

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED  
AUTHORITY HELD ON FRIDAY 23RD FEBRUARY 2024 AT MANCHESTER CITY  
COUNCIL CHAMBER**

**PRESENT**

Mayor of Greater Manchester	Andy Burnham (in the Chair)
Deputy Mayor (Police, Crime & Fire)	Kate Green
Bolton	Councillor Nicholas Peel
Bury	Councillor Lucy Smith
Manchester	Councillor Bev Craig
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Mark Hunter
Tameside	Councillor Ged Cooney
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross
Wigan	Councillor Nazia Rehman

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Rochdale	Councillor Janet Emsley
GM Older People's Equality Panel	Nakib Narat

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chief Executive Officer, GMCA & TfGM	Eamonn Boylan
GMCA Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
GMCA Deputy Monitoring Officer	Melinda Edwards
GMCA Deputy Monitoring Officer	Gwynne Williams
GMCA Treasurer	Steve Wilson
GMCA Director of Governance & Scrutiny	Julie Connor
Bolton	Sue Johnson
Bury	Lynne Ridsdale

Manchester	Joanne Roney
Oldham	Harry Catherall
Rochdale	Steve Rumbelow
Salford	Tom Stannard
Stockport	Michael Cullen
Tameside	Julian Jackson
Trafford	Sara Todd
Wigan	Alison McKenzie-Folan
TfGM	Martin Lax
TfGM	Anne Marie Purcell
TfGM	Steve Warrener
Office of the GM Mayor	Kevin Lee
GMCA	Sylvia Welsh
GMCA	Lee Teasdale

**GMCA 29/24            APOLOGIES**

That apologies be received from Councillor Eamonn O'Brien (Bury), Councillor Arooj Shah (Oldham), Councillor David Molyneux (Wigan), Caroline Simpson (Stockport), Sandra Stewart (Tameside) and Councillor Nadim Muslim (Chair of the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee).

**GMCA 30/24            CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS**

The Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, advised those present of the sad news that a member of the Manchester Music Commission, Sam Malik, had passed away unexpectedly the previous weekend. Sam had played a hugely important role within the Manchester and wider music community and his kindness, passion and support for the next generation of talent would be greatly missed.

**RESOLVED /-**

That the GMCA acknowledges the sad passing of Sam Malik, a valued member of the Manchester Music Commission, and that condolences be passed on to his family, friends and the wider Manchester music community impacted by this.

**GMCA 31/24            DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**RESOLVED /-**

That there were no declarations of interest made in relation to any item on the agenda.

**GMCA 32/24            MINUTES OF THE GMCA MEETING HELD ON 9 FEBRUARY  
2024**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the minutes of the GMCA meeting held on 9 February 2024 be approved as a correct record.

**GMCA 33/24            MINUTES OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER OVERVIEW &  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 7 FEBRUARY 2024**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the proceedings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 7 February 2024 be received.

**GMCA 34/24            COMMERATION OF THE UKRAINIAN HOLODOMOR**

The Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, presented a report asking GMCA members to recognise the 1932-33 Holodomor as a genocide of the Ukrainian people and to endorse the statement contained within part 2 of the report, at the request of the GM Ukrainian Community.

The Mayor confirmed that following the meeting he would be attending a press event with representatives of the region's Ukrainian community, both long-standing and new arrivals following the onset of the current conflict.

It was also advised that a support network had been established for the Mayor of Lviv, who sought to make Lviv the 'rehabilitation centre' of Ukraine and had requested that mayors be convened to provide support for this through an 'Unbroken Cities' network.

#### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That the update on the 'Unbroken Cities' network plans to support the Mayor of Lviv on the development of a rehabilitation centre be received.
3. That the GMCA endorses the following statement:
  - *The Holodomor was an act of genocide against Ukrainians in 1932-33.*
  - *The GMCA recognises the 4th Saturday of November as a day of remembrance for the innocent victims of the Holodomor.*

#### **GMCA 35/24            HOMELESSNESS FROM THE ASYLUM SYSTEM – UPDATE AND RESPONSE**

City Mayor, Paul Dennett, Portfolio Lead for Housing, Homelessness & Infrastructure, provided an update on the current homelessness and rough sleeping crisis across Greater Manchester as a result of Home Office accelerated asylum decision-making and sought approval for a shared Greater Manchester (GM) approach to tackling it.

A humanitarian crisis was now being faced within the city region as a result of this decision. Government did not appear to want to work with Greater Manchester in a constructive way to tackling this issue resulting in an increasing chaotic situation. Elements such as the delays in the uplift of local housing allowance and the renters reform bill were further exacerbating this issue. People were now having to be turned away from support due to the significant undercapacity available to meet housing demands. This was on top of the pre-existing homelessness demands within the system. The report included a number of recommendations to government to help in providing temporary alleviation of the pressures.

Further detail was provided on the real day to day impact being seen particularly acutely within central Manchester. Since November 2023 Manchester City Council had seen daily presentations of between 35-50 people. These were vulnerable people who had fled persecution and conflict and had received confirmation that under international law that they had a right to reside in this country yet being quickly dispersed from temporary accommodation and arriving at Manchester Town Hall. This week numbers had risen to an unprecedented level with over 60 presentations every single day.

### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the unprecedented levels of homelessness and rough sleeping among new refugees in Greater Manchester, the linked service pressures and the opportunities for improvements to our service offer to this cohort, now and in the longer-term be noted.
2. That support be given to efforts to secure additional funds to boost Voluntary Community Faith Social Enterprise (VCFSE) provision for this cohort, with a focus on prevention and Private Rented Sector (PRS) access, and ensure that Housing Options and homelessness teams support delivery of GMCA-commissioned services.
3. That the continued or additional investment in capacity for specialist frontline support for people in or leaving the asylum system, especially across homelessness, social services, education teams, using current and future (potential) Asylum Dispersal Grant funding be considered.
4. That support be given for continued engagement with national Government and efforts to evidence and communicate impacts on people, services and communities are visible more widely.
5. That support be given to shared key policy asks in order to:
  - i. give GM's local systems time to recover;

- ii. fund GM's systems to enable effective response now and in the longer term;
  - iii. improve transitions from the asylum system and;
  - iv. address wider policy issues that are preventing access to affordable housing.
6. That the update received on the ongoing significant pressures placed upon local authorities in meeting homelessness need as a result of failures in national migration and asylum policy be noted.

**GMCA 36/24            PUBLIC SWITCHED TELEPHONE NETWORK (PSTN)  
SWITCHOVER UPDATE**

Councillor Nicolas Peel, Portfolio Lead for Digital, introduced a report providing an update following the growing concerns about the implementation of the PSTN Switchover which is impacting upon a significant number of vulnerable people and across the city region.

This issue was becoming an increasing concern as the government's decision for this to be an industry led switchover was resulting in a continuing lack of national communications on this issue, which in turn meant a continued lack of awareness. Telecare systems were the most pressing issue at present, as despite assurances that care would be taken, some users of telecare systems were being switched over without any communication and sufficient checks that their lifeline devices would still operate effectively. Significant safeguarding issues had already arisen from this.

The cost of the upgrades was also an issue, with the cost of upgrades being passed on to customers in many instances. With all of this in mind, a number of further recommendations were being made to the government as detailed within the report, with the ultimate resolution being that if these problems persisted, there would be a further ask that the December 2025 deadline be pushed back.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the significant issues in telecare arising from the PSTN switchover rollout be noted.

2. That support be given to further action including correspondence with Government to urge action in response to the current risk to adults, and to develop a funded National Action Plan that includes telecare switchover working with telecommunications providers, the telecare industry and the LGA.
3. That the establishment of the GM PSTN Working Group as a forum to assess the readiness of GM for the switch over, share best practice and bring forward significant issues as they arise be noted.
4. That it be noted that there has been an exchange of letters between the Mayor and DSIT Secretary of State in December 2023 and January 2024 regarding increasing concerns of the PSTN switchover.
5. That it be noted that a further paper would be brought back to the GMCA asking the government for an extension to the switchover deadline.

## **GMCA 37/24            GREATER MANCHESTER AGE-FRIENDLY STRATEGY**

Sara Todd, Portfolio Lead Chief Executive for Equalities and Communities, introduced a report providing an overview of the new Greater Manchester Age-Friendly Strategy 2024 – 2034 and the process taken to refresh it.

It was advised that following final consultations with stakeholders and the International Advisory board, the GM Age-Friendly strategy had been finalised for the GMCA's consideration and approval. A detailed implementation plan would be developed in the coming months and finalised in June 2024. As cities around the world took steps to adapt to demographic change, Greater Manchester was at the forefront of initiatives to ensure our societies are more age-friendly.

The new age-friendly strategy was ambitious in improving life for all residents as they age. Some key commitments within the strategy included engaging with employers to raise employment standards of older workers by improving health and wellbeing at work; working towards neighbourhoods where older residents live in age-friendly homes; and continuing to collaborate with national and international partners to

develop evidence-based policy and support businesses in the flourishing healthy ageing sector in Greater Manchester to grow, innovate and commercialise.

Nakib Narat, in his position as the Co-Chair of the Greater Manchester Older People's Equality Panel was invited to address the GMCA. Reference was made to the many difficulties faced by older residents of the city region in recent years following the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic and then the cost-of-living crisis. This Strategy would put older people's voices at its heart and ensure that they were always heard, in addition to reflecting the diversity of the region's older people.

Thanks were expressed to the Older People's Equality Panel and the supporting officers, whose considerable work and sharing of knowledge, had pulled together a progressive forward-thinking Strategy.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the refreshed Greater Manchester Age-Friendly Strategy be approved.
2. That the comments received from Nakib Narat, the Chair of the GM Older People's Equality Panel, be noted.
3. That thanks be expressed to all political and officer leads for their considerable work on developing the refreshed Strategy.

**GMCA 38/24            NET ZERO ACCELERATOR FUND**

Councillor Tom Ross, Portfolio Lead for Green City Region, provided an update on a recent unsuccessful bid for Innovate UK Pathfinder funding and the alternative opportunity to deliver a Net Zero Accelerator in Greater Manchester.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the update on Innovate UK funding and the opportunity to deliver a Net Zero Accelerator be noted.

2. That approval be given to GMCA submitting a business case and acting as the accountable body for a circa £6-7m award from Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) potentially via Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority, with delegated authority to the Lead Portfolio holder, Chief Executive and Treasurer to finalise the business case, receive and defray funding if successful.

## **GMCA 39/24            GREATER MANCHESTER INVESTMENT ZONE**

Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Lead for Economy & Business, presented a report that provided further updates on the Investment Plan being developed for Greater Manchester.

The report set out the exciting opportunities that could be capitalised on within the long-term strategy, with a significant focus on advanced materials. The report also requested that the final negotiations be delegated appropriately with a final report to be submitted to the GMCA detailing how the monies would be spent and how growth and benefits would be delivered for the whole city region.

### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That authority be delegated to the GMCA Chief Executive Officer and Treasurer, in consultation with the Economy Portfolio Chief Executive and Leader, to negotiate with Government project allocations in 2024-25.
2. That a further update will be provided to the GMCA, following Ministerial approval, confirming the project allocations in 2024-25, and overall indicative allocations across the programme as a whole be noted.
3. That the further detail sought by members on the GM Investment Zone Package be made available at the appropriate time.

## **GMCA 40/24            GREATER MANCHESTER INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK**

Steve Wilson, GMCA Treasurer, presented a report seeking approval for investments into Advanced Therapeutic Materials Ltd, Financielle Ltd and Home Global Holdings Ltd. These investments would be made from recycled funds.

### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That an equity investment of up to £500k to Advanced Therapeutic Materials Ltd be approved.
2. That a convertible loan of up to £400k to Financielle Ltd be approved.
3. That a loan of up to £300k to Home Global Holdings Ltd be approved.
4. That authority be delegated to the Combined Authority Treasurer and Combined Authority Monitoring Officer to review the due diligence information in respect of the above investments, and, subject to their satisfactory review and agreement of the due diligence information and the overall detailed commercial terms of the investments, to sign off any outstanding conditions, issue final approvals and complete any necessary related documentation in respect of the investments noted above.

## **GMCA 41/24            DELIVERING THE BEE NETWORK – BUS FRANCHISING IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE**

The Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham provided an update on progress made in implementing bus franchising as part of the delivery of the Bee Network, Greater Manchester' vision for an integrated, 'London-style' transport system.

The Mayor highlighted the increasingly positive position of the Network, with the initial tranche one teething issues now largely worked through. The latest punctuality report revealed that the average was now at 71.5%, this was an improvement on previous weeks, but even more importantly, considerably better than the non-franchised numbers which had been running at a considerably lower number.

Plans for the Night Bus Pilot, which would focus on the V1 and 36 services were confirmed for commencing in 2024 at a date to be confirmed.

Further detail was provided on Tranche 2 which was due to commence on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2024. Many services within this Tranche would see an increase in frequency, with many services that would usually see four buses an hour now rising to six, alongside earlier and later start and finish times.

#### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the progress towards the implementation of Tranche 2 of bus franchising be noted.
2. That the update received on the Bee Network Night Bus Pilot be noted.

#### **GMCA 42/24            THE GREATER MANCHESTER FRANCHISING SCHEME FOR BUSES 2021 – PROCUREMENT UPDATE**

The Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, introduced a report that provided an update, and made a number of recommendations, in relation to the procurement process for the Greater Manchester Franchising Scheme for Buses 2021, in particular to note and agree the outcome of the process to procure service providers to operate the five Large Local Service Contracts in Sub-Area C of the Scheme.

Five further reports on the outcome of the evaluation of tenders in relation to these Large Local Service Contracts had been submitted in Part B of the agenda.

The Mayor confirmed that the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee had considered the update at its meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> February and in Councillor Nadim Muslim's absence highlighted the feedback raised through the Committee.

Reference was made to the wish to bring some local rail lines under the Bee Network umbrella in the forthcoming years. It was confirmed that the government had given the green light to a contactless payment pilot scheme on 2 lines with GM during 2025.

The Mayor confirmed that the new Stockport Interchange would open on 17<sup>th</sup> March, a week ahead of Tranche 2 going live, and that the electric buses on order for the south of the city region would be delivered in November 2024 and would operate out of Stockport Interchange.

## **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the outcome of the process to procure a preferred service provider to operate the Hyde Road, Sharston, Stockport, Tameside and Wythenshawe Large Local Service Contracts in Sub-Area C of the Scheme be noted and agreed.
2. That the proposed key contractual arrangements of the Hyde Road, Sharston, Stockport, Tameside and Wythenshawe Large Local Service Contracts be noted.
3. That the comments of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee be received and noted.
4. That the update received on the proposal for a contactless rail pilot scheme to take place within Greater Manchester in 2025 be noted.
5. That it be noted that the new Stockport Interchange will officially be opened on 17<sup>th</sup> March.
6. That it be noted that a new fleet of electric buses will operate out of South Manchester from November 2024, ahead of Tranche 3 going live in early 2025.

## **GMCA 43/24                    EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business on the grounds that this involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

## **GMCA 44/24                    GREATER MANCHESTER INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK**

**Clerk's Note:** This item was considered in support of the report considered in Part A of the agenda (minute 40/24)

## **RESOLVED /-**

That the contents of the report be noted.

**GMCA 45/24            GREATER MANCHESTER FRANCHISING SCHEME FOR  
BUSES 2021 – PROCUREMENT UPDATE**

**Clerk’s Note:** This item was considered in support of the report considered in Part A of the agenda (minute 42/24)

**RESOLVED /-**

That the comments received from the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee be noted.

**45/24a. Procurement of the Tranche 3 Hyde Road Large Local  
Service Contract**

That the recommendations within the report be approved.

**45/24b. Procurement of the Tranche 3 Hyde Road Large Local  
Service Contract**

That the recommendations within the report be approved.

**45/24c. Procurement of the Tranche 3 Hyde Road Large Local  
Service Contract**

That the recommendations within the report be approved.

**45/24d. Procurement of the Tranche 3 Hyde Road Large Local  
Service Contract**

That the recommendations within the report be approved.

**45/24e. Procurement of the Tranche 3 Hyde Road Large Local Service Contract**

That the recommendations within the report be approved.