

**GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL
MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 19 MARCH 2025 IN FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE,
MANCHESTER, M2 5NS**

PRESENT:

Councillor Janet Emsley	Rochdale Council (Chair)
Councillor Sandra Walmsley	Bury Council
Councillor Barbara Bentham	Salford Council
Councillor Robin Garrido	Salford Council
Councillor Jake Austin	Stockport Council
Councillor Jaqueline Owen	Tameside Council
Councillor Rose Thompson	Trafford Council
Councillor Dane Anderton	Wigan Council
Stephen Williams	Independent Member
Tony Gordon	Independent Member
Duncan Craig	Independent Member

Also in attendance:

Kate Green	GM Deputy Mayor
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Officers Present:

DCC Terry Woods	GMP
Lee Rawlinson	Chief Resources Officer, GMP
Chief Supt. John Paul Ruffle	GMP
DCFO Ben Norman	GMFRS
AM Jim Wilmott	GMFRS
Vicky Sugars	Assistant Director of Police, Crime, Fire & Criminal Justice, GMCA
Lee Teasdale	Senior Governance & Scrutiny Officer, Governance and Scrutiny, GMCA
Sarah Bennett	Deputy Monitoring Officer, GMCA
Steve Wilson	Treasurer, GMCA
Carol Judge-Campbell	Principal Officer for Victims & Vulnerability, GMCA

PFCP/09/25

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Rabiya Jiva (Bolton), Councillor Garry Bridges (Manchester), Councillor Angela Smith (Rochdale), Councillor David Lancaster (Salford), Councillor Rosemary Barratt (Stockport), Councillor Stephen Homer (Tameside), Lynne Ridsdale (Lead Chief Executive), ACC Matt Boyle (GMP) & Jeanette Staley (Advisor to the Panel).

PFCP/10/25

CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS & URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair advised members that the Home Office had now provided their official confirmation (attached on the agenda) that the Panel may appoint a third independent member for the same initial three-year term applied to all independent panel members. As the Committee had already agreed to the appointment of Duncan Craig at its meeting in September 2024 dependent on this approval. Duncan was therefore welcomed by members to his first meeting of the Panel.

Members were advised that Deputy Chief Fire Officer Ben Norman would be retiring from GMFRS in the coming weeks. The Panel expressed their sincere thanks for the fantastic work he had done in conjunction with the CFO, and leaves GMFRS as a much stronger place thanks to his dedicated service.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Panel notes receipt of the approval for the appointment of a third independent panel member by the Home Office and welcomes Duncan Craig to his first meeting as the third independent panel member.
2. That the Panel thanks and gives its best wishes to DCFO Ben Norman in his retirement from GMFRS.

PFCP/11/25

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Deputy Mayor Kate Green submitted two declarations in relation to the 'for information' decision notices attached to the Panel Agenda. These relate to decisions taken in relation to the magistrates' association, of which the Deputy Mayor was a life member, and ICVA (The Independent Custody Visitors Association), of which the Deputy Mayor had become a

recent member. The Deputy Mayor took no part in the decision for small grants awarded to both of these bodies.

Independent Member Duncan Craig submitted two potential conflicts of interest in relation to the Gender Based Violence Delivery Plan and the 'For Information' decision notice due to the organisation 'We are Survivors' of which he was the Chief Executive Officer being listed by name.

PFCP/12/25 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 27th JANUARY 2025

Members considered the minutes of the previous meeting.

It was noted that Councillor Robin Garrido was listed under Bolton Council rather than Salford Council in error.

RESOLVED/-

1. That, subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2025 be agreed as a true and correct record.

PFCP/13/25 GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE FUND REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET 2025/26

Steve Wilson, GMCA Group Treasurer, was invited to present a report notifying Panel Members of the Greater Manchester police fund revenue and capital budget for 2025/26, revised three-year medium term financial Plan to 2025/26 to 2027/28 and the projected position on general and earmarked reserves.

The Chair invited Deputy Mayor Kate Green to introduce the item, where the following points were highlighted:

- Three new funding streams had been made available by the Home Office, which was very welcome, but GMP were still left in a position where there would be a funding shortfall for the year ahead. GMP was required to fill the funding gap, and thanks were given to the Panel for granting the precept increase that allowed for the closing of that gap.

- Thanks were given to Lee Rawlinson and his team at GMP, together with supporting officers from across the piece, for the phenomenal work that had gone into Operation Rydal, which involved a deep dive into all elements of GMP spend. There was a very clear management in place now of the cost base and would allow for a sounder planning basis for GMP in the future. Which was particularly vital given that there appeared to be further difficult budget funding decisions for the foreseeable future.
- The Deputy Mayor received financial updates every single month, with a dedicated meeting solely for the finances bi-monthly, and weekly contact with the GMP senior management team.

The GMCA Group Treasurer, and GMP Chief Resources Officer Lee Rawlinson then provided further detail to members, highlighting the following:

- Following extensive work by officers, the savings required to achieve a balanced budget had now been found, with no impact upon front line services.
- The Medium-Term Financial Plan highlights further funding pressures that are due to be faced, but officers entered the year with a clear understanding of the actions required not just to balance the budget, but to also provide a sustainable budget into the future.
- The paper further set out the capital programme of £38m for the year ahead, with significant investment in critical infrastructure ongoing across the service. The paper pointed out that this was almost entirely funded by borrowing which was being addressed with the treasury.
- The GMCA Group Treasurer was also required to provide a opinion on the level of reserves, a deep dive on which was provided within the report. The Treasurer considered these current levels as adequate for the year ahead.

Comments and Questions

The Chair then invited Members of the Panel to comment and ask questions.

- Members expressed concern about the potential impact on support staff, and the risk that this may require front line staff to undertake more administrative duties that would take them away from the front line. The Deputy Mayor stated that GMP was

in a much stronger position than many other forces, which had already been in a position for some time where front line officers were having to undertake administration duties. Officers advised that decisions on staffing were made based upon the impact upon the whole wider system. One of the objectives set out at the start of the process had been not to 'decivilianise' the force and ensure the right balance of civilian staff and police officers. As many of the skill sets required, such as digital, could only be provided in this way.

- Members referenced the Medium-Term Financial Plan and expressed concern around specific grants, income and sponsors. Collectively this foresaw an almost £6m drop for 2026/27 – more detail was sought on this. Officers stated that multiple funding grants were in place, and some of these were for specific strategic activities that only ran for a set period of time.
- Members referenced capital financing. This stood at £20.3m for the current year but was predicted to grow each subsequent year. Would this impact upon savings that possibly needed to be made in the future? At what point would this financing be expected to taper off to reduce the number of charges being incurred. It was advised that capital was scrutinised just as closely as revenue, and there was a keenness not to take decisions that would see the books balanced for the current year that would then result in higher costs in future. It was vital to make the capital expenditure on the estate and digital expenditure now to avoid these being even higher expenses in the future.
- Members raised a query around staff training needs and the associated costs. The Deputy Mayor advised that a training and learning strategy was in place and if colleagues were interested this could be brought to a future meeting of the Steering Group. Officers advised that 'whole life' staff training costs were costed into all staff hiring plans.
- Members referenced Right Care, Right Person – was this expected to result in savings going forward? It was advised that the plans around this were to 'repurpose' and make better use of the expenditure that was incurred by the police having to undertake activities that could be undertaken by other partner organisations – so was not a 'cost cutting' measure in the traditional sense.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report and the budget proposals were noted.

2. That the training and learning strategy for staff at GMP be considered for addition to the Steering Group work plan.

PFCP/14/25

GMFRS PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS TEAM

AM Jim Wilmott provided a report updating Members on the implementation of a Professional Standards Team within GMFRS. The Chair opened the item by inviting Deputy Mayor Kate Green to make introductory comments. Points highlighted included:

- The introduction of this team had arisen from a suggestion by HMICFRS that Fire & Rescue Services should have a professional standards function, similar to that which had been seen in police services for some time. GMFRS would be one of the first fire services in the country to fully introduce this.
- The introduction of this team was very much in keeping with the standards brought into place under the leadership of CFO Dave Russel which focussed on culture and improved standards right at the heart of the service.

AM Jim Wilmott highlighted:

- The plan and strategy around the introduction of the Team had been through a rigorous process that was approved through internal governance in September 2024.
- Through quarter 3 and 4 of the year a recruitment process had been undertaken which now saw all posts filled apart from one group manager post which had been pipelined for quarter 1 2025/26.
- Close collaboration had taken place with teams across the service to provide governance, structure and support & training for colleagues across the service. the team had now begun to pick up cases and would take overall control of these at the commencement of the new financial year.
- A further report would be brought to the Panel on the progress made by the Team in due course.

Comments and Questions

The Chair then invited Members of the Panel to comment and ask questions.

- Members referenced the formal processes that would be put in place for stages of a complaint. Was there an informal process underneath this? It was advised that this was absolutely the case and that where a minor issue could be 'nipped in the bud' informally, that would be emphasised as best practice. The support element would train managers on how to have difficult conversations when issues were still within incipient stages.
- Members asked about the processes being put in place for learning to be taken away from each formal complaint. It was advised that there was an absolute emphasis on taking away learned and cascading this throughout the wider service.
- Members emphasised the importance of clarity within reports around Equality Impact Assessments having been undertaken and their outcomes.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Panel notes the report on the implementation of the GMFRS Professional Standards Team.
2. That a report updating on the work and results of the Professional Standards Team be brought back to the Panel at an appropriate time.

PFCP/15/25 GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE – PREVENTION & DETERRENCE (NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING)

Chief Supt. JP Ruffle presented a report providing the Panel with an update on the progress of Greater Manchester Police's (GMP) Neighbourhood Policing Model, focusing on prevention and deterrence. It highlighted key achievements, crime trends and strategic developments in strengthening local policing.

The Chair invited Deputy Mayor Kate Green to introduce the item, and the following points were highlighted:

- Two years into the programme strong results were being seen, backed up by a rigorous performance framework that was reviewed in detail every month by the senior leadership team in conjunction with the Deputy Mayor.
- This performance management also cascaded down to the frontline supervisor level, and there had been a big investment into this capacity, with a lot of training

taking place to ensure that the benefits of the neighbourhood policing model were maximised for the public.

- The level of problem solving and deterrent work now taking place at the neighbourhood level was a real exemplar of the progress taking place.

Chief Supt. Ruffle was then invited to further highlight key achievements and developments:

- There was a continued focus around visibility and accessibility, ensuring that the force was listening to and understanding the region's communities, and to understand the issues that impacted them most deeply.
- The ambition of the force was to be 'outstanding' at neighbourhood policing and prevention, and this was a real possibility with numerous improvements being seen in the policing of neighbourhood crime, resulting in an overall reduction of 17%, which translated to approximately 8,000 fewer victims of such crimes across the region.
- Some of the ways in which these improvements had been achieved included improving the neighbourhood offer, supporting neighbourhood policing teams through prevention hubs, and improved governance & oversight.
- Feedback from communities and from political members indicated that abstractions from neighbourhoods continued to be an area that arose concern. Work had taken place to implement an app that allowed for the tracking of officers around abstractions. Abstractions now stood at 3.8%, the lowest figure to date.
- Next steps included review and development of the neighbourhood policing guarantee; further development of the neighbourhood performance framework; expanding community engagement; and strengthening intelligence, particularly amongst partnerships.

Comments and Questions

- Members referenced the 17% reduction in crime and asked how these actually related to the number of crimes reported – and what the conversion rate was to those being recorded as a crime. It was advised that there were two key figures to consider around this. There was a conversion rate that was 'incidents reported and converted to crime' which in the last month stood at 30.1%, which was a solid figure when benchmarked against the national figure. The other figure was 'incidents

converted to crime that resulted in crime reports' which stood at 92.9% conversion rate. Again, compared to other forces, this was now an outstanding figure.

- Member referenced PACT meetings, stating that these had a mixed level of success depending on the areas in which they were based. In areas where they had been less successful, what could be done to engage community groups more? It was advised that the gaps in engagement with harder to reach communities were tracked, with a methodology used to establish the right mechanisms to do this. It was important that everybody had access to the same quality offer regardless of their postcode within GM.
- On a similar note – Bee in the Loop had also been varied in its levels of success and engagement to date – what could be done to improve consistency. It was stated that Bee in the Loop remained very much a work in progress at the current stage. Conversations had been taking place with areas of the country that had achieved a wider reach by using different technologies. Evidence had shown that by PCSO's taking place in active engagement with community members, large scale signups could be made in a short period of time.
- Members highlighted the important role that the voluntary sector had to play in upping the number of people signing up to Bee in the Loop, but also feeding back into work around how to engage harder to reach communities.

RESOLVED/-

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

PFCP 16/25 GENDER BASED VIOLENCE DELIVERY PLAN 2024-2026

Carol Judge Campbell (GMCA) presented a report outlining the progress made on the development of the Gender Based Violence Delivery Plan.

The Chair invited Deputy Mayor Kate Green to introduce the item, where the following points were highlighted:

- The Plan had gained even more vitality following the new government's commitment to halving violence against women and girls.

- The work of the Lived Experience Panel which had commenced in 2024 was highlighted for how important its input had been in giving an understanding of areas that needed to be prioritised.
- There are real concerns around the forthcoming spending review delivering the funds required to ensure the full success of the ten-year strategy in place. It was hoped that the government, now that this had been set as a priority for this parliament, would ensure this funding was in place.

Carol Judge Campbell then provided further insight into the plan, highlighting the following:

- Special thanks were expressed to the domestic abuse coordinators and directors in every one of the ten GM districts. Without their support the progress made within the Plan would not have been possible.
- Responses had been submitted to the spending review, with an emphasis on helping the government understand that its intentions to reduce VAWG could not be done cheaply and would require significant resourcing.
- The new delivery plan highlighted 14 separate clear priority areas.
- Further detail was provided on the Lived Experience Panel. The Panel was made up of nine members and represented a geographical spread from across the entire region, and the intersectional interests reflected in the region including class. The Panel was also closely included work on housing and delivered services.
- The next iteration of the 'Is This Ok' campaign was in place and would focus on coercive behaviours. The campaign would commence in summer 2025.
- Significant work was taking place around housing. In an overwhelming amount of cases, women who suffered domestic abuse and their children were forced to leave the family home and be put in temporary accommodation. This cost of this was between £15-£20m per year. Further work needed to take place with social housing providers to put in place occupation orders so that when domestic abuse took place a protection order could then be followed with an occupation order to seek to evict the perpetrator from the property.
- However, a clear set of programmes were also being put in place to support perpetrators who wished to change their behaviours.
- Detail was provided on the Domestic Abuse Protection Order Pilot. This had been launched in Bury in November 2024, in Wigan in January and then in the city of Manchester from February. This pilot allows an unlimited time span for protection

orders, and breaches could result in imprisonment. Feedback from victims had been wholeheartedly supportive of the pilot.

- The family of GM employers were being brought together to pull together different policies and practices into one good employment package around gender-based violence.

Comments and Questions

- Members welcomed the report, congratulating officers on the wide scope of work and level of research taking place under the plan.
- Members referenced the risk matrix and particularly the section focussing on confidence and trust in institutions surrounding the work – which was vital to tackle the issues within. Could further detail be provided on this? Information was provided on the improvements within GMP on weeding out those officers who were perpetrators of domestic abuse, and how joined up working with GMFRS on their culture first approach could also yield very positive results and improve trust. The story had really changed, and it was time for public services to embrace, promote and leading the way on cultural change.
- Work with young men was referenced, and the need for positive male role models from a yearly age – on this front, work was taking place to get more young men to take up roles as childcare workers.
- Members sought information on the further rollout of the Domestic Abuse Protection Order Pilot into other areas of the region. It was advised that as quick a rollout as possible was being sought and close work was taking place with GMP on this, however it was vital to ensure that further rollout only took place once quality of service could be assured, therefore definitive dates could not be given yet.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.