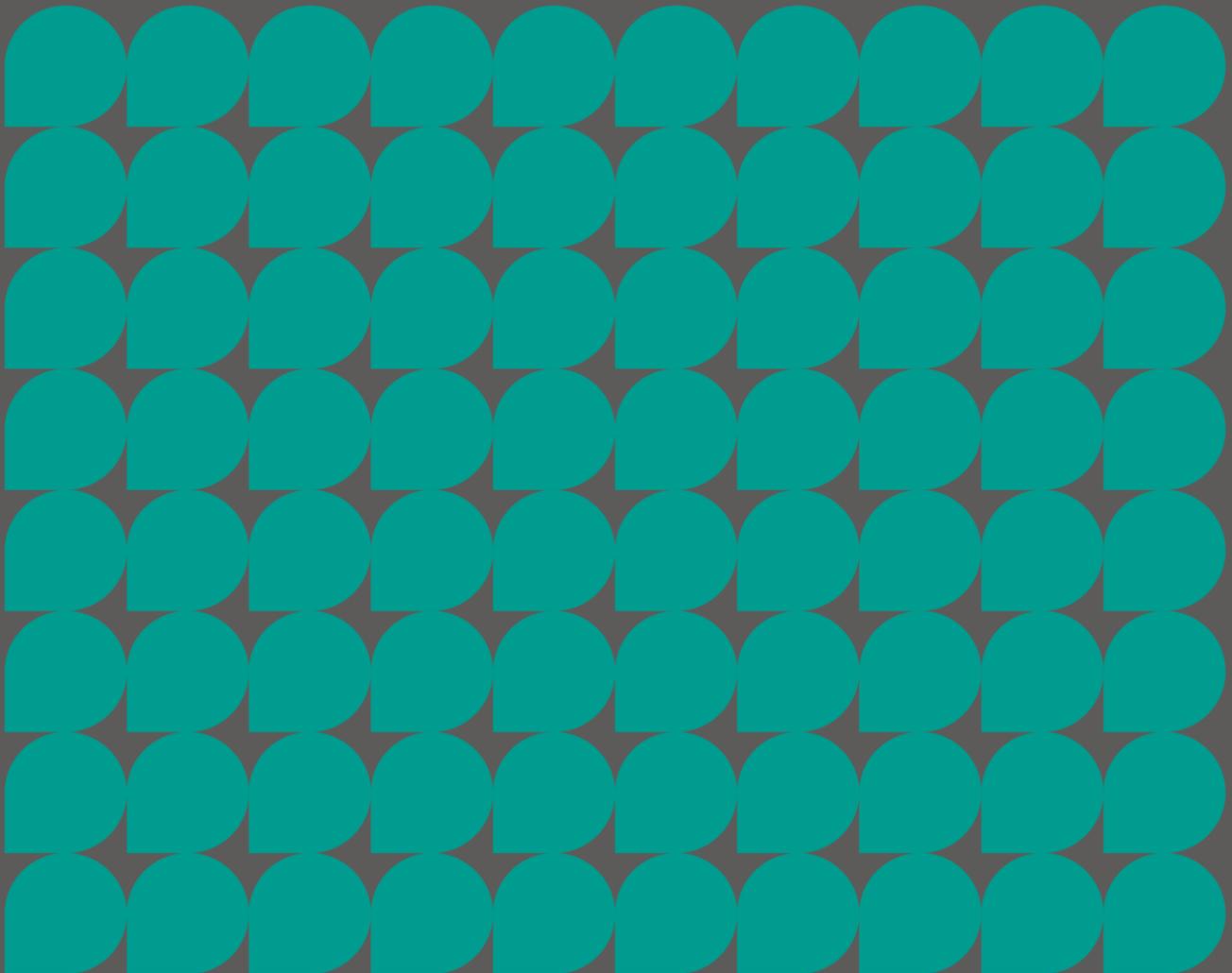


# WOMEN & GIRLS EQUALITY PANEL

DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY  
FOR GREATER MANCHESTER

## Annual Report 2022/23



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# 1. Message from the Chair

## **Halyma Begum (Chair of the Women and Girls' Equality Panel & Senior Inclusion Manager at Business in the Community)**

It has been another year where the Panel has continued to preserve and campaign for Gender Equality in Greater Manchester (GM). We saw headlines about misogyny in the Police force, the very people who we women put our trust in to protect us. The Panel voiced our concerns and those of the women in GM. We built closer relationships working with Greater Manchester Police and continued to contribute to and influence the Gender Based Violence Strategy to ensure that the safety of women is a priority.

Not only did the Panel voice the concerns of Women, but we also looked at how GM can support young girls in getting the right support to equip them to make the right choices as they transition from secondary school into the world of employment. We were fortunate to have Mayor Andy Burnham join us for a Panel meeting where we talked about support for young girls, safety for women and funding for women entrepreneurs, and have had his support to continue to pursue our work in these areas. I look forward to continuing to progress these actions and continue to tackle Gender equality in GM with the help of the truly committed passionate Women we have in our Panel.

Halyma Begum - Chair of the Panel

## 2. Introduction to the Panel

**The Women and Girls' Equality Panel was established in December 2020 to address gender inequality in Greater Manchester.**

The Panel aims to establish a clear vision for women and girls by utilising its knowledge, expertise, and networks to understand and address the issues and inequalities affecting their lives.

The role of the Panel is to constructively challenge political and system leaders to tackle prejudice and discrimination against women and girls. The Panel works alongside the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the wider Greater Manchester (GM) system to ensure that equality is actively considered in decision making to help make the city a better place for women and girls to live, work and study and do business.

The Panel is convened by the Pankhurst Trust, in partnership with GM4Women2028, a charity focused on promoting equality and diversity for the benefit of the community in Greater Manchester.

The Panel meets on a quarterly basis. It has established two working groups – one looking at Education, Skills, and Employment and the other Violence Against Women and Girls. It also benefits from the support of an Allies' Network, comprised of women and girls from across Greater Manchester who are willing to contribute their expertise and experiences.

The Panel is made up of a diverse range of individuals, organisations and sectors who are committed to ensuring that the viewpoints of women and girls from a cross-sector of society are represented. To find out more about the Panel and its members, please visit: [Greater Manchester's W&GS' Equality Panel Information.](#)

### 3. The Previous Year

**Over the course of the previous year, the Panel has gained greater insight and understanding across a wide range of issues pertinent to achieving gender equality for women and girls. The Panel and its working groups have achieved some notable successes, generated new ideas and created strong working connections and relationships that continue to positively impact the lives of many.**

The Panel welcomed eight new members this last year, with the aim of adding new skill sets and energy to the group. The recruitment drive specifically targeted women from certain boroughs of Manchester, women of different age groups, and women of colour to achieve greater diversity within the Panel and better represent the women of Greater Manchester. At the end of 2022 the Panel bid farewell to two members, Francesca Gains and Jean Hurlstone, both of whom were instrumental to the Employment, Skills and Education working group.

Halyma Begum continued to serve as the Chair of the Panel. Emma Persand, Founder of Lemur Health, and Sally Carr, Northwest Director of Street Games, were appointed as the new Co-Chairs of the ESE working group and Gemma Aitchison, Founder and Director of Yes Matters UK, was appointed as the new Chair of the Violence Against Women and Girls working group.

The Panel continued to work with GM4Women2028 this last year. Panel members ran listening workshops at the Dialogue, Deeds and Determination events held in different boroughs within Greater Manchester to engage local women in determining the Panel's priorities. Many of the newly recruited members learned about the Women and Girls' Panel through attending the GM4Women events and hearing about the work the Panel does. Similarly, the Panel gets many expressions of interest throughout the year and channels this towards GM4Women membership and participation in their five working groups on Employment, Safety, Participation, Education and Culture & Active Lives.

The Panel has continued to collaborate with other equality panels across a range of matters, including the representation of women, and particularly women of colour in

digital and tech industries and leadership roles and has received valuable input from Elizabeth Cameron, Chair of the Race Equality Panel.

This year the Panel welcomed speakers from several organisations working in the VCSE sector as well as academics, local authority leaders and GMCA officers, with the aim of building our knowledge and understanding across a range of topics and considering how we can work together to influence change and improve outcomes.

Over the course of the year, the Panel and its sub-groups looked at several topics relating to the Education, Skills and Employment and Violence against Women and Girls agendas and developed a series of asks, which we presented to the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham. An important milestone for the Panel was the subsequent meeting with the Mayor in November 2022. The Mayor's willingness to collaborate and his commitment to address issues related to underrepresented voices in decision-making was well received by the members of the Panel.

## 4. The Working Groups

### 4.1 Education, Skills, and Employment

The Education, Skills and Employment (ESE) working group has had a busy year, continuing to build on its work on childcare, skills pathways, good employment standards, women's self-employment, and co-operatives, as well as care and commissioning and exploring the next steps for these issues.

In addition, the ESE group considered several new topics such as reskilling, self-employment, entrepreneurship, tech and gaming, and flexible working. The group are keen to continue discussions on care & commissioning in more depth and address intersectionality and representation in future sessions.

The Panel has strived to make real progress in this area including:

- Working with GMCA to support the development of activities to improve the confidence and career aspirations of teenage girls, as recorded in the annual Bee Well Survey, a programme that measures the wellbeing of young people and delivers meaningful, youth-centred actions.
- Supporting the evaluation of the Meet your Future programme which includes empowering women and girls through mentoring, shadowing, and leadership.

- Working with the Greater Manchester Apprenticeship & Careers Service and Curriculum for Life to support the development of content around confidence levels for teenage girls and women in STEM, as well as digital skills for women and girls.
- Several panel members now volunteer as mentors with Girls Out Loud, helping to inspire girls to be the best they can be. In addition, Girls Out Loud and GMP have attained funding from the Sheriffs Trust for policewomen to become 'big sisters' in their program.

## 4.2 Violence against Women and Girls Group

The Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) group met frequently over the past year, exploring important topics such as: the Victims Bill, preventing and policing hate crime, Greater Manchester Police's VAWG Delivery Plan, police response to public protection and domestic abuse, the Police Perpetrator Act, and police behaviour & abuse of position of trust.

In addition, an important focus for the VAWG group over the last year has been to strengthen its relationships with GMP, the Gender Based Violence Board (GBV Board), and GMCA, recognising the important roles these organisations play in ending VAWG.

There have since been a number of positive developments including

- the VAWG group being asked to provide feedback on videos for the #IsThisOkay Communication Campaign aimed at educating men and boys and supporting them in calling out sexual harassment, online abuse and stalking amongst other things, as well as participate in the evaluation of the latest phase of the campaign.
- we have set up a joint Data Working Group between GMCA and the VSCE sector to better understand how VAWG data is currently collated, compiled, shared, and used to inform GMCA Strategy and Policy and consider what data is missing.
- Following the VAWG group's development of a Standards and Expectations list for the GMP to adhere to when it came to dealing with migrant women, GMP started working with two of the VAWG members to create a training programme which would help police deal with cases where women victims and survivors have no recourse to public funds.

## 5. Future Focus

**The Panel has gone from strength to strength over the last 12 months and as it moves into its third year it will continue to play a lead role in reducing gender inequality in Greater Manchester. The Panel will continue to build on its programme of activity, working with partners and stakeholders to deliver real change and continuing to provide intersectional input to GM strategies.**

In 2023 and beyond, the Women and Girls' Equality Panel is committed to driving equality in women's health. We have been a key stakeholder so far providing valuable input into the GM Integrated Care Partnership Strategy and the GM Women's Health Strategy. Our Panel members and Allies Network bring professional and lived experience of the challenges faced by women and girls in particular the impact of women's health on employment opportunities and healthcare services that do not address women and girls' differentiated needs.

We will continue to support GM4Women in furthering their goal of reaching gender equality in Manchester by 2028. We will continue to build our Allies Network and gather data and insight on the needs of women and girls in Greater Manchester in partnership with GM4Women2028 through engagement workshops at their Dialogue, Deeds and Determination events and the annual Pankhurst-Fawcett Gender Equality Scorecard.

We will continue to pursue the 'Asks' we put to the Mayor of Greater Manchester including improved support for mental health and career services for young girls, promoting digital skills training and exploring existing programs like Enterprising You for self-employment support.

The ESE working group has defined its priorities for the next two years, which include: employment and menopause, entrepreneurship and sports and leadership. We will continue to contribute to the development of the Good Employment Charter to make sure it reflects the specific needs of women in employment in particular childcare, menopause and sexual health and reproductive challenges.

The VAWG working group has also been developing its priorities which include policing and criminal justice, the creation of whistle blowing guidance for victims of police misconduct, and ongoing support with the delivery of the GBV strategy and the #IsThisOkay Campaign. You can view our workplan on our website.

In 2022 we discussed how to ensure that women and girls' equality, and safety is adequately considered as part of the decision-making process in GM for example by taking part in Equality Impact Assessments where these are carried out on all major policy and strategy decisions. This is a theme we will continue to explore over the next year.

A key aim for 2023 is to increase awareness of the Panel and have greater transparency around the work we do. With this in mind, we are posting regularly on social media, providing public summaries of our meetings, and communicating regularly with our Allies Network through Basecamp where we share relevant events and consultation opportunities. Going forward, we are also keen to explore the potential for releasing position statements on current topics and legislation.

## 6. Contact us

Organisations or members of the public wishing to get involved in the Panel's work can join one of the GM4Women subgroups. The subgroups' [themes](#) include Education, Safety, Culture & Active Lives, Participation in Public Life or Employment. You can also join our Allies Network to get Panel and working groups updates, invitations to consultations and information about issues affecting women and girls in Manchester. Just email [womenandgirls@pankhursttrust.org](mailto:womenandgirls@pankhursttrust.org) and ask to sign up to our Basecamp. You can also keep up to date and get involved with the Women and Girl's Equality Panel by following [GM 4 Women 2028](#) on [Twitter](#), and Manchester Women's Aid on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).