

GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL
MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 10 NOVEMBER 2022 IN FRIENDS MEETING
HOUSE, MANCHESTER

PRESENT:

Councillor Janet Emsley	Rochdale Council (Chair)
Councillor Kevin Anderson	Wigan Council
Councillor Russell Bernstein	Bury Council
Councillor Laura Boyle	Tameside Council
Councillor Becky Chambers	Manchester City Council
Councillor Vimal Choksi	Tameside Council
Councillor Richard Gold	Bury Council
Councillor Tom Morrison	Stockport Council
Councillor Luthfur Rahman	Manchester City Council
Councillor Steve Williams	Oldham Council (Vice-Chair)
Majid Hussain	Independent Member

Also in attendance:

Baroness Beverley Hughes	GM Deputy Mayor
Ch. Supt. Rick Jackson	GMP
Deputy CFO Ben Norman	GMFRS
Assistant CFO Leon Parkes	GMFRS
DCC Terry Woods	GMP

Officers Present:

Neil Evans	Assistant Director, Police, Crime, Criminal Justice & Fire, GMCA
Mallika Mandal	Assistant Director, Peoples Services, GMCA
Jeanette Staley	Head of Community Safety, Resilience & Neighbourhoods, Salford CC
Lee Teasdale	Senior Governance & Scrutiny Officer, Governance and Scrutiny, GMCA
Gwynne Williams	Deputy Monitoring Officer, GMCA
Steve Wilson	Treasurer, GMCA

Apologies were received from Councillor David Lancaster (Salford), Councillor Dylan Butt (Trafford) and Councillor Rabiya Jiva (Bolton).

The Chair opened the meeting by addressing the announcement that Deputy Mayor Baroness Beverley Hughes was to step down from the role of Deputy Mayor for Policing & Crime. On behalf of the Panel, the Chair expressed gratitude to the Deputy Mayor for her tireless work over the past five years. It has been a time of great transformation for the region, not least of which has been the taking on of further responsibilities in overseeing the work of GMFRS. The recent removal from special measures of both GMP and GMFRS, has been, in addition to the fantastic work of the staff involved, a testament to Baroness Hughes' determination in ensuring that no stone was left unturned in providing the best possible value services for the residents of Greater Manchester. The Panel noted the GM Mayor's proposed nomination for the role of Deputy Mayor, and that Baroness Hughes would remain in post during a transitional period.

Members were advised that a special meeting of the Panel would be convened in due course, at which the Panel would be informed of the proposals around the transition period and the Panel would have the opportunity to consider the nomination as appropriate.

Baroness Hughes thanked panel members for the kind messages that had been received since her announcement and looked forward to continuing to work with them during the transitional period.

The Chair thanked officers from GMFRS for hosting an event for panel members at the GMFRS Bury Fire Training Centre on 7th October.

Members were reminded that since the last meeting of the Panel, GMP had been removed from special measures by HMICFRS on Friday 28th October.

The Chair advised panel members that following the meeting she would be attending the Police, Fire & Crime Annual Conference at Warwick University.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the apologies be noted.
2. That the Chair's announcements be received.

PFCP/64/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

PFCP/65/22 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 20th SEPTEMBER 2022

RESOLVED/-

1. That Members agree the minutes of 20th September 2022 as a true and correct record of the meeting.

PFCP/66/22 OFSTED FIRE INSPECTION REPORT

Mallicka Mandal (Assistant Director, Peoples Services, GMCA) introduced a report that updated the Panel on the outcomes from recent Ofsted Inspection of the Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship delivery at Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, as part of the GMCA.

The inspection took place in July 2022. At the time of the inspection, 195 apprentices were studying operational firefighting at Level 3. The outcome following the inspection announced an overall 'good' rating – with 'outstanding' ratings in personal development and behaviour & attitudes, and 'good' ratings for quality of education and leadership & management. A high-level action plan had been put in place to address the good areas to ensure they were rated outstanding next time.

Three challenges had been set by Ofsted going forward. These were to improve the quality of training; undertake quality assurance of training on a more regular basis; and improving career guidance.

Comments and Questions

- Members welcomed the positive news on diversity of recruitment and would welcome future feedback on the work taking place with this part of the workforce on retention and progression within the service.
- Members asked around what internal checks and balances were in place outside of being monitored by Ofsted. It was advised that lots of rules and regulations were in place for training processes. For the last two years a self-assessment and quality improvement programme had been taking place, with regular update reports being delivered to the Deputy Mayor.
- Members enquired with the Chief Fire Officers about how they felt ahead of the Ofsted inspection taking place. Officers advised that whilst there may have been a little bit of natural apprehension – because of the solid action plan and the work that Mallicka and her team had delivered, there was a quiet confidence ahead of the visit, however it was still a pleasant surprise to receive some results within the ‘outstanding’ category. GMFRS had some exceptionally talented learners, with the calibre within the programme considered to be very high.
- The Deputy Mayor stated that it was important not to undersell the level of achievement that had been resulted from the inspection and expressed her public thanks to Mallicka’s team.
- The Chair stated that she would welcome confirmation of how many people were currently going through the apprenticeship scheme and would also welcome numbers of the fire cadet scheme now that it was back underway.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Panel notes the Ofsted report outcomes, including the areas highlighted as outstanding.
2. That the Panel notes the areas highlighted for improvement and the actions being taken to address these.
3. That thanks be expressed to the Peoples Services Team for their hard work in ensuring a very positive Ofsted outcome.
4. That numbers be fed back to the Panel on the number of people currently going through the Apprenticeship Scheme, and if available, the Fire Cadet Scheme.

Assistant CFO Leon Parkes (GMFRS) presented a report seeking the Panel's support to establish a **Greater Manchester Strategic Water Safety Partnership**. The Partnership would oversee a pan Greater Manchester response, for the prevention of drowning and other water related deaths.

National Water Safety Forum figures for 2021 identified 26 water related within the GM region, placing it within the top five county regions for this. In the same period, there had only been 11 deaths related to fire in the region. Given the seriousness of this, it was important to develop a pan-GM response, and that would be brought together via this Strategic Partnership.

The report laid out the level of challenge faced in the region. In an 18-month period covering all of 2021 and early 2022, there had been 336 water related incidents that required a response. The Partnership would look to develop a Greater Manchester Water Safety Strategy and would provide governance, oversight and strategic direction going forward.

The Partnership would look at best practice, coordinate campaigns, achieve greater impact in terms of economies of scale and improve the chances of securing grants.

It was recommended that a part-time permanent Chair role was established to oversee the Partnership, and that a co-ordinator role be created to undertake the day-to-day work and establish links with localities.

Comments and Questions

- Members asked if figures were available establishing how many of these water incidents had happened on land under public control and how many on private land/property? It was advised that the locations were available for each incident, so the Partnership would be able to look at these figures and dig deeper into them to establish notable patterns and undertake work with the private sector accordingly.

- Members talked about training – given the level of response required in recent times, had this resulted in improved response capability? Officers confirmed that GMFRS was very much a ‘learning organisation’ and a full debrief followed on from every single incident. Members were provided with an example of an event in Salford Quays which had tragically resulted in a loss of life but had established some significant learning around the use of poles in searching for bodies. Work was also taking place with colleagues in Lancashire who had invested in an underwater drone.
- It was noted that the main groups affected were 17–24-year-old males. What was done around specific engagement with this cohort? Officers advised that this was a challenge that work was taking place to address, as this same cohort was also the most likely to be involved in road accidents. The adoption of modern comms tech such as TikTok was taking place, as this was being used by this age group nowadays as a primary means of information consumption. Focus Groups were also taking place with this cohort.
- Members asked if mapping exercises had taken place in relation to high-risk sites? It was confirmed that mapping took place related to high-risk sites. This mapping was particularly important in the summertime in terms of places young people were most likely to go swimming/bathing.
- Members noted that it was written into law that responders were not allowed to go underwater themselves – were there potential workarounds for this? It was advised that the Health and Safety Executive had a very clear mandate on what is reasonably foreseeable, and GMFRS did not have the operational capability to go subsurface. However, there had been discussion in terms of the feasibility of having scuba diving teams – but analysis at present, the cost in relation to response time did not pass the benefit analysis. This would continue to be discussed at regular intervals.
- Members asked if the different types of water sources for each incident could be established. It was advised that this information could be provided.
- Members asked about the possibility of lifeguards being on site at Salford Quays. It was advised that consideration had been given to lifeguards here, but to have lifeguards on-site would present an impression that the Quays was an acceptable and safe place to swim, when that was very much not the case and needed to be

discouraged as much as possible. However, there was a holistic multiagency action plan in place every summer for responding to incidents at the Quays. It was also highlighted that following the tragic incidents in recent years at the Quays – arrangements had been made for ROSPA (The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) to undertake an independent review of this work.

- Members sought further detail on encouraging behaviour change by not having floatation devices/lifeguards on site. Was there a body of evidence to show that this worked? It was advised that a lot of work had taken place on this. National Fire Chiefs Council guidance accepted the inevitability that young people would congregate and consume alcohol in such areas on hot summer days but agreed that the most important message was to encourage people not to enter unregulated water in the first place, especially if you have consumed alcohol.
- Members referenced open water swimming events that took place at Salford Quays – did these not present a view that the Quays were safe to swim in? It was advised that these swimming events were heavily regulated and monitored with robust risk assessments taking place before the events commenced. The Quays was on an immense scale now, and it was incredibly difficult to stop people jumping into different parts of the quays on hot days. It was advised that the ROSPA review could be made available to members once completed.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Panel supports the implementation of a Greater Manchester Strategic Water Safety Partnership and the development of a Greater Manchester Water Safety Strategy and accompanying action plan.
2. That the Panel notes the proposal to establish a permanent part-time Chair for the Partnership, initially for a period of 12 months, to establish the partnership, develop the strategy and action plan and to establish local partnership links, supported by a full-time coordinator role.
3. That the Panel notes the Services intention to liaise with all GM Community Safety Partnerships to discuss options available to kick start the partnership proposal.
4. That statistics be provided to Members on the different types of water sources that each water related incident occurred in.

The Chair invited Neil Evans (Assistant Director, Police, Crime, Criminal Justice & Fire, GMCA) to introduce the latest Police & Crime Plan Priority 3 report and performance scorecard. Points highlighted included:

- In terms of reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, there had been a 60% increase in arrests in the time since September 2021. There were a number of elements related to this, such as more appropriate arrests in scenarios such as domestic abuse and rape; and increasing capacity around proactivity such as Operation AVRO.
- Attendance at residential burglaries had now hit 94%. This was very welcome as lower attendance at these in recent years had impacted public confidence in the police force.
- It was expected that the first stage of implementation around Neighbourhood Policing would take place in the new year. This would include a number of officers being ringfenced within localities.
- A tender had now gone out to recommission the Policing and Community Safety Survey, which last year had provided valuable insight into GM's communities.
- GMP were on track to double their roads policing unit. Speedwatch schemes were being developed with requests for interest being made within communities. ANPR cameras within the clean air zone were being utilised to help solve serious crime.
- Information was provided on the Retail Crime Steering Group. This was maturing well, and further information should be available for the next update report.
- Publication had now taken place on volume 2 of the Manchester Arena Enquiry. The information reported was painful, but it was important to say it was an excellent report, in that it made significant recommendations, that were already in the process of being implemented.
- The scorecard detailed the improvements that were being made in answering calls from the public on 999 and 101.

Comments and Questions

- The Deputy Mayor thanked officers for their contributions and involvement with the publication of the second volume of the Enquiry Report. It was highlighted that the recommendations also involved the need for account at the national level as well. Things had moved on significantly since 2017, and a mapping exercise would take place to map the work already in place against the recommendations to provide self-assurance that they were being implemented fully and properly. There would need to be a visible body that oversaw these and provided the public with absolute confidence that the results of the enquiry were being addressed in full.
- The Deputy Mayor provided information on the launch of Operation Vulcan. This was a fantastic example of all services working together to tackle an embedded and enduring decades old problem with criminality in Cheetham Hill/Strangeways. This was being funded by monies reclaimed from the proceeds of crime.
- Members referenced burglary figures but noted that this did not yet appear to be transferring through into public confidence figures. It was enquired as to what the measures applied were now in establishing the priority level of a burglary call. It was also noted that on public confidence, the neighbourhood policing element would be crucial. It was advised that performance data on burglaries was now being monitored very carefully – all burglary victims were now 100% offered a visit (6% at present did not take this offer) – successes such as this needed to be a clear message to the public.
- Members noted on the quarterly scorecard that the overall number of 999 calls had reduced – was this a surprise? Officers felt that part of this could be that there was less failure to meet demand within the system now, and as GMP were more effective at answering calls, there was less volume in the system.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Panel notes the contents of the summary of progress and the performance scorecard.

Steve Wilson (Treasurer, GMCA) introduced a report explaining the statutory duties of the Police and Crime Panel in relation to the setting of the police precept. The Mayor would bring the proposed precept to a meeting on 26th January, at which the Panel would have the opportunity to consider and accept or veto the proposal.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the statutory duties of the Police and Crime Panel in relation to the setting of the police precept be noted.
2. That the Panel notes the timetable for the setting of the 2023/24 police precept and requiring a meeting of panel before 31st January 2023

DCC Terry Woods and Ch. Supt. Rick Jackson (GMP) introduced a report updating the Panel on progress made by GMP against the actions set out by HMICFRS since being placed in special measures in December 2020.

The main news recently had been GMP's removal from HMICFRS's engagement process. This was an important milestone in the long-range plan for GMP to become rated as the best force in the country.

The engagement process had been intricate and involved significant accountability. Removal from this process is rightfully difficult as the confidence of HMICFRS in sustainability was a key factor. It was important to be clear that GMP did not now suddenly have a 'clean bill of health' and the letter received showed their was still a need to focus on improving the quality of investigations. Whilst GMP was now rightly investigating a lot more crime – the highest level of quality now needed to follow.

DCC Woods stated that it was important to thank the ground level staff at GMP, this was their achievement, the leadership simply put the right framework around them.

In terms of statistics. The incident volume this year had increased by over 50,000, despite 999 call levels being static. This reflected the changing nature in which people were now contacting GMP and reflected how it was a national leader in terms of its online offer.

In terms of sustainability going forward on call handling. An additional 53 members of staff were now being mentored in the control room and a further 63 on a course, and in January 2023 up to a further 64 members of staff will be joining the control room.

The GMP uplift programme was now in its third year. In summary, it was well on track to reach the target figure now. Huge numbers were coming through the application process – this included a notable number of officers from other forces applying to transfer to GMP and want to be part of its future.

Comments and Questions

- The Deputy Mayor welcomed the strong partnership between the Mayor's office and GMP, which included the highest level of both challenge and support. Going forward it was agreed that the big next step was to see improvements in the quality of investigations. It was vital that the public felt that they had been treated appropriately and that they had confidence that the way in which the investigation proceeded that every possible line of enquiry would be pursued.
- Members asked if it was difficult to change officer behaviours throughout the process. DCC Woods stated that he firmly believed that policing was a vocation and that this remained the case. Regardless of views about police, fundamentally people were still joining the force because they wanted to help people. Therefore, the chief job of the leadership was to lay the groundwork to enable officers to live up to those fundamental views, reminding them why they had originally chosen to apply to the force.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Panel notes the report.

Cllr Steve Williams provided members with an update on his recent attendance at the LGA Fire Commission. He advised that there had been resistance against the incoming government legislation to restructure fire authorities to run along the lines of the PFCP in Greater Manchester. Cllr Williams emphasised the strength of the Panel in GM, and the power it now holds to hold both the police and the fire authority to account with detailed scrutiny. Following the meeting it was noted that the minutes stated that any future combining of police and fire authorities should use Greater Manchester as an appropriate model to follow.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the update be received.