



## Greater Manchester Green City Region Partnership

Date: **17<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

Subject: **Greater Manchester Strategy Progress Report – Spring 2023**

Report of: **Mark Atherton, Director Environment, GMCA**

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### Purpose of Report:

To provide an overview of the key messages and findings from the second progress report developed, at 12 months into delivery of the Greater Manchester Strategy.

The full progress report will be published [here](#) on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

The information gathered for the report has shown a responsive set of actions have been taken to the main findings and the implications from the first progress report, although overall further pivot, pace, and scale will be required if overall GMS ambitions are to be achieved.

The progress report focuses on key strategic opportunities presented to Greater Manchester, raising visibility of how whole system responses and applying GMS ways of working can support maximising those opportunities.

### Recommendation:

The Partnership is recommended to:

- note the presentation of findings and that progress can be brought to a future meeting of the Partnership.

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## **Background Papers:**

[Greater Manchester Strategy Progress Report – July 2022](#)

[Greater Manchester Strategy Refresh – December 2021](#)

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 This is the second GMS progress report, at 12 months into implementation. The progress report builds on the findings of the six month update and reviews collective progress, areas of demonstrable pivot or responsive actions, and identifies timely strategic opportunities presented to GM which have the potential to further collective progress in achieving the GMS ambitions.
- 1.2 The progress report highlights areas of good practice and identifies opportunity for the greater embedding of the ways of working – which if fully utilised can support the attainment of better outcomes. The report provides comment on whole system / overall direction of travel, not a detailed analysis of individual performance.
- 1.3 The progress report has been developed following engagement with GM delivery group leads and local authorities. A review of the draft report and sense checking of the findings has been undertaken with a stakeholder panel, with representatives from across the GM system from place, policy areas and across sectors.

## **2. Key findings**

- 2.1 The report highlights areas of good practice and builds an understanding of some of the activities being delivered in support of the GMS ambitions. It does not provide a holistic view of all activity which contributes to GMS, nor does the progress report offer view of the effectiveness of that activity or whether there are current activities delivered across the GM system which may be counter to headline ambitions.

2.2 The GMS includes ways of working, which, if utilised and embedded can support the achievement of better outcomes. The progress report highlights specific strategic opportunities presented to GM right now, and seeks to draw system attention to the potential of working differently to ensure the maximisation of those opportunities for the long term benefit of people and places of GM.

2.3 The strategic opportunities identified in the report include:

- Devolution trailblazer and possible single pot financial settlement
- Refreshing of the 5 Year Environment Plan
- Reenergising the prevention agenda
- Refreshing the Local Industrial Strategy
- Development of the Integrated Care Partnership
- Refreshing the GM Digital Blueprint (as a key enabler of the GMS).

2.4 The work undertaken to produce the progress report has begun to identify how the ways of working can be applied and the whole GM system adopt such approaches to support the greater embedding of GMS ambitions within all areas of work, delivering whole system truly shared outcomes.

2.5 The progress report draws on the latest available performance data and provides an update on the progress to date on the three floor targets. The GMS is underpinned by a comprehensive set of performance metrics and dashboards allowing tracking of progress against key metrics which tell a story of GM achievement against targets and how responsive GM actions are to the targets and measures in place. The GMS dashboards have been updated, with key findings and contextual measures included in the progress report. The full set of dashboards can be viewed [here](#).

2.6 The floor targets are all showing good progress, but more broadly they are providing evidence that when a particular issue is given an area of focus, GM gets results. Bringing together the right actors, with a single and shared purpose,

with space for innovation is proving effective and provides for greater learning from this approach as part of the wider embedding of GMS ways of working.

2.7 A stakeholder panel discussion was undertaken as part of the development of the progress report. The panel discussion provided opportunity for cross-system discussion of progress and challenges in the round, demonstrating the value of dedicated time for reflection, debate and discussion to understand more fully how the many strands of activity being delivered come together in support of attainment of the GMS ambitions. In addition to the panel discussion informing the full progress report, broader systemic issues and learning points were also identified, examples include:

- Ensuring GM is maximising all the levers currently at our disposal, e.g. smoking cessation, where national levers are all in place, so local activity can drive improvement in this area;
- Consideration should be given to greater future use of floor targeting approaches for GM determined priorities, e.g. targeting of childhood obesity;
- Ensure maximum effect of the extensive GM intelligence and evidence base to drive timely and agile responses across the system;
- Greater investment in early intervention & prevention is needed – recognising this may be for a range of services and interventions at local level, delivered via VCSE orgs or wider partners, e.g. ICP Strategy embedded prevention;
- Ensuring that collective actions as Greater Manchester are reflective of shared values and ethos, e.g. Greater Manchester is a welcoming place, and should consider local ways of delivering services responsive to immigration and asylum seekers needs, which regardless of national policy and mandates, should be reflective of GM values.

## 2.8 Greener – strategic opportunity; refreshing the 5 Year Environment Plan

2.9 GM's objective to be carbon neutral by 2038 is still considered achievable, but the pathway towards that is likely to exceed the carbon budget, and by a considerable margin unless decarbonisation is accelerated. GM's ambition and priority remains rapid decarbonisation, with a desire to remain within or as close to the budget as possible. Further work is required to fully embed the ownership and accountability of this agenda within other policy areas.

2.10 The upcoming refresh of the 5 Year Environment Plan presents a significant opportunity for GM to focus and push on in order to meet the 2038 target. The approach adopted to that refresh will influence and determine the extent to which the ownership of this agenda and actions being taken across all policy areas are supportive of the 2038 target. This is a key area where GM has an opportunity which should not be missed, with the potential to accelerate activities which are positively contributing, and to create opportunities to challenge the system where activities are counter to the target.

2.11 Consideration should be given to how the GM system can take forward the refreshing of the 5YEP differently to maximise this opportunity?

- Considering systemwide development, ownership and accountability for delivery
- Can a common approach be developed to measuring and monitoring performance in regard to net zero and carbon neutrality commitments?
- What can be done to ensure greater prioritisation and coordination / alignment in terms of funding, commissioning and investment decisions to help support GM's environmental ambitions?
- How can conflicting priorities e.g. between environmental and economic ambitions, be better acknowledged and addressed and what are the implications for resources, structures, functions?

## **2.12 Fairer – strategic moment to retain and regain focus on the prevention agenda**

2.13 The progress report has been developed in the context of the ongoing cost of living crisis, causing far reaching impacts to individuals, households and whole communities across Greater Manchester. The GMS seeks to support people and places in the here and now, but also to prioritise prevention and early intervention within the GM system, recognising the need for action impacting causal effects, not just responding to immediate impacts. The production of [monthly dashboards](#) to monitor the impacts arising are now being provided to GMCA, to inform all stakeholders of the latest position and ensure appropriate response actions are in place and visibility of the support available.

2.14 Greater opportunity for reflection and evaluation of impact within current activity, and underpinning the development of new strategies, may provide the necessary space for the consideration of how the prevention agenda can be considered alongside the current and urgent needs presented.

2.15 This may include a review of the current dissemination of the intelligence being generated via the dashboards and system insights to better inform and target responses. A reenergising of the prevention agenda will require assessments of need and likely different resourcing allocations, with investment in activities delivered across a range of sectors and providers. These difficult trade-offs need to be considered head on and GM decisions taken to support immediate needs, while investing in early intervention and prevention activities to improve long term outcomes and manage future service need.

## **2.16 More Prosperous – strategic opportunity; refreshing the Local Industrial Strategy**

2.17 As Greater Manchester's economy continues to recover post-pandemic, like other major urban areas, the use of GM's urban and employment centres has changed, travel patterns are different and people's use of space and access to employment has shifted. These changes are ongoing and it is not yet possible to

say that the current situation is the stable 'new normal'. Economic restructuring continues and ensuring GM utilises to maximum effect the levers within its control to support that restructure remain fundamental to the overall success of the city-region going forward.

2.18 The cost of living crisis and very limited national growth forecast makes for a potentially more challenging economic climate. The refreshing of the LIS provides opportunity for GM to restate its economic ambitions, enabling and supporting economic growth and innovation, and ensuring that economic growth is accessible to, and benefitting all the people and places of Greater Manchester.

2.19 The development of the refreshed LIS will ensure that GM's economy is supported and enabled to develop at all levels, across sectors. For example, the importance of GM's foundational economy work will support many people working across the sector to secure good jobs, with fair pay and with career opportunities, fundamental to driving increased equality and opportunity for the people and places of Greater Manchester. A focus on innovation and high growth sectors will continue to provide opportunities for the city-region, ensuring the economy continues to develop and GM remains at the forefront and globally competitive in the frontier sectors.

2.20 The refreshing of the GM Digital Blueprint also provides a significant opportunity for GM to achieve GMS ambitions. The refreshed Blueprint will be more explicit in its responses to the environmental agenda and a greater focus on creating connected, inclusive, sustainable places, and tackling digital exclusion. The actions led under the refreshed Blueprint will be more directly responsive to the greener, fairer and more prosperous GMS pillars.

## 2.21 **GMS Ways of Working**

2.22 The [GMS ways of working](#) were developed to support the whole system to work together in ways which can maximise impact and efficiency, but also to support the embedding of GMS ambitions within all aspects of GM's policy and delivery. The strategic opportunities presented to the GM system above, can



be supported and delivered in ways which maximise their reach across all policy areas and in doing so deliver better outcomes if all parts of the system re-consider how the ways of working are being applied in their area.

2.23 Development of the progress report has highlighted areas where there are opportunities for greater direct support, provision of capacity and practical examples / sharing of learning which could enable the greater understanding and use of the ways of working. The stakeholder panel discussion as part of this report's development has further highlighted the value and importance of the need for cross-system conversations on progress and challenges in the round. The panel discussion has supported greater collective ownership and accountability to the GMS ambitions and provided a space for discussion on how the many various strands of activity come together under the GMS frame.

### **3. Next Steps**

3.1 The draft progress report will be presented to GMCA on 24<sup>th</sup> March for discussion and approval. Following agreement of the report, a process of dissemination of the findings will be undertaken and engagement across the GM system to consider practical ways in which the strategic opportunities identified can be taken forward to maximum effect.