

Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Housing Commission held on the 9 October 2024 via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Salford CC	City Mayor Paul Dennett, Portfolio Leader - Chair
Manchester CC	Councillor Gavin White
Salford CC	Councillor Lewis Nelson (GM Scrutiny Member)
Rochdale Council	Councillor Daniel Meredith
Salford CC	Councillor Mike McCusker
Tameside Council	Councillor Laura Boyle
Trafford Council	Councillor Liz Patel
Wigan Council	Councillor Susan Gambles

Independent members:

Inspiring Communities Together	Bernadette Elder (Voluntary, Community, and Land Trust Social Enterprise (VCSE))
Arup	Jane Healey-Brown (Private Sector)
Onward Homes	Bronwen Rapley - Vice Chair (GM Housing Providers)

North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Members:

Bury Council	Councillor Alan Quinn
Salford City Council	Councillor Phillip Cusack

Officers in Attendance:

GMCA	Anne Morgan
GMCA	Steve Fyfe
GMCA	Aisling McCourt
GMCA	Jill Holden
Homes England	Holly Harrow
TfGM	Mia Crowther
GMCA	Kerry Bond

PHC/001/24 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received and noted from Councillor Elaine Taylor (Oldham).

Apologies were also received and noted from Martin Lax (TfGM) and Carl Moore (Homes England).

PHC/002/24 Appointment of Chair

Resolved/-

1. Agreed to nominate Portfolio Leader, City Mayor Paul Dennett as Chair of the Commission for 2024/25.

PHC/003/24 Appointment of Vice Chair

Resolved/-

1. Agreed to nominate Bronwen Rapley, Onward Homes, as Vice Chair of the Commission for 2024/25.

**PHC/004/24 Membership of the Greater Manchester Planning and
Housing Commission 2024/25**

Resolved/-

1. To note the membership of the Commission for the 2024/25 municipal year.
2. That Homes England be added to the membership as observers be agreed.
3. That members of the NWR FCC be added to the membership as observers be agreed.

PHC/005/24 Appointment to the Green City Region Partnership

Resolved/-

1. That Councillor McCusker as a Member and Vice Chair of the Green City Region Board be the Planning and Housing representative for the 2024/25 municipal year be agreed.

PHC/006/24 Members Code of Conduct

Resolved/-

1. That the GMCA's Member Code of Conduct at Appendix A of the report be noted.
2. To agree to complete and return the annual register of interest form at Appendix B of the report.

PHC/007/24 Terms of Reference

Resolved/-

1. That the Terms of Reference at appendix 1 of the report be noted.
2. That Homes England be added to the membership as observers be agreed.
3. That GM members of the NWR FCC be added to the membership as observers be agreed.

PHC/008/24 Chairs Announcements and Urgent Business

Resolved/-

1. To note the recent changes to GM Portfolio Leaders:
City Mayor Paul Dennett is the Housing First Portfolio Leader.

Councillor Cooney, previous Portfolio Leader for Housing is now Portfolio Leader for Greater Manchester Pensions Fund Investments and Bee Network Pensions.

Mayor Andy Burnham has the Healthy Lives portfolio in addition to his Policy & Reform and Transport portfolios.

PHC/009/24 Declarations of Interest

Resolved/-

1. There were no Declarations of Interest reported.

PHC/010/24 GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Report on Affordable Living

Councillor Lewis Nelson, Chair of the GM Scrutiny Task and Finish Group presented a report detailing the recent task and finish exercise undertaken by the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee in relation to Affordable Living, key findings include:

- That the GMCA has an enabling role for delivery of affordable housing, with the responsibility sitting with local authorities and housing associations.
- Factors that make up an affordable home were explored, concluding that system defined affordable housing does not always translate to what is truly affordable for residents, and it is noted that many new social housing tenants require a range of additional support, increasingly falling to housing providers given shortfalls in support from the broader public sector.
- Acknowledging that the monthly rent/mortgage payment figure cannot alone define affordable housing the review widened its scope to address how we can collectively enable residents to achieve affordable living.
- Investigated case studies and approaches that have already unlocked development which are delivering results across Greater Manchester. To

replicate the examples of local best practice in multiple areas an effective collaborative approach supported by national government is required.

- That the review sets out the findings of the task and finish group which are hoped to highlight the issues relating to affordable living and offer some helpful recommendations to address these but is not a conclusive assessment of the housing landscape across Greater Manchester.

Questions and comments included:

The Chair noted:

The request of to continue co-production and design of future Housing Strategies.

The Shared housing allocations framework has been looked at previously and highlighted national developments to remove local connection barriers.

Members highlighted:

The need to increase the amount of housing in districts and to work together to tackle issues and best practices of the private rented sector.

That zero-carbon housing should be standardised and the need for the government to mandate solutions such as water management, sustainable drainage and nature-based solutions.

It was suggested that the proposed Annual GM Strategic Place Partnership event could be held more regularly.

Rochdale Council have undertaken a task and finish group looking at improving future housing demand, three housing sites have been declined government funding, with housing providers recently agreeing to build on the sites.

The delay to the spending review is creating short term challenges in terms of accessing brownfield funding and accessing the affordable homes programme.

Officers confirmed:

That the recommendations of the report were fed into responses to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) review.

That the recommendations will be considered in the next iteration of the GM Housing Strategy and the Housing First agenda.

It was suggested that land value capture uplift be included in the recommendations

Cllr Nelson confirmed that the referral to partnerships in the report includes landowners and housing development and agreed that there is more to do on retrofit for biodiversity.

The Chair thanked Cllr Nelson, and everyone involved in this work.

Resolved /-

1. That members support the delivery of the recommendations as detailed in the report be agreed.
2. To note that this report has been shared with the GMCA, GM Local Authority Councillors, Cabinet Members for Housing and Scrutiny Committees for their information and appropriate action.

PHC/011/24 Housing First Unit

Steve Fyfe presented a report and talked to a presentation confirming the launch of the Housing First Unit, setting out the Housing First vision for Greater Manchester (GM), the challenges of the current housing crisis, the headline measures the unit will help drive to build a new system and the potential for GM Housing Investment Loan Fund surpluses to support delivery of the Housing First vision that was agreed at the September meeting of the GMCA, including:

- The ambition of Housing First in GM – a healthy home for all by 2038
- System changes required to accelerate delivery workplan:
 - Supply: building a flexible system to drive growth
 - Standards: a comprehensive toolkit to improve existing homes
 - Support: a system that enables healthy independent living

- Building on what works
- A roadmap to a housing first city region and next steps
 - Detailed workplan to guide activity under three pillars
 - Wider engagement on the development of the unit and the roadmap
 - Discussions with government, including the Spending review process

Questions and comments included:

Members asked whether 75k homes and 10k truly affordable net zero aligns with the 175k places for everyone (PfE) and 50k affordable homes and how this would be broken down by district, and how the 3-year extension of the housing investment loan fund will be utilised to deliver the ambition as a useful mechanism to forward some of the proposals.

Officers confirmed that 75k homes is more ambitious than the targets set in PfE and the local housing need for Stockport, set by PfE. A search for public land suitable for housing development is underway.

It has been requested that the housing investment loan fund be extended beyond 2028 with additional flexibilities, GMCA's share of the returns from the fund have been used to support districts on capacity on infrastructure, planning and housing.

Members asked whether there are any opportunities to look at Treasury rules to campaign on how the Treasury views housing and the need to unlock future investment.

Officers confirmed that work is starting on the modelling approach looking at links between health and housing. This will highlight mental and physical health issues residents are facing in sub-standard homes and how these can be resolved, linking with NHS data on physical and mental health and wellbeing.

It was noted how this Commission has embraced the housing agenda with a request that groups and initiatives be collated and shared with members to enable engagement where necessary, along with a look across GM governance in this area to ensure it is effective, adding value and fit for purpose.

Members suggested that the use of modular housing be investigated, and government be lobbied on funding around this. Officers indicated that the use of modular housing is transitioning, though timelines are unknown. The housing minister has written to Homes England setting out priorities, including improving productivity through the uptake of modern methods of construction.

Members requested that GM community led housing be revisited to ensure adequate support is being provided. Inspiring Communities Together are working to achieve Registered Social Landlord status and are planning to be the first in GM. The chair recognised the importance of community voluntary and social enterprise sectors across GM and the need to ensure an asset base and revenue stream is available to the sector.

Housing Associations have been pursuing a cross-subsidy model to build truly affordable housing. Officers were asked to investigate the GM approach and relationship with housing associations and how truly affordable housing can be delivered across GM.

Members requested that officers investigate with education providers what work is underway to deliver construction industry training. Strategic thinking is necessary to agree what priorities will have the biggest impact in the shortest time.

Members expressed concern around the number of properties that are being converted into houses of multiple occupancy.

Resolved/-

1. That the proposed Housing First vision for Greater Manchester be approved.
2. That the programme of engagement with the government, private sector and broader stakeholders to gain support and contribution to the necessary radical actions be agreed.

3. To agree to the ambition to drive forward growth and increase housing supply by delivering 75,000 new homes in the current Parliament, including 10,000 Truly Affordable Net Zero (TANZ) homes, subject to necessary support from Government.
4. That the potential for GM Housing Investment Loan Fund surpluses to significantly assist in work to deliver the Housing First vision be noted.

PHC/012/24 Local Levy 2025/26

Jill Holden presented a report providing an update on the Local Levy percentage increase scenarios for 2025/26 being proposed by the North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (NWRFCC).

Members were asked to consider the proposal to increase the levy above the baseline of 1% to 4% for 2025/26 prior to voting and agreement at the NWRFCC meeting on 18th October

The levy can provide match funding, provides quick win funding of £100k for districts and various resources, the business plan includes projects that can be funded from the levy of which GM currently have two projects ongoing.

Resolved/-

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the increase above the baseline from 1% up to 4% be agreed.
3. That a report be brought to a future meeting to include the operational water management framework for GM and the levy priority and pipeline schemes be agreed.

PHC/013/24 Strategic Planning Update

Anne Morgan presented a report and talked to a presentation on key strategic planning matters affecting Greater Manchester, including:

- Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document
- Supplementary Planning Documents in relation to Holcroft Moss and the South Pennine Moors
- The recent consultation on proposed Government reforms to planning policy.

Legal challenge

The hearing in relation to the 4 grounds which did not receive permission to proceed been postponed to 12 December due to the lack of judicial availability.

Supplementary Planning Documents

Two draft Supplementary Planning Documents that link to the Habitat Regulations Assessment have been prepared and will be out for public consultation in November 2024 for Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations and South Pennine Moors, with a view to being adopted by March 2025.

The Government launched a consultation on revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in July 2025. The consultation proposes a change to the methodology for calculating Local Housing Need. The local housing need for Greater Manchester would increase by more than 30%, an additional 3,500pa.

It was noted that a Planning Bill is expected in 2025 and that further detail around subregional planning is expected in the Devolution Bill.

Resolved/-

1. That the report be noted.

PHC/013/24

Date of the Next Meeting

Resolved/-

1. That the next meeting scheduled for 5 February 2025 be agreed.