

**Minutes of the Greater Manchester Housing First Planning Infrastructure  
Commission meeting held on Thursday 23 October 2025**

**Present:**

Salford City Council	City Mayor Paul Dennett - Chair
Manchester City Council	Councillor Gavin White
Manchester City Council	Councillor Joanne Midgley
Stockport Council	Councillor Jake Austin
Trafford Council	Councillor Liz Patel

**Independent Members:**

Arup	Jane Healey-Brown (Private Sector)
Onward Homes	Bronwen Rapley (GM Housing Providers)
TfGM	Megan Black

**North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Members:**

Bury Council	Councillor Alan Quinn
Salford City Council	Councillor Phillip Cusack
Salford City Council	Councillor Jane Hamilton
Manchester City Council	Councillor Mandie Shilton-Godwin

**Officers in Attendance:**

Portfolio Lead Chief Executive	James Binks
GMCA	Steve Fyfe
GMCA	Clare Taylor-Russell
GMCA	David Hodcroft
GMCA	Jill Holden
GMCA	Joe Donohue
GMCA	Philippa Lane
GMCA	Lucy Woodbine
GMCA	Jacqueline Gailey
GMCA	Kerry Bond
Homes England	Carl Moore

Homes England	Holly Harrow
Environment Agency	Nick Pearson
Environment Agency	Dermot Smith
Chair GM Strategic Infrastructure	Peter Emery
Board	

**HFPIC/001/25      Apologies**

**Resolved/-**

Apologies for absence were received and noted from Councillors Andrew McLaren, (Tameside), Sean Fielding (Bolton), Daniel Meredith (Rochdale), Susan Gambles (Wigan) and Martin Lax (TfGM).

**HFPIC/002/25      Appointment of Chair**

**Resolved/-**

1. To note, as detailed in the Terms of Reference, the appointment of the GMCA Housing First Portfolio Leader, Mayor Paul Dennett as Chair of the Greater Manchester Housing First, Planning & Infrastructure Commission for 2025/26.

**HFPIC/003/25      Appointment of Vice Chair**

**Resolved/-**

1. That the nomination of Bronwen Rapley, Onward, as Vice Chair of the Commission for 2025/26 be agreed.

**HFPIC/004/25**

**Membership of the Greater Manchester Housing First,  
Planning & Infrastructure Commission 2025/26**

**Resolved/-**

1. To note the membership of the Greater Manchester Housing First, Planning & Infrastructure Commission for the 2025/26 municipal year appointed at the AGMA Executive Board held on 27 June 2025.

**HFPIC/005/25**

**Appointment to the GM 5 Year Environment Plan  
Partnership**

**Resolved/-**

1. That Councillor McCusker, Salford City Council, as a Member and Vice Chair of the Green City Region Board would be the Housing First Planning and Infrastructure Committee representative for the 2025/26 municipal year.

**HFPIC/006/25**

**Meeting Introduction / Purpose**

Mayor Paul Dennett provided a verbal update on the purpose of the Commission, highlighting its role in delivering Housing First principles and integrated infrastructure priorities.

**Resolved/-**

1. That the update be noted.

**HFPIC/007/25**

**Terms of Reference**

**Resolved/-**

1. That the change of name from the GM Planning & Housing Commission to the Housing First, Planning and Infrastructure Commission be noted.
2. That the Housing First, Planning and Infrastructure Commission Terms of Reference be noted.
3. That a VCSE Homelessness representative be invited to future meetings.

**HFPIC/008/25      Chairs Announcements and Urgent Business**

**Resolved/-**

1. On behalf of the Committee, the Chair expressed thanks and appreciation to Anne Morgan upon her retirement, acknowledging her significant contributions to Greater Manchester's planning initiatives since the establishment of the Planning and Housing Commission in 2009.

**HFPIC/009/25      Declarations of Interest**

**Resolved/-**

1. There were no Declarations of Interest reported.

**HFPIC/010/25      Minutes of the Planning and Housing Commission Meeting held on 5 February 2025**

**Resolved /-**

1. That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2025 be approved.

## HFPIC/011/25      Housing First Overview

Steve Fyfe and Joseph Donohue, GMCA spoke to a presentation providing an update on the Housing First Plan approach and programme priorities.

### Key Points Presented:

- Housing First Vision - Aim: A healthy, safe home for all as the foundation of well-being.
- Healthy Homes for All approach and pledges
- Current Challenges:
  - Unsafe homes with Category 1 hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).
  - Changing tenure patterns and pressure on the housing market.
  - Rising private rents and limited affordable housing supply.
  - Scarcity of social housing lets leading to bottlenecks in crisis accommodation.
  - Lack of affordable housing leading to homelessness and instable housing.
  - Temporary accommodation challenges for local authorities and residents.
- Housing First principles to drive system change:
  1. Housing is a priority for resources.
  2. Solutions will be integrated across sectors.
  3. Non-housing interventions will contribute to housing outcomes.
  4. Housing interventions will support wider prevention goals.
  5. GM-level opportunities will be realised through collaboration.
  6. Pursuing radical change to address systemic issues.
- Working with partners: The Housing First Unit:
  - Provide strategic leadership and governance.
  - Coordinate action across GM partners.
  - Advocate for radical reforms and investment.
  - Drive delivery of GM and government growth ambitions.
  - Hold the system accountable for implementing Housing First principles.

- Housing First Programme Overview:
  - Supply: Funding new supply, alternative delivery models, land assembly, integrated pipeline.
  - Standards: Enforcement, Good Landlord Charter, Property Check, retrofit programmes.
  - Support: Homelessness prevention, temporary accommodation, health and housing pathways, supported housing.
- Key Milestones (Q3 & Q4 2025/26):
  - September: Property Check Pilot launch
  - October: GM Integrated Pipeline proposition
  - November: Housing First Event
  - December: GMHP Capacity Analysis
  - February: Property Check Pilot evaluation

### **Comments and Questions:**

Members expressed concerns about the decline in social housing lets and its impact on temporary accommodation. They requested a detailed review to examine potential funding delays.

The Chair emphasised that work on temporary accommodation must deliver added value and asked GMCA housing and homelessness teams to engage with Homes England on securing affordable homes funding.

Joe Donohue confirmed that GMCA is actively working on funding and investment interventions to support local authorities, aiming to expand housing options and address long-term needs.

Steve Fyfe noted that recent discussions with MHCLG indicated imminent announcements on the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF).

Carl Moore clarified that Homes England programmes do not target temporary accommodation but will collaborate with GMCA and sector partners to improve access to the existing pipeline and explore bridging funding.

Members enquired how pockets of privately owned unused land across Greater Manchester be brought into use for new housing development.

Members requested:

Data on Right to Buy activity following the changes introduced in November 2024.

No definitive data is currently available following the Right to Buy changes; details will be shared when available.

Data on the Brownfield Funding pipeline. It was confirmed that work is underway across GM on the pipeline for Brownfield Funding prior to submission to the housing minister.

Additional information on the Good Landlord Charter and its application to private landlords.

Brownfield Funding aims to integrate the brownfield development pipeline and associated funding within the integrated settlement framework, providing greater flexibility and in collaboration with Homes England, district and other partners,

The GMCA are supporting a broader piece of work on empty homes across GM and the different options to utilise the housing stock across GM, including tenancy fraud, under occupying and under sizing to identify temporary accommodation stock.

Members were advised that retrofit funding is available through the integrated settlement under a three-year DESNZ agreement, providing greater certainty on funding levels and scope. This includes initiatives such as tying private sector landlord grant availability to Good Landlord Charter Supporter Status and the launch of a Retrofit Portal. While funding is not available at the scale required, additional support is expected through the Warm Homes Plan. The government also intends to introduce a workforce plan for the construction sector in partnership with Wigan and Leigh College.

The Chair requested that districts collaborate with GMCA on addressing empty homes to ensure the process is as streamlined as possible, noting that some authorities are already more advanced in this area.

The Chair advised members that Eamon O'Brien, Portfolio Lead for Work and Skills, has agreed to collaborate with the Chair, Portfolio Lead for Housing First, on the government's announcements regarding the construction industry and skills sector.

The Chair suggested auditing the Affordable Homes Programme 2021–26 to assess whether it has delivered in line with the programme's objectives. Officers advised that the programme runs until March 2028, current data will be sought for a future update.

**Resolved:**

1. That the presentation be noted.
2. That the Commission supports the Housing First principles and milestones as outlined.
3. That a detailed update on Housing First implementation be scheduled for a future meeting.
4. That GMCA explores options for bringing pockets of privately owned unused land across Greater Manchester into use for new housing development be agreed.
5. That details of the Retrofit Portal be shared with members be agreed.
6. That GMCA Environment officers be invited to share an update at the next meeting be agreed.
7. That a construction industry and skills sector update be brought to a future meeting be agreed.
8. That an audit of the Affordable Homes Programme 2021–26 be brought to a future meeting be agreed.
9. That an update on housing association rent convergence be brought to a future meeting be agreed.

**HFPIC/012/25      Strategic Planning Update**

Clare Taylor-Russell, GMCA spoke to a presentation providing an update on the current strategic planning.

- Current Strategic Planning Context in GM:
  - Places for Everyone (PfE) adopted March 2024; covers nine GM local authorities, except Stockport.
  - PfE remains up to date until 2029, subject to annual monitoring.
  - All GM local authorities are preparing individual local plans for submission by December 2026.
  - No Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) currently in place, instead the PfE has been developed.
- Established Spatial Strategy
  - Includes Stockport under Duty to Cooperate
- Chronology of Changes to Strategic Planning National Policy:
  - NPPF (Dec 2024): Introduced new local housing need methodology, new definition of 'grey belt', and 'Golden Rules' for Green Belt.
  - English Devolution & Community Empowerment Bill (July 2025): Requires strategic spatial plan coverage across England and changes MCA governance.
  - Planning & Infrastructure Bill (March 2025): Expected Royal Assent November 2025; mandates Mayoral Combined Authorities to produce SDS and sets governance arrangements.
- Implications of the changes for GM:
  - PfE remains valid until 2029; new Local Housing Needs (LHN) figures apply post-2029 unless delivery slows.
  - Government expects SDS preparation during this parliamentary period; Secretary of State may intervene on content and timetable.
  - SDS will be a Mayoral plan forming part of GM development plan but cannot allocate sites or revise Green Belt boundaries.
- What is a Spatial Development Strategy (SDS)?
  - The Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) is a Mayoral plan prepared by GMCA as the strategic planning authority.
  - It sets out strategic policies for land use and identifies targets to meet housing and employment needs.
  - The SDS must align with the area's local growth plan.

- It cannot allocate specific development sites or revise Green Belt boundaries.
- Once adopted, the SDS will form part of the development plan for all GM local planning authorities.
- Recent changes to planning regulations mean the position on SDS preparation is likely to change.
- New Housing Need Methodology Results for GM:
  - GM total annual requirement: 14,048 homes (up from 12,120).
  - 15-year target: 210,720 homes.
  - Notable changes due to uplift in the previous methodology
    - Manchester: 2,536 (down from 3,533).
    - Salford: 1,351 (down from 1,658).
- Next Steps:
  - Await Royal Assent of Bills and secondary legislation (early 2026).
  - Programme steps for SDS preparation and submit timeline to Secretary of State.
  - Begin formal work on next-generation spatial planning for GM, c.mid 2026.

### **Comments and questions**

- Officers confirmed that plans must be reviewed every five years. Greater Manchester is in a strong position, with effective collaborative working with nine authorities already having plans in place.
- Following direction from government, Stockport will publish an emerging draft Local Plan for consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning Act. The PfE meets the housing needs of the nine authorities with a spatial strategy which maximizes urban density in the core. The SDS will incorporate Stockport into the strategic framework.
- Officers confirmed that Greater Manchester can continue collaborative work as it transitions to an SDS, utilising land supply and Mayoral Development Corporations to maximize urban potential. It was noted that Stockport has not yet commenced its Regulation 18 consultation. Discussions with Stockport will take place around meeting housing needs.

**Resolved:**

1. That the presentation be noted.

**HFPIC/013/25      Joint Minerals and Waste Plan**

Philippa Lane, GMCA spoke to a presentation providing an overview of minerals and waste planning for Greater Manchester.

- What is Waste?
  - Waste includes any substance or object discarded by individuals or organisations.
  - Waste planning authorities must plan for municipal, commercial/industrial, construction/demolition, agricultural, hazardous, low-level radioactive, and wastewater streams.
- What does a Waste Plan do?
  - Sets policies for determining waste planning applications and forms part of the Council's development plan.
  - Ensures sufficient capacity for waste management needs over the plan period.
  - Current GM Joint Waste Plan adopted in 2012; update is required to reflect NPPF and the Waste Management Plan for England, circular economy principles, and changes in waste patterns and sites.
- What are minerals and what GM produces:
  - Minerals are natural substances extracted via mining, quarrying, or pumping, essential for energy, construction, and industrial needs.
  - GM produces primary aggregates (crushed rock from 6 quarries, 4 active), no sand and gravel quarries remain, relies on secondary/recycled aggregates and imports from other regions.
- What does a Minerals Plan do?
  - Provides policies to enable mineral supply and safeguard resources.
  - Identifies sites for mineral working and infrastructure where necessary.

- Updates required due to falling landbanks, cross-boundary flows, and planned housing/infrastructure growth.
- 2013 Joint Minerals Plan requires updating.
- Joint GM Minerals and Waste Plan development:
  - AGMA approved principle of plan-making in March 2025; council approvals completed July 2025.
  - New style Local Plan (30-month preparation period) will replace existing minerals and waste plans with a single joint plan for all ten GM authorities.
  - Plan will form part of local planning authorities' development plans, not a GMCA/Mayoral plan.
- Next Steps:
  - Await publication of new local plan-making regulations.
  - Begin evidence base development in the interim.
  - Publish timetable and commence preparation of the new Joint Minerals and Waste Plan following regulations.

**Resolved:**

1. That the presentation be noted.

**HFPIC/014/25      Update on Strategic Infrastructure Priorities**

Peter Emery (Independent Chair, Greater Manchester Strategic Infrastructure Board) spoke to a presentation outlining the Greater Manchester Strategic Infrastructure Board's (SIB) role, priorities, and actions for 2025/26.

- Purpose, Accountability, Scrutiny and Reporting:
  - Established in 2019 to address 11 critical infrastructure challenges identified in the GM Infrastructure Framework.
  - Provides strategic oversight, coordinates responses, and identifies interdependencies across Greater Manchester's infrastructure landscape.

- Accountable to GMCA and the GM Business Board.
- Board Role, reporting and accountability
- Alignment with Delivering 5 Year Environment Plan goals
- Approach to Delivery of Growth underpinned by three components for the delivery of physical assets feeding into GM's 10 Year Delivery Plan and the GM Strategy.
- Priorities and Direction – future priorities, board working/maturity, housing first portfolio and cross GMCA alignment:
  - Maximising Devolution: Shift from nationally driven to locally led decision-making with transparency and accountability.
  - Strengthen GMCA Input: Into company plans, regulatory reviews, and regional constructs.
  - Deepen Links: With regulators and government departments (e.g., Defra, Ofwat, Ofgem).
  - Tactical Initiatives: Streetworks Pilot, Integrated Water Management Plan (IWMP), and Integrated Infrastructure Pipeline.
- Forward Plan
  - Synchronise GM's Integrated Pipeline with national investment cycles.
  - Position GM as a testbed for regulatory innovation and advocate for flexibility in frameworks.
  - Strengthen engagement with economic regulators and government departments.
- Project Management Led Approach: Establish lessons learned bank and strategic project evaluation.
- Centralised Coordination Framework: Designate single points of contact and create joint working groups for integrated delivery.

### **Discussion & Actions:**

- Members welcomed the integrated approach and emphasis on regulatory engagement.
- Agreed that the Commission should receive regular updates on the Integrated Pipeline and IWMP progress.

- Requested a briefing on economic regulator engagement outcomes at a future meeting.

**Resolved:**

1. That the report and presentation be noted.
2. That an update on the Streetworks Pilot be brought to a future meeting.

**HFPIC/015/25      Flood and Waste Management Update**

**Resolved:**

1. That the item be deferred until the next meeting of the commission.