

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED  
AUTHORITY HELD ON FRIDAY 26<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025 AT WIGAN TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT**

|            |                             |
|------------|-----------------------------|
| GMCA Mayor | Andy Burnham (In the Chair) |
| GMCA       | Deputy Mayor Kate Green     |
| Bury       | Councillor Eamonn O'Brien   |
| Manchester | Councillor Bev Craig        |
| Oldham     | Councillor Arooj Shah       |
| Rochdale   | Councillor Neil Emmott      |
| Salford    | City Mayor Paul Dennett     |
| Stockport  | Councillor Jilly Julian     |
| Tameside   | Councillor Eleanor Wills    |
| Trafford   | Councillor Tom Ross         |
| Wigan      | Councillor David Molyneux   |

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

|                                 |                       |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Chair of GM Overview & Scrutiny | Councillor John Walsh |
| Health Innovation Manchester    | Ben Bridgewater       |
| BBC                             | Josie Cahill          |
| GAMMA Board                     | Dr Mike Murray        |

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

|                               |                  |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Group Chief Executive Officer | Caroline Simpson |
| Group Deputy Chief Executive  | Andrew Lightfoot |
| Group Monitoring Officer      | Gill Duckworth   |
| Group Chief Finance Officer   | Steve Wilson     |
| Group Secretary               | Sarah Horseman   |
| Bolton                        | Sue Johnson      |
| Bury                          | Lynne Ridsdale   |
| Manchester                    | Rebecca Heron    |

|                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Oldham                 | Shelley Kipling       |
| Rochdale               | James Binks           |
| Salford                | Miranda Cannon        |
| Stockport              | Michael Cullen        |
| Tameside               | Harry Catherall       |
| Trafford               | Sara Todd             |
| Wigan                  | Alison McKenzie-Folan |
| Office of the GM Mayor | Kevin Lee             |
| TfGM                   | Martin Lax            |
| GMCA                   | Sylvia Welsh          |
| GMCA                   | Lee Teasdale          |

## **GMCA 133/25      APOLOGIES**

That apologies be received and noted from Councillor Nicholas Peel (Bolton) and Councillor Mark Roberts (Stockport) and Tom Stannard (Manchester) and Stephen Young (Salford).

## **GMCA 134/25      CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS**

Mayor Andy Burnham welcomed all to the meeting, noting that this would be the first GMCA meeting to have support through British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters that would be fully livestreamed.

The Mayor also provided the latest update on the industrial action that had been taking place across some bus services on the Bee Network, and the work being done to avert any further strike action and agree a path forward that would support both the staff and all passengers.

Upon taking control of the Bee Network, it had been found that bus drivers were on a wide set of pay structures and terms & conditions depending on which operator they worked for and which depot they operated from. The intention now was to move towards a fairer and more harmonised approach, avoiding the destabilisation caused by differing rates across the region. The Greater Manchester Good Employment

Charter was now linked to the process, bringing in improvements around pay and security, and a feedback board was now in place to take on the many concerns addressed by drivers about the old system.

Work was also taking place to develop a Bee Network Pension Scheme, to replace the disparate approach to schemes that many drivers have had to face in the past.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That it be noted that the meeting is the first GMCA meeting to have fully livestreamed British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation in accordance with the Mayor's commitments to accessibility.
2. That the update on industrial action relating to bus services on the Bee Network be noted.
3. That the update on successful court case in relation to the Greater Manchester Housing Loans Fund and the reimbursement of court case costs to the GMCA be noted.

**GMCA 135/25      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**RESOLVED /-**

That Deputy Mayor Kate Green declared an interest in item 9B by virtue of being a board member of Manchester Camerata, and item 9C by virtue of being a governor of Manchester Metropolitan University.

**GMCA 136/25      GMCA MINUTES 22 AUGUST 2025**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the minutes of the GMCA held on 22 August 2025 be approved.

**GMCA 137/25      GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 20 AUGUST 2025**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 20 August 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 138/25          MINUTES OF THE BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE – 19 AUGUST 2025**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the proceedings of the meeting of the Bee Network Committee held on 19 August 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 139/25          MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2025**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Audit Committee meeting held on 22 September 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 140/25          ENGLISH DEVOLUTION AND COMMUNITIES EMPOWERMENT BILL**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, provided a verbal update to the GMCA on the English Devolution and Communities Empowerment Bill. This was a hugely significant piece of legislation for the region and was currently in Parliament having had its second reading on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September. Oral evidence had then been taking at the committee stage on 16<sup>th</sup> September, including a submission from Councillor Bev Craig. Parliament was currently in recess, but between 14<sup>th</sup> October and 12<sup>th</sup> November the Bill would be given line by line consideration.

It was vital that Greater Manchester's priorities were properly considered during the Committee stage and it was hoped that there would be support for amendments being sought to the legislation. Firstly, on taxi licencing, specifically out of area licensing which has been an increasing area of concern for many residents. Since deregulation a decade ago, over half of licences were now granted by authorities a significant

distance from the region – it was considered that it should be a local matter to decide who should and should not be granted a licence to operate a taxi in the region, this was not currently within the proposed bill, however it was very much within its scope and so a proposal would be made on an amendment.

Secondly, an amendment would be sought around the accountability of local housing providers. Concerns had been raised in some localities that authorities had been ‘pushed away’ from their housing providers, with representation on boards reduced and/or ended – resulting in a gap between the authorities and providers. There was a need to restore greater public accountability to public housing.

It was noted that the Bill would also include a right-to-request mechanism for further devolution in certain areas. Three areas had been identified in the first instance, and these had been communicated to government. A tourist levy akin to those seen in other countries to help in paying for the extra pressures put under local systems; further devolution of skills; and further employment support.

## **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the verbal update provided by Mayor Andy Burnham be received.
2. That the intention of the GMCA to put forward amendments in relation to taxi licensing and local accountability of housing providers be noted.
3. That it be noted that the options around local accountability of housing providers will be discussed further by Leaders for consideration ahead of any next steps.
4. That it be noted that the English Devolution and Communities Empowerment Bill also included a right-to-request mechanism.
5. That it be noted that three areas have been identified for consideration as part of the right-to-request mechanism in the first instance:
  - Tourist Levies
  - Devolution of Skills
  - Employment Support

**GMCA 141/25      MAYORAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION FOR THE OLD  
TRAFFORD REGENERATION – CONSULTATION RESULTS &  
APPROVAL TO DESIGNATE**

Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Leader for Economy, Business & Inclusive Growth presented a report setting out the results of the consultation on the establishment of a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) covering the Old Trafford Regeneration area and seeking approval for the next steps in the process.

Councillor Tom Ross, as Leader of Trafford Council, was invited to provide a further update on the consultation process. The majority of respondents to the consultation had been supportive of the objectives around the creation of the MDC. Positive engagement had also taken place with stakeholders and progress was continually being made on the positive vision for redevelopment.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the results of the consultation exercise in respect of the designation of a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) for the Old Trafford Regeneration area be noted.
2. That the Mayor of Greater Manchester's response to the consultation be noted.
3. That it be noted that support for designation of the 'Old Trafford Regeneration' MDC was approved by the Leader of Trafford Council under delegated authority.
4. That the Leader of Trafford Council confirmed consent to the designation of the proposed MDC.
5. That due consideration was given to the proposal by the Mayor to designate an area, identified on the plan at Appendix 3, as a Mayoral Development Area and that the GMCA will notify the Mayor within the consideration period if it proposed to reject the proposal.
6. That it be noted that subject to 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: "Old Trafford Regeneration Mayoral Development Corporation".

**GMCA 142/25      STOCKPORT TOWN CENTRE MAYORAL DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION EXPANSION: CONSULTATION OUTCOMES  
AND FINAL APPROVAL**

Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Leader for Economy, Business & Inclusive Growth, presented a report setting out the outcome of the public consultation on the expansion of the Mayoral development area covered by Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation.

Councillor Jilly Julian attending on behalf of the Leader of Stockport Council, Councillor Mark Roberts, was invited to provide a further update from the Stockport Council perspective. The expansion of the MDC was very welcome and would further strengthen the case for extension of the Metrolink network into Stockport. It was stated that this was a historic moment for Stockport and the culmination of years of work around the shared vision for a thriving town centre. This was an example of regeneration providing real value and councils leading from the front on this.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the outcome and responses to the consultation undertaken by the Mayor of Greater Manchester on the proposed expansion of the Stockport Mayoral development area and creation of a new Mayoral Development Corporation to cover this expanded area be noted.
2. That it be noted that Stockport Council Cabinet agreed its support for the proposal set out above at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2025.
3. That the Deputy Leader of Stockport Council, on behalf of the Leader of Stockport Council, confirmed consent to the designation of the proposed MDC.
4. That due consideration be given to the proposal by the Mayor of Greater Manchester to designate this expanded area as a Mayoral Development Area (see map at Appendix One) and that the GMCA will notify the Mayor within the consideration period if it proposes to reject the proposal.
5. That it be noted that following the expiration of the consideration period, if the GMCA has not rejected the proposal, the Mayor intended to take the necessary steps to designate the expanded area as a Mayoral Development Area and to secure the establishment of the new MDC (to be named "Stockport Town

Centre Mayoral Development Corporation”) and the dissolution of the existing MDC including any necessary transfer of rights and liabilities.

**GMCA 143/25          CREATION OF GREATER MANCHESTER REGENERATION SKILLS ACADEMY**

Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Leader for Economy, Business & Inclusive Growth, presented a report seeking approval for the creation of the Greater Manchester Regeneration Skills Academy (“GMRSA”).

It was stated that the last 15 years had seen a significant hollowing out of local authorities’ ability to meet the challenges around developing skills and capacity within regeneration departments and the wider regeneration community. The report focussed on the interventions that the combined authority could undertake working with the many organisations already extant in this space.

The first programme would focus upon early to midyear generation professionals, with the public and private sectors brought together in a joint cohort, with private sector colleagues contributing a fee to join the programme to help in managing costs. The first cohort was due to commence in October 2025.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That approval be given for the creation of the Greater Manchester Regeneration Skills Academy (“GMRSA”).
2. That it be noted that the GMCA will receive proposals for the first round of funding under the 10-year investment pipeline at its November 2025 meeting.

**GMCA 144/25          PREVENTION DEMONSTRATOR, LIVE WELL, AND NHS 10 YEAR PLAN/INTEGRATED CARE BOARD REFORMS**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report providing an update on three interrelated areas of activity which are central to our ambitions as set out in the Greater Manchester Strategy and which will influence the next 10 years of public service delivery across the Greater Manchester (GM); Live Well, The Prevention



Demonstrator and developments in the health system (the NHS 10 Year Plan and ICB reforms).

It was intended that Live Well would enable delivery on a level not possible previously, becoming the primary vehicle in GM for embedding prevention, integration, and community power across the neighbourhoods of the region. This would approach prevention in a way previously unprecedented anywhere in the UK, with all services working together to provide more services to residents whilst also spending public money more efficiently.

Councillor John Walsh, Chair of the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee, was invited to provide feedback on the Committee's recent consideration of this item. The Committee had noted the importance of trust, equity and engaging with disconnected residents. Concerns had been raised about sustainability, longer-term funding and ensuring equality and commonalities across all ten GM districts. Members had also raised the need for a simplified community based mental health support network with a preventative approach. If Live Well was to be complementary to current mainstream offers, it needed to be recognised as integral and complementary to that activity, not a disparate addition. Concerns were also raised about the lack of data sharing and issues that could arise from this.

Mayor Burnham welcomed the update stating that the session with Overview & Scrutiny had been constructive and very helpful. He had noted a councillor request that a direct councillor referral route to Live Well be developed – and this would be given serious consideration.

Mayor Burnham provided an update on the future of the Integrated Care Board. Government had advised of a reduced head count and changes to the infrastructure, including the standing down of the Integrated Care Partnership. Conversations were ongoing with local health partners and NHS England about the optimum accountability arrangements to support the prevention demonstrator. It was hoped that a favourable outcome could be reported to the Combined Authority before the end of the year.

## **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the contents of the report and any implications be noted.

2. That the feedback from the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee be received.
3. That the consideration will be given to a direct councillor referral route to Live Well, as recommended by the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

## **GMCA 145/25      GREATER MANCHESTER'S COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUALITY IN SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND MOVEMENT**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report engaging GMCA partners on Greater Manchester's commitment to collaborative leadership on gender equity in sport, physical activity.

It was stated that the region fully supported true equality in opportunities to be active and participate at every level of sport. GM Moving had been strongly supportive of signing the Brighton Helsinki Declaration and meeting the targets within the Declaration.

The Mayor also noted that Lancashire Women's Cricket Club had won the 'double' this year – the One Day trophy and the T20 trophy, and good luck was expressed to the England Roses who were due to compete in the Rugby Union World Cup Final over the coming weekend.

### **Comments and Questions**

Members welcomed the declaration, also highlighting the need to look at it through the lens of poverty and ethnicity, and how sport could play such an important role to support inclusion within the local community.

### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the GMCA confirms its commitment to leadership on gender inequality in active lives, and lead in their place to support movement, physical activity and sport for all women and girls.
2. That a commitment to the Brighton Helsinki Declaration on Women and Girls be signed.

Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Leader for Economy, Business & Inclusive Growth, provided an update on the 5 “Frontier Sector” Development Plans for adoption as part of GM’s growth approach. The GMCA welcomed Ben Bridgewater of Health Innovation Manchester, Josie Cahill of the British Broadcasting Corporation and Dr Mike Murray from the GAMMA Board, who would all contribute to the item with sector specific insights.

Councillor Craig provided further context. The city region had now grown to the extent that it had a larger economic output than many countries in Europe. This had been achieved by not just focussing on one single area but instead ensuring a range of thriving sectors. The five frontier sector plans built upon this previous commitment to excel in these sectors.

Ben Bridgewater (Health Innovation Manchester) provided an update on work around Life Sciences. He stated that it was an exciting prospect to have a growth plan in place for this sector, and the importance of seeing it within the context of the Greater Manchester Strategy, which creating alignment with a whole range of policy initiatives. The growth plan had been based on analysis undertaken rigorously over time. There was a strong employment base in GM for life sciences and was the biggest outside of London. This resulted in having very strong sets of data that could be considered nationally and indeed internationally competitive – generating significant and increasing amounts of international investment. This could only continue to deliver as well as it does through connectivity with other sectors with connected growth plans.

Josie Cahill (BBC) provided an update on work around the creative sectors in the region. Being able to have a creative arts and media cluster within the region meant that there had been a huge impact, not just on the local economy, but the enabling of truly home growth storytelling, real lives, real voices and real places that mattered to people. There was still more to do, and with the right investment further progress could be made on more jobs and further growth. Collaboration was vital to driving this, and the Plan’s intention to establish a Greater Manchester Creative Industries Council would provide strategic leadership, advocacy and this vital collaboration.

Dr Mike Murray (GAMMA Board) provided an update on advanced manufacturing. The plan established a clear vision for an advanced manufacturing super cluster for the

region, which would allow for a more productive, sustainable, highly skilled and innovative approach that supported the transition to net zero. This was a living document that built upon the region's ambitions around the acceleration of growth, and the successes already achieved.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the frontier sector plans be adopted.
2. That the proposed next steps with the intention for these plans to inform the Local Growth Plan Government has asked the GMCA to produce and for the plans to be refreshed annually be noted.

**GMCA 147/25      GREATER MANCHESTER CULTURE FUND PROCESS 2026-2029**

Councillor Neil Emmott, Portfolio Leader for Culture presented a report outlining the impact of investment to date and proposes an approach, process and timeline for GMCA investment in culture from April 2026.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the impact of GM Cultural Investment 2023-26 be noted.
2. That the GM Culture Investment Approach 2026-2029 be approved.
3. That the outlined process for the GM Culture Investment 2026-29 be approved.
4. That an indicative investment period of three years, subject to annual review and approval of the Culture Fund as part of the GMCA annual budget setting process, be approved, in principle.
5. That the timeline for the GMCA Culture Fund to open for bids in preparation for the new investment approach starting from April 2026 be agreed.
6. That the establishment of a new sector-led body for culture in Greater Manchester, recognising the need for strong sector leadership, be approved.
7. That it be noted that, the decision of the impact tool, and that the proposed approach will support equality inclusion, health outcomes and the economy in Greater Manchester.

## **GMCA 148/25      GREATER MANCHESTER CIVIC UNIVERSITIES AGREEMENT**

Councillor Bev Craig, Portfolio Leader for Economy, Business & Inclusive Growth, presented a report seeking endorsement from GMCA for the refreshed Greater Manchester Civic University Agreement, a collective, co-developed commitment between GM's five major universities, listed below, and GMCA around collaborative working to tackle a shared range of local priorities.

### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the refreshed approach by GM's universities embodied in the Greater Manchester Civic University Agreement (CUA) be noted and endorsed.
2. That it be noted that the CUA was a living document and can be revisited in light of developments to the Greater Manchester Strategy.
3. That it be noted that following the endorsement of the GMCA at recommendation 1, a public announcement will follow in October 2025 at the CUA Citizens' Panel.

## **GMCA 149/25      REVENUE BUDGET UPDATE – QUARTER 1 2025/2026**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Leader for Resources & Investment, presented a report informing members of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority financial position at the end of June 2025 (Quarter 1) and forecast revenue outturn position for the 2025/26 financial year.

### **RESOLVED /-**

That the forecast position at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025 be noted.

## **GMCA 150/25      CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE – QUARTER 1 2025/2026**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Leader for Resources & Investment, presented an update in relation to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's 2025/26 capital expenditure programme.

### **RESOLVED /-**

That the current 2025/26 forecast of £652.9m compared to the 2025/26 budget of £598.3m be noted.