

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER
JOINT CLEAN AIR SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 DECEMBER 2023,
GMCA, BOARDROOM, 56 OXFORD STREET, MANCHESTER M1 6EU**

PRESENT:

Councillor Claire Reid	Tameside Council (Chair)
Councillor Kate Taylor	Bolton Council
Councillor Elliot Moss	Bury Council
Councillor Mandie Shilton-Godwin	Manchester City Council
Councillor Graham Shuttleworth	Oldham Council
Councillor Mohammed Arshad	Rochdale Council
Councillor Lisa Smart	Stockport Council
Councillor Ged Carter	Trafford Council
Councillor Christine Roberts	Wigan Council

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Eamonn Boylan	Chief Executive, GMCA & Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM)
Megan Black	Head of Logistics & Environment, TfGM
Gillian Duckworth	GMCA Solicitor and Monitoring Officer
Oliver Fenton	Assistant Governance Officer, GMCA
Jenny Hollamby	Governance & Scrutiny Officer, GMCA
Kate Jackson	Senior Legal Officer, TfGM
Martin Lax	Transport Strategy Director, TfGM
Frank Tudor	Deputy Director Corporate Services, TfGM
Nicola Ward	Statutory Scrutiny Officer, GMCA

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Eamonn O'Brien	GMCA Portfolio Holder for Technical Education & Skills and Clean Air
Nigel Bellamy	Technical Director, Air Quality Consultants

JCAS/1/23

WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and noted from Councillor Martin Donaghy, Councillor John Mullen, and Councillor Jill Axford.

JCAS/2/23

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED/-

That Councillor Claire Reid (Tameside Council) be appointed as Chair for the 2023/24 municipal year.

JCAS/3/23

MEMBERSHIP FOR THE 2023/24 MUNICIPAL YEAR

RESOLVED/-

That the Membership for the 2023/24 municipal year be noted as below:

Authority	Member	Substitute Member
Bolton	Councillor Martin Donaghy (Labour)	Councillor Kate Taylor (Labour)
Bury	Councillor Elliot Moss (Labour)	To be advised
Manchester	Councillor Mandie Shilton Godwin (Labour)	To be advised
Oldham	Councillor Graham Shuttleworth (Labour)	Councillor Colin McLaren (Labour)
Rochdale	Councillor Mohammed Arshad (Labour)	Councillor Faisal Rana (Labour)
Salford	Councillor John Mullen (Labour)	Councillor Stuart Dickman (Labour)

Stockport	Councillor Lisa Smart (Liberal Democrat)	Councillor Jeremy Meal (Liberal Democrat)
Tameside	Councillor Claire Reid (Labour)	Councillor Shibley Alam (Labour)
Trafford	Councillor Jill Axford (Labour)	Councillor Ged Carter (Labour)
Wigan	Councillor Christine Roberts (Labour)	Councillor Samantha Brown (Labour)

**JCAS/4/23 MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT AND ANNUAL
DECLARATION FORM**

RESOLVED/-

1. That the GMCA's Code of Conduct be noted.
2. That it be noted that all Members be requested to complete an annual register of interest form and return it to the Governance Officer.

JCAS/5/23 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULES OF PROCEDURE

Members considered the committee's Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure, which had been approved by Districts.

In response to a Member's question, it was confirmed that officers would endeavour to ensure that meeting papers were published a week prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED/-

That the committee's Terms of Reference be noted.

JCAS/6/23 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

There were no Chair's announcements or urgent business.

JCAS/7/23

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

JCAS/8/23

SUBMISSION REGARDING THE CLEAN AIR PLAN

Consideration was given to a report, presented by Megan Black, Head of Logistics and Environment, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), which provided an update on the case for a new Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan (the Plan) and confirmed that an appraisal of Greater Manchester's proposed investment-led Plan had been undertaken against a benchmark charging Clean Air Zone (CAZ) in the centre of Manchester and Salford.

Eamonn Boylan, Chief Executive, GMCA & TfGM, thanked the Team for their work to provide a Plan that was fairer for the conurbation and would clean the air, in the shortest possible time (ahead of 2026), through a non-charging investment-led approach. Attention was drawn to the impacts of poor air quality on health, which was the largest environment risk to public health in the UK and how important it was to meet the challenges to improve lives in Greater Manchester. The Plan built upon the Bee Network and the ability to design a system that also delivered quality public transport. Eamonn Boylan, Chief Executive, GMCA & TfGM asked for the committee's comments and questions that would be fed back to the Air Quality Administration Committee, which was the decision-making body at its meeting on 20 December 2023.

The poor air quality in Greater Manchester undeniably exerted a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of its residents and a Member asked why there was no population health assessment and that the population health need for cleaner air be first and foremost. The Member also highlighted that whilst covering the entire region, the Plan had a stronger focus on addressing exceedance sites within the city of Manchester itself, therefore city-centre residents would experience the greatest impact. Officers agreed that prioritising the population's health need for cleaner air was absolutely crucial. The negative impacts of air pollution on public health were

undisputable, ranging from respiratory illnesses and cardiovascular problems to cognitive decline. Moreover, there was a morale duty to clean up the air and to improve lives for some of the poorest communities, who were more exposed to the impacts in Greater Manchester. The equality impact assessment had been considered and been reflected in the Plan, but Officers agreed there could be a stronger emphasis.

A key feature of the Plan to improve air quality was the development of the Bee Network but it was questioned how that was a viable public transport option, which was to inspire behavioural change, when there was so much congestion. Concerns were acknowledged about the role of the Bee Network in tackling congestion and air quality, particularly around Deansgate. The Bee Network aimed to provide a comprehensive, integrated, and reliable transport network across Greater Manchester. Its features like frequency, affordability, and accessible routes had the potential to attract many car users and reduce overall traffic volume. However, congestion remained a complex challenge, working together with Local Authorities (LAs) and advocating for well-rounded solutions would ensure the Plan benefited both public health and the overall wellbeing of the region. The Plan relied heavily on modelling to assess its potential impact on air quality, which further relied on assumptions and data, which might not always perfectly reflect reality. Combining it with evidence, ongoing monitoring and adaptation was crucial for refining the Plan and ensuring its effectiveness in improving air quality for all residents of Greater Manchester.

Members discussed local traffic issues, congestion, and short car journeys that were undoubtedly interconnected topics impacting Greater Manchester and agreed more work was needed. Concerns existed about the accuracy of the modelling, particularly its prediction of localised impacts around specific exceedance points. Congestion around Deansgate and Quay Street in Greater Manchester was a reality and was a complex issue with several facets such as construction and roadworks. A holistic view was being taken and a comprehensive approach was being developed to address congestion in Greater Manchester. Members were assured that a congestion charge would not be proposed. Members asked that continued efforts were required to address the congestion caused by roadworks across Greater

Manchester, whilst also recognising that local measures should also be considered to address the number of short journeys taken by car.

A Member further questioned the modelling, which concentrated on the 12 exceedance sites and whether a forward projection would identify further sites outside the maximum. Attention was also drawn to the A56 in Prestwich, which was a congested area and how it fitted in with exceedances. Modelling had identified further sites and recognised the A56 as a problem area. The Appraisal Report set out what was to be achieved through the wider bus strategy. Ambitions included converting 50% of the bus fleet to zero emission by 2027 and the rest of the fleet by 2032.

Clarity was sought around the bus retrofit programme, given the cost, a Member suggested a more significant impact was achievable if the whole vehicle fleet was retrofitted. Whilst that route was considered, Government had advised that benefit assumptions could not be made meaning, a whole fleet retrofit was not possible at this stage.

The concern raised by a Member regarding the coverage the Plan's taxi initiatives as many were licensed outside of GM was highlighted a longstanding problem. The issue of incentivising cleaner taxis in the Plan was crucial for its success. It was a serious issue for LAs and thought should be given to how support could be provided, and reflection take place on the services offered. However, it was reassuring that the modelled figure said that already 59% of the fleet were registered within Greater Manchester this figure also included Uber drivers.

A Member asked about plans for encompassing other vehicle types such as goods vehicles. Government was reluctant to provide funding to support this vehicular group without a charging zone and Officers would seek further negotiation should it be necessary. Evidence showed that compliance could be achieved without upgrading the HGV fleet at this point. Tackling air pollution necessitated a multi-pronged approach that included addressing emissions from all types of vehicles. However, currently it was about prioritising what would give the biggest impact in the shortest time. In comparison with other polluters, heavy goods vehicles (HGVs)

compared to buses and taxis, were small. Retrofit was unavailable as an effective emissions reduction measure for HGVs.

Addressing modelling uncertainty was crucial for building trust and ensuring the Plan's effectiveness. Air quality modelling inherently involved complexities and uncertainties. Members sought assurances that the modelling undertaken had been done so far through the best currently available data. However, recognised there remained a number of variable factors in relation to behaviour change so there would always be some uncertainty regarding a forecasted position.

A Member asked if park and ride with free public transport to the city-centre could be used in certain areas such as A602 to M60, A580 and Regent Road to address traffic congestion and to avoid longer journeys for passengers at rush hour. Motorways were exempt from Clean Air Plans but acknowledged the impact of emissions from motorways and were actively seeking collaboration with National Highways on innovative interventions such as park and ride and speed limit controls to tackle air pollution holistically.

A significant concern was expressed that the motorway network remained out of scope for data collection and resulting air quality interventions.

It was suggested that there was not enough EV charging infrastructure especially for high-speed charging points. Installation of rapid charging points had been challenging due to cost and grid connectivity issues, which would include roadworks therefore causing disruption. Whilst, expanding the rapid charging infrastructure, focus had been on increasing EV charging in especially in the city-centre core and for taxi operators. Again, it was a question of priorities and resulting in the most significant impacts.

A Member asked about the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras, how many there were in total, and whether any impact to civil liberties be considered should the Plan be accepted. It was clarified that in 2021, 870 cameras were planned across Greater Manchester, and in January 2022 when the scheme was put under review, 462 of those cameras had been installed and remained on pause. The

cameras were there to monitor air quality primarily and were already feeding into assumptions and modelling. If the Government's proposed charging plan was not implemented, those cameras that could be removed would, and if they could be repurposed, discussions would take place with government and the police. A public consultation would be needed, and civil liberties addressed at the relevant stage. The Member further asked how many cameras there would be, if the Investment-led Plan was accepted, it was clarified that circa 70 cameras would be needed.

The Member suggested and the committee agreed that a further recommendation be added to the report that an independent review into the lessons learnt from the CAZ (Clean Air Zone) process take place in due course, with a focus on how LAs, the GMCA and government could work more effectively together.

A Member highlighted that the Investment-led Plan would require an additional £22.9 million and if that was not provided by Government, where would it come from. The Plan proposed offered government a valuable opportunity to address air quality concerns quickly, at less cost, and improve the overall wellbeing of residents in Greater Manchester and beyond. Members agreed that the GMCA should be clear with the public of the overall cost of developing, implementing, and decommissioning the CAZ from the outset in order to build public trust for the proposed investment-led approach.

Members discussed the role of enforcement on speed-limited highways and agreed that the GMCA should continue to lobby for additional powers to enforce antisocial behaviour, dangerous driving, and speed exceedances on Greater Manchester's road network in support of the proposed city-centre interventions. There was a clear role for Greater Manchester's Bee Network to continue to engage with GMP and lobby the Department for Transport for additional enforcement powers.

In response to a question about confidence in the Plan to deliver and lessons learned from the bus retrofit programme it was essential to consider the Plan's multifaceted approach and potential for significant improvements. Whilst there were other types of bus technologies available, electric was seen as the future in Greater Manchester given its proven reliability. Zero emission was the ambition and

reference was made to the investment at Stockport Interchange, which aligned with the ambition to electrify public transport and upgrading the depot infrastructure to accommodate electric buses, including charging facilities. Also seen as important and as part of the multifaceted approach (along with bus reform) was the Clean Taxi Fund and local road measures addressing traffic hotspots and congestion. The success of the Plan hinged on the effective implementation of all its solutions working in synergy.

To send a clear message to residents to show their voice had been heard, it was suggested that the CAZ signage be removed. However, this was dependent on when government responded to GM's proposal.

A Member was concerned that the Plan's measures for cleaner taxis might not be sufficient. A number of scenarios had been modelled, the offer was attractive and helped people make changes. It was acknowledged that taxis were a business and financial feasibility was crucial for designing practical and sustainable solutions. The Plan's intention was to offer the most possible support for taxi operators in transitioning to cleaner options, which would need collaboration and trust.

It was suggested that partners could leverage the power of collaboration to address construction work and roadworks in a way that minimised disruption, optimised efficiency, and contributed to a smoother and more sustainable transportation system for Greater Manchester. TfGM was looking at lane rental power should they be granted, and it was acknowledged that co-ordination between partners could be improved. However, unplanned roadworks would always be challenging.

A Member asked that construction and roadwork issues were addressed from a Greater Manchester perspective and all partners work together.

It was suggested and Members agreed that the Greater Manchester Joint Clean Air Scrutiny Committee continued to keep a watching brief on this agenda as it moved forward.

RESOLVED/-

1. That it be noted that the Greater Manchester Joint Clean Air Scrutiny Committee considered and commented on the report and noted the recommendations which would be considered by the Air Quality Administration Committee at its meeting on 20 December 2023:
 - a) Note the latest position with the government's National Bus Retrofit.
 - b) Note modelling results now evidence that Greater Manchester's proposed investment-led Plan (the Investment-led Plan) can achieve compliance with legal limits of NO₂ concentrations in 2025 and that compliance is not achieved in either 2025 or 2026 under a benchmark charging CAZ C in the centre of Manchester and Salford.
 - c) Note whilst it is for the government to determine what measures Greater Manchester is to implement, the appraisal shows that only the Investment-led Plan complies with the requirement placed on the 10 Greater Manchester Authorities to deliver compliance in the shortest possible time and by 2026 at the latest.
 - d) Note bus measures represent the most important mechanism for reducing exceedances under the Investment-led Plan and are grounded in the ability of Greater Manchester to control the emissions standards of vehicles operating on key routes having introduced a bus franchising scheme.
 - e) Note the Investment-led Plan seeks to use £51.2 million of funds already awarded to purchase 64 Zero Emission Buses (ZEBs) and to fund the costs for the electrification required on Piccadilly Approach, and at Bolton, Queens Road, and Middleton depots.
 - f) Note taxi measures represent an important mechanism for reducing exceedances under the Investment-led Plan and Greater Manchester wants to offer £30.5 million of already awarded funding to support upgrades to help the Greater Manchester licensed hackney carriage and private hire trade upgrade to cleaner vehicles (the Clean Taxi Fund).
 - g) Note that an emissions standard, requiring licensed hackney carriages (hackneys) and private hire vehicles (PHVs) to be a minimum of Euro 6

(diesel) or Euro 4 (petrol) by 31st December 2025, needs to have been adopted by all Greater Manchester Authorities to secure compliance with legal limits in 2025.

- h) Recommend that each Greater Manchester Authority puts appropriate arrangements in place to facilitate a transitional start date for the implementation of emission standards by the 1 January 2025 with the end transition date being the 31 December 2025.
- i) Note that the Investment-led Plan proposes taxi funding being issued directly to applicants, subject to meeting the relevant criteria and production of relevant evidence.
- j) Note the Investment-led Plan seeks to use £5 million of funds already awarded to deliver targeted local measures to reduce NO₂ exceedance concentrations at Regent Road (Salford), Quay Street and Great Bridgewater Street (Manchester) sites.
- k) Note that funding awarded by government to help van, minibus, coach, HGV owners upgrade and mitigate against the economic impact of a Greater Manchester-wide Category C charging CAZ that has not been committed would be redistributed under Greater Manchester's Investment-led Plan.
- l) Agree that the funding for HGVs should be closed to new applicants and applicants that have an existing funding award should be given to 1st January 2025 to spend the committed funding.
- m) Note that from an equality impacts perspective, the Investment-led Plan would deliver an air quality improvement that benefits individuals with protected characteristics. An air quality improvement is likely to be faster for the Investment-led Plan than a benchmark CAZ due to the former achieving compliance earlier.
- n) Request that the government gives urgent consideration to agreement to the removal of the 1309 signs installed for a Greater Manchester-wide category C charging CAZ across Greater Manchester and its boundary Authorities, as the appraisal shows that only the Investment-led Plan meets the legal requirement to deliver compliance in the shortest possible time and by 2026 at the latest and therefore the signs are no longer required.

- o) Note the Investment-led Plan would require an additional £22.9m of funding versus £56m for a benchmark CAZ when considering whole life costs.
 - p) Agree a delegation is made to the Chief Executive, GMCA and TfGM, in consultation with the Greater Manchester Clean Air Lead to approve the final submission of material to the government's Joint Air Quality Unit and deal with any supplementary requests from the Joint Air Quality Unit in support of the appraisal.
2. That it be noted that the population health need for cleaner air be first and foremost.
 3. That it be noted that Members sought assurances that the modelling undertaken had been done so far through the best currently available data. However, there remained a number of variable factors in relation to behaviour change so there would always be some uncertainty regarding a forecasted position.
 4. That it be noted that continued efforts were required to address the congestion caused by roadworks across Greater Manchester whilst also recognising that local measures should also be considered to address the number of short journeys taken by car.
 5. That it be noted that the GMCA should continue to lobby government for additional powers to enforce antisocial behaviour, dangerous driving, and speed exceedances on the Greater Manchester road network in support of the proposed city-centre interventions.
 6. That it be noted that the GMCA should be clear with the public of the overall cost of developing, implementing, and decommissioning the Plan from the outset in order to build public trust for the proposed investment-led approach.
 7. That an independent review into the lessons learnt from the CAZ process take place in due course, with a focus on how LAs, the GMCA and government could work more effectively together.
 8. That the Greater Manchester Clean Air Scrutiny Committee continue to keep a watching brief on this agenda as it moved forward.

A report was presented by Megan Black, Head of Logistics and Environment, TfGM, which provided an update on the funding received from government, the expenditure made and the funding requirements that have emerged as the new Plan was developed to the end of November 2023.

RESOLVED/-

1. The Greater Manchester Joint Clean Air Scrutiny Committee is requested to consider and comment on the report and note the recommendations which will be considered by the Quality Administration Committee at their meeting on the 20 December 2023:
 - a) Note this paper provides further details on the aggregate spend following on from the “GM Clean Air Plan – Expenditure Update” dated 26 October 2022 which provided spend to the end of September 2022;
 - b) Note the funding received from Government, the expenditure made and the funding requirements that have emerged as the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan has been developed;
 - c) Note an additional £8.2 million of forecast expenditure, for the FY 2023/24, requires funding from JAQU and is subject of an additional funding request to cover the ongoing case development work as well as the operational costs for the Clean Air Zone and Financial Support Scheme;
 - d) Note that TfGM and JAQU reached an agreement in Q4 2022/23 over the funding required to fund the continued development of the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan to fill the gap that would have been covered by the CAZ revenues and £12.2 million was provided to fund that shortfall and covered the period up to 31st March 2023.

- e) Note that TfGM is unable to materially change or terminate the contracts that have been put in place for the delivery of a charging Clean Air Zone or the delivery of the Financial Support Scheme, until a formal decision is received from the government.

JCAS/10/23 DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Chair thanked Members and Officers for the contributions at today's meeting. The Chair would report Members feedback to the Clean Air Administration Committee on 20 December 2023.

RESOLVED/-

To be arranged as and when required in accordance with the committee's Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure.