

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED
AUTHORITY HELD ON FRIDAY 22nd AUGUST 2025 AT SALFORD TOWN HALL**

PRESENT

GMCA Mayor	Andy Burnham (In the Chair)
Bolton	Councillor Akhtar Zaman
Bury	Councillor Lucy Smith
Manchester	Councillor Joanna Midgley
Oldham	Councillor Elaine Taylor
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Mark Roberts
Tameside	Councillor Andrew McClaren
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross
Wigan	Councillor David Molyneux

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

GMFRS	CFO Dave Russel
Chair of GM Overview & Scrutiny	Councillor John Walsh
Chair of Faith & Belief Advisory Panel	Rev. Ian Rutherford
Chair of Trafford Faith Action Network	Councillor Eve Parker
Co-Chair of Race Equality Panel	Paula Watt
Regional Director Natural England	David Renwick
Deputy Reg Director Natural England	Lucy Abram

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Group Chief Executive Officer	Caroline Simpson
Group Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
Group Deputy Monitoring Officer	Melinda Edwards
Group Chief Finance Officer	Steve Wilson
Group Secretary	Sarah Horseman

Bolton	Sandra Brice
Bury	Paul Lakin
Manchester	Tom Stannard
Oldham	Emma Barton
Rochdale	Julie Murphy
Salford	John Searle
Stockport	Michael Cullen
Tameside	Harry Catherall
Trafford	Sara Todd
Wigan	Alison McKenzie-Folan
Office of the GM Mayor	Kevin Lee
TfGM	Steve Warrener
TfGM	Martin Lax
TfGM	Fran Wilkinson
GMCA	Nicola Ward
GMCA	Lee Teasdale

GMCA 112/25 APOLOGIES

That apologies be received and noted from Councillor Nicolas Peel (Bolton), Councillor Eamonn O'Brien (Bury), Councillor Bev Craig (Manchester), Councillor Arooj Shah (Oldham), Councillor Eleanor Wills (Tameside), Deputy Mayor Kate Green, Sue Johnson (Bolton), Lynne Ridsdale (Bury), Shelley Kipling (Oldham), James Binks (Rochdale) & Melissa Caslake (Salford).

GMCA 113/25 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

Mayor Andy Burnham welcomed all to the meeting, noting that this would be the first meeting of the GMCA that was supported by British Sign Language interpreters to ensure that meetings were as accessible to all as possible.

Councillor John Walsh was welcomed to the GMCA following his reappointment as the Chair of the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Walsh stated that it would be important in the coming year to ensure an appropriate balance between overview

and scrutiny functions. The latest meeting of the Committee had addressed this need well, and it was hoped that would be maintained over the coming year and beyond.

The GMCA expressed its congratulations to all students in the region on their recently announced exam results, with evidence showing that results in the North West region continued to improve, with GM notably contributing to that improvement.

Mayor Burnham invited Caroline Simpson, Group Chief Executive, to provide an update following a legal challenge to the Housing Investment Loans Fund. The competition appeals tribunal had ruled in favour of the GMCA on every single count brought forward. The approach taken was praised by the judge on the matter. The Mayor paid tribute to the Investment Team at the GMCA, and this ruling was a huge endorsement of their professionalism.

Mayor Burnham advised that he and City Mayor Paul Dennett would be meeting with the owners of Salford Red Devils Rugby League Club, following the failure of promises investments, currently leaving the club's future in jeopardy. It was vital to find a solution to take the club out of this current perilous situation in which fixtures were being cancelled.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the GMCA welcome Leo Freeman & Amanda Liddle to their first meeting as British Sign Language interpreters for GMCA meetings going forward.
2. That Councillor John Walsh be welcomed to his first meeting as the Chair of GM Overview & Scrutiny for the municipal year 2025/2026.
3. That the comments highlighted by Councillor John Walsh be received.
4. That congratulations be expressed to all students in the region on their recently announced exam results.
5. That the update on the legal ruling in favour of the GMCA following the competition appeal tribunal challenge on the Housing Investment Loans Fund be received.
6. That it be noted that Mayor Burnham and City Mayor Paul Dennett would be meeting with the owners of Salford Red Devils Rugby Club this afternoon to seek solutions to the ongoing issues at the Club.

GMCA 114/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED /-

There were none.

GMCA 115/25 GMCA MINUTES 27 JUNE 2025

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the GMCA held on 27 June 2025 be approved.

GMCA 116/25 GMCA WASTE & RECYCLING COMMITTEE – 2 JULY 2025

RESOLVED /-

1. That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Waste & Recycling Committee held on 2 July 2025 be noted.
2. That the appointment of Councillor Alan Quinn as the Chair of the Waste & Recycling Committee for 2025/2026 be approved.
3. That the appointment of Councillor Lee-Ann Igbon as Vice Chair of the Waste & Recycling Committee for 2025/2026 be approved.

GMCA 117/25 MINUTES OF THE GMCA AUDIT COMMITTEE – 23 JULY 2025

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Audit Committee held on 23 July 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 118/25 MINUTES OF THE GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 25 JUNE & 23 JULY 2025**

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 25 June & 23 July 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 119/25 MINUTES OF THE GMCA BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON 24 JULY 2025**

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Bee Network Committee held on 24 July 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 120/25 GREATER MANCHESTER APPOINTMENTS UPDATE
2025/2026**

Melinda Edwards, Deputy Monitoring Officer, presented a report setting out further appointments to various Committees and other bodies within the Greater Manchester system of governance.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the appointment of 15 substitute members to the GMCA Waste and Recycling Committee be deferred until the September meeting of the GMCA.
2. That Cllr Les Webb (Bolton) be appointed as a substitute member of the Bee Network Committee.
3. That it be noted that the GM Mayor has appointed the following members to the Bee Network Committee – Cllr Peter Crossen (Stockport, Conservative), Cllr Max Woodvine (Oldham, Conservative), Cllr Howard Sykes (Oldham, Lib Dem) and Cllr Jon Byrne (Stockport, Labour).
4. That Cllr Ian Hunter (Stockport, Lib Dem) be appointed as a member of the GMCA Audit Committee.

5. That Cllr Nathan Evans (Trafford) and Cllr Joanne Marshall (Wigan) be appointed as members of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
6. That Cllr Ashley Dearnley (Rochdale) be appointed as a substitute member of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
7. That the appointment of Cllr John Vickers (Wigan) as a substitute member to the GM Joint Clean Air Scrutiny Committee be noted.
8. That the appointment of Cllr Hamid Khurram (Bolton) as substitute member of the Air Quality Administration Committee be noted.

GMCA 121/25 GM PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION TERMS OF REFERENCE

Deputy Mayor Paul Dennett, Portfolio Leader for Housing First presented a report setting out the proposed changes to the terms of reference for the Planning & Housing Commission.

RESOLVED /-

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

GMCA 122/25 FAITH, BELIEF & INTERFAITH COVENANT

Councillor Elaine Taylor, on behalf of Councillor Arooj Shah, Portfolio Leader for Equalities & Communities, presented a report that set out progress made in implementing the Greater Manchester Faith, Belief and Interfaith Covenant following its endorsement by GMCA in March 2024.

Examples of the faith and voluntary sectors coming together to support the community were cited, such as food banks being set up in local churches and mosques. The work on the Covenant really emphasised the importance of partnership, and the ability to listen and create inclusive spaces where everyone could feel a sense of belonging. This was very timely and relevant in a period of continuing heightening community tensions.

Rev. Ian Rutherford, the Chair of the Faith & Belief Advisory Panel was invited to address the GMCA. He stated that the Panel brought together strengths and assets from all of the region's communities to address key issues such as homelessness, food insecurity and digital exclusion. The Panel also brought together resources, credibility and a strong sense of motivation. Examples of the work supported through the Covenant were highlighted through five case studies contained within the supporting report.

Councillor Eve Parker provided insight into the work being undertaken through the Trafford Faith Action Network, launched in September 2024. The intention of the Network was to implement the aims of the Covenant in a way that specifically worked for the Trafford borough and its faith community. Work had taken place on a strategic approach that aligned with the aims Trafford's corporate plan.

Reference was also made to the Faith & Belief Advisory Panel's Community Cohesion Response which responded to community issues that had arisen during the summer of 2024 and continued to flare up. The Response provided a strong unified message of cohesion and inclusion – countering the online misinformation prevalent in recent incidents. A mobilisation plan had been provided to the GMCA, GMP and community safety partnerships for future events.

Comments and Questions

Members welcomed the work of the Trafford Faith Action Network, stating that this should be highlighted as a strong template on which other GM localities should be encouraged to use as an exemplar model.

Members highlighted the importance of the work on community cohesion, highlighting recent personal experience of racially motivated abuse that appears to have been made 'acceptable' amongst some by recent events.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the progress of the Faith, Belief and Interfaith Covenant be noted.
2. That opportunities be championed for implementation of the Covenant in portfolios and localities, including the role of local Interfaith Networks.
3. That the comments received from Rev. Ian Rutherford and Councillor Eve Parker be welcomed.

4. That the Trafford Faith Action Network be highlighted as a strong template which other GM localities were encouraged to use as an exemplar model.

GMCA 123/25 EQUALITIES & COMMUNITIES

Councillor Elaine Taylor, on behalf of Councillor Arooj Shah, Portfolio Leader for Equalities and Communities, presented a report summarising the activity and impact of the Greater Manchester Equality Panels over the last year. The report provided a clear reminder of the role that the Race Equality Panel played in ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion remained at the centre of all work across the region.

The report did not just present the achievements of the Panel but also highlighted the challenges that continued to be faced. This honesty helped leaders and institutions to do better.

Paula Watt, Co-Chair of the Race Equality Panel was invited to contribute her thoughts. She stated that the Panel sought to fight racial discrimination and foster positive relationships and embed its work within public policy. This year the Panel had focussed on policing, mental health, employment and housing. These had been specifically chosen by the Panel as themes as they were considered areas of concern within the community – work had taken place with key stakeholders in each of these areas.

Representation in leadership had been highlighted as a key area of work, and the Civic Leadership Programme run by GMCA sought to address this by bringing through a generation of young people from across all of GM's communities. It was advised the the region's Chief Executive network had frequent conversations around what more could be done to address imbalances throughout all GM organisations.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the activity and impact of the Equality Panels be noted.
2. That endorsement be given by all portfolios to proactively engage with Equality Panels on issues that impact communities-of-identity.
3. That the comments received from Co-Chair of the Race Equality Panel Paula Watt be welcomed.

**GMCA 124/25 GREATER MANCHESTER'S REMEDIATION ACCELERATION
PLAN: ENSURING FIRE SAFETY IN FLATS AS PART OF THE
RESPONSE TO GRENFELL**

Deputy Mayor Paul Dennett, Portfolio Leader for Housing First, presented a report providing an update to the Authority on the development of the Greater Manchester Remediation Acceleration Plan (RAC).

The agreement of the first iteration of the RAC in December 2024 and built upon significant work that had already been taking place since the Grenfell disaster in 2017. However, a new era was now being entered, as where previously all work had focussed on buildings 18m+ in height, there was now a requirement to remediate for all buildings 11m+ in height. This meant that 196 buildings in GM now required remediation. This would require access to a significant level of funding to commence this work.

The importance of supporting resident management and right to manage companies was highlighted. These were usually made up of volunteers, who now had to navigate a legislatively complicated environment. Thanks were expressed to the 'Manchester Cladiators' group, who had become experts in this domain, supporting residents freely with their time, energy and efforts.

CFO Dave Russel emphasised the need for a 'relentless' commitment to delivery, as this was a great opportunity for thorough remediation through the funding now made available. A whole GM system response was needed to most effectively deliver on this.

Comments and Questions

Members stated that there was a concerning shortage of class 3 building inspectors, and this needed to be lobbied on as it would have an impact if there were not enough of these fully trained inspectors available to support the work.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the contents of the Greater Manchester Remediation Acceleration Plan and delivery arrangements be noted and that the Plan be endorsed.

2. That members be asked to take part in lobbying the insurance industry on the urgent need to train more class 3 building inspectors.

GMCA 125/25 GREATER MANCHESTER LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY PLAN

Councillor Tom Ross, Portfolio Leader for Green City Region, presented Greater Manchester's Local Nature Recovery Strategy which had been developed over the last two years with our local authorities and wider stakeholders.

David Renwick, Regional Director for Natural England was invited to address the GMCA. He stated that the key aim for Natural England was to create resilience in nature, and that this could only be achieved through building partnerships to support recovery, and GM formed a great example of this partnership working. The collective local nature recovery plans across the north of England had been brought together collectively as 'Nature North' which would in turn bring together a plan to support local actions.

Comments and Questions

Members highlighted the importance of ensuring green spaces in the urban environment within all of GM's communities. This was particularly important in areas most at risk of the phenomenon of urban heat islands, which contributed to heat related excess deaths.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy be endorsed.
2. That it be recommended that the Mayor approves the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy for publication, in his capacity as Responsible Authority for Greater Manchester.
3. That the comments highlighted by Natural England representatives be noted.
4. That members emphasised the importance of green spaces within all the region's communities, particularly those areas most at risk of becoming 'urban heat islands'.

**GMCA 126/25 OUR PASS DIGITISATION: INTRODUCTION OF A NEW
PRODUCT FOR 18-21 YEAR OLDS TO INCREASE ACCESS
TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT THROUGH AFFORDABLE AND
SIMPLER FARES FOR TICKETING**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, provided an update on the delivery of Digital Our Pass and proposes the introduction of a new product for 18-21 year olds to increase access to public transport through affordable and simpler fares and ticketing.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the introduction of a half price 28-day Bee Bus ticket for 18–21-year-olds living in Greater Manchester be approved.
2. That the delivery of Digital Our Pass be noted.

GMCA 127/25 ACTIVE TRAVEL FUNDING FOR SCHEMES

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester presented a report seeking approval to allocate funding received from Active Travel England.

The allocations reflected a call from leaders that there had been struggles with the wider fabric of highways and pavements around some of the active travel schemes and that more needed to be done in recognising those pressures within the allocations.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the allocation of £5.2m revenue funding, consisting of Active Travel Fund 4, Active Travel Fund 5 and the Consolidated Active Travel Fund be approved as follows:
 - Bee Network scheme Development (Local Authority led): £2.22m;
 - Behaviour Change: £1.74m;
 - Cycle Hire: £1m; and
 - Programme Management and Network Monitoring: £0.201m

2. That the allocation of £15.2m capital funding, consisting of Active Travel Fund 5 and the Consolidated Active Travel Fund be approved as follows, noting there is a further £1.5m capital funding to be allocated by GMCA at a later date:
 - Active Travel Infrastructure Pipeline Delivery: £8.6m;
 - School Streets: £2m;
 - Bee Network Crossings: £2m;
 - Remedial Works: £1.1m;
 - Cycle Hire: £0.5m;
 - Secure Cycle Parking: £0.5m; and
 - Wayfinding: £0.5m
3. That the associated drawdown requests in relation to the capital allocations will be considered by the Bee Network Committee at the meeting held on Tuesday 19th August 2025, subject to GMCA approval of the overall allocations be noted.

GMCA 128/25 BUSINESS CASE DEVELOPMENT FOR RAPID TRANSIT LINES IN GREATER MANCHESTER

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Great Manchester, presented a report setting out the next steps for potential major fixed track investments in support of GM's growth ambition, and as part of the GM Integrated Pipeline.

The schemes planned to be taken forward were highlighted, noting that they were all at differing stages of progress. The stage 1 process was the strategic outline business case, making the arguments for becoming a government funded scheme. Stage 2 formed the outline business case, before finally Stage 3 forming the full business case.

One scheme of particular note was the Oldham-Rochdale-Heywood-Bury pathfinder scheme, which would be important for Atom Valley and would provide an orbital link much sought in the northern part of GM. A target date for works beginning on these scheme had been set for 2028.

The Stockport tram network extension was referenced, with the strategic outline business case on this being expected to conclude in the autumn.

Work would also now commence on the proposals for an underground rail system for the region – as the current rapid transit system in the regional centre was unlikely to have sufficient capacity to accommodate demand by the middle of the century, driven by continued population and economic growth – and by the need for non-car modes to accommodate a higher proportion growth in line with the Right Mix.

Comments and Questions

Concern was raised about the lack of progress made on making Walkden Station an accessible station, as work around this was all set to commence five years ago. The Mayor stated that he had met with Network Rail management and conveyed the disappointment around the lack of progress on this scheme. The Mayor would also make an ask to the Group Chief Executive to look at the possibility of using the new 'right to request' facility through the English Devolution Bill to acquire further funding to support Access for All.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That the next steps be endorsed.
3. That the Group Chief Executive be requested to look at the possibility of using 'right to request' to acquire further funding to support Access for All.

GMCA 129/25 GM LOCAL INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK – APPROVAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Leader for Resources & Investment, presented a report seeking approval of a £600,000 loan facility to Social AdVentures Limited, an amendment to the loan provided to Evergreen House Limited, and approval of two investments through GM Advance.

RESOLVED /-

1. That a loan of up to £600,000 to Social AdVentures Limited be approved.
2. That a loan of up to £150,000 to Insightful Brands Ltd be approved.
3. That an investment of up to £150,000 to Gennate Limited be approved.
4. That an amendment to Evergreen House Limited loan be approved.

5. That the delegated approval of a loan of up to £450,000 to Ecobelt Limited, a loan of up to £370,000 to United Canning Limited and an investment of £50,000 to 9N Limited be noted.
6. That authority be delegated to the Combined Authority Treasurer in consultation with the Combined Authority Monitoring Officer to review the due diligence information in respect of the above investments, and, subject to their satisfactory review and agreement of the due diligence information and the overall detailed commercial terms of the investments, to sign off any outstanding conditions, issue final approvals and complete any necessary related documentation in respect of the investments noted above.
7. That it be noted that going forward an annual impact report will be prepared for the GMCA which will highlight examples of job creation made possible through the GM Local Investment Framework.

GMCA 130/25 NORTHERN GATEWAY MAYORAL DEVELOPMENT

Tom Stannard, on behalf of Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Leader for Economy, Business and Inclusive Growth, presented a report setting out the results of the consultation on the establishment of a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) covering the Northern Gateway sites in Atom Valley and seeking approval for the next steps in the process.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the results of the consultation exercise in respect of the designation of a Mayoral Development Corporation for Northern Gateway be noted.
2. That the Mayor's response to the consultation be noted.
3. That it be noted that recommendations to support the designation of the 'Atom Valley Northern Gateway' MDC were approved by Bury and Rochdale Councils at their meetings on 9 July 2025 and 29 July 2025, respectively
4. That due consideration be given to the proposal by the Mayor to designate an area, identified on the plan at Appendix 3, as a Mayoral Development Area and notify the Mayor within the consideration period if it proposes to reject the proposal.

5. That it be noted that subject the GMCA not rejecting the proposal as set out at recommendation 4 above, the Mayor shall publicise the designation, notify the Secretary of State of the designation and the name to be given to the Mayoral Development Corporation, as follows: “Atom Valley Northern Gateway Mayoral Development Corporation.”

GMCA 131/25 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.

GMCA 132/25 GREATER MANCHESTER INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK

RESOLVED /-

That the report be noted.