

GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL
MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2025 AT TFGM OFFICES, 2
PICCADILLY PLACE, MANCHESTER

PRESENT:

Councillor Janet Emsley	Rochdale Council (Chair)
Councillor Abdul Akbar	Bolton Council
Councillor Sandra Walmsley	Bury Council
Councillor Garry Bridges	Manchester City Council
Councillor Richard Kilpatrick	Manchester City Council
Councillor James Gartside	Rochdale Council
Councillor Shaun O'Neill	Rochdale Council
Councillor Robin Garrido	Salford Council
Councillor Dan Oliver	Stockport Council
Councillor Rose Thompson	Trafford Council
Councillor Kevin Anderson	Wigan Council
Duncan Craig	Independent Member
Tony Gordon	Independent Member
Steve Williams	Independent Member

Also in attendance:

Kate Green	GM Deputy Mayor
Lynne Ridsdale	CEX Portfolio Lead & Chief Executive, Bury Council

Officers Present:

Lee Rawlinson	Chief Resources Officer, GMP
Ian Cosh	Chief Finance Officer, GMP
DCC Terry Woods	GMP
Chief Supt. Nicola Spragg	GMP
Sarah Nattrass	GMFRS
Sarah Scoales	GMFRS
Larissa Edwards	GMFRS
Jeanette Staley	Lead Advisor to Panel & Head of Community Safety, Salford Council

Neil Evans	Director of Police, Crime, Fire & Criminal Justice, GMCA
Melinda Edwards	Deputy Monitoring Officer, GMCA
Lee Teasdale	Senior Governance & Scrutiny Officer, GMCA
Steve Wilson	Group Treasurer, GMCA
Jerome Francis	Head of Finance Management Accountancy, GMCA

PFCP/59/25 APOLOGIES

RESOLVED/-

That apologies be received from Cllr Rabiya Jiva (Bolton), Cllr Barbara Bentham (Salford), Cllr Rabnawaz Akbar (Manchester) and Deputy Chief Fire Officer Carlos Meakin.

PFCP/60/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. There were none.

PFCP/61/25 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 22nd SEPTEMBER 2025

The Chair asked the Panel to consider the minutes of the previous meeting.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the minutes of the meeting of 22nd September 2025 be agreed as a true and correct record.

PFCP/62/25 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair reflected on recent Remembrance Day events, noting how proud she had been to see local emergency services personnel involved so prominently.

On behalf of the Panel, the Chair acknowledged the bravery of the officers who responded to the Heaton Park Synagogue attack which had taken place on Thursday 2nd October, including those who had been carrying out community reassurance work since, the 999

call handlers, the GMFRS fire crews who stopped on their way to another incident and the North West Ambulance Service.

The Chair acknowledged the recent announcement by the Minister for Policing & Crime that PCC's would be abolished in 2028. Deputy Mayor Kate Green commented, stating that there should be a limited practical impact from this announcement on Greater Manchester, as it looked to move the rest of the country closer to the model already in place in the region where the Mayor nominates a Deputy Mayor to handle the day-to-day functions of policing and crime. The arrangements in terms of the scrutiny of this were not clear at present, given the abolition of Panels. There was also a lack of clarity at present around responsibilities in terms of fire.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the announcements made be noted.

PFCP/63/25 PRESS PROTOCOL FOR PANEL MEMBERS

Melinda Edwards (Deputy Monitoring Officer, GMCA) introduced a report providing the Panel with proposed guidance regarding how to respond to media enquires going forward.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That the Panel agrees to adopt the guidance.

PFPCP/64/25 2026/2027 POLICE & CRIME PRECEPT SETTING PROCESS

Steve Wilson (Group Treasurer, GMCA) introduced a report explaining the statutory duties of the Panel in relation to the setting of the police precept.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the statutory duties of the Police, Fire & Crime Panel in relation to the setting of the police precept be noted.

2. That the timetable for the setting of the 2026/27 police precept and requiring a meeting of the Panel before 31st January 2026 be noted.

PFPC/65/25

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER – FINANCE UPDATE QUARTER 2

Steve Wilson (Group Treasurer, GMCA) provided an update on the financial position of GMFRS, GMP and the PCC. The paper set out the latest position at Quarter 2. Highlights from each of these areas were brought to the attention of members:

- **GMFRS** – The service had faced a tough 2025/26 following a challenging settlement as part of the local government funding settlement. Pay awards for firefighters and non-firefighter staff had been higher than the previous national assumptions had suggested they would be, putting further pressure upon the budgets. Savings had been found on utilities bills through a combination of global price changes and more effective purchasing, and a reduction in capital financing costs in year, which unfortunately would accrue in future years effectively resulting in a delayed cost. Due to the savings found in year, the drawdown of reserves would not be required this year to balance the fire service budget. The capital budget had seen some slipping but was broadly moving to plan, and the new build fire station at Blakely was due to be finished within weeks.
- **GMP** – Greater Manchester Police faced a challenging financial picture consistent with that seen in recent years. The current financial forecast suggested an unmitigated overspend against budgets of £12.6m. There was a significant amount of work taking place through Operation Rydal to find savings and new efficiencies to bring the Force back on budget. Around £3m in additional savings had been found since September 2025, but this was countered by one off operational costs that had been required in quarter 2 that would worsen the position. A new budget approval board had been established by GMP which would be led by the Deputy Chief Constable, Chief Resource Officer and Chief Finance Officer. A small underspend was forecast on the capital budget.
- **PCC** – This budget was not faced by the same sort of pressures as GMFRS and GMP and was forecasting a break-even position for the year.

Comments and Questions

Concern was expressed that GMP had not been able to achieve as many savings as sought – had all possible savings and efficiencies been investigated before making use of reserves? It was advised that all forces across the country were facing similar pressures upon their budgets, and at the present time this remained an unmitigated forecast in which other savings may be found. The multi-year finance settlement being received from government would allow for some longer-term forecasting around budgets going forward, which would help. The Force were working hard to ensure that medium-term forecast presented a sustainable position.

The Deputy Mayor stated that both GMFRS and GMP had begun the year with difficult financial settlements from government and both had worked very hard on significant efficiency gains, with GMP's Operation Rydal having investigated every single line of spending taking place through the Force to build a sustainable financial model for the future. A very significant part of the shortfall that had now arisen had been in the wake of the Heaton Park synagogue attack which had seen a huge overtime bill arise through the many hours of community reassurance work required. Further funding was also still not being provided by government for the policing of regular protest action, despite Greater Manchester seeing the largest number outside of London.

Chief Resources Officer Lee Rawlinson (GMP) stated that GMP was arguably one of the most efficient forces in the country at present, in terms of the efforts it had taken to find more ways of savings money. As a result of this, a number of forces were coming to GMP to ask for their advice on the approach being taken. Around £75m of running costs had been taken out of the organisation in the last two years alone.

Members asked if there was any possibility of reclaiming the extra monies that had been spent following the Heaton Park synagogue attack. The Deputy Mayor advised that there was no automatic process for such refunding, there was a special grants procedure which enabled forces to apply to the Home Office to meet exceptional costs but even with the millions of pounds of extra overtime costs accrued, the force would be unlikely to meet the criteria for these grants. The force would however continue to look at all possible options around the recovering of this unprecedented expenditure.

Members expressed concern that GMP had been able to set a balanced budget at the start of the year due to ambitious income generation targets, which had not been met. Could further insight be provided on this? The Deputy Mayor stated that the income generation targets had not been unrealistic and had not been positioned to 'fill in the gap', but rather a shortfall in expectations around the central ticketing office which had been a large part of the target and small delays in work taking place between GMP and TfGM on a common command structure dealing with issues on the transport network. Essentially the ambition for the income generation had been right, it was that the timing had not landed quite as well as hoped. This was also the case for work taking place to maximise opportunities within the GMP estate.

DCC Woods provided further detail on the central ticketing office and income generation plans. This unit largely processed speeding fines. GMP had seen a unique year during 2025 in which the number of speeding offences had started to reduce. Officers were researching why this had been the case but was felt that the hard work taking place around road safety, such as the introduction of further average speed cameras was having an impact on lowering driver speeds, resulting in fewer ticket issues. Such changes in driver behaviour were not known ahead of inputting the expected income generation for the year. A review would take place to establish if this would likely be a continuing trend.

Members asked if reserve positions could be made clear within the finance papers going forward. The Deputy Mayor agreed that fuller detail within the papers would be provided in future. GMP was now relatively under reserved because of the repeated demands made upon operational contingency reserves in recent years, this was a concern that was being raised with home office officials.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the financial position at Quarter 2 be noted.

PFCP/66/25 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR APRIL 2024 – MARCH 2025

Deputy Mayor Kate Green introduced her annual report which outlined the functions, activity and progress in meeting the police and crime objectives in the Mayor's police and

crime plan. The draft report was presented to Panel for comment. A fully designed report would then be presented to the Panel at the next meeting for endorsement.

It was highlighted that the report detailed work on the 10 priorities within the Police & Crime Standing Together Plan. There was also a dedicated section to which all 10 local authority Community Safety Partnerships had contributed which described local activities in support of the Plan, and how they were using funding provided by the Deputy Mayor to contribute to meeting the priorities.

Comments and Questions

Members welcomed the report, stating that it helpfully detailed the level of work being undertaken by the Deputy Mayor's office.

Members referenced stop and search and welcomed the statement acknowledging members of the community more likely to be subject to such searches. Reference was made to conscious and unconscious bias, noting the statistic that 25.7% of these had led to positive outcomes. It was asked that details be provided showing how these percentages on arrests tallied with the demographics searched and if this further highlighted disproportionality issues. The Deputy Mayor agreed that it was vital to have this information and that she was in regular engagement with GMP to establish these figures and what was driving them.

The Deputy Mayor stated that she had raised the question of what represented a 'positive outcome', as in did officers find the item they were searching for? Did they search for a knife and find a small amount of cannabis for example? As this would still go on record as a positive outcome. It was highlighted that public attitude surveys took place to understand exactly how each community felt about the approach of GMP to stop and searches.

Evidence had shown that if the searches were undertaken respectively and people were informed about the rationale for the search before it commenced, this mitigated a lot of the concern and hostility that may be expressed. GMP published a standalone 'Achieving Race Equality' report each year which was considered by the GMCA Race Equality Panel where more the granular detail on stop and search was further exposed.

Members referenced accessibility. Whilst the report was very welcome in its detail, it could prove to be overwhelming in its level of content to members of the voluntary community

who may otherwise benefit from seeing the work taking place. Was a shorter version of the report possible? The Deputy Mayor advised that an 'easy read' version of the report would be prepared to be published alongside the full report.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the draft report be received and members be asked to provide any further comments on the draft by email.
2. That the Deputy Mayor will provide further stop search outcome data to members following the meeting.

PFCP/67/25 GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE LOCAL REMEDIATION ACCELERATION ACTION PLAN – UPDATE REPORT

Deputy Mayor Kate Green introduced the item which provided an update on activities relating to the establishment and operation of the Grenfell Tower Oversight Group and the GM Remediation Acceleration Plan. It was stated that it was vital to ensure that residents remained at the heart of the recommendations as far too many of them still lived in buildings that had not yet been fully or even partially remediated. Many buildings still had defects that were not funded by government programmes and there were still outstanding concerns for those who were part of resident management companies, and the need to not place burdens upon people because they had taken on such responsibility as a resident.

Sarah Scoales (GMFRS) provided further detail on the response to recommendations:

- Two key areas of work were being taken forward. The establishment of the Grenfell Tower Oversight Group and the progress on the Greater Manchester Remediation Acceleration Plan.
- The Oversight Group had been approved by the GMCA in December 2024 and was chaired by CFO Dave Russel. The purpose of the Group was to ensure a consistent pan-GM approach to implementing the recommendations assigned to fire & rescue services and local authority resilience groups. The Group provided a joined up and consistent response. Progress had initially been slower than hoped with only two meetings having been held so far, with another due in late November. Currently a baselining exercise was taking place to map out what the activity across Greater

Manchester was in relation to phase 2 recommendations. A monitoring mechanism was being developed to enable the clear tracking of progress against recommendations, reporting quarterly to the Strategic Oversight Group and annually to the GMCA.

- The Remediation Acceleration Plan had been approved in August 2025 and adopted a resident first approach. The Plan was contingent on MHCLG funding which currently stood at £500k. A further £300k had been requested, with indications being that there was willingness to accept the request. Longer term funding up to 2029 was an issue and had been delayed further due to cabinet minister changes. It was hoped that future funding would be confirmed by the new year at the latest.
- 10 new Fire Safety Inspectors had been hired, and these were currently in the process of completing training. It was anticipated that they would be ready to commence inspections from January 2026. A new senior communications officer was due to start later in November who would focus on resident engagement activity and the development of new materials and resources. Other external hiring was paused until the confirmation of future funding.

Comments and Questions

Members welcomed the work that had taken place with resident management companies and the work around right to manage. Having one point of contact in the new communications officer, and even more so, having the new inspectors in place to provide safety reassurances would be a game changer. There had been issues for resident management companies in establishing the facts and helping them to know their rights, which had led in some circumstances to bad faith actors taking advantage of them. It was hoped that once the long term funding was in place this new remediation approach could be applied consistently across the whole city region.

Members sought clarity on the role of housing associations in supporting the work. The Deputy Mayor advised that housing associations had only recently been granted access to the funding required to ensure that all their properties were appropriately remediated. Representatives for all GM Housing Providers attended the Strategic Oversight Group and had provided assurances that they were absolutely committed to getting the work done.

The Deputy Mayor stated that she had confidence around required funding being provided but had serious concerns around the loss of workforce. Fire safety inspectors were being lost faster than replacements could be recruited and trained. Many of these were being drawn to the private sector who could pay much higher salaries. There was a lot of competition in the fire, construction and housing industries where the government had further new house building targets.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the progress with establishing a GM Grenfell Tower Oversight Group be noted.
2. That the progress on the GM Remediation Acceleration Plan be noted.
3. That it be noted that six monthly updates will be brought to the Panel going forward.

PFCP/68/25 GMFRS – EVALUATION OF PREVENTION INTERVENTIONS

Deputy Mayor Kate Green introduced an item providing an overview of evaluation activities within the prevention department of GMFRS. It was asked that local authorities provide support on this, as an important source of information for GMFRS was about residents who were also known to adults and children's social services. The statistics within the report showed that a high proportion of those vulnerable residents who GMFRS could be providing targeted support to, were known to other services.

Larissa Edwards (GMFRS) then provided further detail on the report. During 2024/25 fifteen significant evaluations had been undertaken, but the focus of the report was on three key evaluations that had taken place during 2025/26.

The first of these was for home fire safety assessments. Around 30,000 assessments were delivered each year, these were largely done via referrals through family members or third-party services. A fatal fires review had found that 61% of people who had died in fires in the last ten years had been known to other services but not to GMFRS. The approach to these assessments had been revised in 2022 and an evaluation had taken place to review the effectiveness since. The evaluation had found that 80% of the assessments had found at least four direct hazards of fire, so the assessments were being delivered to the right people. 98% of those assessed had stated that they now felt safer in their homes.

The second key evaluation had been on the mini blue-light project – a collaboration between GMFRS, GMP, Northwest Ambulance Service and Wigan Community Safety Partnership. Piloted in Wigan and taking place over the course of an academic year, the project provided education to year 6 students on a range of topics such as knife crime, anti-social behaviour, fire safety and water safety. Positive feedback from students had been received and funding had now been secured to roll out a similar project in Bolton.

The third key evaluation had focused on the Atlas Project. This supported adults with a conviction, history of, or likelihood to engage with, deliberate fire setting. Work took place with the probation service, clinical psychologists and universities to deliver this project. An evaluation had been commissioned to establish the effectiveness and impact of the project, and it had found that there had been a decline in participants interest in fire setting and none of the participants had reoffended in relation to this to date.

Comments and Questions

Members welcomed the valuable work being undertaken by GMFRS and noted that any vulnerable persons known to local authorities were also virtually guaranteed to also be known to relevant bodies within the voluntary sector. Independent Member Duncan Craig stated that he would be happy to engage with GMFRS on this.

It was asked if the evaluations also attempted to establish the potential cost savings found through these forms of intervention work in addition to the social value. It was advised that work had been commissioned through the University of Liverpool to look at the cost of delivering a home fire assessment relative to the cost savings through changes in behaviour and reduction of risk around accidental dwelling fires.

Members welcomed the mini blue light project but noted concerns that had been raised around schools sometimes showing reluctance in taking up the offer. Officers stated that this had been a challenge. All primary schools in GM were offered visits or invites to the Bury safety centre, as were the top 10% of targeted secondary schools. It was found that the take up, particularly in secondary schools, was quite challenging, and any input on how best to go about improving the levels of take up would be welcomed.

Members asked if work with harder to reach groups was factored into future projects, with offers in multiple languages etc? It was confirmed that inclusivity and accessibility was

absolutely a priority, with a lot of work undertaken around different religious festivities, and many of the key campaigns were translated into the top 10 languages spoken within GM.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That support be provided for the ongoing evaluation activities within the prevention directorate, including a ask that local authorities provide support by providing data on vulnerable cohorts to GMFRS.
3. That GMFRS will link up with relevant local voluntary sector organisations to gather further intel on vulnerable cohorts.

Deputy Mayor Kate Green presented a paper providing analysis and commentary on the most recent performance update data for each of the ten Police and Crime Plan priorities and drew attention to a number of elements.

The Panel had made an ask around comparative data with other police forces, and this was now available though was not always useful as many were not directly comparable. There was a 'most similar force' model that was under review nationally, and when that was complete it would instead be provided.

Comments and Questions

Members referenced priority 4 and services to victims, was feedback available on how victims felt they had benefitted from services? The Deputy Mayor confirmed that there had been a regular ongoing survey asking victims about their experiences of engaging with services which was now in its sixth wave. This data was very important and used to inform decision making.

Concerns were expressed that Manchester has continued to lag behind other areas of the region in terms of neighbourhood presence and perceptions of the public around the GMP offer. The Deputy Mayor acknowledged that Manchester City Council had been the last

area to see the benefits of the new neighbourhood model, but it was now where it needed to be and the team was in the process of embedding and stabilising within the area.

Members referenced the average period from charge to case completion. Anecdotally magistrates were becoming increasingly frustrated with these, which now stood at 320 days on average. Whilst it was known that this was a national issue, how did GM compare on this with similarly sized metropolitan areas? The Deputy Mayor acknowledged that the whole criminal justice system end to end was still in a very challenging position across the country. The local Criminal Justice Board, chaired by the Deputy Mayor, brought together all partners to identify where the biggest blocks were and how best to address these. The Deputy Mayor would seek to provide a dedicated note to the Panel on this work.

Members noted the 10% increase in hate crime and asked about working taking place to address this. The Deputy Mayor advised that the Hate Crime Action Plan had recently been refreshed and rises in particular types of hate crime had been identified, notably antisemitism and islamophobia. The community cohesion plan of work was engaging with faith and other relevant communities about responding to and combating these rises.

RESOLVED/-

1. That Members note the report.
2. That the Deputy Mayor will provide a dedicated update to the Panel on work taking place to address the backlogs in the criminal justice system.

**PFPCP/70/25 POLICE & CRIME PLAN PROGRESS REPORT – PRIORITY 7:
REDUCING HIGH HARM AND REPEAT OFFENDING, TAKING A
PREVENTATIVE AND DIVERSIONARY APPROACH**

Deputy Mayor Kate Green presented a paper which provided a highlight summary of progress against all of the actions outlined under priority 7, so that the Panel could assess progress against the priority in its totality.

The Deputy Mayor stated that a new initiative was being negotiated with the Ministry of Justice to enable focus on a cohort of repeat prolific offenders with a preventative approach dependent on building a data sharing model with a whole range of agencies so that once someone comes to the attention of the police and probation services they could

be routed to the different support offers that could enable the root causes of the repeat reoffending behaviours.

There was also a focus on a model to intervene with perpetrators to address the drivers of their offending behaviour and to take a multi-agency approach, particularly in relation to perpetrators of gender-based violence. The recommissioning of GM's rehabilitative services for 2027 would be taking place, alongside the commissioning of a restorative justice programme.

Work was taking place to stand up a multi-agency stalking prevention programme, which would receive direct support and guidance from the Suzy Lamplugh Trust.

Comments and Questions

Members made reference to Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPOs) noting that these required the consent of the perpetrators – was this requirement proving prohibitive? The Deputy Mayor stated that it did cause issues and that a request had been made to the Home Office around removing the requirement for consent. In the meantime research on why perpetrators were not engaging could help to provide some further insight.

Members noted the concerning statistic that 52% of sexual offences were currently committed by those under the age of 16. This was a significant issue across the country and it was welcomed that the Deputy Mayor was willing to highlight the scale of this issue.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Priority 7 highlight report progress update be noted.

**PFCP/71/25 POLICE & CRIME PLAN PROGRESS REPORT – PRIORITY 10:
CONTINUE TO TACKLE SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME
THROUGH OUR SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP APPROACH,
PROGRAMME CHALLENGER**

Deputy Mayor Kate Green presented a paper which provided a highlight summary of progress against all of the actions outlined under priority 10, so that the Panel could assess progress against the priority in its totality.

The Deputy Mayor stated that this was a complex priority area with a number of separate strategically important priority activities taking place concurrently. Highlighted areas of work included collaborating with the National Crime Agency and the North West Regional Crime Unit, and the successful continuation of the work of Programme Challenger.

Other highlighted areas included successes in seizing assets, targeted operations against firearms and drug supply, the protection of vulnerable people in respect to issues such as modern slavery, sexual exploitation, cuckooing properties and county lines exploitation.

Comments and Questions

Members referenced the partnership approach to modern slavery and human trafficking and asked if work was taking place with the private sector to collate data on companies that have digital accounts used to take advantage of people who may not have a right to work within the country. The Deputy Mayor advised that work with the private sector was an important part of the work. Larger companies were encouraged to look at their supply chains and to write into all of their supply contracts standards that comply with modern slavery and trafficking issues. Smaller 'cash in hand' type businesses were more difficult to tackle and had led to some shocking examples of modern slavery. A successful conference had just taken place with partners to look at the development of a GM wide strategy including increased engagement with the private sector.

RESOLVED/-

1. That the Priority 10 highlight report progress update be noted.

PFCP/72/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members were advised that the next meeting of the Panel would be taking place on Wednesday 28th January 2026.