panel - BHA for Equality
- Older Peoples Panel - Manchester Alliance for Community Care
- Disabled Peoples Panel – GM Coalition for Disabled People
- Youth Combined Authority – Youth Focus North West
- Faith and Belief Advisory Panel – to be commissioned

4.4 To enable the Enable Panels to continue to deliver meaningful impact, as set out in the report above and in their Annual Reports, recurrent funding of £350,000 will be required from the Mayoral Budget from 2022/23.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Recommendations appear at the front of this report.