

# CREATE GM

2024-2030



The Greater Manchester  
Strategy For Culture,  
Heritage And Creativity

**GREATER  
MANCHESTER**  
DOING CULTURE DIFFERENTLY



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From stunning heritage buildings and unique collections to cutting edge creative technology that links residents and businesses with opportunities and perspectives from all over the world, creativity, culture, and heritage are hugely important to Greater Manchester.

Our rich heritage and history speak of the impact our city region has had on the world. We have vibrant city and town centres filled with historically significant buildings, vitally important libraries innovative and beloved cultural institutions, each one telling stories of who we were, who we are and who we hope to be.

We have world-class festivals and iconic music venues that welcome talent and audiences from all over the globe. We recognise the need to protect and promote these world-class assets while supporting, nurturing, and providing space for the next generation of artists, creative businesses and changemakers.

Alongside physical expressions of creativity in our everyday lives, culture plays an equally important, less tangible, role in our individual and collective expression of who we are and what we have to offer the world. Culture, creativity, and heritage also help us make sense of the world, improve people's physical and mental health and wellbeing, and provide moments of individual and collective joy.

From classic literature, poetry, music, theatre, dance and art to industrial, natural, and intangible heritage, Greater Manchester has long punched above its weight in terms of global cultural and historic impact, with stories, creations, and scenes, forged in our ten districts, putting our city region on the map and in the hearts and minds of people all over the world. The creativity of our people and the unique character of our places attract people and businesses from all over the world and our cultural offer is regularly cited as one of the main reasons people choose to visit, study, locate, or invest here.

While the importance and impact of culture, creativity and heritage to Greater Manchester is well understood that does not mean that we can take their continued existence or success for granted. In fact, at the start of in 2024, we need to do the opposite.

From the impact of international issues like global conflict, climate crisis, COVID-19, an ageing population and the rise of artificial intelligence to more local issues like the cost of living crisis and the impacts of austerity, the de-prioritisation of creative subjects in the curriculum and an increasingly stark mental health crisis, for many of our residents, including those working in the culture, heritage and the creative industries, things

have never been more difficult.

If we are to maintain and further develop the world-class cultural infrastructure, heritage assets, creative output and reputation of Greater Manchester, conscious action needs to be taken to support and protect our assets, artists, and organisations, to improve access, opportunity, and representation, and to ensure that Greater Manchester keeps pace in an increasingly complex global landscape.

CreateGM will set out how, over the next five years, we can protect, develop, and democratise culture, heritage, and creativity in Greater Manchester so we can continue to share our stories with the world and reap the societal and economic benefits of a thriving creative ecosystem.

We will better align our creative organisations and people with emerging opportunities in Greater Manchester like the Greater Manchester Baccalaureate that will give a clear path to all young people in Greater Manchester, whatever their interests, ambitions and passions. The MBacc will guide the two in three young people in Greater Manchester who do not go into higher education towards subjects which will maximise their chances of getting a good job in our vibrant regional economy, providing culture, heritage and creative organisations with the talent they need to thrive while reducing inequalities within the sector.

As well as providing our young people with clear routes into our thriving creative industries, we will better harness the power of culture, heritage and creativity to inspire and provide a safe space for young people at risk of harm or on the cusp of criminality.

We will make sure that the ambitions of Greater Manchester's creative health strategy are realised, working closely with GMNHS partners to support our residents to live well, harnessing the power of creativity to improve lives and reduce pressures on the health system.

As Greater Manchester continues to develop at pace we will work with colleagues to ensure that culture and creativity are at the heart of new developments and that the history and heritage of our places are protected and promoted, recognising the importance of these sectors in the collective and individual identities of our people and the success and vibrancy of our places.

We will align culture, heritage and the creative industries with wider Greater Manchester plans for economic growth, ensuring they feature in Growth Location plans and that their full potential, as drivers and contributors to growth, are recognised.



With complex and competing priorities, challenges and opportunities, Greater Manchester needs a clear strategic plan for culture, heritage, and the creative industries so residents, businesses and local and national partners can work together to maximise the potential impact of culture, heritage, and the creative industries across our city region.

CreateGM will guide Greater Manchester's strategic interventions over the next five years, with an accompanying delivery plan, outcomes framework and investment approach to support delivery.

With clear Vision and Mission statements and priorities for action, CreateGM will harness the ambition, ability and creativity of Greater Manchester's people, places, and partners, cementing and enhancing the vital role culture, heritage and the creative industries play in the lives of our residents, the vibrancy of our places and the reputation of our great city region.

### **Vision**

Greater Manchester: A place of rich history, innovation and compassion, where the creativity of our people and the distinctiveness of our places can delight, inspire, provoke and change our world for the better.

### **Mission**

Greater Manchester will care for and invest in our artists, audiences, heritage assets and cultural organisations, creating the conditions for creative businesses and communities to thrive and for people to enjoy, create, learn, understand and express themselves.









## Priorities

Priorities for the strategy will be split into two distinct areas: Foundational Priorities and Thematic Priorities.

### Foundational Priorities

Foundational Priorities are areas where conscious action needs to be taken to ensure the sustainability, success and accessibility of culture, heritage, and creativity in Greater Manchester over the life of this strategy.

Foundational priorities will shape how we deliver our thematic priorities, improving transparency and accountability while working with partners to improve understanding and conditions within the sector.

#### 1) Insight

#### 2) Representation

#### 3) Care

#### 4) Ethics

Insight, data, research, representation, and space to discuss complex local, national, and international issues, as well as conscious care for our buildings, stories, creative, heritage and cultural workers and organisations, will be key to the success of culture, heritage, and creativity in Greater Manchester.

We will work with partners to develop, deliver, and manage structures, programmes, and policy across the four foundational priorities to ensure that Greater Manchester is providing the very best support, guidance, and intelligence to sector partners in the region.

### Thematic Priorities

Thematic Priorities are areas of existing strength or opportunity with Greater Manchester, where our sector partners are already delivering exceptional work or where there is real opportunity to better align the work of culture, heritage and the creative industries with Greater Manchester's wider strategic priorities and ambitions.

#### 5) Wellbeing

Health, Wellbeing, Ageing

#### 6) Prosperity

Economy, Education, Skills, Talent

#### 7) Environment

Place, Environmental Sustainability

#### 8) Reputation

Visitor Economy, Trade, Vibrancy

Future investment in culture, heritage and creativity will be guided by these thematic priorities.

We will support exceptional people, projects and organisations that contribute to these key areas of focus as well as improving links between the sector and partners in Greater Manchester.

Key delivery partners for these priorities include departments within GMCA and across our ten districts as well as local and national partners including GMNHS, Transport for Greater Manchester, Marketing Manchester, Greater Manchester Business Growth Hub, MIDAS, GM Universities, schools and colleges, GM Libraries and Archives, GM Chamber of Commerce, 10GM, Arts Council England, Historic England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Visit England and Government Departments including DCMS, DLUHC, DFE and DBT.

### Objectives

CreateGM has seven objectives that will guide activity through the life of the strategy. Each objective will be accompanied by measurable targets, which will be co-developed with partners across Greater Manchester and beyond during year one of the strategy. By 2030 we will work to ensure that;

- 1) Greater Manchester residents are represented in policy development and governance. Key decisions about culture, heritage investment and policy are based on robust insight and data.
- 2) All Greater Manchester residents have the opportunity to create, contribute to and enjoy Greater Manchester's rich culture and heritage offer.
- 3) Culture, heritage and the creative industries are properly recognised in the development and delivery of wider Greater Manchester policies and strategies, including the MBacc, Places for Everyone, Growth Locations, Harm Reduction, Ageing Well and more.
- 4) There are clear and equitable pathways between talent and opportunity for those who want to pursue and develop a career in culture, heritage, and the creative industries.
- 5) People working in culture, heritage and the creative industries in Greater Manchester are treated with care and respect and receive fair remuneration for their work.
- 6) Greater Manchester is known around the world for its distinctive creative output that reflects our people, places and history and supports our residents to explore, navigate and make sense of their future.
- 7) Culture, heritage, and the creative industries in Greater Manchester are valued, supported, and protected in recognition of the vital role they play in the vibrancy and prosperity of our places and the wellbeing of our people.







The first ever Greater Manchester Culture Strategy, *Grown in Greater Manchester, Known Around The World*, was published in Spring, 2018. The strategy set out a five-year vision for culture across the city region. The strategy drew inspiration from and was supported by the ten districts of Greater Manchester, with a focus on codifying a shared vision for the city region that capitalised on the unique strengths and opportunities available in Greater Manchester. You can read how we delivered the strategy in our Greater Manchester Culture Strategy Review.

Much has happened since the first Greater Manchester Culture strategy was published, from COVID-19, Brexit, and national political change to brand new technologies that will forever change the creative landscape. Importantly, all ten districts of Greater Manchester have significantly developed their individual strategic approaches to culture, heritage, and creativity in their borough. From *Suprema Lex* in Salford and *Pioneering Creativity* in Rochdale to *Different Cultures; Same Horizons* in Bury, there has been a marked shift in the importance placed on culture, heritage, and the creative industries in every district of Greater Manchester.

There has also been a huge amount of work undertaken by GMCA. Our new investment approach, which will run between 2023 and 2026, will see £4m p/a invested in the sector, a 40% increase since 2018.

This new investment approach aligns with broader GMCA developments that have taken place over the past five years, including a new Greater Manchester Strategy, *Places for Everyone*, a Creative Health Strategy developed and supported by GMNHS, and *Nighttime Economy Strategy*. There have also been significant developments in devolution, with GM's Trailblazer devolution deal, signed in 2023, bringing more powers and investment to the city region.

Key partners, including Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic England have new strategies too, which can and should work alongside this strategy as we better align our work through a new strategic partnership and Memorandum of Understanding, developed as part of GM's Trailblazer Devolution Deal.

Also, since the first Greater Manchester Culture Strategy was published every borough of Greater Manchester has undertaken significant consultation to better understand what residents, businesses and visitors and visitors to want to see in terms of support for culture, heritage and the creative industries across their cities and towns.

A summary of all ten district strategies is available as Appendix A.

The priorities included within CreateGM are areas where there is distinct need and desire for collaboration across the ten districts of Greater Manchester and beyond. Where ambitions align, opportunities are significant and where challenges require collective understanding and action.

### **Culture, heritage, and the creative industries**

As well as the interdependencies between the various strategies it is useful to articulate the interdependencies between culture, heritage, and the creative industries. These interdependencies inform the priorities within this strategy and will be key in maximising the impact of CreateGM.

When exploring the importance of culture, heritage and the creative industries to the prosperity and reputation of our places, for example, there is an understanding that our rich heritage, both physical and intangible, is central to the vibrancy and distinctiveness of our towns and city centres. Our heritage is central to the stories we tell each other and the world about Greater Manchester which in turn acts as a draw to visitors, students, and investors.

Similarly, when we look at the role the three sectors play in the wellbeing of our people, our work should reflect the multiplicity of cultures within Greater Manchester and the importance of self-expression and participation to our residents' health and wellbeing. If our residents do not draw distinctions between the way a concert, performance or TV show and the way exploring our natural and industrial heritage or visiting a museum or library, makes them feel, neither should we when defining and developing our strategic interventions.



## Greater Manchester

Greater Manchester is one of the country's most successful city-regions, home to more than 2.8 million people and with an economy bigger than that of Wales or Northern Ireland. Our vision is to make Greater Manchester one of the best places in the world to grow up, get on and grow old. Greater Manchester has been at the forefront of the UK economy since the industrial revolution. Across the conurbation our historic sites, mills and civic buildings tell the story of our city region through the ages.

Greater Manchester has been a bastion of innovation, the site where the atom was split and the home of graphene, and a centre of culture and creativity. Today, Greater Manchester is the largest city region economy outside London with a gross value added of close to £75 billion. It is the home to world-leading businesses, with thriving advanced manufacturing, health innovation, clean growth, creative, digital and technology sectors.

Greater Manchester's Trailblazer Devolution Deal provides the city region with greater control than ever before over the levers of economic prosperity and will create job opportunities, increase productivity, and takes GMCA's ability to coordinate and locally-tailor devolved action to a new level.

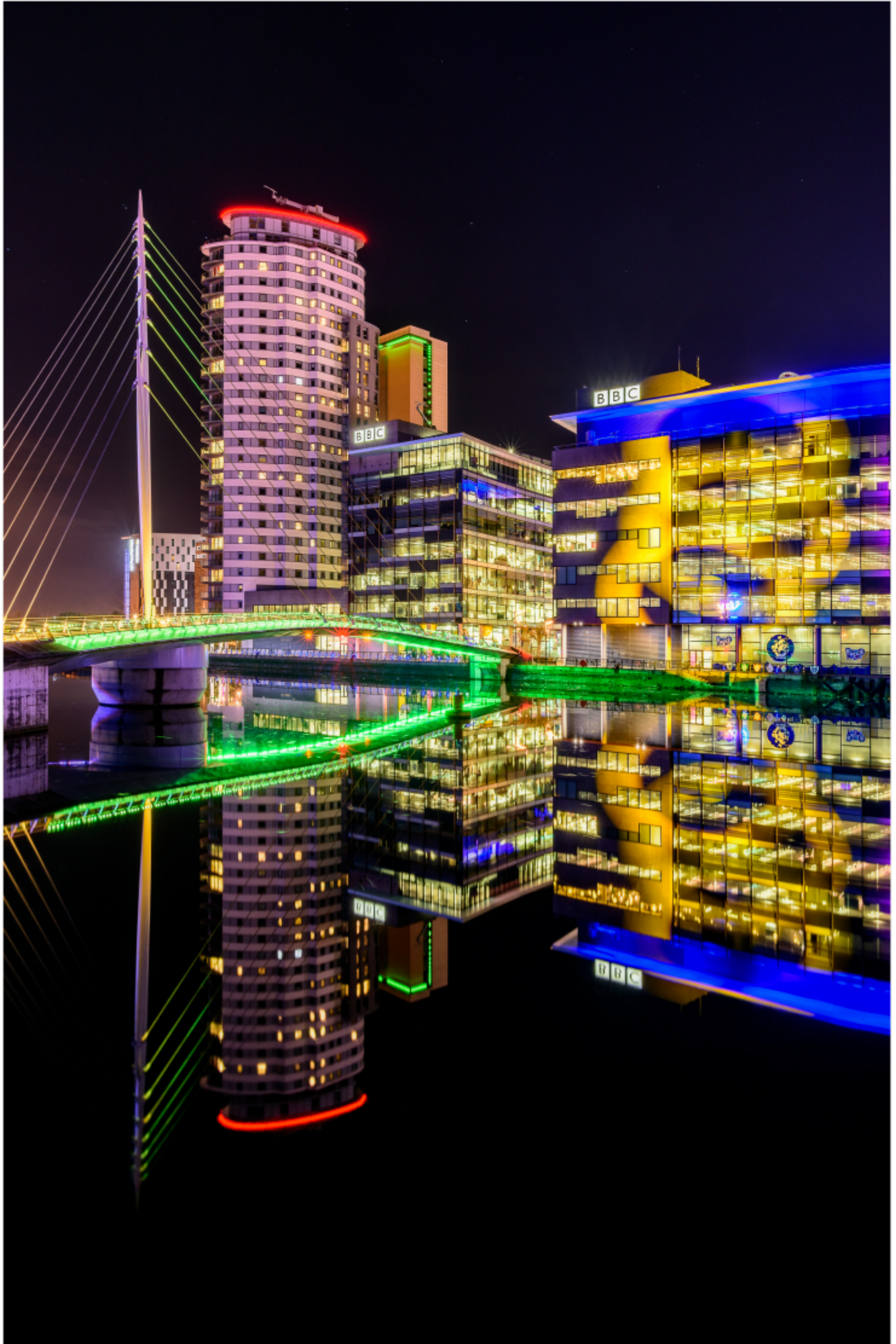
From Places for Everyone, Growth Locations, our plans for improved technical education through the MBacc, our long-term transport strategy, our approach to integrated care, ageing, GM Moving, digital and the broader Greater Manchester Strategy, our city region has never been clearer in the collective action required to improve the lives wellbeing of our residents and the vibrancy and prosperity of our places. All these strategies are delivered by GMCA through our clearly defined ways of working.

These key developments provide real opportunity for culture, heritage, and the creative industries in Greater Manchester. Our sectors will play a vital role in the delivery of GM's ambitions and in turn, the opportunities within Greater Manchester, to strengthen our sector and ensure that everyone can enjoy and explore our culture and heritage and develop and express their creativity, are significant.

CreateGM will work within existing and, where necessary, create new systems, structures, and programmes to support our residents and partners to navigate, collaborate and support the ambitions of Greater Manchester, with Foundational and Thematic Priorities providing structure and focus for this work.









**In 2023, GMCA agreed a new investment approach, including investment of almost £4m p/a . The new investment approach includes three-year grant funding for 40 Greater Manchester organisations through the Spirit and Sustain funds as well as continued support for strategic activity like the Greater Manchester Town of Culture, Creative Improvement Districts, the Greater Manchester Music Commission and StreamGM.**

The new approach also included two new funds, Inspire, a small grants programme for creative freelancers and small culture, heritage, and creative businesses, which launched in January 2024 and Collaborate, an innovation fund, designed to deliver Greater Manchester Strategy priorities, which will launch in 2024.

In 2025, GMCA will begin the process of looking at the investment approach for April 2026 onwards, which will be closely informed by priorities within this strategy. While the Spirit, Sustain, Inspire, Collaborate and Strategic strands are currently delivering against the strategic priorities outlined in this draft strategy there will be opportunity, when refreshing our investment approach, to further align our funding approach with the strategic priorities outlined in this draft strategy as well as the strategic and investment priorities of our local and national partners.

This could include clearer and more tailored support for heritage organisations and practitioners, libraries, the creative industries and organisations and individuals who do not currently access GMCA funding.

The priorities included within CreateGM are areas where there is distinct need and desire for collaboration across the ten districts of Greater Manchester and beyond. Where ambitions align, opportunities are significant and where challenges require collective understanding and action.

**Inspire** One-off development grants of between £500 and £2,000 to seed good ideas and sector development across Greater Manchester. This programme aims to support individual practitioners, freelancers, and grassroots and community organisations, with grants given across several thematic areas.

**Spirit** Supporting locally loved and important organisations, this grant programme will award between £20,000 and £200,000 per year. Spirit does not require organisations to deliver across all of Greater Manchester, but they will be of strategic importance to the “cultural ecosystem” of the city region. The “cultural ecosystem” is the whole of Greater Manchester’s cultural offer, all the people who work in it and all the people who take part in it in some way.

**Sustain** This strand will provide support for organisations who require £200,000 or more per year to deliver Greater Manchester-wide activity and support for artists and grassroots organisations in every one of the 10 districts.

**Collaborate** An opportunity for organisations in Greater Manchester to form consortia to deliver the strategic aims of the Greater Manchester Strategy: Greener, Fairer, More Prosperous. Consortia will be expected to match-fund activity to bring the greatest possible value.

**Strategic** This pillar represents Greater Manchester strategic funds to fund activity that support delivery of the Greater Manchester Culture Strategy, including Town of Culture, Creative Improvement Districts, StreamGM and the Greater Manchester Music Commission.







**On the 23rd of March 2023 Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) signed a Trailblazer Devolution Deal with UK Government, a key recommendation of The Levelling Up White Paper which was followed in 2023 by a Memorandum of Understanding outlining how devolution will be delivered.**

The Deal further embeds the role of local decision-making through additional powers and responsibilities over post-16 technical education, transport, housing, and regeneration, as well as new financial freedoms and new accountability arrangements.

The Trailblazer Devolution Deal had a specific section on culture, negotiated and agreed between Greater Manchester, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Arm's Length bodies that work with both, including Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic England, and Visit England. The text of the culture section of Greater Manchester's Trailblazer can be found in full at Appendix B.

CreateGM will provide a framework for collaboration between Greater Manchester and national partners, with opportunity to bring together local and national partners to deliver shared aims.

Beyond the culture-specific text within the deal, there is significant scope for Greater Manchester's Trailblazer devolution deal to have a positive impact on culture, heritage, and the creative industries in Greater Manchester. From Marketing Manchester's role as lead for the Local Visitor Economy Partnership to data sharing, investment in transport and skills to greater fiscal control through a single settlement, there is significant opportunity to better align local and national plans and strategic priorities.









Foundational Priorities are areas where we need focussed collective action over the life of this strategy. These actions will be led by Greater Manchester but will require support and engagement from local and national partners from within the cultural, heritage and creative industries and beyond. Successful delivery of our foundational priorities will be vital to the success of our thematic priorities.

Without improved insight and more equal representation within policy development and decision making and protection for our creative communities, buildings and stories, the creative output of Greater Manchester will not be representative of our people, opportunities will continue to be unfairly distributed and stories and talents and important heritage assets will be lost.

### Insight

Given the complex local, national, and international environment in which CreateGM will be delivered, our ability to make good decisions will be key to the success of this strategy and the health of our cultural, heritage and creative industries more broadly. To prioritise and maximise limited resources we will have to be confident in our understanding of the challenges and opportunities at hand.

This will apply to data about culture, heritage, and the creative industries, working with sector partners as part of our Devolution deal to understand analyse national data sets at a Greater Manchester level. These national sector data sets will be combined with local data, whether that is about the health, wealth, or demographics of our residents or economic or spatial data looking at areas of potential growth or specific need, to inform our actions, policies, and investment.

Insight is not just data, however. As we work to improve representation on our stages, behind the scenes and in our policy making and investment decisions, we will need to develop ways of better understanding what our residents want and need and whether we are delivering what we have said we will.

Over the five years of this strategy, we will improve our approach to data and research alongside more qualitative ways of improving our understanding of the wants and needs of our residents, businesses, communities, and visitors. We will have a codified approach to this work, ensuring we thread this vital information into all our work as well as improving transparency and advocacy about what we do and the work of the sector more broadly.

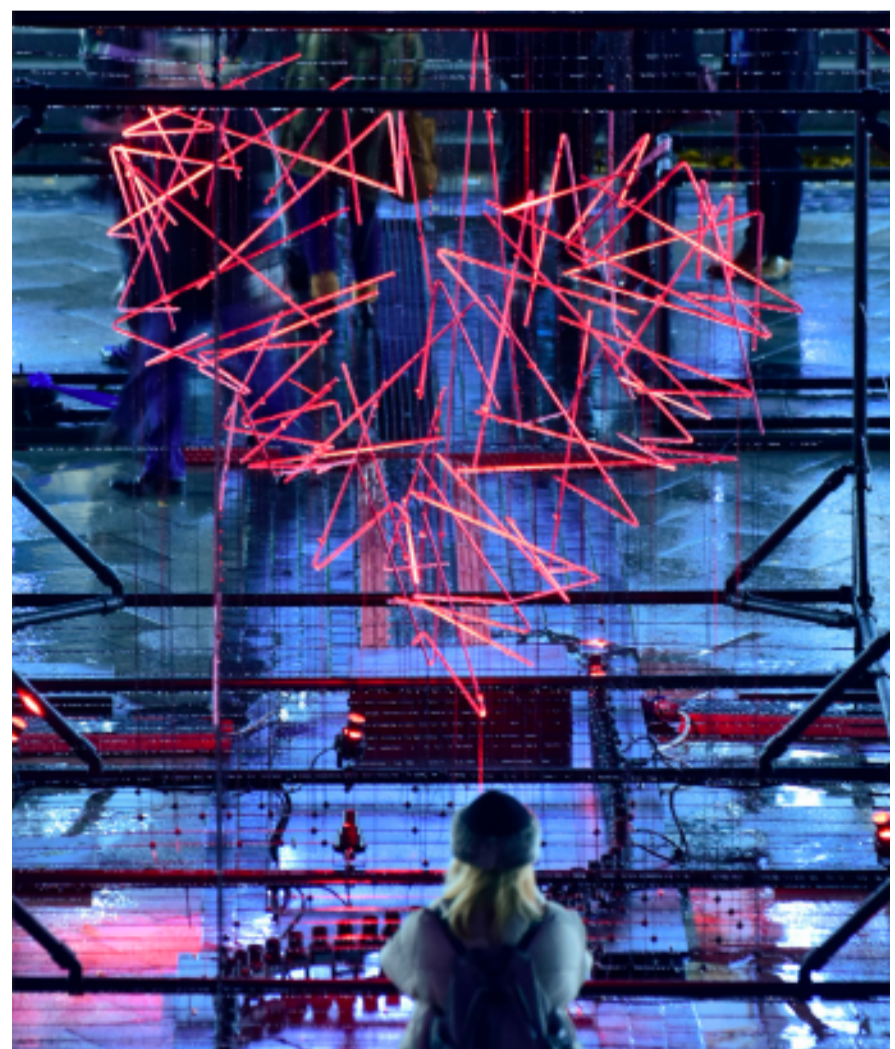
### Representation

Whether on our stages, in our galleries, behind the scenes or in our highstreets or boardrooms, representation matters. For too long, the people in positions of power in these spaces and places have not been representative of the people of Greater Manchester.

With improved insight into the people, communities, and spaces of Greater Manchester we will work to make sure that our activity is shaped and delivered by groups more reflective of our city region, with better representation from currently underrepresented groups due to gender, class, disability, race, religion, sexuality, and intersectionality of any of the above. By improving representation in our decision making and, on our stages, screens and gallery walls we will be able to better tell Greater Mancunian stories that are as distinct, diverse, and compelling as our people.

While this strategy will not be able to undo centuries of systemic under-representation and disadvantage, by placing people at the heart of all our work we can start to affect change and improve structures that currently exclude whole swathes of our population.

Through resident panels, tailored investment and developing and highlighting best practice CreateGM will collaborate with partners locally, nationally, and internationally to make Greater Manchester a place where opportunities are open to all and ambition and talent, not background, are determinants of success.





## Care

As skylines, high streets and the nature of work, leisure and creativity evolve and develop in Greater Manchester, conscious action must be taken to care for, develop and protect the people and places of Greater Manchester.

We will develop a framework through which partners can collaborate on the protection of the spaces, places, and stories of Greater Manchester. From our historic buildings to more intangible heritage, we need to actively and consciously care for and promote the heritage and culture of our city region, recognising the importance of these places and stories to our sense of identity and place in the world.

We will also develop policies and best practice guides that support artists to make a decent living from their work and protect them from harassment or unfair treatment as well as working with partners to develop ways to best support audiences and participants, recognising that careful consideration needs to be given to different communities if we are to unlock the creative potential of all our residents and improve access, representation and diversity throughout the sector in Greater Manchester.

## Ethics

From Artificial Intelligence and Intellectual Property, Freedom of Speech, and Freedom from Persecution to broader questions of identity,

ownership and climate justice, individuals and organisations in Greater Manchester and beyond will need to navigate increasingly complex ethical questions and situations throughout the life of this strategy.

While culture and heritage have a vital role to play in helping people work through these complex issues, we recognise the need to support our sector to understand what that role looks like, how their work might be impacted, and how to best to facilitate essential but at times uncomfortable conversations.

We will work with experts in our Information Governance team, Greater Manchester Police, universities, culture and heritage organisations and individuals with lived experience across Greater Manchester to investigate and provide practical advice on how to best navigate these complex issues through debates, seminars, and written guidance.









Thematic priorities are areas of genuine alignment between partners within Greater Manchester and beyond, where there are pockets of international best practice and opportunity to collaborate so that culture, heritage, and the creative industries can contribute to broader Greater Manchester ambitions to be a greener, fairer, and more prosperous city region.

In many cases, there are already areas of genuine innovation and best practice taking place to deliver these thematic priorities in Greater Manchester. CreateGM will support the further development of these existing strengths, investing in, supporting, and advocating for these key priority areas.

### **Wellbeing**

The Greater Manchester Strategy acknowledges the 'significant benefits' to health and wellbeing conferred by access to 'high quality culture, outdoor and leisure opportunities,' recognising the significant role culture, heritage and the creative industries play in improving the health and wellbeing of our residents and communities.

The positive relationship between culture, heritage, creativity, and health is well documented with evidence and practice demonstrating the positive links between involvement in creative activities and improved clinical and community outcomes and strengthened social ties. We recognise the positive physical and mental health outcomes generated when our residents engage with culture, heritage and green and blue spaces.

In November 2022, Greater Manchester launched its first ever Creative Health strategy stating that; 'Greater Manchester has committed to becoming a creative health city region'. This means that Greater Manchester will be the first city region in the world to realise the power of creativity, culture, and heritage in addressing inequities and improving the health and wellbeing of its residents'.

The Creative Health strategy guides the work of NHSGM Integrated Care and GMCA in supporting, developing, and delivering creative health infrastructure and activity and will act as a companion document to CreateGM. Other local strategies and interventions, including the Greater Manchester Ageing Strategy, the work of the Public Service Reform and police and crime teams, alongside work around Digital Inclusion, Skills, and Education, will shape, galvanise, and focus activity and collaboration between sector partners, GMNHS and the wider GMCA family.

Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic England all hold significant bodies of evidence around the value of expression, exploration and participation with culture, heritage and the creative industries to physical and mental wellbeing. This strategy will inform collaboration and closer alignment and investment in creative health activity in Greater Manchester, building on and expanding internationally significant practice and research in this area.

Creative health is also part of Live Well; Greater Manchester's commitment to community-led health and wellbeing for health equality and there is growing evidence of the role creative health can play in reducing health inequalities. Increasing the need for focussed activity in this area.

### **Prosperity**

Our people and our places thrive when culture thrives, and the role that culture can, and should, play in Greater Manchester's prosperity cannot be understated.

In 2019, the creative industries contributed £115.9 billion to the UK, accounting for 5.9 per cent of the UK economy and around 2.2 million jobs. Greater Manchester's Independent Prosperity Review identifies digital and the creative industries as one of Greater Manchester's frontier sectors. These findings are supported by DCMS's Creative Clusters report that identifies Greater Manchester's existing strengths and areas for potential for growth.

Beyond the direct impact culture, heritage and the creative industries have on the economy of Greater Manchester, these sectors also play a huge role in the broader prosperity of our city region, attracting tourists, businesses, and students. The soft power of culture and creativity, in supporting our businesses to attract and retain talent and move into new markets key, and the role culture, heritage and the creative industries play in the vibrancy and regeneration of our places should not be underestimated. CreateGM will align with Greater Manchester's Growth Locations to ensure that the potential of culture, heritage, and the creative industries, to drive and deliver growth, is properly recognised in the city region's long-term spatial economic plans.



When discussing the prosperity of Greater Manchester and the role culture, heritage and the creative industries play in that prosperity, it is vital to look at skills and education to ensure all our residents can access opportunities within these sectors and that our businesses have the right skills required to contribute to growth.

Developments in the Greater Manchester skills system, from the MBAcc and devolved skills budgets provide real opportunity to better align the needs of our businesses with the skills and talents of our residents. Providing a clear pathway for students from our classrooms and libraries into our thriving creative industries and world renowned cultural and heritage organisations will be a key focus for this strategy that will require sector stakeholders to collaborate with Greater Manchester schools, colleges, universities, libraries and training providers.

The pathway from education to good employment in culture, heritage and the creative industries and the need for these routes to be open to all will be key to the future prosperity of Greater Manchester, with the positive effects of a creative education impacting the sustainability of businesses in Greater Manchester, driving innovation and securing Greater Manchester's place as one of the best places in the world to live, study, visit and do business. There need to be clear and accessible pathways from our schools, colleges and universities to our cultural and heritage organisations, businesses, and creative industries.

## Environment

Culture, heritage, and the creative industries play a huge role in making Greater Manchester a great place to live. Our heritage and historic buildings and natural and industrial heritage assets take pride of place across our town centres and outlying areas and engender a sense of pride and identity. New cultural opportunities can also act as conveners and can play a role in increasing local home ownership, driving inward investment, and growing the visitor economy and it is important to listen to communities about what is important to them, from local heritage assets and grassroots venues to internationally acclaimed destinations.

Through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Places for Everyone plan, we have a unique opportunity to ensure that the cultural sector drives our prosperity by building places around the rich and diverse culture that surrounds us. In existing and planned places and developments, we must ensure that all communities have access to culture and heritage

in their places, paying particular attention to communities who face poverty, discrimination, and disadvantage.

In recognising the importance of culture, heritage, and the creative industries to our places, we must also recognise the challenges these places and our people will face as the climate emergency unfolds. Greater Manchester has committed to being net zero by 2038, twelve years ahead of the UK's 2050 target. This requires ambitious and targeted activity by all partners across the city-region, including those within the cultural sector who have a vital role to play in supporting people to make sense of and take action to mitigate challenges. Some organisations are already well on their path to becoming carbon neutral, but there are some organisations that will require targeted support from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and other partners to reach this goal.

We know that cultural venues across Greater Manchester are some of the best in the world. They attract visitors from near and far, and it is important that we help people to make environmentally friendly choices when travelling to and from our cultural attractions and that transport supports, not limits, engagement and expression. Greater Manchester is the first city-region outside of London to take its bus network back under public control and we will leverage this opportunity to ensure that residents and visitors alike are able to access the vast array of cultural experiences that are on offer across the conurbation. The Bee Network will consist of over one hundred electric buses, the fully electric Metrolink tram system, active travel, and eventually some local rail services. All these modes of transport have a role to play in connecting people with the sector, and in addressing the climate crisis.





## Reputation

Greater Manchester regularly features in national and international publications as one of the best places in the world for culture, heritage, and creativity. Insight from Marketing Manchester shows just how many people travel to our city region to visit our world-class culture and heritage sites bringing £4.4 billion p/a to the Greater Manchester economy.

Beyond physical visits to our city region, our global reputation is intrinsically linked to our culture, heritage, and creative industries, with Greater Manchester's history, stories, songs, design, and culture being shared across the globe.

While the maintaining and further developing the reputation of our cultural assets and creative output will be a key strand of CreateGM, we must also focus activity on our reputation as a place that supports and protects our creative people and places. If we are to capitalise on the significant opportunities within in this strategy, we will need to secure our reputation a place that values, invests in and advocates for culture, heritage, and the creative industries. A place where innovative

practices are developed, where our people have agency and where we take seriously our role as custodians of our cultural assets and stories.

This will require local and national partners to commit to the vision and mission of CreateGM, recognising the significance of culture, heritage, and the creative industries in our city region to all parts of the Greater Manchester system and the role Greater Manchester can play in the national and international success of these key sectors.

Marketing Manchester's emerging Visitor Economy Strategy will be a key partner document to this strategy and their role as Local Visitor Economy Partnership will ensure consistent, coherent messaging about the breadth and diversity of the offer across Greater Manchester.









Each year we will develop a programme of activity that delivers the eight priorities within CreateGM. For 2024/25, our delivery programme, which includes the priorities delivered against, will be;

1) Continue to invest in and evaluate delivery of activity funded as part of GMCA's Culture Portfolio (Priorities 3, 5, 6, 7, 8)

2) Continue delivery of the Inspire Small Grants scheme for freelancers, independent artists, and small organisations (Priorities 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8)

3) Launch the Collaborate strand of funding, with a focus on developing projects that support Greater Manchester to be greener, fairer, and more prosperous (Priorities 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

4) Continue Delivery of Creative Improvement Districts, working with district partners to develop creative placemaking approaches that respond to the needs of our places and communities (Priorities 1, 7, 8)

5) Manage and support the work of the Greater Manchester Music Commission and develop ways of communicating programmes developed and delivered by the group (Priorities 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

6) Support the work of the Greater Manchester Nighttime Economy Strategy, recognising the importance of culture to a safe, accessible, diverse, and thriving NTE offer (Priorities 6, 7, 8)

7) Support and celebrate Bolton's year as Town of Culture 2024 as well as selecting GM's Town of Culture 2025 (Priorities 2, 5, 6, 7, 8)

8) Continue to develop and deliver international partnerships, including delegations and trade missions to Austin and Osaka (Priorities 6, 8)

9) Support the delivery of GM's Creative Health Strategy (Priorities 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8)

10) Support the delivery of the Greater Manchester Ageing Strategy, including work with the Creative Ageing Development Agency (Priorities 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)

11) Support delivery of cultural elements of GM Mayoral Manifesto (Priorities 5, 6, 8)

12) Work with partners to develop a new approach to data and insight in Greater Manchester (Priorities 1, 2)

13) Work with local and national partners to develop a clear approach to better supporting, protecting, and communicating the value of heritage in Greater Manchester, using the Heritage Topic Paper, developed as part of Places For Everyone as a starting point (Priorities 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8)

14) Work with partners across the city region to develop the legacy of the DCMS' Create Growth Programme, supporting development of a clear plan for the support for the Creative Industries across Greater Manchester (Priorities 1, 3, 4, 6, 8)

15) Develop a new governance structure that improves transparency and representation and capitalises on the opportunities within Greater Manchester's Trailblazer Devolution Deal (Priorities 1, 2, 4, 4)

16) Develop and deliver a series of policy proposals, podcasts and information and guidance sessions around key issues for the sector (Priorities 1, 2, 3, 4)

17) Develop a clear pathway from school education to work in culture, heritage and the creative industries that recognises the importance of a creative education and supports the roll-out of the MBACC (Priorities 2, 3, 5, 6)

18) Support the delivery of Marketing Manchester's emerging Visitor Economy Strategy, ensuring the impact of cultural tourism is properly recognised and supported (Priorities 1, 6, 8)

19) Continue to develop StreamGM as a resource for local creative communities and globally recognised platform for Greater Manchester (Priorities 2, 6, 8)

20) Advocate for culture, heritage, libraries and the creative industries' inclusion in wider Greater Manchester strategies, recognising their importance to the vibrancy of our city region and wellbeing of our people (Priorities 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)



## **Appendix A.**

### **Greater Manchester strategies**

Since the first Greater Manchester Culture Strategy was published every borough of Greater Manchester has undertaken significant consultation to better understand what residents, businesses and visitors and visitors to want to see in terms of support for culture, heritage and the creative industries across their cities and towns.

CreateGM will provide an overarching vision for culture, heritage and the creative industries that complements the place-specific ambitions of all ten districts of Greater Manchester, with a focus on strategic action that needs to be taken at a city region level.

The priorities included within CreateGM are areas where there is distinct need and desire for collaboration across the ten districts of Greater Manchester and beyond. Where ambitions align, opportunities are significant and where challenges require collective understanding and action.

#### **Bolton**

A cultural renaissance

We want culture to be the heartbeat of Bolton, we want it to cut through everything that we do because we believe that culture characterises us as people, links us to a place, and connects us in a community. It provides inspiration and entertainment. It is the context for interaction and cohesion. As we seek to build a strong and distinctive Bolton, our culture will define us and binds us together. It is a shared vision, and we will all benefit from its success.

#### **Bury**

Different cultures same horizons

Our communities are organised and active in delivering grassroots creative programmes, whilst our professional artists are excelling in pushing the boundaries of quality, accessibility, and form. Our artistic organisations are creating and delivering exhibitions, festivals, and events internationally, and our performers filling stadiums. Our vision is to enable every community in Bury to tell their story and for these stories to be shared across our borough and beyond.

#### **Manchester**

Always everywhere: Manchester's cultural ambition

Manchester has consulted on a new ten-year cultural plan with the people of the city which will be launched in September 2024. Always, Everywhere: Manchester's Cultural Ambition sets out a strategic vision for the city's culture ecosystem under 3 key pillars that reflect the breadth and wealth of feedback through the consultation; Everyone; Everything; and Everywhere. It articulates an ambition to widen access to culture, celebrate cultural and creative activities in everyday life, and ensure that cultural experiences are distributed equitably across the city and beyond. The Cultural Ambition connects to other specific arts and heritage strategies, partnerships and networks and it is 'our' strategy, which together with residents, artists, freelancers, cultural organisations and stakeholders, we are collectively responsible for its delivery and success.

#### **Manchester**

It all starts with a spark

Manchester is currently crafting a new ten-year cultural plan for Manchester, together with the people and visitors of the city. They want to understand what type of creativity or culture gives people goosebumps, what big or small ideas they have for the city and what is at the cultural heart of Manchester communities. Manchester's conversation on culture will report in 2024.

#### **Oldham**

Oldham culture strategy 2020-2030

Our long-term vision is for cultural engagement to be a cornerstone of future life in Oldham. We want culture in Oldham to be more visible, accessible, inclusive, innovative, and exciting. We want our distinctive heritage and dynamic cultural offer to bring diverse residents, audiences, and visitors from all backgrounds together in Oldham – entertaining, inspiring, and enabling them to lead more creative, equitable, healthy, happy, and prosperous lives. We want to celebrate this unique and proud borough of Greater Manchester: a place where artists, cultural organisations, businesses, and communities can work closely together and are supported to develop and thrive.



## **Rochdale**

Pioneering creativity

Rochdale's rich history of ideas, innovation and cooperation is already an inspiration to the world. The people around here have made history. They've fought for free speech, protested slavery, written beautiful poetry, performed incredible music, starred on stage and screen, battled the hardest adversity, created new ways to work together, and welcomed the world. We brush the fringes of Manchester but bask in our own beautiful countryside. It is perfect for raising a family, a wonderful first home and a place to retire.

## **Salford**

Suprema lex

Creativity and innovation are at Salford's heart: it was formed in the crucible of the industrial revolution, founded on making things. Salford holds its own as 'the creative fringe to Manchester's economic powerhouse', but we want to grow this role into something deeper, something better for our city and our regional neighbours. We have a growing understanding of the roles culture and creativity can play, from our health and well-being to the ways that Salford's identity is understood and communicated. Salford's city motto is: The welfare of the people is the highest law.

## **Stockport**

The place that makes itself

We want as many people as possible to enjoy what has made here, to dream and make themselves. The more we make in Stockport, the more we buy, pay for, and enjoy in Stockport, the more people who come to Stockport to see and take part in what we do here, the greater our contribution will be to the local retail, nighttime, and leisure economies. A dynamic, ambitious cultural sector in Stockport will lead to a thriving, productive economy, create opportunities for people to develop, to progress in traditional cultural and new digital industries, and to learn the adaptive life skills needed in any job.

## **Tameside**

Our vision is to make Tameside the best place in Greater Manchester to create, learn and grow creative ideas by providing and supporting opportunities for new voices in culture. We will do this by building on local creative skills supported by national, regional, and local partnerships. Our aim is to make Tameside the go to place where new creative ideas, projects and businesses can begin, develop, and thrive in our diverse communities where country and city meet.

We will achieve this by leveraging the investments coming into the borough to benefit everyone in Tameside. By working collaboratively across

Services and utilising secured investment to develop skills and networks to enable growth of audiences and opportunities across all nine towns and everywhere in between.

## **Trafford**

A cultural strategy for trafford 2023-28

We want to make the most of the amazing talent and cultural assets that we have in Trafford, building on the heritage of the borough. We want to make the most of our borough's superb buildings and open spaces as well as attracting talent and audiences into Trafford. We want to make sure that what we offer is right for our residents and our creative industries, and that everyone has the opportunity to access the culture they want. Our culture is an essential part of Trafford life, and it is what makes living and working in this borough so special. We will make Trafford a place powered by cultural and creative expression that comes from everyone, and which will enrich lives and life chances.

## **Wigan**

The fire within

Drawing on local heritage, The Fire Within brings together Wigan's incredible cultural offer under five key curatorial themes; Wigan's Future Artists, Digital Wigan, Health & Happiness, Every Community Needs a Stage and A New Heritage. The Fire Within (2019-2024) acts as a framework for development of audiences, impact, arts practice, and infrastructure across the borough. This groundbreaking Manifesto, paved a new vision for Wigan as a place where people want to live, work, and invest. Wigan is currently developing a new cultural strategy for the borough, building on the significant success of The Fire Within.



## Appendix B.

### Greater Manchester culture devolution trailblazer text

229. Both the government and GMCA recognise the crucial role that culture, heritage and sport can play in supporting levelling up, through giving people pride in the places they live, supporting a vibrant local economy, and promoting wellbeing. That is why the government has made commitments to significantly increase investment in culture via Levelling Up Priority Places, and why GMCA is committing investment of between £5 million and £15 million of its UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation to cultural investment, alongside £4.3 million of locally raised investment via the Greater Manchester Culture Fund.

230. To maximise the impact of this collective investment, and to explore new ways in which culture and heritage can deliver on wider levelling up outcomes like regeneration, skills, business support and health and wellbeing, GMCA and the government will establish a Greater Manchester Strategic Cultural Partnership. This will provide a clear, codified framework for collaboration between national and local partners, identifying shared priorities and aligning resources, and will be underpinned by the development of a memorandum of understanding, which the partners will collaborate on to agree in 2023. The partnership will facilitate two-way exchange, connecting the government and relevant arm's length bodies with GMCA and delivery partners in Greater Manchester, and ensuring Greater Manchester's voice is heard on issues of national importance.

231. The Greater Manchester Strategic Cultural Partnership will enable local and national partners to commit to co-developing and delivering the cultural ambition of Greater Manchester, along with its residents and businesses, resulting in a five-year Greater Manchester Culture Strategy, to be published in 2024, that maximises the impact of a shared cultural ambition.

232. The revised cultural vision and the governance framework developed to support delivery of that vision will empower cultural partners to work across a variety of agendas, including economy, skills, and health, and will support local partners to make meaningful contributions to national policy development where it affects the people of Greater Manchester, driving innovation and prosperity in our places.

233. As part of this, the DCMS will work with GMCA and DCMS' arm's length bodies, including Arts Council England, Historic England, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, British Tourist Authority (trading as Visit England / Visit Britain) and, where

appropriate, Sport England, to support greater funding alignment, joint investment and strategic collaboration in the region, to maximise the overall benefit of local, regional and national initiatives that drive local economic growth, support wellbeing and build pride in place.

234. This could include increased alignment around funding and programmes, such as Creative Improvement Districts, Heritage Action Zones, and Greater Manchester Moving. Investment decisions should consider strategic priorities, such as those identified in the NP11 Place Strategy for the North, Levelling Up for Culture Places and Arts Council Priority Places, the Greater Manchester Moving in Action strategy, and other policies to support health, wellbeing, skills, and international activity. As well as supporting the practical development and delivery of shared priorities, this approach will encourage sharing of learning within Greater Manchester and beyond, developing new opportunities for culture and system change through shared endeavour.



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