

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED  
AUTHORITY HELD ON FRIDAY 9TH FEBRUARY 2024 AT TRAFFORD TOWN  
HALL**

**PRESENT:**

GM Mayor	Andy Burnham (in the Chair)
GM Deputy Mayor	Kate Green
Bury	Councillor Eamonn O'Brien
Manchester	Councillor Bev Craig
Oldham	Councillor Arooj Shah
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	Councillor Tracy Kelly
Stockport	Councillor Mark Hunter
Tameside	Councillor Gerald Cooney
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross
Wigan	Councillor David Molyneux

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chair of GMCA Overview & Scrutiny	Cllr Nadim Muslim
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**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chief Executive Officer, GMCA & TfGM	Eamonn Boylan
GMCA Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
GMCA Deputy Monitoring Officer	Gwynne Williams
Deputy Monitoring Officer	Melinda Edwards
GMCA Treasurer	Steve Wilson

Bolton	Sue Johnson
Bury	Lynne Ridsdale
Manchester	James Binks
Oldham	Harry Catherall
Rochdale	Steve Rumbelow
	Julie Murphy
Salford	Tom Stannard
Stockport	Caroline Simpson
Tameside	Sandra Stewart
Trafford	Sarah Saleh
Wigan	Alison McKenzie-Folan
Deputy Chief Fire Officer, GMFRS	Ben Norman
Managing Director, TfGM	Steve Warrener
Office of the GM Mayor	Kevin Lee
GMCA	Julie Connor
GMCA	Sylvia Welsh
GMCA	Lee Teasdale

**GMCA 20/24      APOLOGIES**

**RESOLVED /-**

That apologies be received and noted from City Mayor Paul Dennett (Salford), Councillor Nicholas Peel (Bolton), Joanne Roney (Manchester) & Sara Todd (Trafford).

The Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, opened by expressing the best wishes of the region, and hopes for a speedy recovery, to King Charles following the recent announcement of his cancer diagnosis.

The Mayor advised that a meeting of the GM Police, Fire & Crime Panel had taken place on 30<sup>th</sup> January, at which his request to increase the police precept by £13 per year for a Band D property (£10.11 for Band B) had been unanimously approved and would therefore commence from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

The Mayor, together with Councillor Tom Ross, expressed their concerns following the announcement that Kellogg's would be undertaking a review of operations at its Trafford premises with possible closure of the site being one of the review considerations. The GMCA and its partners were on standby to provide support to Kellogg's employees should the consultation result in closure. There would also be close engagement throughout the whole consultation process as any closure would impact not just Trafford but the whole region.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the GMCA record its best wishes to His Royal Highness, King Charles, for a speedy recovery from his recent cancer diagnosis.
2. That it be noted that the GM Police Fire & Crime Panel, at its meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024 unanimously agreed the Mayor's request to increase the police precept by £13 per year for a band D property (£10.11 for a Band B property) with effect from 1 April 2024.
3. That the concerns raised by the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham and Councillor Tom Ross in relation to the review of the current Kellogg's premises within the Trafford borough be noted, and that the GMCA and partners would closely engage with Kellogg's throughout the full review period.

**GMCA 22/24            DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**RESOLVED /-**

There were no declarations of interests received.

**GMCA 23/24            MINUTES OF THE GMCA MEETING HELD ON 26 JANUARY  
2024**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the minutes of the GMCA meeting held on 26 January 2024 be approved.

**GMCA 24/24            MINUTES OF THE GMCA RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD  
ON 26 JANUARY 2024**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the proceedings of the Resources Committee meeting held on 26 January 2024 be approved.

**GMCA 25/24            MINUTES OF THE GMCA AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 24  
JANUARY 2024**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the proceedings of the Audit Committee meeting held on 24 January 2024 be noted.

**GMCA 26/24            MINUTES OF THE GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2024**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the proceedings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 24 January 2024 be noted.

## **GMCA 27/24            BUDGET REPORTS**

### **GMCA Revenue and Capital Budgets 2024/5 Overview**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources, was invited to introduce the overarching report on the GMCA budget proposals for 2024/25. The report summarised the position on the Mayoral General Budget and Precept Proposals, The GMCA General Budget, GMCA Transport budgets including Transport Levy and Statutory Charge and the GM Waste Services Levy. It also set out the implications of the proposed budgets and the resultant charges on districts and the Mayoral Precept.

The GMCA recorded its thanks to GM Treasurers, GMCA Treasurer Steve Wilson and Deputy Treasurer, Rachel Rosewell, and the GMCA finance team for the significant work put into managing the overall budget process.

Steve Wilson was invited to comment, expressing his thanks to the local authority treasurers of the ten Greater Manchester authorities who supported his team throughout the budget setting process. It was highlighted that this year had seen a particular focus on ensuring that extra cost pressures were not passed on to residents through the form of levies or council tax precepts wherever possible.

### **RESOLVED /-**

That the contents of the summary report be noted.

### **A. Mayoral General Budget & Precept Proposals 2024/25**

Councillor Bev Craig, GMCA Deputy Mayor, took the Chair for this item of business.

The report sought approval for the Mayoral General Precept for 2024/25 and recommended the setting of the Revenue Budget for 2024/25 as required under section 42A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (updated in the Localism Act 2011) and the precepts and relevant levels of Council Tax required under sections 40, 42B and 47 of the Act.

Cllr Nadim Muslim, Chair of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee was invited to report back on the Committee's discussion of the budget and proposals. He advised that the Committee Members had recognised the importance of Our Pass and A Bed

Every Night, and they were reassured that the use of reserves to fund these was related to phasing of funding across financial years. Members also recognised the difficulty of financial forecasting for the franchising of the bus network when two tranches were still to commence, however they were still keen to keep a watching brief over performance as the risk re-profiled over the coming year. The Committee had also offered to take a closer look at the Housing Investment Fund; and would welcome to opportunity to look closer at how the GM element of the Business Rate Retention Scheme for 2024/25 would be allocated.

The Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, was invited to comment on his budget and proposals. He stated that the budget proposals had been prepared with a full knowledge of the household pressures still being felt acutely across the region – and due to this a freeze was proposed in terms of the Mayoral General Budget. Within this the prudent use of reserves would allow for the current offer within the Mayoral General Budget to be retained over the coming financial year.

In relation to the Fire Budget, it was advised that following the Fire Review, it was acknowledged that to meet the increasing needs of a vibrant and growing city region, there was a need not only to stop the cuts seen in the 2010s, but to actively reverse this trend. The proposal made was a £5 per year increase that would allow for a permanent fleet of 52 pumps around the city region. This was also necessary due to a below inflation increase seen in the fire grant received from central government this year.

The meeting was advised that a named vote was required to approve the proposals for The GM Mayoral General Budget. Members voted on the recommendations as follows:

<b>District</b>	<b>GMCA Member</b>	
Bury	Cllr Eamonn O'Brien	<b>Agreed</b>
Manchester	Cllr Bev Craig	<b>Agreed</b>
Oldham	Cllr Arooj Shah	<b>Agreed</b>
Rochdale	Cllr Neil Emmott	<b>Agreed</b>
Salford	Cllr Tracy Kelly	<b>Agreed</b>

Stockport	Cllr Mark Hunter	<b>Agreed</b>
Tameside	Cllr Ged Cooney	<b>Agreed</b>
Trafford	Cllr Tom Ross	<b>Agreed</b>
Wigan	Cllr David Molyneux	<b>Agreed</b>

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the Mayor's General budget for 2024/25, as set out in this report together with the calculation of the precepts and Council Tax rates set out in Appendix 2, be approved.
2. That the Mayoral General Precept to £112.95 (Band D) comprising of £81.20 for functions previously covered by the Fire and Rescue Authority precept and £31.75 for other Mayoral General functions be approved.
3. That the following be approved:
  - i. the overall budget for the Fire and Rescue Service for 2024/25 covered by the Mayoral precept.
  - ii. the medium-term financial position for the Fire and Rescue Service.
4. That approval be given to the use of reserves, as set out in section 3 of the report, and the assessment by the Treasurer that the reserves as at March 2025 were adequate.
5. That it be noted that in accordance with legal requirements, the minutes will record the names of those Members voting for or against the Mayor's budget and precept proposals.

6. That the feedback from the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee be received and noted.

Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham retook the Chair from this point in the meeting.

## **B. GMCA Transport Revenue Budget 2024/25**

Steve Wilson, GMCA Treasurer, advised that there were a number of unique challenges set against the transport revenue budget, given this was a transitional year, being in the process of moving from a deregulated service towards a regulated service covering the whole city region. Issues still remained around the recovery of patronage following the COVID pandemic and heightened energy costs. However, a balanced budget had still been achieved, partly in thanks to the Financial Sustainability Plan that had been worked to over the course of the year.

### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the risks and issues which were affecting the 2024/25 transport budgets, as detailed in the report, be noted.
2. That the GMCA budget relating to transport functions funded through the Levy, as set out in this report, for 2024/25 be approved.
3. That a Transport Levy on the District Councils in 2024/25 of £119.473m, apportioned on the basis of mid-year population 2022, be approved.
4. That a Statutory Charge of £86.7m to District Councils in 2024/25, as set out in Part 4 of the Transport Order, apportioned on the basis of mid-year population 2022, be approved.
5. That the proposal to increase fees and charges, as noted in the report, including the increases proposed Departure Charges and Bus stop closure charges, as set out in paragraphs 4.24 and 4.25, be endorsed.



6. That the use of Transport reserves in 2023/24 and 2024/25, as detailed in section, be approved.

### **C. GMCA Revenue General Budget 2024/25**

The Levy to councils would remain unchanged. This was a budget area that exemplified the complexities around Government grant funding that would hopefully be improved once transition to the single settlement had completed. It had been agreed that inflationary pressures would be absorbed within the GMCA and not passed onto local authorities.

#### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the budget relating to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority functions, excluding transport and waste in 2024/25, as set out in section 2 of the report, be approved.
2. That District contributions of £8.5 million, as set out in section 5 of the report, be approved.
3. That the use of reserves, as set out in section 6 of the report, be approved.

### **D. GM Waste Budget and Resources - Budget and Levy 2024/25 and Medium Term Financial Plan to 2023/24 - 2025/26**

In setting the levy, significant efforts had been made to mitigate the pressures faced within these services. Mitigation had been managed through a reduction in tonnage coming through household waste recycling centres and an increased level of income through recycling of paper & card. This did allow, with a small amount of reserve usage, to offset some of the inflationary pressures with an average levy increase of 3.1% - a significant reduction on the headline 6.6% - though this did vary from authority to authority.

In addition to the mitigation, the reserves position had been reviewed, which had resulted in the GMCA being able to return £20m to local authorities during Quarter 1 of 2024/25.

Members recorded their thanks for the work undertaken by the Finance Team that had allowed for the return of funds into local authority budgets.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the proposed 2025/26 Trade Waste rate of £138.93, to allow forward planning by Greater Manchester Local Authorities, be approved.
2. That the budget and levy for 2024/25 of £174.3m (3.1% increase) be approved.
3. That a one-off reduction of £20m to the levy in 2024/25, funded from reserves reducing the 2024/25 requirement to £154.3m be approved and that authority be delegated to the GMCA Treasurer to agree the basis of distribution with Greater Manchester Local Authority Treasurers.

1. That the risk position set out in the Balances Strategy and Reserves be noted.
2. That Members welcome the work undertaken by the Finance Team that has allowed for the return of funds into local authority budgets.

**E. GMCA Capital Programme -2023/24 - 2026/7**

These figures now included an update on 2023/24 alongside the proposed budget for 2024/25. Of the £685.2m capital programme budget, £118m would be funded through borrowing and the revenue costs of that would be picked up by the relevant budgets. The large majority of the funding however was either through grants being received or reserves related to grants received in previous years.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the current 2023/24 forecast of £579.1m compared to the 2023/24 previous forecast of £623.6m be noted and that changes to the capital programme, as set out in the report and Appendix A, be approved.
2. That the capital programme budget for 2024/25 of £685.2m and the forward plan for future years, as set out in the report and Appendix A, be approved.
3. That the addition to, and the subsequent drawdown from, the 2023/24 capital programme of £4.4m for local highways maintenance activities, as outlined in section 3.9.4 of this report, be approved.
4. That the inclusion of Trailblazer funding, as outlined in section 4.14 of the report, be approved.

#### **GMCA 28/24            GMCA REVENUE UPDATE – QUARTER 3 2023/24**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources, presented a report informing the GMCA of the 2023/24 financial position at the end of December 2023 (quarter 3) and the forecast revenue outturn position for the 2023/24 financial year.

#### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the 2023/24 forecast outturn position for the GMCA budgets at the end of December 2023 (quarter 3) be noted.
2. That the return of the forecast in year underspend of £10m from the Waste & resources budget be approved.