

MINUTES FROM THE GREATER MANCHESTER BUSINESS BOARD MEETING HELD AT 16:00 ON WEDNESDAY 19 JULY 2023 IN THE BOARDROOM, GMCA OFFICES, TOOTAL BUILDINGS, 56 OXFORD STREET, MANCHESTER

Board Members:

Lou Cordwell (In the Chair)

Mayor Andy Burnham, Marilyn Comrie, Steve Connor, Cllr Bev Craig, Justin Kelly, Clive Memmott & Vimla Appadoo.

Advisors:

David Rogerson (GMCA), Lee Teasdale (GMCA), Mark Hughes (The Growth Company), Oscar Lynch (GMCA), Louise Latham (Marketing Manchester), Ross McRae (GMCA), Lisa Dale-Clough (GMCA), Mark Thomas (TfGM) & Rosalind O'Driscoll (TfGM)

Attending via Hybrid Link:

Cllr Eamonn O'Brien (LEP Member), Simon Nokes (GMCA), Jacob Morris-Davis (GMCA) & Joanne Roney (MCC).

GMBB/23/10 WELCOME, APOLOGIES & INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, advising that the meeting would be structured to allow time for wide ranging discussions on the deep dive items.

Apologies were received from Chris Oglesby, Lorna Fitzsimons, Miles Rothbury, Mike Blackburn and Eamonn Boylan.

GMBB/23/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

GMBB/23/12 MINUTES OF MEETING OF 18th JANUARY 2023

Ratification was required for the minutes of a meeting held on 18th January 2023.

It was advised that arrangements would be made for briefings ahead of party conference season.

RESOLVED:/

1. That the Board agrees the minutes of 18th January 2023 as a true and correct record of the meeting and ratifies the emergency decisions.

CURRENT ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

GMBB/23/13 ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE & BUSINESS ANALYSIS

Government Policy Update

- Welcome news had been received that inflation rates were now appearing to gradually level off.
- The devolution deal continues to be implemented and conversations were ongoing with the Treasury on the single settlement and how to move forward with Investment Zones.
- A senior civil service visit had taken place earlier in the week which had provided a valuable opportunity for telling 'The Greater Manchester Story', including a visit the Stockport MDC, Atom Valley and transport issues in Central Manchester amongst other areas.

Cost of Living & Economic Resilience

- Further measures had been incorporated as requested, with data now incorporated from the Growth Hub survey and GM Chamber survey.
- The latest meeting of the Economic Resilience Board had just taken place and the general view at that seemed to be confidence in the region was showing relative resilience but investment decisions in the main continued to be put on hold.

Board Economic Intelligence Feedback

- Confirmation had been received from the government that the recovery funding asks for public transport may not be provided to the amount petitioned for. GM was however sticking to its plans on the fare structure for the Bee Network.
- There was continued disappointment with the decline of the national rail network with the additional news coming out around plans to close all ticket offices in England. GM had made it clear that its position was that a full transparent and proper process needed to take place before any ticket offices were closed. A 21-day process was simply not acceptable.
- The technical education announcements recently made had received hugely positive feedback. The LSIP had now been submitted and would be published within a matter of weeks.
- Places for Everyone would provide the opportunity to really begin to embed investment and growth zones across the city region and the mapping out of an ambition for all parts of the region for the future.
- The GAMMA Steering Group continued to meet and develop – with the intention to now move towards a more formal footing in terms of governance.

GC Business Support, International and Marketing

- There were some indications that spending in terms of commerce remained healthy, particularly e-commerce. Though of particular note was a marked growth in the usage of 'buy now, pay later' schemes.
- There were some tentative growth signs within the labour market.
- The final ERDF programme was now coming to an end with the transition to UKSPF.
- The Made Smarter programme continued to make progress and go well, as did the Create Growth Programme.

- Reference was made to the further development and rollout of the Bee Net Zero Rooftop Revolution which encouraged business to invest in solar energy to unlock huge benefits in their long-term energy costs.
- Discussion took place about inward investment and it was suggested that Marketing Manchester and MIDAS could provide a presentation towards the end of 2023.

RESOLVED:/

1. That the updates on government policy; cost of living & economic resilience; economic intelligence and GC business support, international and marketing; all be received by the Board.
2. That arrangements be made for a deep dive item on inward investment.

DEEP DIVE

GMBB/23/14 FOUNDATIONAL ECONOMY AND GOOD EMPLOYMENT UPDATE

- The Foundational Economy was a way of conceptualising sectors of the economy and grouping them accordingly – with the variable bringing them all together being that they were needed for social & economic functioning and wellbeing.
- This included a large number of varied sectors, for example health & social care; education; agriculture and manufacturing – areas vital for the rest of the economy to function.
- A flagship programme was now in place that would provide 40 grants to organisations across the conurbation for innovative projects that would drive forward the economy.

RESOLVED:/

1. That the update on the foundational economy and good employment be received.

GMBB/23/15 GREEN TRANSPORT DISCUSSION

- The item was added to consider what GM could be doing to further push green transport in the region following recent media coverage. Whilst it was clear that there was a lot of work now being put in place to improve GM's standing it was agreed that discussion needed to take place on how to push this agenda further and faster.
- Discussion points included how the spirit of cooperation in the region between public and private could reap real benefits; the mapping of the region was very strong and ready to be capitalised upon; national rail continued to be in issue that could hold the region back; the challenges of travelling on public transport between parts of the region without coming into the centre; and how the business community could support shared public transport ambitions for the region during conference season.

RESOLVED:/

1. That the Green Transport Discussion be noted.

MEDIUM TERM PRIORITIES

GMBB/23/16 BOARD MEMBER FEEDBACK ON DELIVERY/AFFILIATED GROUPS

- An update was provided on the Economic Resilience Group including how the Business Board itself could support genuine economic resilience and respond to any major economic shocks.
- An update was provided following the latest meeting of the Inequalities Board. A revised set of actions had been developed that would be made available to the Business Board.

RESOLVED:/

1. That the board member feedback be received.
2. That the latest actions arising from the Inequalities Board be made available to the Business Board.

GMBB/23/17 GM BUSINESS BOARD ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN AND REPORT

- The latest revision of the Annual Report (looking back at the previous 12 months) and Delivery Plan (looking forward to the next 12 months). These would be produced and signed off by the Chair. It was asked that any feedback on these be sent to Simon Nokes.

RESOLVED: /

1. That members receive the latest iteration of the Annual Report and Delivery Plan.
2. That any feedback be sent to Simon Nokes ahead of sending these on to government.

GMBB/23/18 GM BUSINESS BOARD MEMBERSHIP REFRESH

- A number of applications had now been received; the shortlisting process was taking place ahead of final interviews.

RESOLVED: /

1. That the latest update on GM Business Board Membership be received.

LONG TERM ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

GMBB/23/19 FORESIGHT TOPIC – ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

- AI is a key priority that needs to be addressed. The Chair would explore the scope of the work with officers before bringing an update to the Board.

RESOLVED: /

1. That information for the scoping of the Artificial Intelligence foresight exercise be shared as it is developed.

FOR INFORMATION AND VIEWS

GMBB/23/20 MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Comms around party conference season were being prepared so that all Business Board members would be appropriately briefed. Arrangements were also being made for the Business Board to host an event during the Conservative Conference in Manchester.

RESOLVED:/

1. That the marketing and communications update be received.