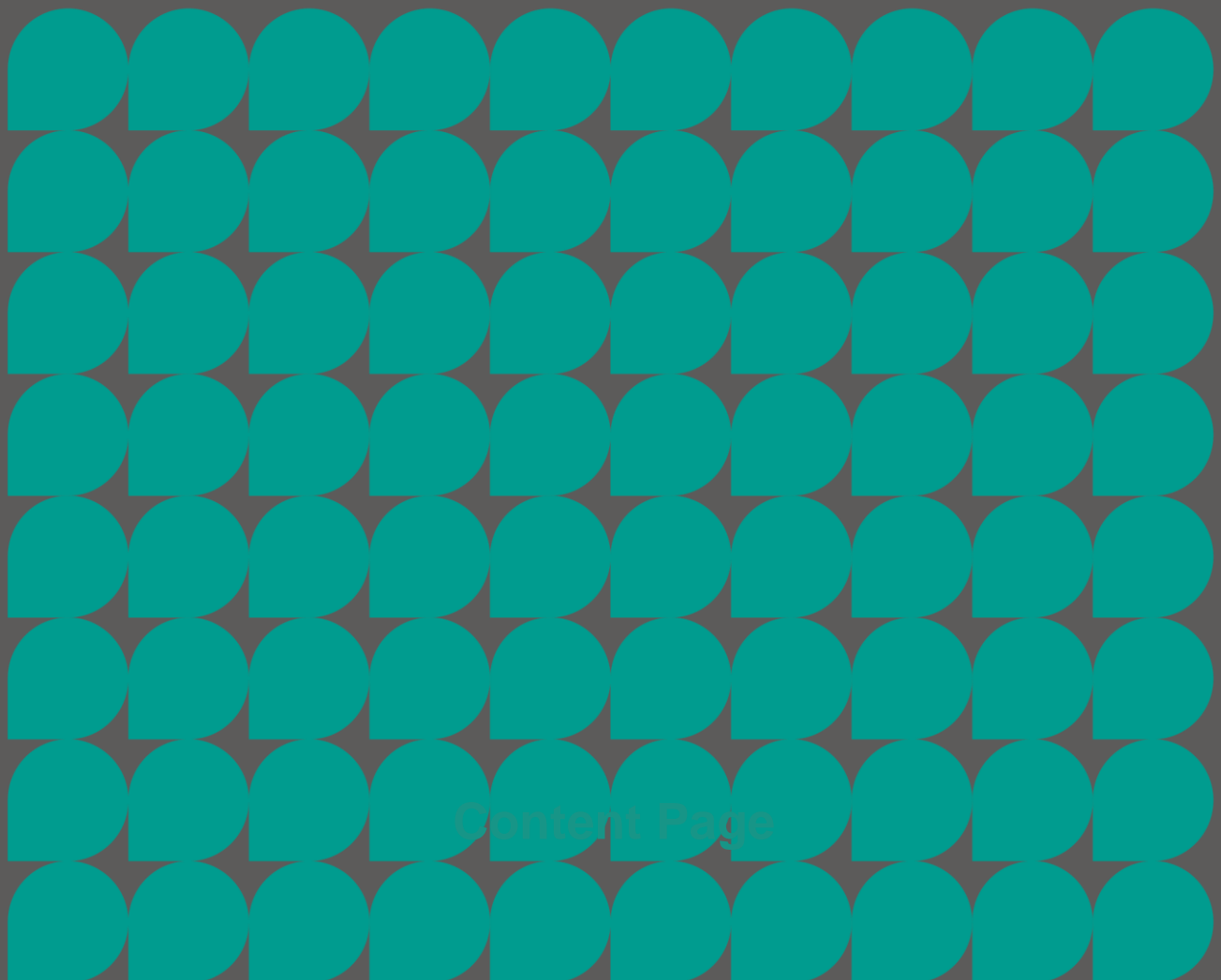


# Greater Manchester Race Equality Panel Annual Report 2022-2023



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## 1. Chair's Forward

I am humbled in my role as Chair to introduce the Annual Report of the Greater Manchester Race Equality Panel. This report summarises a year of dedication, collaboration, and determination as we strive to address the racial disparities that persist within our communities by influencing policy and practice at the level of decision making.

Over the past year, the Panel has shown its unwavering commitment to promoting equity and inclusion. Our tireless efforts have centered around challenging the status quo, advocating for change, and holding decision makers accountable towards fostering an environment where every individual is valued for their unique experiences and contributions.

This report highlights the engagements and progress we have made, but it also serves as a reminder of the work that lies ahead. While we reflect on our activities, we must also confront the uncomfortable truths that have been unearthed through our discussions and work. It is through this introspection and transparency that we can effect real change.

As Chair, I have been inspired by the dedication and resilience of our members, and the voices of those who have shared their stories with us. Our shared commitment to dismantling systemic barriers, confronting racial injustices, and feeding into a future defined by unity and understanding is what drives our collective efforts.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to every individual who has played a role in advancing the goals of the Greater Manchester Race Equality Panel. Your passion, your insights, and your unwavering dedication are the driving forces behind everything I do and say.

As we look toward the future, let us continue to draw strength from our diversity, embrace the challenges that lie ahead, speak truth to power and work to create a Greater Manchester where race is not a barrier but a source of strength and unity.

**Elizabeth Cameron**

**Chair, Greater Manchester Race Equality Panel (2021-2023)**

## 2. Executive Summary

The Race Equality Panel in Greater Manchester has been at the forefront of promoting race equality and influencing policies to create a fair and inclusive Greater Manchester. This annual report presents a snapshot of the panel's activities, achievements, challenges faced, impact made on policy development in the region and recommendations for the future.

During the past year, the Panel undertook an array of engagements to drive meaningful change across various systems. These engagements were mainly centred around its five priority areas:

- Education
- Employment
- Housing
- Criminal Justice & Policing
- Health & Well-being)

However, engagements have not been exclusively limited to these as the panel has also fed into other areas such as Transport. The panel explored the impact of various new and existing policies on race equality in Greater Manchester and offered constructive feedback to these which can improve policies and address systemic inequities.

These cross-sector engagements were a top priority for the panel. Several consultations, meetings, and workshops were held with key statutory organizations, policymakers, and various stakeholders to foster dialogue and collaboration. By actively engaging stakeholders in policy development, the panel ensured that they feedback views that were reflective of diverse range of perspectives and policies would be more responsive to the needs of ethnically diverse communities.

The ongoing work of the Race Equality Panel to influence policy development in Greater Manchester has the potential of being highly significant. This collective action offers a tangible influence on policymakers, leading to positive policy changes that directly address race-related concerns. Several policies and strategies have been influenced by the panel's recommendations. Examples of these policy influences include ensuring safety of pupils in schools, improved social housing and feeding into the Greater Manchester Race Equality Strategy

However, the journey towards achieving the panels ambition has not been without its challenges. The panel has encountered obstacles such as resistance to change, limited resources, and structural barriers. Nevertheless, these challenges have served as valuable lessons, highlighting the need for perseverance, collaboration, and strategic advocacy in the pursuit of lasting policy reform.

The panel acknowledges and appreciates the collaborative partnerships with organizations, community groups, and governmental bodies that are committed to its work. These partnerships demonstrate the power of collective action in driving change and have further strengthened the panel's advocacy efforts.

Looking ahead, the Race Equality Panel remains committed to its vision of a truly inclusive Greater Manchester. There would also be a refresh of the panel membership over the next few months. The panel's future plans encompass continued listening to communities and the development of evidence-based policy recommendations by advocating for policies that dismantle systemic barriers and promote racial equity, the panel aims to contribute to creating a more just and equal society for all residents of Greater Manchester.

## 3. About the Panel

### 3.1 Background and Introduction

The Greater Manchester Race Equality Panel is one of seven Equality Panels established to advise, support and challenge Greater Manchester's political leaders and policymakers to tackle the discrimination and disadvantage that cause injustice and inequality in society, and champion Greater Manchester as an inclusive city-region. The Panel launched in March 2021 and has continued to develop in the ways of operation and engagement with multiple cross-sector stakeholders in Greater Manchester. Our commitment remains in promoting race equality and influencing policies that create a fair and inclusive society for all.

### 3.2 Panel Aims, Objective and Priorities

The aims and objectives are to:

**1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation (and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty)**

- Public agencies tackle all forms of racism and discrimination within their organisation and the structure they contribute to.
- Public sector bodies are proactive in their approaches to meet their Public Sector Equality Duty

**2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it**

- The Greater Manchester Strategy tackles inequality and increases equity for ethnic communities.
- The diversity of the public service workforce, including volunteers and senior leadership, is increased.
- Positive role models, particularly in leadership positions, public services, civic society and with the business community are promoted.

### **3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.**

- Greater Manchester's cultural heritage and history of community inclusion and social justice is championed.

The priorities for the Panel were identified by residents through a series of listening exercises that took place in 2020.

- Discrimination in policing and criminal justice.
- Employment and labour market inequalities, including ethnic diversity in leadership.
- Health and wellbeing inequality
- Educational inequalities and achievement
- Financial inclusion and poverty
- Hate crime and preventing discrimination.
- Housing and homelessness, including hidden homelessness.

Furthermore, it is felt that most issues are the consequences of institutional racism, and this is a focus for the Panel throughout its work.

### **3.3 Panel Membership and Composition**

In December 2020 when the Race Equality Panel was launched, it brought together 23 inspiring people from across our diverse communities. There have been drop-offs in panel membership over time due to changing roles and competing priorities. The members bring significant community and professional experience, across public, private, and voluntary sectors, and personal experience campaigning for equality and against discrimination for many years.

Panel members are enthusiastic and dedicated to championing the cause of equality across Greater Manchester. They are encouraged by the opportunity to discuss issues directly with policymakers. The Panel is not without its challenges; securing consensus across a diverse membership is difficult, as well as balancing the expectations of the community with the pace of change in public services. Whilst the discussions with policymakers can be challenging, they are constructive, with Panel members committed to supporting public services to make positive changes.

The Panel membership would be refreshed in the third quarter of 2023 as the tenure of the current members elapses in November 2023. The current cohort have been brilliant pacesetters in laying a strong foundation for future work across various priority areas. The resilience and tenacity of the members have been without a doubt exemplary.

## 4. Summary of Activities (2022/23)

The panel continued to advance its work from the year before (2021/2022), in Thematic Groups up until February 2023. The groups were subsequently morphed into Task and Finish groups as panel members began to round up sub-group engagements following its end of term in October 2023, and subsequent induction of a new cohort of panel members.

Work began with joint agreement of panel members to write letters to the wider membership of the tackling inequalities group of GMCA which included public private and third sector groups. These letters clearly laid out the framework within which the race panel wanted to engage with agreement from the start that from the disproportionate deaths (we were still experiencing at that time) from COVID 19 to the over aggressive policing and disproportionate job losses or schools' exclusions, systemic racism at an institutional level (as described by the Mc Pherson report), played a significant role.

### 4.1 Education

The Education Subgroup was formed in October 2021 after the panel had begun its substantive work earlier that year. The group consisted of approximately six members of the Race Equality Panel who presided over various engagements.

A notable policy and practice development the subgroup intervened in was on School Based Police Officers, which has now subsequently changed to School Engagement Officers with less of a focus on police officers being based within a school. The Education sub-group worked proactively to arrange meetings and engagements with relevant GMCA officers, discussed the issue through a Safeguarding lens and raised potential issues with Chairs of Safeguarding Boards seeking clarity on how children were protected and with Senior Officers from GM. We note there is a focus now on child-centred policing and this is an area which the panel recognises as being important to understand as part of its on-going work.

The group was also heavily involved in work around safeguarding of young people in schools. Collaboratively the sub-group developed a Race Equality Charter together. There were several additional meetings where this was co-developed and went back



to the main panel members for agreement. Members of the sub-group met with GMCA officers and elected members responsible for the Children and Young People's Plan to discuss the race equality charter. Through this, the panel was introduced to the Greater Manchester Learning Partnership (GMLP). A key aspect of our work here was in making use of the existing structures across GM to complement the work already being undertaken. The work with the GMLP has been particularly fruitful. Since January 2022, there have been various strategic engagements have been highly positive.

## **4.2 Employment**

Through both the lived experiences of its members and engagement with wider communities across Greater Manchester, the Race Equality Panel recognises that the employment sector often fails communities experiencing racial inequality. On the employment front, the Panel is committed to addressing racial disparities and promoting equal opportunities in the workplace across the region. The objective is to address the diversity of the public service workforce, including volunteers and ensuring senior leadership, is increased.

In progressing the work around employment, the panel organised and delivered two conferences, one to introduce the issues at hand as the ethnically diverse community experiences them. We introduced examples of good and poor practice to the extent of a personal account of racial bullying and harassment. We shared tools of good practice (NHS) and worked collaboratively with the Good employment Charter to deliver this workshop, which also highlighted experiences across four different sectors through discussion groups and panel presentations. 'In June 2023 we held an Employment and Race conference The conference which also had representation from trade unions (TUC and UNISON) brought together stakeholders from Public, Private and Voluntary sector to explore best practices for diversifying workforce and ensuring safe spaces for people to operate at work. The conference was well attended and attracted almost 100 delegates and speakers with expertise from different sectors at Eventbrite sign up.

Overall, the conference focused on the following points:

1. Sharing best practices in relation to race equity and tackling discrimination in the workplace.
2. Providing a safe space for people/organisations to share their continuing concerns and encounters relating to racism and how these can be addressed.
3. Supporting organisations facing challenges in implementing the outputs of an initial employment roundtable which took place in May 2022.
4. Provided practical examples for continuing good practice and increased employee relations with regard to race.



During the conference, various points such as senior level, leadership, and board representation. These and other outputs would be explored further as the panel continues its work on that front.

### **4.3 Criminal Justice & Policing**

The panel employed various approaches in holding the Criminal justice and policing systems accountable as part of its remit of reviewing public service policies to ensure that they are anti-racist. Members of the Panel have directly responded to issues highlighted in the community such as recruitment/ representation, leadership, use of force and disproportionate policing. There were several engagements not only with the Greater Manchester Police (GMP) and relevant portfolio leads/ officers within the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). The panel also strategically sought to engage regulatory institutions who had statutory responsibility of overseeing the actions of GMP such as the Independent Office of Police Conduct (IOPC), His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

### **4.4 Housing**

Panel members remain dedicated to tackling housing inequality. Besides ongoing efforts to raise awareness of housing and homelessness issues and race locally, the panel has proposed to undertake a piece of work around scoping racial inequalities in housing and homelessness following the unfortunate incident surrounding Awab Ishak's passing in December 2020.

The chair of the Panel met with the Mayor following the release of the inquest into the untimely death of Awaab Ishak (November 2023) in order to make progress on contributing to address the systemic failings that led to his death. Further conversations identified that the Panel could play a leadership role in this area, and a focus on practical work to identify and address barriers to progress and action to overcome them would be a direct way to tackle racially driven inequalities in social housing in Greater Manchester.

In going forward with this work the panel would be exploring strategic engagements with Greater Manchester Housing Providers (GMHP) and GMCA is being established to develop the detailed workplan to deliver the objectives outlined above. A resourcing plan is to be drafted, for discussion with the steering group, to understand the resource requirements from across the system to deliver this project.

### **4.5 Health & Well-being**

With a wide-ranging remit which covered the disproportionate deaths of Black and Asian women in childbirth to increased likelihood of African Caribbean men and women to be sectioned and have a taser used on them to the mental health impact of

racism, the group chose to follow progress in mental health as a new strategy was being created that we felt ethnically diverse people should have contribution. The establishment of the Health & Wellbeing subgroup has allowed the Panel to develop relationships with key stakeholders and to review existing health provisions to ensure that it is appropriate for ethnically diverse communities. Ongoing work is designed to tackle continued inequalities in access, experience and outcomes for communities facing racial inequality.

The panel facilitated a Mental Health Roundtable which brought together several Practitioners from with the Health and Well-being space in GM to discuss strategies and align priorities. The purpose of the meeting was to explore commitment to how the Panel tackles mental health from a race structural perspective and align with the work that is already on-going in the Greater Manchester system. The roundtable was very engaging and attended by key practitioners who shared insights and ideas on their work.

Subsequently there were also strategic engagements with other stakeholders from this discourse which has facilitated a steer toward three (3) strategic priorities to address the issues faced in various communities.

1. Inclusive integrated services through the Mental Health community transformation programme.
2. External support and work on culturally appropriate services working with community partners in the voluntary sector.
3. Cultural competence, cultural confidence, and trauma informed care tailored to meeting the needs of ethnic communities.

#### **4.6 Greater Manchester Race Equality Strategy**

Following engagements with multiple stakeholders from across various footprints and thematic areas. The panel proceeded to embedding its work into the on-going development of a Race Equality Strategy for Greater Manchester by the Centre On the Dynamics of Ethnicity (CODE), University of Manchester.

The panel views the strategy as a sustainable lever of the intelligence gained across the engagements of its five sub-groups. Further to this, the panel has been part of various co-design workshops feeding significantly into the formulation of the strategy.

#### **4.7 Other Activities**

- ❖ **Consultations** – Panel members have fed into several online consultations, one of which was TfGM consultations rounds on quality improvements to transport accessibility within Greater Manchester.

- ❖ **Stephen Lawrence Day** – The Panel hosted a Webinar on 21<sup>st</sup> April, 2023 to mark the 30<sup>th</sup> Memorial of Stephen Lawrence Day. The virtual event in honour of Stephen Lawrence’s death celebrated the life of Stephen Lawrence by reflecting on positive changes that have been made in his memory and further promote the values of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

The event had several guest speakers and the discussion centred on:

1. What progress there have been over the last 30 years
  2. What do we still have to do and who do we need to influence to make the necessary changes?
  3. How do we encourage people to reflect on the issues of racism and discrimination that still exist in society and to work towards creating a more equal and inclusive society?
- ❖ **Community engagements by the Panel Chair** – The panel chair actively represented the panel at various community occasions and activities such as: Iftar meal, churches, community events.

## 5. Plans for Next Year (2023/24)

The work of the panel in the coming year is to build on existing engagements especially around the Greater Manchester Race Equality Strategy. The resolve of the panel is to ensure that this important piece of strategy is reflective of the needs of the diverse communities the panel represents. The panel is seeking to ensure its five (5) thematic areas is heavily embedded into the strategy and there are policy levers which address the concerns. In addition to the Race Equality Strategy development, the panel would also be exploring engagements across other sectors.

## 6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Greater Manchester Race Equality Panel has made strides in advancing race equality across various domains in the region. Through rigorous policy advocacy and stakeholder engagement, the panel has effectively highlighted racial disparities, proposed evidence-based solutions, and pushed for positive changes in policies and practices. While some progress has been made, challenges persist, and there is much work ahead to dismantle systemic barriers and create truly inclusive and equitable systems, and it is strongly felt that unless the leadership of the city is not more representative, the many issues facing ethnically diverse communities will not be acted upon due to lack of understanding and commitment to difficult change and shift of power. The panel remains committed to its vision of a Greater Manchester where every individual, regardless of their racial background, has equal opportunities and experiences fair treatment in all aspects of life.

By continuing to dialogue with stakeholders, advocate for change, and push for the implementation of innovative strategies, it is hoped the panel can contribute to a Greater Manchester which is truly reflective of the needs of its communities.

## **6.1 Further Information**

If you have any questions about the Greater Manchester Race Equality Panel or would like to remain aware of the panel's engagements, please connect with us via the following channels:

**Email – [gmracepanel@cahn.org.uk](mailto:gmracepanel@cahn.org.uk)**

**Twitter – [@GM\\_RaceEquality](https://twitter.com/GM_RaceEquality)**

**Facebook – Greater Manchester Race Equality Panel**

**LinkedIn - Greater Manchester Race Equality Panel**

**<https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/equalities/race-equality-panel/>**