

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY HELD WEDNESDAY, 24TH JULY 2024 AT THE
TOOTAL BUILDINGS - BROADHURST HOUSE, 1ST FLOOR, 56 OXFORD
STREET, MANCHESTER, M1 6EU**

PRESENT:

Councillor Nadim Muslim	Bolton Council (Chair)
Councillor Peter Wright	Bolton Council
Councillor Russell Bernstein	Bury Council
Councillor Imran Rizvi	Bury Council
Councillor John Leech	Manchester City Council
Councillor Anthony McCaul	Manchester City Council
Councillor Colin McLaren	Oldham Council
Councillor Dylan Williams	Rochdale Council
Councillor Sameena Zaheer	Rochdale Council
Councillor Lewis Nelson	Salford Council
Councillor Rachel Wise	Stockport Council
Councillor Jill Axford	Trafford Council
Councillor Ged Carter	Trafford Council
Councillor Shaun Ennis	Trafford Council
Councillor Claire Reid	Tameside Council
Councillor Joanne Marshall	Wigan Council
Councillor Debra Wailes	Wigan Council
Councillor Fred Walker	Wigan Council

ALSO PRESENT:

Andy Burnham	GM Mayor
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OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Karen Chambers	GMCA
Scott Dickson	GMCA
Gillian Duckworth	GMCA
Amy Foots	GMCA
Nicola Ward	GMCA
John Wrathmell	GMCA

ANNUAL MEETING BUSINESS

O&SC 01/24 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Caroline Simpson (Group Chief Executive, GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM), Councillor Joshua Brooks (Salford), Councillor Basil Curley (Manchester), Councillor Mandie Shilton-Godwin (Manchester) and Councillor Terry Smith (Rochdale).

O&SC 02/24 APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR

Gillian Duckworth, Monitoring Officer, GMCA opened the meeting and invited nominations for the appointment of Chair.

Councillor Nadim Muslim and Councillor John Leech were put forward as Chair for the 2024/25 municipal year.

Following a vote, the decision to appoint Councillor Nadim Muslim was passed.

RESOLVED /-

That Councillor Nadim Muslim be appointed as the Chair of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee for the 2024/25 municipal year.

The Committee was requested to note the membership of the Committee for the 2024/25 municipal year as below –

Members:

District	Name
Bolton	Nadim Muslim (Con)
	Peter Wright (Independent)
Bury	Russell Bernstein (Con)
	Imran Rizvi (Lab)
Manchester	John Leech (Lib Dem)
	Basil Curley (Lab)
	Mandie Shilton Godwin (Lab)
Oldham	Colin McLaren (Lab)
Rochdale	Dylan Williams (Lab)
	Terry Smith (Lab)
Salford	Lewis Nelson (Lab)
	Joshua Brooks (Lab)
Stockport	Rachel Wise (Lab)
Tameside	Naila Sharif (Lab)
	Claire Reid (Lab)
Trafford	Sean Ennis (Lib Dem)
	Ged Carter (Lab)
	Jill Axford (Lab)
Wigan	Joanne Marshall (Lab)
	Fred Walker (Lab)

Substitutes:

District	Name
Bolton	Mohammed Iqbal (Lab)

	Robert Morrissey (Lab)
Bury	Gavin McGill
	To be confirmed
Manchester	John Hughes (Lab)
	Anthony McCaul (Lab)
Oldham	Louie Hamblett (Lib Dem)
	Junaid Hussain (Lab)
Rochdale	Ashley Dearnley (Con)
	Sameena Zaheer (Lab)
Salford	Neil Reynolds (Lab)
	Maria Brabiner (Lab)
Stockport	Steve Gribbon (Lib Dem)
	Helen Hibbert (Lab)
Tameside	Liam Billington (Con)
	Theresa Smith (Lab)
Trafford	George Delvin (Lab)
	Keleigh Glenton (Lab)
Wigan	Mary Callahan (Lab)
	Debra Wailes (Lab)

RESOLVED /-

That the membership of the Committee for the 2024/25 municipal year be noted.

O&SC 04/24

MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT AND ANNUAL DECLARATION OF INTEREST FORM

Members were reminded of their obligations under the GMCA Members' Code of Conduct and were requested to complete an annual declaration of interest form, which had been emailed to them by the Governance & Scrutiny Officer.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the GMCA's Member Code of Conduct (Appendix A of the report) be noted.
2. That member as per their obligation stated in the Code of Conduct would complete their Annual Declaration of Interest form and return it to the Governance & Scrutiny Officer.

O&SC 05/24

TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED /-

That the Committee's Terms of Reference be noted.

ORDINARY BUSINESS

O&SC 06/24

CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

In relation to the Greater Manchester Housing Investment Loan Fund, the Committee acknowledged recent press releases regarding this and the lack of affordable housing in the city. Members agreed that reassurance should be sought around the decision making process for the fund and requested that a report be brought to the next meeting so that the Committee can be confident that due processes were in place.

Members raised concerns regarding the procedures in place for the recruitment of specialist advisors to the GM Mayor (especially in relation to the recent investigations into the Night Time Economy Advisor) and requested that a report be brought to a future meeting to inform the Committee of the procedures, codes and practices around these roles.

The Chair invited a discussion in relation to the appointment of a Vice Chair.

Whilst some Members commented that a Vice Chair should be appointed, others felt that due to the consistent attendance of the current Chair, a Vice Chair would not be needed.

The Chair advised that a report would be brought to the next meeting to provide Members with more information, in order for them to make further recommendations.

RESOLVED /-

1. That a report in relation to the decision making process regarding the Greater Manchester Housing Investment Loan Fund and wider investment programme be brought to the next meeting.
2. That a report in relation to the recruitment, procedures, codes and practices relating to specialist advisors to the GM Mayor be brought to a future meeting.
3. That a report in relation to the appointment of a Vice Chair be brought to the next meeting.

O&SC 07/24

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED /-

No declarations were received in relation to any item on the agenda.

O&SC 08/24

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 20 MARCH 2024

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 20 March 2024 be approved as a correct and accurate record.

O&SC 09/24

**GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24**

Consideration was given to a report that outlined the work of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee had undertaken over the past municipal year.

Members commented that the report contained good examples that the Committee was holding the GM Mayor and Portfolio Leads to account and showed signs of significant improvements to build on.

RESOLVED /-

That the annual report be noted.

O&SC 10/24

A NEW GREATER MANCHESTER STRATEGY

The Chair invited the GM Mayor Andy Burnham and, Amy Foots, Head of Implementation, to present this report to the Committee.

Setting the scene, the GM Mayor stated that this new term of office was the start of a new world with the single settlement and pursuing ambitions around the creation of GM Housing First Unit, Technical Education (MBacc), and a Live Well Service for our residents. These ambitions need to be reflected in the GM Strategy, therefore a full refresh of the strategy has begun to be undertaken. The last refresh took place in 2021, post pandemic, so now is the time to step back and recognise how important it is that we have a GM Strategy that guides us as we move towards the single settlement.

There has been a clear statement from the new Government that devolution is now the default and therefore it is necessary to understand what the future GM offer to the Government will be. For example, to look at a GM growth offer to inform Government of what we hope to achieve, in relation to Housing, could we go further than our target. These are things to be discussed and agreed with the Government,

and the GM Strategy needs to be ambitious enough to reflect this but realistic. The GM Mayor reflected that we are entering a new era, and we need a GM Strategy to focus us for the next 10 years.

Draft versions of the GM Strategy will be brought before the Committee for comments ahead of its publication in September, this will prepare the GMCA for what may come from the Government Spending Review due in the Autumn. Officers added that extensive engagement has already taken place with existing stakeholders in order to ensure that the GM Strategy was a collaborative piece of work.

The Committee was given the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification on the paper, there was some discussion that included:

The Committee raised concerns that financial support for Local Authorities following the election of a new Government and their decision not to lift the two child benefit cap. Regarding the ambition to increase our proportion of the 1.5m new homes target, Members questioned whether funding and resources would be provided to ensure that the infrastructure to support this ambition could be put in place such as GP practices, roads and transport.

It was stated that, in order to prepare for the spending review and the autumn statement, the GMCA needed to be realistic as to what it could achieve and be open with the Government about the opportunities that could be created with the single settlement. For example, as part of the trailblazer work, the rail industry was working with the GMCA to bring 8 rail lines into the Bee Network so that they are included as part of an integrated service. Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) looked at the public subsidy going into those 8 lines, it was around £100m per year. Many of those lines are not running to 100%, some are around 65% patronage. The GM Mayor stated that if the Government put the funding through GM, there was potential to turn that into much more and open up the services to many more people to encourage them to use public transport. Another example was the Working Well Scheme, where GM have been able to use direct funding for employment support helping people to get into work.

Further to this, if the GMCA were able to route the majority of financial resources through the single settlement, then there was the potential to take the pressure off the local authorities. An example of this would be expanding the housing target for GM, as an increase in homes available for social rent would then have a positive effect on the temporary accommodation spend for local authorities. The GM Mayor agreed that if we were to have a stretched target for housing then it would need that extra resource in health and education budgets which would be captured in discussions with Government.

The Committee were advised that the GM Mayor strongly supported the removal the two child cap on child benefit, but he emphasised the new Government was only three weeks into being and they would need time to look at matters such as these in the round in order to make informed judgements in the autumn. However, GM should continue to use its voice for the removal to be a high priority, because of its links to child poverty.

The Committee raised concerns regarding the emphasis on growth and asked whether community wealth building was a part of this. The GM Mayor stated that in terms of the focus on growth, the GM Strategy should create a definition of growth that we all agree on, that includes both personal growth and community growth, and ensure that this is captured in the report under the phrase "Inclusive Growth". It was important to be clear that you only get growth if you have a more circular economy. The GM Mayor gave an example of employment support previously mentioned. During discussions with Government officials as part of the trailblazer work, it became apparent that the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) were reluctant to change their contracting arrangements. Currently the DWP commission large companies to provide employment support, but the GMCA need to encourage the DWP to look at this differently. If they were to localise and personalise that spend, not only would they get better outcomes for residents, the spend would be kept in the GM economy which would further strengthen and build our communities. The work the GMCA have completed with the Bee Network is a good example of a circular

economy, it has shown that better services lead to increased patronage and the advantages of that comes back into TfGM to give lower fares and better services.

For example, there was hoped to be an offer for people on the lowest incomes for an annual Bee Network pass, working with credit unions, to enable the option to pay weekly interest free payments, which further demonstrated a circular economy that needs to be reflected in the GM Strategy.

The GM Mayor asked the Committee to start feeding any thoughts into what should be included in the definition of inclusive growth.

In relation to the planetary boundaries, it was confirmed that the GM Strategy would continue to include our ambition to be carbon neutral by 2038.

The Committee commented that strategies normally work over 5-10 years but under the single settlement the spending review would potentially be 2-4 years and therefore asked how we can ensure that our strategies are aligned with the spending review. Members were advised that once this rewrite was established, the GMCA would review the GM Strategy on a regular basis. The GMCA were focused on fixing the fundamentals that support inclusive growth, for example fixing transport, education, housing and support through the benefit system.

The Committee commented that ambition is often dampened by council boundaries, for example in relation to active travel schemes, Manchester Council have a scheme on Deansgate and Trafford Council have a scheme on Chester Road, but because of boundary issues, the two do not join up, if this was connected it would improve active travel options.

Members asked how the GM Strategy and single settlement can overcome this and were advised that since taking control of buses, TfGM have been able to look at why they don't run on time which is often due to roadworks. This highlights that we don't always work effectively together, so there are opportunities to improve our own working practices. If we want to be sustainable as a GM system, we need to look at

what we can do jointly at a GM level. The GM Mayor gave an example of the recent work completed to look at Out of Borough Placements for children and suggested that perhaps something similar could be done when looking at how we commission temporary accommodation as currently local authorities are competing for limited accommodation.

The Committee noted the pressure being felt by Local Authorities, and in particular the creation of more homes, in the city centre and other areas, as this was resulting in more demand on services such as GPs, and council services, and asked what could be done to ensure that we get a fairer settlement for GM.

The GM Mayor agreed that GM needed to ensure that there were better services, and corresponding support for all our residents to prevent congested services, however firstly we needed to look at the opportunities of collaborative working to ease some of these pressures. There were things that we could do differently using GM budgets, so that the GMCA are not always asking Government for more funding.

The Committee asked how the GMCA could ensure that the growth that the GM Strategy talks about was shared throughout GM, amongst all. Members were advised that it is well recognised that the GM Strategy must be for all people. There were several GM Mayoral Development Zones, from which it was vital to ensure that wider areas around them benefit from the investments taking place in those areas. The GM Mayor envisaged that when the 8 rail lines become part of the Bee Network, benefits will be spread to areas that often feel neglected, so we need to ensure this is a priority.

The Committee asked if the Combined Authority has the capacity to refresh the strategy before the spending review. It was confirmed that the Chancellor was due to make an announcement early next week regarding when to expect the spending review, so when that date is known, further work would be undertaken with the committee to contribute to the GM Strategy. However, Officers confirmed that work had already been undertaken to ensure the deadline was achievable and to ensure the strategy reflected the national picture. It was confirmed that an early draft of the

Strategy could be made available for local authorities to take to their own scrutiny committees as required.

The GM Mayor asked the Committee if they could identify where GM could more effectively work together to improve services, specifically which were politically doable issues we could identify, an example of this was minimum standards for taxi licencing.

The GM Mayor touched on the work undertaken by the GM Reform Board in relation to preventative work that could be widened across GM. He emphasised that there was little point spending money on a person's health or education if they were going to live in a place that damaged their health, so housing had to be a priority. That was the reason behind the Housing First Unit, which would deal with poor housing standards and would have enforcement capability which would in turn help local authorities.

The Committee were encouraged by opportunities to work in a more collaborative way to stop crisis occurring, by focusing on prevention, which made not only ethical but financial sense.

In view of education, the GM Mayor stated that he was starting to look at what the offer is for our 14 year olds who aren't able to, or don't want to go to university. These were the young people that the MBacc would help build a future for.

The Committee welcomed greater clarity of what the GM Strategy was going to deliver and felt that this would make the Strategy more meaningful for the public to engage with.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the proposed approach and outline content for the development of the new GM Strategy be noted.

2. That the draft GM Strategy continue to be shared with the Committee at timely opportunities.
3. That a draft copy of the GM Strategy be shared with the Local Authority Working Group to share with their members and local scrutiny committees for feedback.
4. That Members give some thought to how local authorities could work collaboratively to deliver services and make savings.
5. That the Committee receive further information on improved ticketing offers for the Bee Network in due course.
6. That the Committee give consideration as to the definition of Inclusive Growth.

O&SC 11/24

GM DEVOLUTION TRAILBLAZER UPDATE

The Chair invited the GM Mayor Andy Burnham, John Wrathmell, Director, Strategy Economy and Research and Scott Dickson, Principal, Devolution Strategy to present this report to the Committee.

The report provided members with an understanding of progress since the GM devolution trailblazer deal was signed in March 2023.

GMCA Officers have been working with government officials on implementation since the deal was signed. The following areas were included -

- **Governance and Accountability**, building on the strength of this committee, but also the creation of an MP Question Session with the GM Mayor for further accountability. Officers had been working with the previous Government and the Department for Levelling Up to agree the terms of reference for the session, which was expected to meet on a quarterly basis, however, were currently waiting for clarity from the new Government as to how they wished to proceed with this.

- **Fiscal Devolution**, extending GM's current arrangements for retaining business rates.
- **Data and Digital**, working with Department of Science and Technology to focus on parts of the conurbation to address digital connectivity blackspots.
- **Housing and regeneration**, working with local authorities on selective licencing of landlords which further supports the ambitions of the Good Landlord Charter. Continuing to have conversations around the next Affordable Homes Programme and how this could form part of the single settlement.
- **Skills and Employment**, MBacc work progressing at speed, a recent event was held and very well attended by schools and colleges. One thousand high quality MBacc work placements have already been created for September 2024.
- **Transport**, beginning to look at a place based approach to GM rail stations with 6 sites identified to make improvements, including accessibility, and opportunities to create regeneration around them.
- **Economy and Culture**, although the Strategic Productivity Partnership and the Trade and Investment Board have not met yet, progress was being made.
- **Net Zero and The Environment**, funding received on a pilot basis and progress was being made through single settlement negotiations.
- **Public Services**, a session was planned with the GM NHS to progress and reset how the GMCA and GM NHS could work together more effectively.

Officers confirmed the next stage of single settlement negotiations continue around local growth plans and employment support; this was a specific commitment in the new Government's manifesto for the devolution of employment support into the single settlement.

It was confirmed that a significant part of the single settlement would be the outcomes framework. These would be derived from the GM Strategy and would be

agreed at the spending review and the targets agreed shortly after would be commensurate with the funding that will be received.

The Committee was given the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification on the paper, there was some discussion that included:

Clarity was provided as to why there was a further report in Part B; it was confirmed that the section in schedule 12, refers to Government not releasing certain information into the public domain, so the GMCA were currently bound by that confidentiality.

The Committee asked whether the new deal for renters would see any positive changes from the new Government that would make it easier for renters. Members were advised that GM Leaders were hoping for a stronger bill from the new Government, which would see this new deal go further to not only address the no fault eviction notices but also more regulation of rent, service charges and the handling of deposits.

In relation to transport and the railways, the new Government had committed to not giving franchises to private companies as they come up for renewal. The Committee asked if this would create opportunities to take control of the local rail network and would this bring any difficulties. Members were advised that there was real opportunity here, initial plans were for the 8 lines as previously discussed. There was opportunity to rethink the timetables, so they are in the public interest rather than for income maximisation. More frequency would be the ambition to encourage people to use public transport. These 8 lines are mostly commuter lines so it would be relatively easy to increase frequency on these lines.

Regarding the Good Landlord Charter, the Committee asked whether it would be possible to explore some kind of decarbonisation fund for the private sector in the style of the social housing decarbonisation fund, perhaps triggered by the Good Landlord Charter. Members were advised that there was a need to have incentives for landlords to join the Charter and the idea of making the retrofit funding

conditional to at least being a supporter of the Good Landlord Charter would be explored.

The Committee asked about long term funding for the Bee Network and queried whether local authorities would be expected to pick up any costs. Members were advised that patronage remained higher than expected and services had clearly improved in tranche one and tranche two was anticipated to do the same. The GMCA and TfGM had, however, advised Government that transport funding must become a long term arrangement going forward.

The Committee asked the GM Mayor what he would like to see in the devolution bill in relation to health and social care. Members were advised that there was a seminar taking place this week to scope out what the new arrangement could look like with NHS GM and the Department of Health and whether or not this could be part of the bill.

The Committee asked how the CA would ensure the £150m brownfield funding is evenly distributed across the 10 local authorities. Officers confirmed that the single settlement would help allocate funding in a long term planned way. Previous funding had to be allocated very quickly so often only schemes that were ready to go could be funded, it was confirmed however, that all boroughs did benefit currently from this funding.

The Committee requested clarification on the definition of affordable homes, what was deemed affordable and how much of this next Affordable Homes Programme would be social housing. Members were advised that it was hoped that GM could create its own definition of affordable homes and determine how many homes should be for social rent. Something that could cause issues was the discount for Right to Buy as this impacts on the incentive for investors to build new homes. Therefore, it was envisaged that potentially any social homes built could be excluded from Right to Buy to help increase the number of homes that remain available for social rent.

The Committee commented that some local authorities have a lot of temporary accommodation, and others have a shortage. Members were advised that there was a clear recognition at a recent Homelessness Board that a GM wide approach to this was needed as previously stated this was an area which could be worked on collaboratively with the 10 local authorities.

It was noted that there was a lot of development in larger towns but not necessarily at the same rate in smaller areas, the Committee asked if the focus could be shifted to smaller towns suffering decline. The GM Mayor stated that he was very committed to ensuring smaller towns reach their potential. He was encouraged to see the benefits of the work in the GM Mayoral Development Zones. For some town centres there were clear benefits in developing accommodation as this brings a new footfall into the town centres. An example of the work currently taking place in Farnworth was given. How this is reflected in the GM Strategy was to be discussed.

The Committee raised an issue regarding centralisation of services and asked if there was a need for a GM assembly or GM county council. The GM Mayor advised that this was not planned. The model that the GMCA has works as its routed through local authorities. However, there was scope to look at services that can be procured at a GM level. It was noted that the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would become much elevated as the GMCA progress the single settlement and further deliver the elements of the trailblazer.

It was confirmed that schemes prior to the single settlement would not be abandoned.

The Committee were advised that a broader view of emissions in GM does exist as part of the GM Environment Plan, and this was being reviewed sector by sector. However, it was important that this was captured and measured against the single settlement to ensure that ambitions could continue to be scaled up.

Clarity was requested on Housing Policy Sandbox. Members asked about further legislation requested to tackle anti social behaviour and fare evasion on public

transport and a briefing was requested on devolution of employment support and whether there was any possibility of devolving benefits payments to GM. The Committee was advised that Sandbox was a term to describe working with Government to trial new ways of working and a couple of projects were taking place in Oldham and Salford as a way of testing new approaches to housing welfare and health and social care to see what could be rolled out across GM.

It was confirmed that current legislation relating to public transport to tackle anti social behaviour and fare evasion was quite weak, work on this was already underway but some legislative change was still needed.

In terms of employment support, moving towards a localised model, offering opportunities that relate to our economy and link with the Adult Education Budget were needed and this was being worked on.

The MBacc was discussed further, and members agreed that different pathways and more flexibility was needed. Educational attendance is poor and mental health issues in schools were increasing. There were cohorts of young people waiting for NHS assessments and the Committee recognised that this was holding them back so urged for anything that could be done in terms of living well and working with the NHS be considered.

Members were advised that the MBacc would help young people to make a choice and see a clear direction before them at age 14 so they have relevant information as they make their options. Supported pathways were to form part of the MBacc so reasonable adjustments can be made for young people. Links to the Violence Reduction Unit would also be supported. The Committee recognised that wider support in schools was needed and local authority oversight.

The Committee raised concerns in relation to the Government's recent announcement regarding the early release of prisoners due to overcrowding and how this would be managed in GM. The GM Mayor advised that there was a

scheme in place, CAZ3, so an offer of accommodation was offered to everyone on release.

RESOLVED/-

That the feedback given by the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee on progress so far and views on how to approach the next steps, particularly given the change in the national Government be noted.

**O&SC 12/24 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME &
FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

RESOLVED /-

1. That the proposed Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme for July-September 2024 be noted.
2. That Members use the Forward Plan of Key Decisions to identify any potential areas for further scrutiny.

O&SC 13/24 FUTURE MEETING DATES

RESOLVED /-

That the following dates for the rest of the municipal year be noted:

- 14 August 2024 – 1pm to 3.30pm
- 25 September 2024 – 1pm to 3.30pm
- 23 October 2024 – 1pm to 3.30pm
- 27 November 2024 – 1pm to 3.30pm
- 11 December 2024 – 1pm to 3.30pm
- 29 January 2025 – 1pm to 3.30pm
- 12 February 2025 – 1pm to 3.30pm

- 26 February 2025 – 1pm to 3.30pm
- 26 March 2025 – 1pm to 3.30pm

O&SC 14/24

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That, under section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on business on the grounds that this involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as set out in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

O&SC 15/24

GM DEVOLUTION TRAILBLAZER UPDATE (PART B)

Further discussions took place regarding this report GM Trailblazer Devolution Deal following its agreement on 15 March 2023.

RESOLVED /-

That the feedback given by the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee on progress so far and views on how to approach the next steps, particularly given the change in the national Government be noted.