

**Minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Housing Commission
held on the 15 January 2024 via Microsoft Teams**

Present:

Salford Council	Councillor Colin Macalister
Tameside Council	Councillor Ged Cooney (In the Chair)
Salford Council	Councillor Tracy Kelly
Salford Council	Councillor Mike McCusker
Trafford Council	Councillor Elizabeth Patel
Oldham Council	Councillor Elaine Taylor
Manchester Council	Councillor Gavin White
Bolton Council	Councillor Akhtar Zaman
Tameside Council	Councillor Jacqueline North
Wigan Council	Councillor Susan Gambles

Independent Members:

Inspiring Communities Together	Bernadette Elder
Arup	Jane Healey-Brown

RFCC Representative:

Salford Council	Councillor Phillip Cusack
Bolton Council	Councillor Richard Silvester

Officers in Attendance:

GMCA Governance & Scrutiny	Helen Davies
GMCA Homelessness	Joe Donoghue
GMCA Housing Strategy	Steve Fyfe
GMCA Housing Strategy	Mary Gogarty
GMCA Flood & Water Programme Management	Jill Holden
GMCA Planning Strategy	Anne Morgan
GMCA Housing Strategy	John Bibby

GMCA Housing Strategy	David Hodcroft
GMCA Growth & Infrastructure/ Environment Agency	Helen Telfer
United Utilities	Dee Grahamslaw
GMCA Analyst- Housing & Planning	Aislinn O'Toole
GMCA Research- Housing & Planning	Lucy Woodbine
Homes England	Carl Moore

PHC/011/23 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received and from Councillor Tricia Ayrton (Rochdale), Steve Rumbelow (Rochdale), Paul Moore (Rochdale) and Aisling McCourt (GMCA).

PHC/012/23 Chairs Announcements and Urgent Business

The Chair noted for completeness that Councillor Mike McCusker had accepted the position as the Planning and Housing representative to the Green City Region Partnership.

PHC/013/23 The Minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2023

The Committee noted three specific amendments, a typo on page one, the spelling of Councillor Colin MacCalister should be spelled MacAlister and he represented Stockport Council not Salford Council.

Jane Healey Brown requested more detail be recorded in the minutes noting specifically the discussion on temporary accommodation as this did not reflect the full discussion.

To note, she had asked a question on Temporary Accommodation ahead of the meeting and thanked Joe Donoghue and Steve Fyfe for bringing the response back to Committee today and finally it was noted that temporary accommodation was not currently part of the GM Housing Strategy and it was important that this be considered.

RESOLVED /-

That further to the amendments noted, the minutes of the meeting held on the 31 October 2023 be accepted as a correct and accurate record.

PHC 014/23 Homelessness

PHC 014A/23 Temporary Accommodation Update

Joe Donoghue, Strategic Lead on Homelessness, GMCA gave a presentation on temporary accommodation in Greater Manchester.

The Committee noted how the GM Officer team had changed in recent years, the main function had moved from a position of convening and bringing people together for conversations, instead towards collaborating across GM, supporting officers and Local Authorities (LAs) to provide economies of scale across the ten boroughs.

The data showed an all-time high in terms of demand for homelessness support across GM.

The Committee noted the language used to describe the demand was important, and often not positive for individuals, families or communities. Nationally it was an existential risk to budgets for LAs and Section 114 was largely contributed to by Bed & Breakfast (B&Bs) payments for those using temporary accommodation. Liverpool City Council had written to government noting that the payments in Liverpool had risen from £250k- £19.4million before Christmas.

The context for GM had seen an increase in temporary accommodation usage of 49%. Traditionally Manchester would have an increased figure but that increase has now reached the other nine boroughs.

A report *“Temporary accommodation at crisis point: Frontline perspectives from London and Greater Manchester”* had been written by The Smith Institute, a leading independent public policy think tank. Recommendations noted the phasing out of B&Bs and noting both the budget pressures and this accommodation as the most expensive and poorest quality options for families.

Results were expected imminently from a week-long value for money exercise conducted in partnership with the Centre for Homelessness Impact, the brief to the consultants had been to approach the work boldly to find practical solutions using existing resources. Consultants started from the position of current spend and where value for money could be achieved, solutions (both short and long-term) needed to

integrate into the existing Housing Strategy Plans and drive onward investment from private or social investment.

Once the recommendations were known, these would be mapped into an action plan aligned with emerging work from All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPG) and relieving the immediate pressures on the LAs.

The Committee was given the opportunity to seek clarity and ask questions, there was discussion that included:

- The demands being driven by Government on the removal of people from housing. There was no expectation that the demand would reduce and focus was on clearing the backlog of the thousands of people still within the system.
- The importance of tackling temporary accommodation in partnership across GM particularly the use of social housing, phasing out of B&Bs and the impact of them on primary school children travelling to school.
- The importance of understanding where people were coming from in order to estimate figures more accurately.
- That urgent consideration should be given to the supply points, and a move away from existing housing mechanisms, this would be something to liaise with Homes England about.
- Noting the loss of Right to Buy properties from the housing stock.
- That GM have ensured the allocations policy did not incentive registering as homeless. If a person was at risk they could get the highest banding without presenting at the Town Hall as homeless.
- The question of how to incentivise, whilst homes were being built in GM for families, often they were lost to the adult-children purchasing them as an asset later on down the line.
- The severe impact of freezing the local housing allowance.

Joe Donoghue noted many of these points would be seen through the Action Plan.

RESOLVED /-

That the Temporary Accommodation Update and the proposed action for 2024 be received and noted.

PHC 015/23 Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RFCC) and Integrated Water Management Plan.

PHC 015A/23 Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RDFF) Update.

Jill Holden, GM Flood and Water Management Manager, GMCA gave a short presentation to the Committee.

The Committee noted that the North-West RFCC and Business Assurance Subgroup meet in advance of the full committee and provided a forum to consider, discuss and shape investment of money and resource in flood and coastal erosion risk management, as a basis for making recommendations and providing assurance to the full committee.

A collective view of the ten districts was needed to support the GM RFCC Members. The Planning and Housing Commission Members on the 31 October, approved 5 recommendations that related to the governance of items to be approved by the NW RFCC.

Items recommended for approval at the RFCC were:

- Consent to the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Grant in Aid (GiA) capital allocations £107.5m and the asset maintenance resource allocations £98.6m for 2024-25. Provide statutory consent to allow the implementation of the regional programmes for 2024/25.
- Recommendation to the RFCC the approval of the proposed local levy allocations for 2024-25 of £8.2m.
- Local Levy Strategy update (small-scale, not a substantial refresh)

The Committee noted the setting of the Local Levy at 3% had been approved by this Committee on the 31 October 2023.

The Committee had no further questions.

RESOLVED /-

That the Regional Flood & Coastal Committee (RDFF) Update be received and noted.

PHC 005/23 INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT
PHC 005A/23 FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Jil Holden, GM Flood and Water Programme Manager, GMCA gave a presentation to the Commission on GM Flood and Water Management (FWM), this included the specific governance and groups that supported FWM. These groups were the North-West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (NWRFCC), the NWRFCC Finance and Business Assurance subgroup and the GM FWM Strategic Group.

The Commission was given five suggested recommendations to the Commission:

1. All items for approval at the NW RFCC be brought to PHC for consideration to agree GM's position.
2. Flood and Water Management session to be held for RFCC members/PHC Exec Members (core members only), to help engage specifically with RFCC members and will follow on from PHC.
3. Where timing of PHC does not provide the opportunity to meet in advance of the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup, a Flood and Water Management session will be held separately.
4. Where appropriate the RFCC chair, PHC chair and GM RFCC members will meet outside of PHC in advance of the RFCC Finance and Business Assurance Subgroup.
5. 2024/25 nominations, PHC to appoint the GM NW RFCC members from its membership. Currently RFCC members are invited to PHC and are not PHC Exec Members.

The Commission Members considered the recommendations and were in agreement noting specifically the added level of democracy and joint-decision making that would be achieved by appointing GM NW RFCC representatives from the PHC membership, as opposed to the current arrangements where the RFCC Members are independent from the PHC.

RESOLVED /-

That:

1. the report be received and noted;
2. the meetings for the Planning and Housing Commission be scheduled and diarised for the full municipal year;
3. the five recommendations be agreed; and
4. the 3% Levy for be agreed.

PHC 005B/23 INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

David Hodcroft, Principal Planning Strategy, Helen Telfer, Growth and Infrastructure Advisor, GMCA/Environment Agency (EA) and Dee Grahamslaw, Placed Based Planning Lead, United Utilities (UU) presented the Integrated Water Management Report circulated with the agenda and invited the Committee to provide feedback and comments for clarity and added value. The Committee heard an overview of the outcomes it was hoped would be achieved through the plan: water quality, water quantity, growth and regeneration, improve connectivity, demand, economic development and low carbon.

The Committee was advised the aim was: to create value through the delivery of collaborative schemes with wider benefits to environment and society and organisational resilience; to integrate opportunities that align spatially, driving investments and solutions that deliver better value, leveraging funding from other sources where there is an alignment in objectives and by challenging delivery to be more efficient; and building a strong pipeline of investable projects such that GM is in the strongest possible position to secure funding when available.

The plan identified seven specific workstreams.

The Committee noted 400 clusters had been identified across GM, seven would be utilised using existing resources. The intention was to bring summary documents for each cluster back to this Committee.

The Officers advised that there were 224 individual projects for Stockport, with a lot of activity around Cheadle. There were a number of areas across Stockport where the LA, GMCA, UU and the EA could bring added value.

The lessons learned from the last 12-months were considered and included recognising the networks and relationships in place, the use of clear language, recognising that some projects were measured in years and not days and weeks, maintaining momentum through a developed team with trust and the use of project leads from individual organisations.

The Committee noted joint working at the heart of the plan, and was positive about the GM model evolving and the understanding that this was a complex issue that residents cared about.

RESOLVED /- That

1. the report be received and noted; and
2. a future report on progress of the workstreams relevant to the Commission be agreed.

PHC 006/23 GM Housing Strategy

PHC 006A/23 Good Landlord Charter Consultation

John Bibby, Principal Housing Strategy (Private Rented Sector), GMCA gave some context to the Good Landlord Charter (GLC) circulated with the agenda pack.

The GLC was a voluntary scheme for landlords of any kind, not just social or private and was the first of its kind across whole country. The GMC stemmed from the Good Employment Charter (GEC) and the ambition was to make significant improvement to the rented sectors through a journey of improvement.

There was twenty different member criteria and a commitment to give tenants a fair amount of time, published timescales for complaints and repairs and commitment for landlords to bring Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) as a C rating for homes.

The GLC was not a replacement for enforcement, and it was acknowledged the importance of enforcement for those acting badly towards tenants, enforcement would work alongside the GLC.

A coordinating group met through 2023 from a wide range of specialists to consider research and evidence of private tenants and landlords.

The process involved proposing landlords for consideration, social tenants would be protected by GMC, and could elevate them into a higher level of renting.

The GM Tenants Union expressed support for GLC.

The consultation would run from 8th Jan-26th Feb and www.GMConsult.org was the best way to reach it.

The Committee noted there were ten focus groups, and the request from the Committee was for general feedback on the consultation and opinions about how it should run, e.g. independent Implementation Unit, how can we encourage landlords to take part? What incentives are needed if any? Was the Member criteria for the GMC correct?

The Committee was given the opportunity to discuss the GLC Consultation, there was discussion that included:

- That the EPC C rating be included as part of the member criteria. It was clarified that there are some differences in the implementation of C rated EPCs. The social rented sector and private rented sector is different and was not connected at the moment.

Clarity around if there was funding available for the GLC or an online database for good landlords. There was the decarbonisation funding for Social landlords, but no funding to offer to private landlords. Feedback was needed to understand if it was legal to make decarbonisation contingent on the charter.

- The Committee was advised the ambition of the GLC was to make it as easy as possible to find good landlords. The Residential Landlords Assoc mentioned Incentivising membership, e.g. financial incentives, however this was not necessarily within the power of the GMCA. Private landlords might find it useful to access independent advice for disputes when they arise and whilst landlords should not be dissuaded but it would be important to take action against those not meeting standards.
- Clarifying the GLC would take landlords on a journey. The management of agents was also noted and the incentives for this cohort. The Committee noted that Safe Agent was an accreditation scheme that gave feedback landlords. There was the potential for agents to have a positive role in this. Agents could promote GLC landlords and there is reference to this in the consultation document. The Committee noted the complications but noted the positive benefits for incentivising agents, to become part of the process.
- Clarity was given about needing to be part of the landlord licencing scheme, the

member criteria was not a replacement for landlords legal responsibilities.

RESOLVED /-

That the consultation update be received and noted.

PHC 006B/23 Healthy Homes Background and Plan.

Mary Gogarty, Principle Housing Strategy, GMCA gave some context to the Healthy Homes Services (HHS), a home improvement service to help keep people in their homes and well and included statutory disability funding for LAs plus a range of different grants.

The scheme supported LA services, and worked within policies for consistency and coherence across GM. Keeping people safe and well in their homes was a GMCA priority.

Resourcing and funding was the key issue. Over the next few weeks a Project Manager would be recruited, a role jointly funded with the NHS GM. The work to jointly procure was a positive statement by the NHS doing GM work to draw down funding to support LAs to deliver this work. A practitioner group had been convened from LA, Private sector housing and Social care teams.

Clarification was sought on the amount of work generated for one post and if that was enough resource. The Committee was advised that whilst it was one role at present, the transition plan would be monitored against the scale of work and then funding would be sought to deliver that. The PM post was jointly funded with NHS to jointly manage the resource across organisations. The work plan was high-level and the activity will show scale.

Registered Providers (RPs) were engaged in the work, and the original idea came from the RPs on a locality footprint. Sometimes a managed move is better than adaptations.

The Chair noted the importance of keeping people at home as the best option.

RESOLVED /-

That the consultation update be received and noted.

PHC 007C/23 Census and Housing Market

Aislinn O’Toole, Housing and Planning Analyst, and Lucy Woodbine, Senior Principal GMCA gave a presentation to the Committee that considered the Census 2021 findings and the findings for GM, whilst the census included a wide breadth of areas, the focus for the presentation was on housing.

The key headlines were from the perspective of a usual resident, residing in GM for 12-months.

Key headlines included a population increase, GM was more ethnically diverse than England as a whole, all the household growth was attributed to the private rented sector.

The Committee considered a graph that demonstrated the population change across GM between 2011-2021. Wigan was particularly a standout district with over 100% of 66-year olds. There had been a change in the number of households across GM in the same period with significant numbers into the city-centres and the area of Woodford in Stockport, the social rent was also a majority in Manchester city centre.

In terms of the percentage of tenure types in GM and England in 2021, there were slightly fewer owner occupiers, but a lot of differences between the districts. More of the owner occupiers lived on the outskirts of GM.

The Committee noted that age was one of the protected characteristics considered for the Good Landlord Charter, across GM older people were more likely to own their own homes, those aged 24 and under were more likely to be in private rented sector than social. Those owned 34 and under were the lowest age range of those who owned their own home outright.

RESOLVED /-

That the report be received and noted.

PHC 007/23 Places for Everyone

PHC 007A/23 Places for Everyone Update

Anne Morgan, Head of Planning Strategy, GMCA noted the report circulated with the agenda pack. The analysis of the consultation results was ongoing, expected to be finished on the 6 December, there had been 177 responses to the consultation.

The Inspectors had requested a report to summarise the responses and if any further modifications were needed, the Inspectors needed to be updated. The Inspectors would take a decision if there were any new substantive issues, if not then the plan was to either recommend for: approval, modifications and approval or modifications and no approval. GMCA was working towards approval as the document stood currently.

On the 19 December the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published and the Energy Framework, both would need consideration.

Plans submitted before the 19 December would be reviewed under the old NPPF with a slight update in September 2023. The next update to this Committee would be after the Inspectors report.

The Committee was given the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarity. There was some discussion on:

- If Places for Everyone could achieve the same day adoption, this was the ambition.
- The benefit of planning ahead to consider the implications of the NPPF and discussing this with Elected Members to alleviate issues ahead of cabinet decisions.
- The 177 responses was noted as surprising, the responses had reduced as the process had progressed, it was noted there had been more responses from Bury than any other area of GM.
- It was clarified that the Inspectors has recommended taking out areas of the plan specific to flooding and SuDS. These requirements were not removed, they were now located in one area rather than duplicating across each individual policy.

RESOLVED /-

That the report be received and noted.

PHC 008/23 Date of the Next Meeting

The Commission noted the date of the next meeting: Wednesday 6 March 2024, 12pm:
Microsoft Teams

Meeting Closed: 12:35