



AGMA
ASSOCIATION OF
GREATER MANCHESTER
AUTHORITIES

AGMA Executive Board

Date: 7th February 2025

Subject: AGMA Budget Update 2024/25 and Budget 2025/26

Report of: Cllr David Molyneux, Portfolio Holder - Resources
Steve Wilson, Treasurer to GMCA / AGMA

Purpose of Report

The report sets out the revenue budget for the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) 2025/26. It also includes the forecast outturn position for 2024/25.

The proposed charges in respect of AGMA to be approved for 2026/26 are included within the report together with the recommended allocations to the Greater Manchester local authorities.

Recommendations:

AGMA Executive Board is requested to:

- (i) note the report and the current AGMA revenue outturn forecast for 2025/26 shows an overspend of £18k due to increased Sharepoint costs which will be funded from reserves to show a breakeven position as set out in section 1 of this report;
- (ii) approve a budget of £2,106k relating to AGMA functions in 2025/26 as set out in section 2 of this report;
- (iii) note the forecast position on the AGMA reserve as detailed in section 3 of the report;
- (iv) approve the charges to the GM local authorities in support of the AGMA functions for 2025/26 of £1.532m, as set out in section 5 and Appendix 1 to this report.

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Risk Management – An assessment of the potential budget risks faced by the authority are carried out quarterly as part of the monitoring process.

Legal Considerations – See section 6 of the report.

Financial Consequences – Revenue – The report sets out the out the budget position for 2024/25 and planned budget strategy for 2025/26.

Financial Consequences – Capital – There are no capital considerations contained within the report. Number of attachments to the report: 0

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Background Papers

AGMA Executive Board: AGMA Budget Update 2023/24 and Budget 2024/25 – 9th

February 2024

**1. AGMA FORECAST OUTTURN AND BUDGET UPDATE
2024/25**

1.1 The forecast outturn position for the year ending 31 March 2025 is forecasting an £18k overspend on Sharepoint, which will be funded from reserves to show a breakeven position. Further information is set out below:

AGMA Revenue Budget 2024/25	Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000
Resources Available			
Contribution from Districts	1,501	1,501	-18
Contribution from AGMA Reserves	0	18	0
Contribution from GMCA	203	203	0
External income & contributions	159	159	0
Contribution from Resilience Unit Reserves	137	0	137
Total	2,000	1,881	119
Call on Resources			
Police and Crime Panel	77	77	0
County Records	224	224	0
Specialist Trading Standards	64	64	0
GM Archaeology Service	149	149	0
Waste and Minerals Unit	62	62	0
Ecology Unit	216	216	0
GM Protect Management	110	110	0
Flood and Water Management	34	34	0
Sharepoint	34	52	-18
Information Governance	52	52	0
GM Resilience Network	978	841	137
Total	2,000	1,881	119
Net Position	0	0	0

2. PROPOSED AGMA BUDGET 2025/26

2.1 The AGMA budget was previously hosted by Manchester City Council (MCC) and transferred into GMCA from 1st April 2023. The majority of the AGMA budget is shared by GM local authorities, the majority on basis of population and fixed costs for County Records and Police and Crime Panel. The population basis for 2025/26 has been updated to reflect the latest population census data of mid-year 2023.

2.2 The current scope of functions included in the AGMA budget for 2025/65 have an estimated cost of £2,106k which is an increase of £106k compared to 2024/25. This reflects an increase in line with the Green Book pay award (3%) to provide sufficient funding for the functions and the increased cost of funding Sharepoint which has previously been funded from AGMA reserve.

2.3 The information below shows a table of the proposed 2025/26 budget of £2,106k and provides a brief description for each of the existing functions:

AGMA Existing functions Proposed Revenue Budget 2025/26	2024/25 Original Budget	2025/26 Proposed Budget	Change
	£000	£000	£000
Resources			
Contribution from Districts	1,501	1,532	31
Contribution from Reserves	0	20	20
GMCA Contribution	203	208	0
External income & contributions	159	161	2
Contribution from Resilience Unit Reserves	137	185	48
Total	2,000	970	106
Expenditure			
Police and Crime Panel	77	79	2
County Records	224	231	7
Specialist Trading Standards	64	66	2
GM Archaeology Service	149	153	4
Waste and Minerals Unit	62	64	2
Ecology Unit	216	222	6
GM Protect Management	110	115	5
Flood and Water Management	34	37	3
Sharepoint	34	54	20
Information Governance	52	52	0
GM Resilience Network	978	1033	55
Total	2,000	2,106	106
Net Position	0	0	0

2.3 GM Protect Management

The GM Protect team is hosted by GMCA and funded by the GM local authorities together with the PCC's office to work with local authorities to develop and deliver the Protect Duty (Martyn's Law) in Greater Manchester. Under the new legislation, qualifying premises will be required to meet a series of criteria to ensure public safety, to mitigate the risk of a terrorist attack occurring and to

reduce the consequences of an attack should one take place. Delivery of the Protect Duty requires cross-sector partnership working, with the team reporting to Greater Manchester's CONTEST Board.

2.4 Flood and Water Management

Since 2010 the North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) has part funded (50%) a flood risk coordinator post (with a small operational budget) within each sub region/county in the North West. Following a report to GM chief executives in January 2020 it was agreed that the GM Flood and Water Management post previously employed by Rochdale Council on behalf of the GM local authorities, would be transferred to GMCA. It was agreed that 50% of the cost of the role would continue to be met from the Local Authorities as Lead Local Flood Authorities and 50% would continue to be funded from the Environment Agency (via the Local Levy).

2.5 Sharepoint

The Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference - (MARAC) SharePoint site is a multi-agency site that all the North West Authorities utilise to share data regarding safeguarding and abuse victims with various agencies such as the police. There are several regional sites such as Oldham MARAC, Trafford MARAC, and Bolton MARAC. Costs are paid to Wigan MBC as the host for this system and this contributes to the infrastructure, technical support, and backup costs. The 24/25 cost has increased by 30% since 23/24 which we are querying with Wigan MBC and proposing to fund the difference from reserves.

2.5 Police and Crime Panel

The GM Police, Fire and Crime Panel is the statutory elected member committee that scrutinises the work of the Mayor as the Police, Crime and Fire Commissioner. Police and Crime Panel came into effect as part of the Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011. This introduced new governance arrangements for police forces to create the statutory office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The local authorities for the police area must establish the PCP as a joint committee of the constituent councils and is responsible for the production of the Police and Crime Plan.

2.6 County Records

Greater Manchester County Record Office is hosted by Manchester City Council. It was opened in 1976, two years after the establishment of the metropolitan county councils in England and Wales. After the abolition of Greater Manchester County Council in 1986, it became funded by the AGMA. The main function of the Office is to store historical records relating to the Greater Manchester area and to make them available for members of the public for research. There are now some 4 miles of shelving of records, which date back to 1197. Greater Manchester County Record Office has a public search room where members of the public can consult archives for research. The record Office participates in the County Archive Research Network and has a fully equipped conservation department where irreplaceable documents can be repaired.

2.7 Trading Standards

Trading Standards hosted by Manchester City Council provides the metrology laboratories for GM local authorities. These are the laboratories where weights and measures equipment can be calibrated by each of the local authority Trading Standards teams when they are carrying out weights and measures checks in their areas.

GM Archaeology Service

2.8 This service is provided by the University of Salford to advise on identifying heritage assets with an archaeological interest and understanding their significance. This includes:

- Assessing the likely archaeological implications of development proposals
- Recommending any necessary archaeological work as a planning condition
- Liaising with planners and developers to mitigate impacts on significant archaeology
- Preparing briefs and advising on written schemes of investigation

- Monitoring archaeological works Mediating between clients and archaeological contractors Preparing research agendas within the planning process
- Enhancing the Historic Environment Record as a planning tool and public record
- Promoting dissemination of results from archaeological investigations

2.9 Waste and Minerals Unit

The GM local authorities are minerals and waste planning authorities. This means that they must ensure that there are enough minerals for construction to meet need and enough sites for facilities to meet waste management requirements. The local authorities are required by legislation to produce Waste and Minerals Plans and to keep these under review. The service transferred into the GMCA in 2024. As waste and minerals is a strategic issue two joint Greater Manchester plan have been produced:

- The Greater Manchester Waste Development Plan Document (DPD) was adopted in April 2012 and
- The Greater Manchester Minerals Development Plan Document in April 2013

GMCA monitor and review the plans as required, provide advice direct to the 10 Local Planning Authorities and engagement with neighbouring local authorities.

2.10 Ecology Unit

The GM Ecology Unit (GMEU) is hosted by Tameside MBC and provides specialist advice to and on behalf of the GM local authorities in relation to biodiversity, nature conservation and wildlife issues. This includes:

- Development and implementation of the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Informing the ecological impact of development proposals on behalf of planning departments, and provides advice on safeguarding wildlife on development sites.
- Identifying, surveying and designating sites of biological Importance in Greater Manchester.

- Advising other council departments and the general public on wildlife issues.
- Inputs into the preparation of Local Development Frameworks and other plans and strategies.
- Providing advice on national and international legislation and planning guidance relating to wildlife and nature conservation, including protected species.
- Advising on the management of local authority owned land, including the preparation of site management plans.
- Providing training for local authority staff and others.

3. AGMA RESERVES

3.1 The position on General AGMA reserves at 31st March 2024 was £455k. The forecast balance for 31st March 2025 after returning £350k back to the districts and a transfer from reserve to cover the Sharepoint Shortfall is £87k which represents 4% of the AGMA proposed budget for 2025/26 for minor in year variances.

AGMA Reserves	Actual Balance as at 31-Mar-24	Forecast Transfer in/(out) 2024/25	Forecast Balance as at 31-Mar-25	Forecast Transfer in/(out) 2025/26	Forecast Balance as at 31-Mar-25
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
General AGMA Reserves	455	-368	87	-20	67
% of AGMA Budget	22%		4%		3%

4. CHANGE IN SCOPE OF AGMA BUDGET

4.1 The AGMA constitution sets out the principles for joint working in relation to functions covered by the agreement. This includes providing streamlined decision making, excellent co-ordination of services across the combined administrative area, mutual co-operation, partnering arrangements, and added value in the provision of shared services.

4.2 One of the objectives of the AGMA Board is to streamline decision making where joint arrangements already exist, develop and agree current and new areas of joint working and develop joint working arrangements with the GMCA.

4.3 The AGMA recharge for each Local Authority is summarised in the table below:

AGMA Recharge	2025/26 Budget
	£000
Bolton	156
Bury	112
Manchester	276
Oldham	132
Rochdale	126
Salford	148
Stockport	155
Tameside	128
Trafford	129
Wigan	171
Total	1,532

5. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 In coming to decisions in relation to the revenue budget the Authority has various legal and fiduciary duties. The amount charged to the Districts in respect of the Authority's AGMA functions must be sufficient to meet the Authority's legal and financial commitments, ensure the proper discharge of its statutory duties and lead to a balanced budget.

5.2 In exercising its fiduciary duty the Authority should be satisfied that the proposals put forward are a prudent use of the Authority's resources in both the short and long term and that they are acting in good faith for the benefit of the community whilst complying with all statutory duties.

Duties of the Treasurer (Chief Finance Officer)

- 5.3 The Local Government Finance Act 2003 requires the Chief Finance Officer to report to the Authority on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. The Authority has a statutory duty to have regard to the Chief Finance Officer's report when making decisions about the calculations.
- 5.4 Section 28 of the Local Government Act 2003 imposes a statutory duty on the Authority to monitor during the financial year its expenditure and income against the budget calculations. If the monitoring establishes that the budgetary situation has deteriorated, the Authority must take such action as it considers necessary to deal with the situation. This might include, for instance, action to reduce spending in the rest of the year, or to increase income, or to finance the shortfall from reserves.
- 5.5 Under Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, where it appears to the Chief Finance Officer that the expenditure of the AGMA incurred (including expenditure it proposes to incur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to it to meet that expenditure, the Chief Finance Officer has a duty to make a report to the Authority.
- 5.6 The report must be sent to the Authority's External Auditor and every member of the Authority and the Authority must consider the report within 21 days at a meeting where it must decide whether it agrees or disagrees with the views contained in the report and what action (if any) it proposes to take in consequence of it. In the intervening period between the sending of the report and the meeting which considers it, the authority is prohibited from entering into any new agreement which may involve the incurring of expenditure (at any time) by the authority, except in certain limited circumstances where expenditure can be authorised by the Chief Finance Officer. Failure to take appropriate action in response to such a report may lead to the intervention of the Authority's Auditor.

Reasonableness

- 5.7 The Authority has a duty to act reasonably taking into account all relevant considerations and not considering anything which is irrelevant. This Report sets out the proposals from which members can consider the risks and the arrangements for mitigation set out below.

Risks and Mitigation

- 6.8 The Treasurer has examined the major assumptions used within the budget calculations and considers that they are prudent, based on the best information currently available.

Basis of Apportionment of Costs to District Authorities

- 6.9 The amount payable by each Council is determined by apportioning the costs between the Councils in such proportions as they (unanimously) agree or, in default of such agreement in proportion to the resident population. Appendix 1 details the apportionment of costs across the Districts.
- 6.10 The remaining functions, with the exception of those listed below, are apportioned to Districts on a population basis.
- Police and Crime Panel Support – Historic funding split 17% Manchester City Council and the remaining 83% split equally to the remaining nine Districts
 - County Records Unit – Each District pays an equal Contribution

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Detailed recommendations appear at the front of this report.

Appendix 1

AGMA Recharges 2025/26

Mid Year Population 2023	Total Charge £	Basis of Apportionment	Bolton 302,383 £	Bury 195,476 £	Manchester 579,917 £	Oldham 246,130 £	Rochdale 229,756 £	Salford 284,106 £	Stockport 299,545 £	Tameside 234,666 £	Trafford 237,480 £	Wigan 339,174 £	Total District Charges £	Cont From GMCA £	Other Income £	Use of reserve £	Total Funding £
Existing AGMA functions																	
Police & Crime Panel	79,000	Per Division	7,286	7,286	13,430	7,286	7,286	7,286	7,286	7,286	7,286	7,286	79,000				79,000
County Records	185,000	Fixed	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500	185,000	46,000			231,000
Specialist Trading Standards	66,000	Population	6,768	4,375	12,980	5,509	5,143	6,359	6,705	5,253	5,316	7,592	66,000				66,000
GM Archaeology Service	153,000	Population	15,690	10,143	30,091	12,771	11,922	14,742	15,543	12,176	12,322	17,599	153,000				153,000
Waste and Minerals Unit	64,000	Population	6,563	4,243	12,587	5,342	4,987	6,167	6,502	5,093	5,154	7,362	64,000				64,000
Ecology Unit	222,000	Population	22,766	14,717	43,661	18,531	17,298	21,390	22,552	17,668	17,880	25,536	222,000				222,000
GM Protect Management	100,000	Population	10,255	6,629	19,667	8,347	7,792	9,635	10,159	7,958	8,054	11,503	100,000	15,000			115,000
Flood & Water Management	37,000	Population	3,794	2,453	7,277	3,088	2,883	3,565	3,759	2,945	2,980	4,256	37,000				37,000
Sharepoint	34,000	Population	3,487	2,254	6,687	2,838	2,649	3,276	3,454	2,706	2,738	3,911	34,000			20,000	54,000
Information Governance	52,000	Fixed	5,200	5,200	5,200	5,200	5,200	5,200	5,200	5,200	5,200	5,200	52,000				52,000
GM Resilience Network	540,000	Population	55,377	35,799	106,204	45,075	42,077	52,030	54,857	42,976	43,491	62,115	540,000	147,000	161,000	185,000	1,033,000
Total	1,532,000		155,687	111,599	276,285	132,488	125,736	148,149	154,516	127,761	128,921	170,859	1,532,000	208,000	161,000	205,000	2,106,000