

GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL
MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2024 AT THE MECHANICS
INSTITUTE

PRESENT:

Councillor Janet Emsley	Rochdale Council (Chair)
Councillor Angela Smith	Rochdale Council
Councillor Barbara Bentham	Salford Council
Councillor Robin Garrido	Salford Council
Councillor David Lancaster	Salford Council
Councillor Jake Austin	Stockport Council
Councillor Rosemary Barratt	Stockport Council
Councillor Vimal Choksi	Tameside Council
Councillor Rose Thompson	Trafford Council
Councillor Dane Anderton	Wigan Council

Also in attendance:

Kate Green	GM Deputy Mayor
Chris Edwards	Regional Probation Director for GM

Officers Present:

Ian Cosh	Chief Finance Officer, GMP
ACC Colin McFarlane	GMP
Lee Rawlinson	Chief Resources Officer, GMP
DCC Terry Woods	GMP
DCFO Ben Norman	GMFRS
Sarah Scoales	GMFRS
Jeanette Staley	GM Police, Fire and Crime Policy & Strategy Support Officer, Salford Council
Alison Connelly	Reducing Harm & Offending Lead, GMCA
Damian Dallimore	Assistant Director of Police, Crime, Fire & Criminal Justice, GMCA
Neil Evans	Director of Police, Crime, Fire & Criminal Justice, GMCA
Mark Knight	Strategic Lead for Substance Misuse, GMCA
Lee Teasdale	Senior Governance & Scrutiny Officer, GMCA

PFCP/52/24 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Rabiya Jiva (Bolton), Councillor Sandra Walmsley (Bury), Councillor Garry Bridges (Manchester), Councillor Peter Dean (Oldham) and Independent Members Angela Lawrence & Majid Hussain.

PFCP/53/24 CHAIRS ANNOUCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair opened by asking that the Panel's thanks be recorded to Independent Members Angela Lawrence and Majid Hussain following the end of their terms with the Panel, and that their contributions to the Panel over the past six years had been invaluable.

The Chair highlighted the sad news that the day of the meeting marked the 12th anniversary of the passing of PC Fiona Bone and PC Nicola Hughes. A minute's silence had been held of Manchester Cathedral that morning to acknowledge their brave and courageous actions on this day in 2012.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Jake Austin as the new representative of Stockport Council on the Panel following the standing down of Tom Morrison MP from his councillor role. Thanks were expressed to former Cllr Morrison for his contributions to the Panel over the previous two years.

Deputy Mayor Kate Green was then invited to provide an update to the Panel following the publication of the Baird Inquiry. An oversight group was now being put in place to oversee the delivery of the recommendations within the inquiry report. The oversight group would be chaired by the Deputy Mayor who would report back directly to the Mayor and provide regular updates to the Panel.

Deputy Mayor Kate Green provided an update following the publication of the Grenfell Tower Part 2 Inquiry report. As well as recommendations for the London fire brigade, there was a substantial number of recommendations made for fire & rescue services, regulators, local authorities and others across the country. A whole GM system response was being considered in response to how these recommendations would be applied across the GM system. There was full awareness that there were still a substantial number of buildings across GM that remained to be remediated, and the anxieties that this would be causing to

those who lived in these buildings. The new ruling that remediation measures would need to be applied to any building over 11m tall (previously 18m) would create significant extra levels of work. To enable the whole system approach, Deputy Mayor Kate Green and City Mayor Paul Dennett would jointly oversee the arrangements and it would be ensured that update reports were brought before the Panel, as well as the Housing Resilience Forum and the GM Housing First unit being established. It had been made clear to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that there would need to be additional funding made available to allow for the implementation of the recommendations.

The Deputy Mayor provided a brief update to the Panel on the early release of prisons programme. The numbers across GM were small, with the largest number being discharged into the Bolton district (circa 20). Significant work had gone into the tranche 1 release, which had seen prisoners due to be released upon reaching 50% of their sentence, released at 40%. It was emphasised that there was a clear criteria around who was eligible for this early release programme. Tight levels of scrutiny were taking place within the Ministry of Justice throughout the programme.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Panel's thanks to Independent Members Angela Lawrence & Majid Hussain be recorded.
2. That the Panel acknowledges the 12th anniversary of the passing of PC Fiona Bone and PC Nicola Hughes.
3. That the Panel welcomes Councillor Jake Austin (Stockport).
4. That the Panel thanks Tom Morrison for his tenure.
5. That the update from the Deputy Mayor on the establishment of the Baird Inquiry Recommendations Oversight Group be received.
6. That the update from the Deputy Mayor following the publication of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Part 2 report be received.
7. That the update from the Deputy Mayor of the early release of prisoners programme be received.

Deputy Mayor Kate Green submitted a declaration of interest in her role as a governor of Manchester Metropolitan University who supply the reports on drugs trends in relation to Item 16 (PFCP 67/24) of the agenda.

RESOLVED/-

1. That there were no declarations of interest.

PFCP/55/24 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 24TH JULY 2024

Members considered the minutes of the previous meeting, and the following points were highlighted:

- PFCP32/24: statistical breakdowns of stop and searches by ethnicity had now been provided to all members on 17th September.
- PFCP44/24: the Deputy Mayor requested a correction to this item which indicated that the GMP website would be publishing the implementation plan for the Baird Inquiry. For clarity, these updates would be published via the GMCA website.
- PFCP47/24: It was asked that it be recorded within the minute that there was potential underreporting of off-road bike related ASB within Salford.
- PFCP47/24: stats pertaining to all boroughs were provided to members on 17th September.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the minutes of the meeting of 24th July 2024 be agreed as a true and correct record.

PFCP/56/24 APPOINTMENT OF NEW INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

Jeanette Staley (GM Police, Fire and Crime Policy & Strategy Support Officer) presented a report seeking approval from the Panel to appoint the newly recruited independent members. Points highlighted included:

- The recruitment panel recommended the appointment to the Panel of two new members for a three-year term (with the potential for a further three-year extension) of Stephen Williams and Tony Gordon. Information pertaining to the two proposed appointees was detailed within the report pack.
- The recruitment panel also sought agreement for officers to contact the Home Office for approval to appoint a third independent member of the Panel (Duncan Craig) to achieve the balanced appointment objectives of the Panel.

RESOLVED/-

1. That Stephen Williams and Anthony Gordon be appointed as independent members of the GMPFCP for a three-year term of office commencing from the date of this meeting. The three-year term can also be subject to an extension of a further three years subject to the candidates, Lead Chief Executive for GM Police and Crime and GMPCP members approval upon approaching the expiry of the initial three-year term
2. That Duncan Craig be appointed as a third independent member of the GMPFCP subject to the approval of the Home Office.

PFCP/57/24 DEPUTY MAYOR ANNUAL REPORT

Report withdrawn from agenda to be presented at the November 2024 meeting.

PFCP/58/24 POLICE COMPLAINTS REPORT

Neil Evans (Director of Police, Crime, Fire & Criminal Justice) was invited to provide an update on how the Deputy Mayor exercises the statutory responsibilities on behalf of the Mayor to scrutinise and hold GMP to account, with reference to the monitoring and overseeing the handling of police complaints. Key points highlighted included:

- Revisions to the complaints process had been put in place in 2020 with the intention of seeing complaints through with more speed and so that the complainant could get the best level out outcome depending on the nature of their complaint – avoiding long running investigations.
- Improvements had been seen in the standards of complaints handling.
- It was noted that Dame Vera Baird had spoken positively of the changes put into place at GMP for complaints handling processes.

- The second element of the paper focussed on police complaints reviews for those who were not satisfied with how a complaint had been handled by GMP. These reviews looked at the complaint in its totality including all paperwork gathered. Judgement was then made as to whether it was considered that the handling and findings by GMP were reasonable and proportionate.
- As of March 2023, there had been around 220 reviews on the books stretching back over a period. Hard work over the past 12 months had now seen that number reduce to 15, with reviews now essentially being dealt with 'in real time'.

Comments and Questions

- Members raised a question in relation to schedule 3, where complaints were low level enough to be dealt with informally outside of the complaints handling process. Were these complaints still recorded within the system? It was confirmed that all complaints dealt with through schedule 3 were still included on the records system. It was explained that there was a new 'front door' being created for these types of complaints to allow them all to come through a single system, which will impact the figures recorded over time.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.

PFCP/59/24 STANDING TOGETHER 2022-25 – PRIORITY 3 YEAR 3 PROGRESS REPORT: STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES & PLACE

Neil Evans (Director of Police, Crime, Fire & Criminal Justice) presented a report that provided a year 3 update on the work to progress Priority 3 of the Police and Crime Plan 2022-25. Points highlighted included:

- The progress report showed good progress against the further improvements that had been sought through the last Peel inspection of GMP.
- An example was the progress made in neighbourhood crime, which had reduced by 15.4% over the last 12 months, approximating 41,000 less crimes.

- A significant amount of work had been put into the reduction of thefts from a person and large reductions had been seen over the last 12 months following a number of bespoke operations.
- An 8.2% increase (4000 offenses) in Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) had however been seen in the last 12 months. It was acknowledged that this was a priority within communities, and forthcoming crime safety partnerships would be focussed on driving down the numbers of ASB going forward.

Comments and Questions

- Members made reference to the ongoing concerns of increases in shoplifting numbers – stating that they would appreciate a more comprehensive update to be brought to the steering group on the measures being taken and the success to date of these measures. It was advised that this would be arranged.
- Members made reference to the refresh taking place on priorities. In terms of ASB, a better definition of the different types of behaviour taking place under this umbrella term would be welcomed, as this would support in data sharing across partners and better resourcing to tackle the most frequent forms of ASB and better understand what might be driving it. Officers agreed, stating that this would form a key area of discussion as the Community Safety Partnership summit due to take place in November.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That a report on work taking place to tackle shoplifting crime be brought to a meeting of the Police, Fire & Crime Steering Group.

PFCP/60/24 RIGHT CARE, RIGHT PERSON

ACC Colin McFarlane provided members with an update on the Right Care, Right Person (RCRP) approach being implemented in Greater Manchester on the 30th September 2024.

Deputy Mayor Kate Green advised that all partners involved in the launch of RCRP had confirmed their readiness for the go live date. Substantial arrangements were in place for the first few days and weeks, and it would be ensured that there was support in the force

contact centre and established escalation processes amongst partners. Metrics were also ready to start measuring the impact of RCRP from day one. The Deputy Mayor's strategic oversight group would continue to meet until at least spring 2025 for continued assurance that the programme was bringing the expected benefits.

It was noted that GM was one of the last regions in the country to go live on RCRP, and that this had been a collective decision across the partnership due to the infrastructure required across other organisations to ensure absolutely readiness for go live.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Right Care Right Person model being implemented in Greater Manchester be noted.
2. That the go live date of first phase on 30th September 2024 be noted.
3. That it be noted that the Board will receive regular progress updates as and when required.

PFCP 61/24 GMP PLAN ON A PAGE

Lee Rawlinson (Chief Resources Officer, GMP) provided an annual update on the key achievements of the 2023/24 Plan on a Page (PoaP) Improvement Portfolio, alongside any key mid-point progress updates against the 2024/25 PoaP Delivery Plan and associated programmes and projects.

Deputy Mayor Kate Green opened by stating that the programme management process seen at GMP has provided the GMCA team with a great deal of confidence. The work to date had been exemplary, to the extent that it had been recognised not only by other police forces but also by other public sector bodies well beyond policing and criminal justice.

Some key highlights were then drawn out of the report:

- The introduction of the Neighbourhood Policing model had put GMP well ahead of many other forces on improving local policing standards.
- The Force Crime Management unit was now much improved, especially in terms of the recording of crimes and the quality of investigations and outcomes.

- Digital contact options were being enhanced so that members of the public had further digital pathways for reporting.
- Criminal Justice hubs and the governance of these had been strengthened. With 80% of files being accepted at the first triage.

GMP was now entering its third phase of improvement work, which was to focus on sustainability. It was vital to ensure that, despite tight budgetary issues, that momentum could be maintained whilst still ensuring value for money on the public purse.

Comments and Questions

- Members enquired about phase 1 of neighbourhood policing. Noting one PCSO per ward. How would this work in practice? The Deputy Mayor explained that a lot of work had taken place on ensuring that the balance was right in neighbourhoods in terms of full warranted officers and the more community facing role taken on by PCSOs. It had taken longer than initially hoped to get these numbers to an ideal level of alignment. There was absolute confidence that the arguments for taking this approach would prove to be the right one. The problem-solving hubs in each district and PACT members were welcomed by members in terms of community engagement.
- Members sought assurances around timelines for when the neighbourhood policing model would be fully embedded, and were for example, PACT meetings now taking place across the whole of GM? It was advised that the slowing rate of natural attrition of PCSOs had slowed the ability to fully embed the model. It had always been a very ambitious programme, and the model had withstood some of the fluidity that had been experienced at the ground level. In terms of PACT meetings, some districts were not as effective as others yet. Work was continuing to improve these and any feedback on how to do so would be welcomed from elected members.
- Members referenced ward boundaries and how the revised political ward boundaries often no longer aligned directly with policing ward boundaries, creating confusion as to who the local officers were.
- Members expressed concerns about the weakening of links between the police and the community with the reduction in PCSOs. The Deputy Mayor fully agreed that it was vital to retain community contacts and trust, it was fully expected that

warranted officers would continue to maintain and build upon these relationships. Effective embedding in communities resulted in better intelligence received.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That all members be asked to feedback on the effectiveness of PACT meetings in their areas.

PFCP 62/24 UPDATE ON POLICE VETTING PROCEDURES & PERFORMANCE

DCC Terry Woods introduced a report providing an update on vetting procedures at GMP, both for new applicants and the existing workforce.

Deputy Mayor Kate Green stated that since taking up her role this had been one of the key issues affecting policing nationally in the aftermath of the Wayne Couzens and David Carrick cases and the lack of sufficient vetting that allowed them to serve as Metropolitan Police Officers. As a result, there had been reviews across all forces of vetting procedures, including washing all officer data through national databases. There had been real progress made at GMP in terms of how vetting had progressed through the vetting unit and the rigorousness of the processes now fully in place. The Deputy Mayor would next be asking the force to look at disproportionality in vetting procedure outcomes as this was an issue that had been flagged nationally.

DCC Woods emphasised how vigorous the vetting process now was. The vetting team at GMP was a large and highly structured one, which reported up to the professional standards lead, which in turn reported to the DCC. 12 documented principles were adhered to, and it was advised that a clear appeals process was in place for those who did not pass vetting.

14% of candidates in the latest recorded assessments had been refused, this equated to 142 candidates. Of these, 55% appealed with 97% of those appeals being unsuccessful. This emphasised that whilst the appeals were listened to, the rigid filter of the first stage was robust. In terms of disproportionality, currently 88% of white applicants passed vetting compared to 77% of BAME applicants.

Comments and Questions

- Members noted that the vetting period was valid for a ten-year period. Concern was expressed that this was a long period and compared poorly to the security industry which requires a re-vetting every three years. It was advised that GMP had to work to the national parameters for vetting. However, a number of safeguarding measures were in place for this period. The vetting team had direct synergies with the anti-corruption unit and the professional standards unit, this allowed for a review of any particular officers vetting to be undertaken at any time, and that this was done on a regular basis following the receipt of evidence that supported such a review. Also, when officers changed roles, they were reviewed, with many of these requiring a higher level of vetting.
- Concerns were expressed that there was not a statutory gateway to dismiss existing officers who could not achieve the lowest level of vetting. Members sought assurances that there were avenues through which to dismiss such officers. It was advised that again there was a statutory framework in place which restricted GMP, as officers were not 'employees' of GMP but rather employed by the Crown. Members were assured however that because of the safeguards already in place, that this was an exceptionally rare occurrence.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Panel notes content of the report and the action taken by GMP's Force Vetting Unit to protect the integrity of the Force, safeguarding both the public and the workforce from the risk of corruption and / or behaviour that does not accord with police service values.

PFCP 63/24

GMFRS ANNUAL DELIVERY REPORT 23-24

DCFO Ben Norman presented a report providing an overview of the Service's achievements and performance against the six strategic priorities detailed in the Annual Delivery Plan (ADP) 2023-24, and overarching Fire Plan 2021-25. Points highlighted included:

- 44 change related projects that allowed GMFRS to deliver better against the priorities were listed.

- 65% of listed key performance indicators had a positive direction of travel, with 35% in a negative direction or no set direction yet due to being new additions. DCFO Norman chaired a quarterly performance board and where there was a shortfall, items were called in and a deep dive principle applied to them.

Deputy Mayor Kate Green stated that it had been a year of significant achievement at GMFRS, recognised by the very strong inspection results received several months ago.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the paper and the full Annual Delivery Report (ADR) 2023-24 found at Appendix 1 be noted.

PFCP 64/24 GMFRS CULTURE FIRST UPDATE

DCFO Ben Norman provided an update on the cultural journey that has taken place within GMFRS embodied by its Culture First approach. Points highlighted included:

- GMFRS had been proactive in their work on developing the right cultural approach ever since CFO Dave Russel had taken up the role in 2021. This resulted in the development of a 'Culture First' organisation. This was always the first item on every GMFRS meeting and had key milestones which were adhered to.
- Independent reviews by Practice to Progress had been taken to the Deputy Mayors Fire Executive Board as part of a wider scrutiny process to ensure that Culture First was being fully embedded.
- A specific Culture First board was also in place, which was the first of its kind within the sector and was independently co-chaired.

Deputy Mayor Kate Green reflected that this was also a top priority for the newly elected government and Home Officer minister Dame Diana Johnson - who was due to visit GMFRS in the coming week specifically to view the good practice of the Culture First approach.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.

PFCP 65/24 REDUCING HARM & OFFENDING STRATEGY – YEAR 3 UPDATE

Alison Connelly (Reducing Harm and Offending Lead, GMCA) and Chris Edwards (Regional Probation Director for Greater Manchester) introduced a report that reviewed the Partnership Strategy which supported the most recent position statement and risk register surrounding SDS40. Key points highlighted included:

- The Police and Crime Plan consultation that was currently taking place included how to better align the GM Probation and Reducing Reoffending Plan, particularly in terms of alignment to and links with Local Reducing Reoffending Boards.
- GM had unique arrangements through the Justice Devolution Deal with a memorandum of understanding for leading on commissioning for rehabilitate services for people on probation. This had resulted in national interest and GM was now in the process of recommissioning these services, subject to the spending review.
- An opportunity was being taken to test victims' services referrals to the multi-crime gateway service. A process was in place now where any probation practitioner who identified any victim with concerns or issues about early prison releases could make direct referrals as an additional safety net to victim support services.
- There was pride in how far Greater Manchester Integrated Rehabilitative Services and Community Accommodation Services had been embedded. These were services designed to help prison and probation staff to reduce reoffending and were reflective of the strength of GM's unique model. These services had strong referral numbers and enhanced visibility.
- Support hubs for mental health services were proving to be a success across GM and work was taking place to see how these hubs could be built out to incorporate elements such as accommodation services.

Comments and Questions

- Members raised a query around the community accommodation service. the report stated that there had been 4687 referrals but only 2049 placed – what had happened in terms of these non-placed referrals? It was advised that not all

referrals were suitable for the service, and many of these would then be referred to other linked accommodation services that were more appropriate such as 'A Bed Every Night'.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.

PFCP 66/24 ORGANISED CRIME ANNUAL UPDATE AND FORWARD LOOK

Damian Dallimore (Assistant Director, Police, Crime & Criminal Justice, GMCA) presented a report providing members with an overview of Greater Manchester's partnership response to serious and organised crime. Key points highlighted included:

- The Paper highlighted top priorities within the programme challenger strategy.
- A huge amount of activity was taking place under each of the four thematic areas.
- Key successes in the previous 12 months had included the exceeding of the county lines closure targets set by the Home Office (155 closures against a target of 120); training on modern slavery and trafficking had resulted in many positive outcomes including the training of 300 modern slavery champions operating out of Manchester Airport; there had also been a significant increase in the collection of organised immigration crime data, resulting in the highest number of intelligence submissions nationally.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Panel notes the contents of the report.

PFCP 67/24 GM DRUGS INTELLIGENCE FUNCTION

Mark Knight (Strategic Lead for Drug Misuse, GMCA) introduced a report providing an overview of drug trend insights resultant from the GM Drugs Intelligence System commissioned by the Deputy Mayor. Key points highlighted included:

- A drugs early warning system was in place that brought together professionals from across the 10 local authority areas.
- Drugs intelligence research was commissioned through Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) and directly informed Operation Vulcan in Cheetham Hill and exposed the extent of illicit drugs markets in that area.
- Drug testing was also conducted by MMU under a special home office licence, this enabled for rapid testing and the monitoring of the current picture in terms of purity and adulterants. This was recognised as one of the country's key examples of best practice.
- Current concerns around the adulteration of the synthetic opioid nitazene in the local drug market were highlighted.
- Messaging and communications around the use of THC Vapes within schools was highlighted.

Comments and Questions

- Members referenced the use of THC Vapes and stated that there was also a role for trading standards in combatting this.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Panel considered the contents of the report.
2. That it be noted that the GM TRENDS Report for 2023/24 will be published in October 2024 together with Trend Focus Reports on Ketamine and THC Vapes.