

**MINUTES OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION HELD ON 21 MARCH 2023 VIA MS TEAMS AND LIVESTREAMED VIA PUBLIC I.**

**PRESENT**

Matthew Harrison	Great Places
Jane Healey Brown	Ayrup
Bernadette Elder	Inspiring Communities Together
Councillor Alan Quinn	Bury Council
Councillor James Wright	Trafford Council
Councillor Toby Hewitt	Bolton Council
Councillor Mike McCusker	Salford City Council
Councillor Susan Gambles	Wigan Council
Councillor Colin Maclister	Stockport Council
Councillor Tricia Ayrton	Rochdale Council
City Mayor Paul Dennett	Salford City Council
Councillor Gavin McGill	Bury Council

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Steve Fyfe	GMCA, Planning & Housing Team
Aisling McCourt	GMCA, Planning & Housing Team
Ninoshka Martins	GMCA, Governance Team
Jacqueline Gailey	GMCA, Planning & Housing Team

**GMPHC/11/22**

**APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gavin McGill (Bury) and Tom Ross (Trafford) and Simon Warburton (TfGM).

**GMPHC/12/22**

**CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no Chairs announcements or items of urgent business.

BOLTON  
BURY

MANCHESTER  
OLDHAM

ROCHDALE  
SALFORD

STOCKPORT  
TAMESIDE

TRAFFORD  
WIGAN

**GMPHC/13/22**

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**RESOLVED /-**

There were no declarations of interest reported by any Member in respect of any item on the agenda.

**GMPHC/14/22**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 NOVEMBER 2022**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2022 be approved.

**GMPHC/15/22**

**HOMELESSNESS**

**A. HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION STRATEGY**

Consideration was given to a report that provided an overview of the progress made in delivering the Greater Manchester Homelessness Prevention Strategy as a mid-stage point in year 1. The report also seeks to outline the feedback from key stakeholders and including emerging opportunities and new areas of focus.

Members thanked officers for the report and welcomed the partnership working approach which was seen as a platform to delivering the proposals as outlined within the devolution trailblazer deal.

In noting the housing challenge faced by different cohorts within the housing system across Greater Manchester, it was felt that it was absolutely essential to deliver homes and a housing market that were truly affordable to GM residents.

With regards to the affordable homes programme, it was reported that as of the trailblazer discussions agreement was being sought to allow GMCA to have a strategic oversight of the Affordable Homes Programme, including the strategic priorities for spend in the region. This would also include the ability to use Affordable Homes Programme grant funding for social rent in all ten of Greater Manchester's

local authority areas. Members were advised that further details on the bidding process would be provided following the spring budget.

## **RESOLVED /-**

That the update be noted.

## **GMPHC/16/22      GREATER MANCHESTER HOUSING STRATEGY**

### A. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report that provided an update on the progress made in terms of the Greater Manchester Housing Strategy 2019-20 - Draft Implementation Plan.

Concerns were raised around the potential negative impact on development programmes due to the current economic crises. Officers acknowledged the concerns raised in terms of delivery and advised members of plans to lower building costs. It was also felt essential to review the development programme to ensure that housing targets were achievable.

Retrofitting of existing housing stock was essential to delivering GM's Carbon Neutral targets and therefore the need to work with Government to develop new solutions was seen essential. Officers noted the comments and explained that as part of the devolution trailblazer submission for a 'housing quality pathfinder' work was underway to seek agreement for a new strategic approach to the funding and delivery of housing retrofit.

Given the current challenge faced by the construction industry, it was felt that the economic consequences for Greater Manchester could be fairly significant, it was therefore seen imperative that these challenges were addressed by working with stakeholders and partner organisations to maximise investment.

In noting the review of Homes England's governance structures, it was explained that this was being done to be able to offer better support to deliver projects through respective regeneration programmes. It was felt that it would be beneficial for a future

meeting to include an update from Homes England to provide further clarity on the direction of travel.

As an item for consideration at a future meeting, it was suggested that it would be useful to review the outcomes of the National Planning Policy Framework that the Government had recently consulted upon.

## **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the update be noted.
2. That the following items be brought to a future meeting of the Planning and Housing Commission:
  - National Planning Policy Framework Update
  - Homes England Update

## **B. DAMP AND MOULD UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report that provided an update on the discussion held with Government and advised of the request for information about housing conditions in Greater Manchester, primarily assessing the damp and mould issues affecting privately rented properties including the prevalence of categories 1 and 2 damp and mould hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).

In relation to the Social Housing Quality Funding, it was reported that further details around the timeline of funding was yet to be received and would be shared with members in due course. Officers explained that as part of the agreement, GMCA would retain discretion over how funding would be allocated across the social housing stock in Greater Manchester on the condition that funding would be spent on making improvements to the quality of social housing.

On the Good Landlord Scheme, it was reported that ten new housing standards enforcement trainees. These entry-level posts, delivered across GM, would include an

enforcement apprenticeship followed by additional advanced training. Recruitment is scheduled to begin in January with the apprenticeship expected to start next spring.

It was noted that the work to improve standards of social housing had focused mainly on accessing funds for low carbon retrofit, with a focus on collaborative bidding and programme delivery in an attempt to maximise delivery, impact, and associated benefits.

On the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF), it was reported that funding would be utilised to install building fabric improvement measures, low carbon heating and renewable energy systems across 1,286 homes. The SHDF Wave 2.1 funding had opened in September 2022, with total funding of £800m available nationally over two years. It was reported that GMCA had submitted a GM consortium bid of behalf of 18 register providers for retrofit measures to be installed in 5,485 homes.

It was noted that housing associations and RPS were responsible to deliver appropriate housing conditions and with the capital funding being received it would accelerate the programme of delivery.

In terms of the process and criteria, it was reported that further details were yet to be received from Government. However, in preparation of delivery, work was underway to identify projects in order of most urgent need of attention to the least.

## **RESOLVED /-**

That the update be noted.

## **GMPHC/17/22                      INFRASTRUCTURE                      FLOOD                      AND                      WATER MANAGEMENT**

### **A. INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to a presentation that outlined the vision for integrated water management in Greater Manchester.

As part of the devolution deal, GM would be utilised as a test bed to explore and develop options for flood management, including other relevant adaptation activity, which could include an ecosystem-based approach.

It was reported that the GMCA Scrutiny had established a task and finish group to review the issues associated with flood risk and had developed a list of recommendations as outlined within the presentation.

In noting the importance of a water management plan, it was noted that with recent climate changes there was a need for water management companies to build resilience in order to manage demand. Within the Environmental Impacts report produced by Government, there was a reference to creating Net Zero Water developments but ultimately it was down to consumers to reduce consumption.

Concerns were raised around the amount of water lost through leakage and natural flooding. It was felt that there was a lack of resource at a local level to respond to such issues and therefore there was a need to push Government for funding specifically to respond to natural disasters.

## **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the update be noted.

## **B. NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AND POLICY**

Consideration was given to a presentation that provided an overview of the framework relating to the approval and adoption of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to regulate rainfall, decrease the volume of water flowing into sewers and storm overflow discharges that was expected to be implemented in 2024.

It was reported that Wales had commenced the schedule into law in January 2019 and that the GMCA were in discussion to learn from best practice.

A review had been carried out to identify the benefits of making SuDS mandatory for new development. The report published in January 2023 found that the Planning led

approach alone was insufficient and that no specific checking regimes were in place to ensure that SuDS had been constructed as agreed.

One of the most notable proposals was for the introduction of SuDS approval bodies (SAB) whose duty it would be to adopt new drainage systems on the basis that they meet certain conditions:

- That developers build the drainage system in line with an approved drainage plan that complies with national standards.
- Certify that the drainage system functions in line with the approved plan or non-performance bond if a certificate had been issued.
- Ensure the system is a sustainable drainage system as defined by the Secretary's regulations.

Working with TfGM, the SUDs design guide will be embedded into the streets for all strategy and would form supporting design guidance for projects across the region, including schemes within the £1bn City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme.

Members were advised that the design guide, once drafted, would be brought to a future meeting to brief members, and gain support for adoption across the 10 Localities. It was added that the design guide was predominantly focused on highways and retrofit.

The challenges to identifying and working to retrofit the existing SUDs were noted. It was felt that through developing a guide for new builds there was an opportunity to get the drainage system right.

## **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the update be noted.

A verbal update in relation to the latest position around the PfE public examination was provided and following key points were highlighted:

- The review of district and cross boundary allocations had concluded.
- Further work has been planned, looking at final green belt additions as recommended by the inspectors.
- At the end every sitting week the inspectors have published an action points-based plan on the discussions around wording changes to ensure consistency and to reflect national policy which can be found the PfE website.
- A national housing policy framework consultation had launched in December 2022. Inspectors have indicated that an additional hearing session would be needed once the revised National Planning Policy Framework had been published.
- Once the hearings rounds have concluded, the inspector would publish a letter outlining the recommendations that would need to be actioned in order to make the plan sound. These would then be needed to be taken to the nine local authorities, for the input and agreement from cabinet executives. Following which a consultation would be held and the responses would be sent to the inspectors, who would consider whether or not they need to hold any further sessions. Following which a final letter would be issued to districts that would need to be considered at full council for adoption.
- The recommendation would then become part of each local authority's development plan. Further work to implement the policies have been identified around carbon and energy, but also to address the outcomes of the Habitats Regulations Assessment.
- Through this pilot work would be done with districts to develop guidance and an approach to implement diversity net gain and the same would be replicated potentially around carbon offsetting and how that might operate at a district level.
- Further to that a couple of supplementary planning documents would need to be published to help deal with some of the issues arising particularly around the South Pennine Moors and Manchester Moss.

- Following publication and adoption, the plan would be monitored on an annual basis and after at the end of five years a decision on whether or not the plan needs to be reviewed would be taken.

The update was welcomed, and work that was being done leading to the adoption of the plan was noted.

It was felt through PfE there was an opportunity to improve housing standards however, to make progress on the low carbon front and hold developers accountable it was essential to continue lobbying Government to makes changes to the legislative framework and strengthen the building regulation standards to ensure delivery of high-quality homes.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the update be noted.
2. That an update on UKSPF be provided at the next meeting.