

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Date: 22nd August 2025

Subject: Planning and Housing Commission - Terms of Reference Updates

Report of: Deputy Mayor Paul Dennett, Portfolio Lead for Housing First and James Binks, Portfolio Lead Chief Executive for Housing First.

Purpose of Report

To set out proposed changes to the Terms of Reference for the Planning and Housing Commission, including changing the name to the Housing First, Planning and Infrastructure Commission, to better reflect the new Greater Manchester Strategy and GM's Housing First and Infrastructure commitments.

Recommendations:

GMCA is requested to:

1. Approve the change of name from the GM Planning & Housing Commission to the Housing First, Planning and Infrastructure Commission.
2. Approve the Terms of Reference.

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Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

Recommendation - Key points for decision-makers

Insert text

Impacts Questionnaire

Impact Indicator	Result	Justification/Mitigation
Equality and Inclusion		As this is an update to the Terms of Reference, there are no discernable impacts to note
Health		As this is an update to the Terms of Reference, there are no discernable impacts to note
Resilience and Adaptation		As this is an update to the Terms of Reference, there are no discernable impacts to note
Housing		As this is an update to the Terms of Reference, there are no discernable impacts to note
Economy		As this is an update to the Terms of Reference, there are no discernable impacts to note
Mobility and Connectivity		As this is an update to the Terms of Reference, there are no discernable impacts to note
Carbon, Nature and Environment		As this is an update to the Terms of Reference, there are no discernable impacts to note
Consumption and Production		As this is an update to the Terms of Reference, there are no discernable impacts to note
Contribution to achieving the GM Carbon Neutral 2038 target		
Further Assessment(s): Equalities Impact Assessment		
G Positive impacts overall, whether long or short term.	A Mix of positive and negative impacts. Trade-offs to consider.	R Mostly negative, with at least one positive aspect. Trade-offs to consider.
		RR Negative impacts overall.

Carbon Assessment				
Overall Score				
Buildings		ResultJustification/Mitigation		
New Build residential	N/A	As this is an update to the Terms of Reference, there are no discernable impacts to note		
Residential building(s) renovation/maintenance	N/A	As this is an update to the Terms of Reference, there are no discernable impacts to note		
New build non-residential (including public) buildings	N/A	As this is an update to the Terms of Reference, there are no discernable impacts to note		
Transport				
Active travel and public transport	N/A	As this is an update to the Terms of Reference, there are no discernable impacts to note		
Roads, Parking and Vehicle Access	N/A	As this is an update to the Terms of Reference, there are no discernable impacts to note		
Access to amenities	N/A	As this is an update to the Terms of Reference, there are no discernable impacts to note		
Vehicle procurement	N/A	As this is an update to the Terms of Reference, there are no discernable impacts to note		
Land Use				
Land use	N/A			
No associated carbon impacts expected.	High standard in terms of practice and awareness on carbon.	Mostly best practice with a good level of awareness on carbon.	Partially meets best practice/ awareness, significant room to improve.	Not best practice and/ or insufficient awareness of carbon impacts.

Risk Management

Legal Considerations

TBC

Financial Consequences – Revenue

There are no revenue consequences to this report

Financial Consequences – Capital

There are no capital consequences to this report

Number of attachments to the report: 1

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

N/A

Background Papers

Key Decision

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

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 Established alongside a number of similar commissions in 2010/11, the Planning and Housing Commission (PHC) brings together public and private sector partners to “support efforts to deliver GM’s growth ambitions set out in the Greater Manchester Strategy”.
- 1.2 The PHC is an advisory body and not decision making – it is accountable to Leaders through the GMCA/AGMA Executive Board, where decisions are made. For instance, GMCA/AGMA Executive Board is responsible for the Minerals and Waste Plan, and the GMCA approves Housing Investment Fund spending.
- 1.3 The Planning & Housing Commission is chaired by the GM Portfolio Leader for Housing First, and the current membership of the Commission is as follows:
 - Relevant GM Portfolio Leader(s) (Chair)
 - One GM elected member from each of the ten GM districts, nominated annually at the GMCA/AGMA AGM
 - A representative of the GM Housing CEO’s Group
 - A representative of Transport for Greater Manchester
 - A representative of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise network in GM
 - A representative of GM NHS Integrated Care
 - A representative from the private sector

At the Annual General Meeting, members appoint:

- A Vice Chair, and
- One member to the GM Green City Region Partnership.

AGMA appointed North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee members will be invited to the commission meetings as observers. The role of the Local Authority RFCC members includes providing local democratic input and scrutiny and support for specific schemes; participating in the local levy vote and championing local flood risk management back to their Lead Local Flood Authorities. There is value in the

Commission being the GM strategic group that has a line of sight to the RFCC, as flood risk management is cross cutting of planning, housing, and infrastructure.

The Commission can identify and appoint its own advisors to attend meetings or provide written advice on specific issues when required.

- 1.4 The Planning & Housing Commission is a public meeting, held quarterly on Microsoft Teams and livestreamed on the GMCA website. This provides transparency and accountability to the process of policy development.

2. Proposed changes to the PHC

- 2.1 The current Terms of Reference (ToRs) were agreed by the Planning & Housing Commission in October 2024. Since then, a number of developments have meant that the Terms of Reference need to be refreshed.
- 2.2 The new [Greater Manchester Strategy](#) (GMS) was launched on 9th July 2025, setting Housing First at the heart of our collective vision for the next decade, to see a thriving city region where everyone can live a good life.
- 2.3 Since the agreement of the current Terms of Reference, the Housing First Unit has been established as a virtual team based within GMCA, set up as a response to the GM Mayor's Manifesto commitment for GM to become the UK's first Housing First City Region.
- 2.4 The purpose of the Housing First Unit is to bring together colleagues across GM working on delivery of housing supply, raising housing standards, and supporting people with their housing needs, into a coherent virtual team with a shared vision, to provide strategic leadership to the wider public sector, to ensure that the Housing First mission is embedded across relevant partner agencies, to work innovatively and at pace with partners and stakeholders to drive delivery of GM and the Government's growth ambitions, and to make the case to decision makers to invest in the capacity and resources needed to drive radical change in the housing system.
- 2.5 The Housing First Unit is considering governance across the system, and ensuring that lead members have effective oversight and opportunities for collaboration in Housing First projects, strategies and policies.
- 2.6 The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill published on 10 July 2025 proposes significant changes to the planning powers and the role of the combined authorities and their mayors. It signals that all areas across the

country will be required to develop spatial development strategies (SDS), much like the capital's London Plan. The Bill also introduces the intention for mayoral combined authorities (MCA's) to have strategic development management powers; to be able to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), similar to London and; to make Mayoral Development Orders (MDOs). These mayoral powers can only be implemented once an SDS is in place. The Planning and Infrastructure Bill (published on 11 March 2025), takes forward the proposals in relation to strategic spatial planning. Once enacted, it will require strategic planning authorities (SPAs), (including combined authorities), to produce a spatial development strategy (SDS) and adoption of the SDS would be by majority vote, with the Mayor having the casting vote in the event of a tie.

- 2.7 The Greater Manchester Strategic Infrastructure Board is closely aligned with both the region's overarching Strategy and its 10-Year Growth Plan. The government has adopted a spatially integrated approach to infrastructure planning, coordinating efforts across various sectors and geographic areas to address national and local priorities—including roads (RIS), water management (drainage and flood mitigation), energy (RESPs), and AI Growth Zones.
- 2.8 On 19 June 2025, HM Treasury published the new National Infrastructure Strategy, led by the recently established National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority (NISTA). This strategy outlines a comprehensive 10-year vision for transforming the UK's infrastructure, with at least £725 billion of public investment committed. It represents the UK's first unified, long-term framework encompassing both economic infrastructure—such as transport, energy, water, waste, digital services, and flood risk management—and social infrastructure, including housing, healthcare, education, and justice facilities.
- 2.9 NISTA is responsible for overseeing Strategy implementation and will provide regular progress updates alongside future spending reviews. The Strategy will be updated biennially to ensure continued relevance and responsiveness.
- 2.10 As an initial action, NISTA will introduce an Infrastructure Pipeline beginning in July. This resource aims to provide an authoritative, consolidated dataset for the UK's major infrastructure market.
- 2.11 The Strategy should be considered alongside recent and ongoing strategic frameworks and announcements relating to economic regulators, flood risk funding with greater roles for Regional Flood and Coastal Committee and

Mayoral CA to determine priorities, water management, energy planning, Industrial Strategy as well as the Planning and Infrastructure Bill.

- 2.12 Greater Manchester's Integrated Pipeline serves as a pioneering regeneration model, coordinating housing, employment, and infrastructure development across six key Growth Locations. By sequencing investments and implementation, this approach guarantees that every new community benefits from essential infrastructure, including green spaces, low-carbon heating solutions, and efficient transportation links via the Bee Network. This strategic coordination not only unlocks land and attracts substantial private investment but also supports the city region's objectives for inclusive growth, net zero targets, and innovation-driven economic expansion. It marks a significant evolution from fragmented project management to a cohesive, place-based delivery system designed to maximize value and impact.
- 2.13 To facilitate this transformation, Greater Manchester is transitioning from nationally driven systems with local consultation to a locally empowered governance model through the GMCA. This shift enhances GMCA's capacity to shape company strategies, influence regulators and government departments, and secure representation within regional bodies such as RESP. Initiatives like the Streetworks Pilot, Integrated Water Management Plan (IWMP), and the Integrated Pipeline are maturing into effective operational models that underscore the advantages of local leadership. Moreover, the region-wide Housing First portfolio will be supported by a robust infrastructure pipeline, ensuring strategic alignment between priorities, delivery capabilities, and investment readiness.
- 2.14 Given these developments, it is proposed that the name of the Planning and Housing Commission is changed to the "Housing First, Planning and Infrastructure Commission", to better reflect the priorities of the Commission going forward.
- 2.15 The proposed changes to the Terms of Reference are as follows:
- Updating the **Function/Purpose** of the group to reflect the new Greater Manchester Strategy, with its role in supporting the vision for GM and the seven workstreams underpinning the strategy, and to include more references to climate impacts and resilience, to highlight the importance of this role for the Commission;

- Updating **Delegations** to ensure that the Commission's engagement with communities reflects the VCFSE Accord;
- Updating the **Membership** to include three Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) members; and
- Updating the **Meeting arrangements** to include the option for thematic sub-groups or Task and Finish groups to be established and meet as required.

2.16 It is proposed that when the new Terms of Reference are agreed, the Housing First, Planning and Infrastructure Commission will undertake a membership review, to ensure that all themes, stakeholders and partners are adequately represented on the Commission. For example, the review will ensure that Lead Members for Homelessness are represented on the Commission, and will review and refresh the engagement of partner organisations represented on the Commission.