

**GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL**  
**MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 18 NOVEMBER 2024 AT THE MECHANICS**  
**INSTITUTE**

**PRESENT:**

Councillor Janet Emsley	Rochdale Council (Chair)
Councillor David Chadwick	Bolton Council
Councillor Richard Gold	Bury Council
Councillor Garry Bridges	Manchester City Council
Councillor Angela Smith	Rochdale Council
Councillor Robin Garrido	Salford Council
Councillor David Lancaster	Salford Council
Councillor Rose Thompson	Trafford Council
Councillor Yvonne Klieve	Wigan Council
Tony Gordon	Independent Member
Stephen Williams	Independent Member

**Also in attendance:**

Kate Green	GM Deputy Mayor
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**Officers Present:**

Ian Cosh	Chief Finance Officer, GMP
Lee Rawlinson	Chief Resources Officer, GMP
DCC Terry Woods	GMP
CFO Dave Russel	GMFRS
Tracey Read	GMFRS
Mathew Chard	GMFRS
Jeanette Staley	GM Police, Fire and Crime Policy & Strategy Support Officer, Salford Council
Neil Evans	Director of Police, Crime, Fire & Criminal Justice, GMCA
Lynne Ridsdale	Lead Portfolio Chief Executive, Bury Council
Claire Postlethwaite	Director of Operational Finance, GMCA
Melinda Edwards	Deputy Monitoring Officer, GMCA
Lee Teasdale	Senior Governance & Scrutiny Officer, GMCA
Peter Boulton	Network Director Highways, TfGM

**PFCP/68/24            APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Rabiya Jiva (Bolton), Councillor Sandra Walmsley (Bury), Councillor Peter Dean (Oldham), Councillor Aftab Hussain (Oldham), Councillor Barbara Bentham (Salford), Councillor Jake Austin (Stockport), Councillor Rosemary Barratt (Stockport) and Councillor Dane Anderton (Wigan).

**PFCP/69/24            CHAIRS ANNOUCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair opened by advising members that following a Cabinet reshuffle at Tameside Council, Councillor Vimal Choksi would be standing down from the Panel with a new Tameside member confirmed in due course. The Panel expressed its thanks to Councillor Choksi for his valuable contributions during his tenure.

It was advised that the first session of the Overview & Scrutiny Task and Finish Group on the Safety of Women and Girls had recently taken place and that the Chair of the Police, Fire & Crime Panel had been in attendance.

The Chair advised that the latest 'Safe Drive, Stay Alive' event had taken place at Middleton Arena, and continued to provide important information to young people in the region.

Congratulations were expressed following receipt of the King's Award for Voluntary Service at Rochdale Fireground Museum.

**RESOLVED/-**

1. That the Panel expresses its thanks for former Panel Member for Tameside Council, Councillor Vimal Choksi.
2. That the update on the Overview & Scrutiny Task and Finish Group on the Safety of Women and Girls be received.
3. That the update on the latest iteration of Safe Drive, Stay Alive be received.
4. That congratulations be expressed to the Rochdale Fireground Museum following receipt of the King's Award for Voluntary Service.

**PFCP/70/24            DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Deputy Mayor Kate Green submitted a declaration of interest in her role as a governor of Manchester Metropolitan University, in relation to the Deputy Mayor Decision Notices attached for information to the agenda pack.

**RESOLVED/-**

1. That the above declaration be noted.

**PFCP/71/24            MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 18<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024**

Members considered the minutes of the previous meeting, and the following points were highlighted:

- PFCP/55/24: this item would be amended to fully reflect the Deputy Mayor's declaration.
- PFCP/65/24: the paragraph referencing support hubs would be amended to reflect that the hubs offered a wide range of holistic support in addition to the referenced mental health services.

**RESOLVED/-**

1. That, subject to the above amendments, the minutes of the meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> September 2024 be agreed as a true and correct record.

**PFCP/72/24            FINANCE PRECEPT PROCESS UPDATE**

Claire Postlethwaite (Director of Operational Finance, GMCA) presented a report explaining the statutory duties of Panel in relation to the setting of the police precept for 2025/26.

**RESOLVED/-**

1. That the statutory duties of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel in relation to the setting of the police precept be noted.

2. That the timetable for the setting of the 2025/26 police precept and the requirement for a meeting of panel before 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025 be noted.

## **PFCP/73/24            BAIRD INQUIRY UPDATE REPORT**

Deputy Mayor Kate Green was invited to provide a progress report to the Panel on the implementation of the recommendations outlined in the Baird Inquiry report into the treatment of people arrested and taken into police custody in Greater Manchester, with a focus on women and girls. Key points highlighted included:

- Members were reminded that the report published in July 2024 had made 40 recommendations for actions, with 26 of the 40 being actions for Greater Manchester Police (GMP), some for the office of the Deputy Mayor at GMCA, and some recommendations to be progressed at the national level.
- Information was provided in the report on GMP's actions against the recommendations in the report, with the Deputy Mayor being satisfied that all but two of them had now been implemented.
- The Deputy Mayor had monitored the implementation of the recommendations closely through a Mayoral Oversight Group to track the progress and application of these.
- It was now vital that this set of activities resulted in sustained high-quality conduct and behaviour in relation to those arrested and brought into custody. One of the recommendations to the Deputy Mayor had been to establish an independent scrutiny panel to track continued GMP performance. The panel had now been appointed and consisted of professional, yet independent members with a range of backgrounds related to criminal justice and welfare. The work of the Panel would take place through a variety of methods including site visits, dip sampling and the close scrutiny of records – it would have the power to question through the Deputy Mayor, any areas it felt were not being satisfactorily discharged.
- Another recommendation made of the Deputy Mayor was to appoint a 'super independent' custody visitor. There were already a number of independent custody visitors in place, who made daily visits to custody suites to consider the welfare of detainees. This new appointee would supplement these visitors, providing support to the scrutiny panel by drawing upon the knowledge of the custody suite visitors and wider quality monitoring.

- Reference was made to the two outstanding recommendations made by Dame Vera Baird to GMP. It was advised that it would not be possible to complete these as Dame Vera had suggested. The first of these related to the ability to designate certain cells entirely for female detainees. As much as was possible this would be the case, and every suite in GM did have a designated section of holding cells for women. But there would be occasions where male holding cells were at capacity and it would be necessary to use the women's holding cells. However, assurance was given that all GMP cells were single occupancy and there was no risk of sharing.
- The second recommendation also provided a logistical issue for GMP. This was the recommendation that whenever a female detainee pressed a buzzer for assistance that only a female officer should attend to the call. It was advised that this would be the case wherever possible but there would be rare occasions where this would not be possible.
- The Deputy Mayor had been in very recent conversation with Dame Vera, who had confirmed that she was pleased with the progress made by GMP since the publication of the report.

## **Comments and Questions**

- Members sought further information regarding the proposed Independent Scrutiny Panel. Was a timetable available of when they would be meeting and how would it be reporting back? It was advised that the first meeting would take place in December and would report directly to the Deputy Mayor as per Dame Vera's recommendation. The Deputy Mayor would then pick up resulting issues through her Deputy Mayor's Executive meetings with GMP. The Deputy Mayor advised that she would also be able to bring updates to the Panel on the work of the Independent Scrutiny Panel as and when sought.
- Members welcomed the enhanced scrutiny arrangements, stating that they could reveal further trends and emerging issues that would aid in the future development of best practice. The Deputy Mayor agreed and stated that learning from the report was not just been used in GM but was also been applied by forces from across the country.
- Members noted concerns around initial arrests and the evidence used to justify them, as highlighted through cases in the report. The Deputy Mayor shared the concerns that had been raised, highlighting that whilst the use of arrest packs was

valid, this had led to a few situations where arrests were being made in the early hours of the morning under a decision to progress the case rapidly. However, these packs had sometimes been in place for a number of weeks, negating the supposed rapidity reasoning. There were also concerns where the context around the arrest, particularly in cases of “one word versus another” were not being considered in the round. A significant officer training programme was taking place in relation to this, and a real attention placed on alternatives to arrest and custody. The need for GMP to not overcompensate in relation to previous low arrest rates would be a key area of scrutiny for the independent panel.

- Discussion took place around the membership of the independent scrutiny panel. It was advised that the terms of reference for the Panel would be shared once finalised.

## **RESOLVED/-**

1. That the progress made against the Baird Inquiry recommendations by both Greater Manchester Police and Greater Manchester Combined Authority be noted.
2. That the engagement with national bodies to progress national recommendations be noted.
3. That it be noted that on-going Mayoral Oversight arrangements are in place to ensure that these recommendations are delivered and embedded, and that the resulting improved standards are maintained and built upon.

## **PFCP/74/24            POLICE & CRIME PLAN DECEMBER 2024 – MARCH 2028**

Deputy Mayor Kate Green presented a report that provided an outline and summary of the draft new Standing Together: Police and Crime Plan, which accompanied it. Points highlighted included:

- There had been a strong level of engagement from the public and partners on the development of the new Plan, with a number of events held over recent months. These had been constructive and had aided in producing a plan that was well focused, with clarity on the areas that prioritised what GM residents sought to see within it.

- There was now a much closer correlation with the Mayor's visions for the region including pathways for young people, safety on the transport network, and opportunities to live well & safely within communities.
- The plan had also drawn out a number of equalities commitments which were explicitly threaded throughout the plan.
- The Plan also reflected a request by authority chief executive leads and the GMCA senior management team for it to have a clear focus on safety for children and young people as victims of crime and reducing the risk of them being drawn into criminal and harmful activity.

## **RESOLVED/-**

1. That the Panel considered and noted the draft Police and Crime Plan providing recommendations on the draft to fulfil their statutory requirements.

## **PFCP/75/24 POLICE & CRIME ANNUAL REPORT**

Deputy Mayor Kate Green provided members with a report that outlined the functions, activity and progress in meeting the police and crime objectives in the Mayor's police and crime plan.

### **Comments and Questions**

- Members welcome the clear progress highlighted within the report but enquired as to which elements remained challenging for the Deputy Mayor and policing partners. It was advised that with a growing city region, there were incredibly high levels of demand presented constant challenges to all public services and partnership organisations. National and international events that continued to cause tension within communities had also presented many challenges over the past 12 months. Such high levels of demand put a stretch on resources, officers and public trust & confidence.
- Members noted that concerns around GMP in previous years had led to reductions in the reporting of crimes. Was there confidence now that underreporting was becoming less of a concern and that reductions in crimes reported were not a sign of this continuing? It was advised that there had been a significant increase in the

recording of crimes by GMP together with better solved outcomes, which in turn was increasing public confidence in reporting – a key success in this area had been increases in reporting shoplifting related to organised criminality. It was known that there was still underreporting in specific areas – with hate crime & sexual abuse/domestic violence reporting being highlighted as key concerns.

- Reference was made to Operation Wildflower and how the costs arising from this were still having to come from the existing GMP budget rather than additional funding. The Deputy Mayor assured members that concerns around this were repeatedly raised with ministers. Due to ongoing international issues, it was likely that Operation Wildflower would remain active into the longer term.

## **RESOLVED/-**

1. That the Panel considered and noted the Annual Report and providing recommendations on the draft to fulfil their statutory requirements.

## **PFCP/76/24            GMFRS SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY UPDATE**

Mathew Chard (Sustainability Manager, GMFRS) provided an overview of progress in delivering the GMCA Sustainability Strategy 2022 – 2026 and outlined activity undertaken during 2023/2024 that had contributed towards current progress. The report also outlined actions set to be delivered in 2024/2025.

Some key highlights were then drawn out of the report:

- Five key priority areas were in place. Rapidly reducing carbon footprint; protecting and enhancing the environment; using resources efficiently & responsibly; adapting to climate change; and being sustainability leaders.
- 81% of the GMFRS carbon footprint came from fossil fuel consumption, therefore targeting these for reduction was a primary area where significant gains could be made through electrification.
- Grant funding had been pursued for a number of projects, with £99k of survey money having been received in previous years to undertake surveys that would support future applications. There had been some previous successes in receiving funding for capital works as a collaborative activity with GMP.

## **RESOLVED/-**

1. That the progress made against the priority areas of the GMCA Sustainability Strategy 2022 – 2026 be noted.
2. That the contents of the report including actions proposed for 2024/25 be noted.
3. That the implications of the Biodiversity Duty on the organisation and the proposed response be noted.

## **PFCP/77/24            GMP LOCAL POLICING UPDATE**

ACC Matt Boyle (GMP) introduced a report providing an update on Neighbourhood Policing in Greater Manchester. Points highlighted included:

- The governance structure now contained strategic levels of governance right down to operational levels. National neighbourhood policing guidelines were followed, and a framework had been developed adhered to these on engaging communities, problem solving & prevention, and targeted activity. These were the key components of neighbourhood policing in which continual improvements were strived for.
- There had been a 17% reduction year on year in some of the key neighbourhood crime types, namely burglary, robbery and car theft. This translated to over 8000 fewer victims, which was quite significant.
- To complement the standard neighbourhood policing model, each district now had its own prevention hub which were continually assessed and expanded upon.
- There had also been investment into neighbourhood crime teams that specifically dealt with investigations relating to robbery, burglary, car theft and theft from a person. Neighbourhood action teams were also in place to complete targeted activity and be available for rapid deployment within wards.
- Current vacancy rates within neighbourhood policing sat at just under 10%, which was considered to be an 'operating' rate given the ebb and flow of staff within such roles.
- Abstractions from neighbourhood roles were a rarity and only took place during emergencies. A performance management framework was in place to constantly monitor abstraction rates.

- A local neighbourhood newsletter was in the process of being drafted. This will go to all elected members and councils within the next few weeks, to provide further detail and context around what was taking place in each neighbourhood.

### **Comments and Questions**

- Concerns were expressed about the reduction to a single PCSO in wards in terms of community work. Officers agreed that PCSOs provided a valuable role as the 'eyes and ears' of a community, but the model of one per ward was the right figure in relation to the needs and demands across GM, with a focus on increasing warranted officers, with a ward PCSO to complement them.
- Members highlighted a strong example of neighbourhood working in Bolton to combat licensing issues that had arisen.

### **RESOLVED/-**

1. That the progress to date be noted.
2. That the Panel will continue to receive regular progress updates as and when required.

### **PFCP/78/24            VISION ZERO UPDATE**

CFO Dave Russel (GMFRS) and Peter Boulton (Network Director Highways, TfGM) presented a report sharing the final Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan for Greater Manchester (GM) and provided an overview of GM wide road safety initiatives, which formed part of the Action Plan. Points highlighted included:

- The importance of the Strategy was highlighted. In the previous year, 799 people had been killed or seriously injured on the roads of GM, with 45 of those sadly resulting in fatalities. There were encouraging trends in comparison with 2023, with fatalities having reduced by 30% and the number of seriously injured down by 6%. But this still remained an intolerably high number.
- Following the approval of the draft by the GMCA at the start of the year, the governance and approach to vision zero had been strengthened to bring it to its current iteration.

- A Vision Zero Board was in place, chaired by CFO Dave Russel and with membership from across all relevant partners.
- A number of events had been held with the public and stakeholders to consider the draft Vision Zero Strategy and fully establish what needed to happen to make the public feel safer on GM's roads.

CFO Dave Russel asked that his thanks be noted to the team at TfGM on the production of the Strategy. He emphasised the importance of strong governance around the Strategy as some serious 'hard yards' would be required in order to deliver on the Strategy and would require an accountable system led approach across all partners.

### **Comments and Questions**

- Members reflected upon the alarming statistics, including the fact that specialist fire and rescue units had to be mobilised for road traffic accidents in GM every single day. The Strategy was very welcome given this, though it was acknowledged that changing the mindset of such a large cohort of people would be immensely challenging.
- Members welcomed Safe Drive, Stay Alive events for young people, but noted that there needed to be more direct engagement in the form of Q&As at the events for example. The Deputy Mayor advised that the event was being evaluated for current effectiveness. It was very impactful in the moment of attendance, but there needed to be further thinking around how that impact could be sustained in the long term. There was also a need to reach even more young people, particularly those close to legal driving age, across the region. Thanks were placed on the record to the bereaved families who bravely engaged with Safe Drive, Stay Alive events.
- Members sought clarification around the enforcement of 20mph zones. It was advised that where 20mph zones were implemented in accordance with the law and the regulations were implemented correctly, then they were fully enforceable.

### **RESOLVED/-**

1. That the contents of the report be noted.

2. That the Panel endorses the final Vision Zero Strategy and Action Plan and the formal adoption of a Vision Zero ambition for GM, where no one will suffer death or life changing injuries on our roads.
3. That thanks be placed on the record to the bereaved families who bravely engaged with Safe Drive, Stay Alive events.

**PFCP/79/24            DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED/-**

1. That the next meeting of the Panel will take place on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2025.