

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY HELD WEDNESDAY, 26TH JULY, 2023 AT
THE TOOTAL BUILDINGS - BROADHURST HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, 56 OXFORD
STREET, MANCHESTER, M1 6EU**

PRESENT:

Councillor Nadim Muslim	Bolton Council (Chair)
Councillor Peter Wright	Bolton Council
Councillor Russell Bernstein	Bury Council
Councillor Nathan Boroda	Bury Council
Councillor Mandie Shilton Godwin	Manchester Council
Councillor Basil Curley	Manchester Council
Councillor John Leech	Manchester City Council
Councillor Jenny Harrison	Oldham Council
Councillor Colin McLaren	Oldham Council
Councillor Tom Besford	Rochdale Council
Councillor Patricia Dale	Rochdale Council
Councillor Joshua Brooks	Salford Council
Councillor Lewis Nelson	Salford Council
Councillor Helen Hibbert	Stockport Council
Councillor Jill Axford	Trafford Council
Councillor Nathan Evans	Trafford Council
Councillor Naila Sharif	Tameside Council
Councillor Joanne Marshall	Wigan Council
Councillor Fred Walker	Wigan Council

ALSO PRESENT:

Andy Burnham	GM Mayor
Councillor Tom Ross	Trafford Council
Councillor Shaun Ennis	Trafford Council

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Gillian Duckworth	GMCA
Ninoshka Martins	GMCA
David Taylor	GMCA
Nicola Ward	GMCA
Kevin Lee	GMCA
Steve Warrener	TfGM
Helen Humble	TfGM

O&SC 01/23 APOLOGIES

None received.

O&SC 02/23 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Gillian Duckworth, Monitoring Officer, GMCA opened the meeting and invited nominations for the appointment of Chair.

Councillor Nadim Muslim was put forward as Chair for the 2023/24 municipal year. The decision to appoint Councillor Nadim Muslim was passed with 5 votes in favor and 14 abstentions.

RESOLVED /-

That Councillor Nadim Muslim be appointed as the Chair of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee for the 2022/23 municipal year.

**MEMBERSHIP OF THE GMCA OVERVIEW &
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2023/24**

The Committee was requested to note the membership of the Committee for the 2022/23 municipal year as below –

District	Name
Bury	Nathan Boroda (Lab)
Bury	Russell Bernstein (Con)
Bolton	Peter Wright (Ind)
Bolton	Nadim Muslim (Con)
Manchester	Basil Curley (Lab)
Manchester	Mandie Shilton Godwin (Lab)
Manchester	John Leech (Lib Dem)
Oldham	Colin McLaren (Lab)
Oldham	Jenny Harrison (Lab)
Rochdale	Tom Besford (Lab)
Rochdale	Patricia Dale (Lab)
Salford	Joshua Brooks (Lab)
Salford	Lewis Nelson (Lab)
Stockport	Helen Hibbert (Lab)
Tameside	Naila Sharif (Lab)
Trafford	Jill Axford (Lab)
Trafford	Nathan Evans (Con)
Wigan	Joanne Marshall (Lab)
Wigan	Fred Walker (Lab)

District	Name
Bury	Mary Whitby (Lab)
Bury	To be confirmed
Bolton	Robert Morrissey (Lab)

Bolton	Champak Mistry (Lab)
Manchester	John Hughes (Lab)
Manchester	Linda Foley (Lab)
Oldham	Eddie Moores (Lab)
Oldham	Holly Harrison (Lab)
Rochdale	Sameena Zaheer (Lab)
Rochdale	Ashley Dearnley (Con)
Salford	Marie Brabiner (Lab)
Salford	Arnold Saunders (Con)
Stockport	Lisa Smart (Lib Dem)
Stockport	Shan Alexander (Lib Dem)
Tameside	Claire Reed (Lab)
Tameside	Liam Billington (Con)
Trafford	Mike Cordingley (Lab)
Trafford	Kevin Procter (Lab)
Wigan	Dane Anderton (Lab)
Wigan	Debra Wailes (Lab)

RESOLVED /-

That the membership of the Committee for the 2023/24 municipal year be noted.

O&SC 04/23

**MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT AND ANNUAL
DECLARATION OF INTEREST FORM**

Members were reminded of their obligations under the GMCA Members' Code of Conduct and were requested to complete an annual declaration of interest form, which had been emailed to them by the Governance & Scrutiny Officer.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the GMCA's Member Code of Conduct (Appendix A of the report) be noted.
2. That member as per their obligation stated in the Code of Conduct would complete their Annual Declaration of Interest form and return it to the Governance & Scrutiny Officer.

O&SC 05/23

TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED /-

That the Committee's Terms of Reference be noted.

O&SC 06/23

CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

There were none.

O&SC 07/23

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were received in relation to any item on the agenda.

O&SC 08/23

NATIONAL WASTE STRATEGY

Consideration was given to a report that provided an overview of the potential implications of the national Resources and Waste Strategy for waste collection and disposal. The report also set out the process being undertaken to review options for future provision of waste services in Greater Manchester.

Concerns were raised around the implication of the national Resources and Waste Strategy in terms of contamination and the requirement of a separate collection of

food waste for all households by March 2025 which would add another receptacle which some residents may have difficulty managing within their home particularly those with disabilities and with limited space. Officers acknowledged the concerns and explained that the information from Government indicated that while the preference may be for the separate collection of materials, it was recognised that this may not be possible for every area. Therefore, a mechanism by which waste collection authorities can undertake a technical, economic, and environmental practicability assessment (known as a TEEP assessment) to justify the selection of a system that deviates from the preferred option is hoped to be further outlined within the next set of guidance.

Members raised concerns around the associated overall costs as officers explained that the treatment of food waste through 'Anaerobic Digestion' (AD) was expected to cost more than the current mixed garden and food collection with 'In Vessel Composting' (IVC) treatment. Officers explained that the estimated high costs were partly due to no availability of AD treatment capacity in the North West.

In terms of the impact to Local Authority income from recyclables, it was reported that the new measures would not impact GM's share of income which would be likely to remain in excess of the minimal threshold of 25,000 tonnes. However, energy from waste was also now to be included in the carbon emissions trading scheme which may result in additional charges to customers.

Members sought to understand whether the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) would result in a further receptacle being added to houses to collect some recyclables. The introduction of a waste tax should reduce the overall number of polymers, however, officers explained that retailers selling in-scope containers would be obligated to host a return point and would receive a handling fee to compensate them for costs incurred.

Defra estimated that EPR would generate in excess of £1 billion to contribute towards local authority management of packaging waste. The draft figures for the 2024/25 timetable payments were expected to be released in August 2023. These would then

be refined and finalised by January 24 with funds starting to flow in quarterly payments from April 2024. Although the goal posts had moved on a number of occasions and there remained a lack of clarity.

It was noted that changes to waste and recycling could impact future housing proposals and therefore it was felt that it would be beneficial for officers to give thought to how waste would be managed in new developments such as apartments. Officers explained that the strategy refers to a kerbside sorting methodology that utilised a number of boxes for the materials which were then emptied into compartments on a 'resource recovery vehicle' (RRV).

Concerns were raised around the carbon impact of using a kerbside sorting facility and members sought to understand whether any research had been undertaken to measure the potential effects. It was suggested that GM could look at the potential of retrofitting the fleet of existing recycling collection vehicles and utilising the second-hand market to drive down costs. Officers welcomed the suggestion and explained that a full assessment of implications would be brought to a future meeting once further direction was received from Government.

In noting that the RRV-based services have a much lower productivity rate and lower capacity – therefore significantly more vehicles and crews would be needed to collect Greater Manchester's recyclable waste. It was suggested that officers should factor in staff requirements and associated costs. Officers welcomed the suggestion and assured members that this would be picked up as part of the development of the Greater Manchester Waste Strategy.

It was felt appropriate that the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee should write to DEFRA outlining their concerns and highlighting the potential implications for residents. This was also identified as an area for Task and Finish activity to consider the possible outcomes and inform the development of the Greater Manchester Waste Strategy.

In conclusion, members were assured that once Government's response had been published the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee would be updated with a full assessment of the potential implications and would receive a further report on the proposed approach to future waste and recycling contracts ahead of a decision being taken by the GMCA before the end of the year.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the impact on the ambitions of the Greater Manchester Strategy as a result of the National Resources and Waste Strategy be noted.
2. That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee would write to DEFRA stating their concerns and the potential impacts for residents as a result of changes in operations due to the national Resources and Waste Strategy and to advocate for an exemption for GM following a local TEEP assessment.
3. That the suggestion to include the impact of staff requirements and associated costs as well the carbon impact of measures be picked up as part of the development of the Greater Manchester Waste Strategy be noted.
4. That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee receive a further report on the proposed approach to future waste and recycling contracts ahead of a decision being taken by the GMCA, and that this report includes the potential consequential impacts for residents.

O&SC 09/23

BUS FARE INITIATIVES

A.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF CAPPED FARES

Consideration was given to a report that summarised the outcome of the annual review of capped bus fares and proposed the continuation of capped fares at existing prices.

The GM Mayor Andy Burnham informed the Committee of the key findings of the evaluation research that found the introduction of the maximum bus fares had contributed to an increase of bus patronage and that residents have continued to feel the new fares have been helpful to combat the cost-of-living crisis.

In noting the positive impact as a result of capped fares, it was seen beneficial to extend the scheme for another year. The Mayor reported that whilst uncertainty remained in relation to long term funding for the bus industry, through Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) there was sufficient funding available to continue the capped fare offer at the existing prices to March 2025, however, it was proposed that a further Annual Review be undertaken in summer 2024 and subsequent reviews would include input from the Bee Network Committee which would be responsible for reviewing fares and making recommendations to GMCA.

Members thanked officers for the report and welcomed the opportunity to receive some initial feedback on the implementation of bus franchising tranche 1 and progress reports on the subsequent deployment of the rest of the tranches. The Mayor assured members that work was under to ensure full operation of the Bee Network by January 2025 and that a further report to the Scrutiny Committee had been scheduled for September on the overall long-term vision for the Bee Network, that would seek to include some early feedback on the implementation of tranche 1.

It was highlighted that services needed to be punctual and at the right cost to encourage travel on the network. The Mayor acknowledged the comments made and explained that under the franchise agreement bus operators would be held accountable for performance. It was added that the Bee Network application once live would have the added functionality for users to rate their journey that would be reflected in operator payments.

There was concern also raised that services in the north of the conurbation were poorer overall, and that it was imperative that they were punctual, safe and low cost. The GM Mayor responded that franchising the bee network could see the greatest

impact in the north of the sub region and recognised that punctuality was a key driver. A commitment to regular services within a franchised model would be fundamental, with an ambition for 12 minute services on as many arterial routes as possible.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the outcome of the annual review of capped bus fares be noted.
2. That the recommendation for the continuation of capped single, daily and weekly bus fares at the existing price be noted.
3. That it be noted that the GMCA has delegated authority to the Chief Executive of GMCA and TfGM, in consultation with the GM Mayor, to approve the continuation of the capped bus fares scheme, subject to any recommendations made by the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 4.

B. BEE NETWORK FARES AND PRODUCTS

Consideration was given to a report that set out the proposed introduction of fares and products that would be available to customers travelling from 24th September 2023.

The Mayor stated that Greater Manchester's move to bus franchising provided the mechanism to delivering transformational change in bus service delivery for an integrated 'London-style' transport system with flexible products, which would transform the way people travel across the city region. The GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee were therefore invited to put forward any recommendations/suggestions for TfGM to consider as part of their policy development in relation to fares and products.

Members welcomed the report and highlighted the need to capture the economic, social, and environmental benefits from bus franchising for it to be included as part of the long-term public transport funding case for GM and recognised the need for this data when negotiating a sophisticated funding model with Government

Members sought to understand how bus reliability issues due to driver availability would be addressed under the franchising agreement. The Mayor assured members that in addition to retaining existing drivers, a further driver hire campaign had been launched to ensure services were adequately staffed. It was added that further work had been planned for school leavers to consider public transport jobs as a strong career pathway.

It was highlighted that there was an opportunity for GM to work better to mitigate delays through better management of the road network and that members of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee had an opportunity to assist in making improvements that would have a positive impact on punctuality.

In response to a member's query in relation to the financial sustainability of the network, it was reported that current fares caps were funded through BSIP and were proving to be value for money as patronage was steadily increasing. Officers added that GM would be in a better position to report on granularities at the next annual review as more data would be available.

The GM Mayor advised that he would be seeking cross-party support for a proposal to government later in the year regarding the future funding of public transport to ensure future security and sustainability of the network.

It was requested that TfGM continue to provide concessionary support for all groups, leaving no groups or communities disadvantaged and consider the development of product for carers and families. The Mayor advised that conversations with the Credit Union were ongoing to ensure that less affluent residents still had access to the same discounted products, for example annual and monthly tickets which required an upfront payment.

Members raised that despite the fares cap a few operators have continued to increase prices. The Mayor advised that this was a voluntary arrangement however this issue would be regularly monitored and for the very small proportion of customers' journeys where differences do continue to exist, TfGM would seek to review and recompense users where necessary. Members suggested that any compensation scheme be made as simple and accessible to all residents.

To better manage the network, it was suggested that TfGM should seek to improve relations with unions to mitigate any risk of future industrial action impacting the performance of the network. The Mayor welcomed the suggestion and advised that the move towards the Bee Network would lead to improved relations and thus better management of the Bee Network.

The success of the scheme was seen dependent on increasing patronage. Members were assured that a significant wave of publicity campaigns had been planned to increase visibility of products available.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the proposed range of fares and products that would be available to customers travelling from 24th September 2023 be noted.
2. That it be noted that the recommendations/ feedback from the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee would be presented to the GMCA on 28 July ahead of their approval of the proposed range of fares and products.
3. That it be noted that a further report would be received in September outlining the overall long-term vision for the Bee Network, as well as initial feedback on the implementation of bus franchising tranche 1.

Consideration was given to a report that outlined the work of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee over the past municipal year in support of (and alongside) the independent evaluation undertaken by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.

Members expressed their thanks to the outgoing Chair of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee and noted that his leadership and support had resulted in a significant uplift in the level of scrutiny activity at a Greater Manchester level and the overall profile of the Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the annual report in conjunction with the independent evaluation set out in Annex A of the report be noted.
2. That it be noted that this report would be shared with the GMCA at their meeting on the 28 July 2023 and that on an annual basis the GMCA will receive a report on the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the draft Work Programme be noted.
2. That the Forward Plan of Key Decisions be received and noted.
3. That a letter of thanks be sent to Councillor John Walsh, former Chair of the Committee for his exceptional leadership over the past year.

RESOLVED /-

That the following dates for the rest of the municipal year be noted:

- 16 August; 1-3 PM
- 27 September; 1-3 PM
- 25 October; 1-3 PM
- 22 November; 1-3 PM
- 13 December; 1-3 PM
- 24 January; 1-3 PM
- 7 February; 1-3 PM
- 21 February; 1-3 PM
- 20 March; 1-3 PM