

## **GMCA AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
Subject: GMCA Audit Committee Effectiveness  
Report of: Steve Wilson, GMCA Treasurer

---

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report provides Audit Committee members with an update on the discussions and recommendations made at the previous meeting of the committee, which suggested a way forward in developing the work and functionality of the Audit Committee.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Audit Committee members are asked to comment and note the report.

### **CONTACT OFFICERS:**

Steve Wilson, GMCA Treasurer  
[Steve.wilson@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.wilson@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

Paul Harris, Senior Governance Officer, GMCA  
[Paul.harris@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.harris@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk)

Equalities Implications: N/A

Climate Change Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures: N/A

Risk Management – Risk management is included in the work programme.

Legal Considerations – none

Financial Consequences – Revenue – There are no specific revenue considerations contained within the report.

Financial Consequences – Capital – There are no specific capital considerations contained within the report.

Number of attachments included in the report: none

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Report to Audit Committee 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024

TRACKING/PROCESS		
Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution		No
EXEMPTION FROM CALL IN		
Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?		No
TfGMC	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
N/A	N/A	

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 At the previous meeting of this committee, Members considered proposals and explored potential future arrangements for the Audit Committee, to ensure an effective Audit Committee for the future, particularly in light of the greater responsibilities that have been devolved to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) as part of the Government's devolution agreement.
- 1.2 The previous report identified particular areas that could be strengthened which included clarity on and reviewing Independent Member tenures, Member training and development matters, the frequency and location of meetings, better liaison with GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Joint Audit Panel (Police and Crime) and remuneration.

## **2. Audit Committee**

### **2.1 Membership**

- 2.1.1 The membership of the committee is 8 Members, comprising of four local authority appointed members and four Independent Members. Two additional local authority members are appointed as substitute members. There are no proposals to alter this arrangement.
- 2.1.2 In terms of tenures, elected member appointments may change as part of the GMCA Committee nominations and appointments process in May. The tenures for Independent members have not been so clear and in view of this, the Committee agreed at the previous meeting, to stipulate that the length of tenure for Independent Members will be set at 2 terms of 3 years plus 3 x 1 year giving a maximum of 9 years.

2.1.3 The decision to agree the final 3 individual annual appointments will be done so on business need and to support a smooth flow of change in independent membership. This arrangement will be included in the updated Terms of Reference for the Committee and the GMCA Constitution.

2.1.4 With Gwyn Griffiths stepping down as an independent member at the end of this municipal year, a recruitment pack is being developed to seek to attract and appoint another independent member. As part of this process committee members will be asked to undertake a skills audit to help identify any areas where expertise and experience of the committee can be strengthened.

## **2.2 Induction, Training and Development**

2.2.1 Members have highlighted that a training programme would be helpful to support their work on the committee. In January, Members were invited to a treasury management training session with Link Group, GMCA's Treasury Management advisors, and a CIPFA webinar was also provided. Similar ad hoc training will be provided as an when opportunities arise.

2.2.2 In developing the committee work programme, Members will have an opportunity to identify GMCA activities which can be linked to the meetings as a training offer or to include as a deep-dive topic, or both.

2.2.3 Should members agree, an induction programme for members is proposed for June 2024. This will enable new and existing members to

receive information on the combined authority (what it does and doesn't do), and to highlight finance and governance matters. The induction will also include an overview of technical matters including audit, assurance, risk and treasury management.

## **2.3 Meeting Frequency**

2.3.1 It is proposed that the Committee will continue to meet five times per year and this will be reflected in the committee work programme. Generally, the Committee will meet in a city centre location.

2.3.2 Following a proposal from Committee members, the potential for site visits to be undertaken by the committee were to be explored. Members should note that if site visits are to be linked to committee meetings, additional time will be needed and any venue would need to be able to accommodate the committee meeting in person, have the facilities to allow for the live-streaming of the meeting and to be accessible to any members of the public wishing to observe the committee.

## **2.4 Liaison with Other Bodies**

2.4.1 Members have recognised the need for improved relationships with other bodies such as the Joint Audit Panel (Police and Crime) and GMCA Overview and Scrutiny.

2.4.2 Members welcomed the attendance of the Chair of the Joint Audit Panel at a meeting of the Audit Committee in which he presented his annual report. Tentative arrangements are being developed for an

Audit Committee and Joint Audit Panel meeting and networking session during the next municipal year.

2.4.3 GMCA Governance and Scrutiny are developing a plan which will help to provide greater links between the work of this committee and the Overview and Scrutiny work, particularly where risks or potential risks are being scrutinised by both Committees.

## 2.5 **Remuneration**

2.5.1 Following a request, a benchmarking process is underway to explore the levels of remuneration paid to members of Audit Committees within the respective GM councils and other combined authorities.

## 3. **Recommendation**

3.1 Members are asked to comment on update.