

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 07 JUNE 2023 AT THE  
GMCA OFFICES, TOOTAL BUILDINGS, OXFORD STREET, MANCHESTER**

**PRESENT:**

Bolton	Councillor John Walsh (Chair)
Bolton	Councillor Champak Mistry
Oldham	Councillor Colin McLaren
Rochdale	Councillor Tom Besford
Tameside	Councillor Naila Sharif
Trafford	Councillor Barry Brotherton
Wigan	Councillor Joanne Marshall
Rochdale	Councillor Ashley Dearnley
Manchester	Councillor John Leech
Bolton	Councillor Martin Donaghy
Oldham	Councillor Chris Goodwin
Oldham	Councillor Nazrul Islam
Salford	Councillor Mishal Saeed
Bury	Councillor Russell Bernstein
Tameside	Councillor Jacqueline Owen
Stockport	Councillor John Taylor
Oldham	Councillor Sam Al Hamdani

**ALSO PRESENT:**

GM Mayor	Andy Burnham
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**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

GMCA	Helen Davies
GMCA	Gillian Duckworth
GMCA	Kevin Lee
GMCA	Nicola Ward

TfGM	Anne-Marie Purcell
TfGM	Stephen Rhodes
TfGM	Steve Warrener
Ernest Young	Andrew Mee

**O&SC 86/23                      APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hamid Khurram (Bolton), Mandie Shilton-Goodwin (Manchester), Umar Nasheen (Oldham), John Mullen (Salford), Jim King (Salford) and Alex Warren (Salford).

**O&SC 87/23                      CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair noted that following the local elections, the Combined Authority deferred the appointment the successive Scrutiny Committee and so the preceding Scrutiny Committee remained until the formal appointment of the new Committee.

The Chair reminded the Committee that items under Part B of the agenda contained commercially sensitive information, that would remain confidential until after the Combined Authority had appointed and publicly announced the franchisee on 23 June 2023.

**O&SC 88/23                      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were received in relation to any item on the agenda.

**O&SC 89/23                      THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 MARCH  
2023**

The minutes were approved as a correct and accurate record.

**O&SC 90/23                      FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

The Committee considered the GMCA’s Forward Plan of Key Decisions. A member of the Committee sought clarity over whether decisions taken by the Greater

Manchester Resources Committee were within the remit of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and whether a report could be considered on the appointment of advisors and Deputy Mayors made by the GM Mayor. The Chair noted that since the review of the Scrutiny function by the GMCA, there were some arrangements still to be finalised, but that decisions of the GMCA Resources Committee were within the scope of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The Monitoring Officer would seek to establish arrangements to ensure that members were cited on their decisions.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the Forward Plan of Key Decisions be received and noted.
2. That it be recommended the newly appointed Scrutiny Committee, as part of its Work Programme, considers the appointment of advisors made by the GM Mayor.
3. That the Monitoring Officer would seek to establish arrangements to ensure that the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee were cited on decisions taken by the GMCA Resources Committee.

**O&SC 91/23**

**THE GREATER MANCHESTER FRANCHISING  
SCHEME FOR BUSES 2021-PROCUREMENT  
UPDATE.**

GM Mayor Andy Burnham reminded the Committee that procurement of Greater Manchester's Bee Network was not just about purchasing buses but that there had already been a significant amount of work undertaken and there was more to be undertaken in advance of the launch of tranche 1 franchises in Wigan and Bolton on the 24 September. However, he further advised the Committee that the first fifty buses had been formally transferred and were in the process of being transported to Greater Manchester. Fifty further buses had been ordered as part of Tranche 2 for the commencement of franchising in the northern area of GM, Oldham, Rochdale, parts of Bury and North Manchester.

The GM Mayor emphasised bus franchising was about improving the service for passengers alongside creating a positive working experience for employees working on the network. The Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter, TUPE arrangements, pension agreements and real living wage agreements were being included as part of the tender process to evidence this priority. Further conversations with Trade Unions were also taking place to consider working conditions, protections and provision of facilities.

The GM Mayor referred to the recent decision of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority to establish a new joint transport committee (The Bee Network Committee) with membership of 16 cabinet lead members to ensure political balance of the Committee and enable quicker decision-making. The GM Mayor clarified the changes in governance were to empower people at every part of the process and ensure that the public and local councillors would have the ability through their lead member to shape services at a local level.

The Committee requested clarity on how the new Bee Network Committee interacted with Overview and Scrutiny and were informed that the scrutiny of the network remained firmly with the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee and that the Bee Network Committee had been designed to have a delivery role.

The Committee acknowledged that the detail given by the GM Mayor had left Members reassured about the well-being of employees of current operators across the network and welcomed the suggestion of integrated career structures under the franchising model.

A member sought information as to whether there was any other pass/fail criteria within the procurement process that would have eliminated a bidder from the process. As this information was deemed commercially sensitive, the Chair requested that a response be provided in private within the Part B section of the meeting.

Some concern was raised by the Committee regarding bus access to sections of neighbourhoods the GM Mayor acknowledged there needed to be tough priority

measures to meet journey times that would attract people to leave cars at home and choose public transport. The consequence of moving to electric buses would not only improve air quality but noise pollution would also be less for residents who lived on bus routes.

Members expressed concern that the award of the tranche 2 contract could lead to the loss of services as experienced at this stage in tranche 1. Officers reminded the Committee that in such instances emergency measures would be put in place and services would be ultimately re-tendered to ensure that the network remained the same for the commencement of the franchise.

The GM Mayor noted the concern and risks relating to on the start dates and completion of the franchising scheme and the need to remain vigilant, specifically with mounting pressures ahead of the Tranche 3 start date which was 2-years behind Tranche 1.

In relation to the Vantage Services, the Committee were reassured that they would be encompassed within tranche 1 franchises and would be branded in line with the remainder of the franchise.

#### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the report and recommendations be commended to the GMCA for consideration at their meeting on the 9 June.
2. That the comments from the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee would also be shared with the GMCA as they considered the report.

**O&SC 92/23**

#### **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business on the grounds that this involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in

the relevant paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

**O&SC 93/23            BUS FRANCHISING INDICATIVE PREFERRED BIDDER**

Anne-Marie Purcell, Steve Rhodes, Steve Warrener from Transport for Greater Manchester and Kevin Mee from Ernest Young attended the meeting to present a briefing to the Committee on the indicative preferred bidder process for Tranche 2.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the report and recommendations be commended to the GMCA for consideration at their meeting on the 9 June.
2. That the comments from the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee would also be shared with the GMCA as they considered the report.

Signed by the Chair: **(to be printed off and signed by the Chair at the next meeting)**