

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED  
AUTHORITY HELD ON FRIDAY 12<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2025 AT MANCHESTER CITY  
COUNCIL CHAMBER**

**PRESENT**

GMCA Mayor	Andy Burnham (In the Chair)
GMCA	Deputy Mayor Kate Green
Bolton	Councillor Nicholas Peel
Bury	Councillor Eamonn O'Brien
Manchester	Councillor Bev Craig
Oldham	Councillor Arooj Shah
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Mark Roberts
Tameside	Councillor Andrew McLaren
Trafford	Councillor Tom Ross
Wigan	Councillor David Molyneux

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chair of GM Overview & Scrutiny	Councillor John Walsh
Chair of Task and Finish Group	Councillor Helen Hibbert
GM Disabled Peoples Panel	Jas Taylor
GM Disabled Peoples Panel	David Neilbig

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Group Chief Executive Officer	Caroline Simpson
Group Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
Deputy Monitoring Officer	Sarah Bennett
Group Chief Finance Officer	Steve Wilson
Bolton	Sue Johnson
Bury	Lynne Ridsdale
Manchester	Tom Stannard

Oldham	Shelley Kipling
Rochdale	Julie Murphy
Salford	Stephen Young
Stockport	Michael Cullen
Tameside	Emma Alexander
Trafford	Sara Todd
Wigan	Alison McKenzie-Folan
Office of the GM Mayor	Kevin Lee
TfGM	Martin Lax
TfGM	Steve Warrener
TfGM	Kate Green
GMCA	Sylvia Welsh
GMCA	Lee Teasdale

#### **GMCA 170/25      APOLOGIES**

That apologies be received and noted from Councillor Eleanor Wills (Tameside), Gill Duckworth (GMCA) and Sarah Horseman (GMCA).

#### **GMCA 171/25      CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, opened by welcoming the positive news, that following the budget, the GMCA received a letter detailing the final version of the outcome of the task and finish process led by the Group Chief Executive with colleagues from the GMCA and government departments. The letter had been signed jointly by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government, and laid out the next stage for GM devolution including strong backing for the Manchester Baccalaureate as well as the GM Good Growth Fund.

Group Chief Executive Caroline Simpson provided further detail, stating that significant increased investment was being made available to the region. Notably this included a £300m extension to the Housing Loans Investment Fund, a substantial growth flexibility fund that had been put into the growth investment pot for the Good Growth Fund. Also, it would allow for further shaping of the work being done as part

of the national 'Prevention Demonstrator', particularly for departments across Health, Education, Work & Skills and the Treasury.

Tributes were paid following the recent losses of two significant figures in Greater Manchester culture. Ike Alderman, a survivor of Auschwitz who used his experience to embody the best of humanity and inform young people throughout the region of how hate was a disease and must never be allowed to win, and Gary "Mani" Mountfield who as a member of The Stone Roses had spread the music and culture of the region throughout the world.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the update on the Task & Finish Group letter received from government be noted.
2. That the GMCA celebrated the impact of the huge contributions made by Ike Alderman and Gary Mountfield "Mani" to the Greater Manchester region following their recent passing and expresses sincere condolences to their family and friends.

**GMCA 172/25      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**RESOLVED /-**

There were none.

**GMCA 173/25      GMCA MINUTES 28 NOVEMBER 2025**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the minutes of the GMCA held on 28 November 2025 be approved.

**GMCA 174/25      GMCA RESOURCES COMMITTEE MINUTES 28 NOVEMBER  
2025**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Resources Committee held on 28 November 2025 be approved.

**GMCA 175/25            MINUTES OF THE GMCA OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2025**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 26 November 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 176/25            MINUTES OF THE GMCA AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 24  
NOVEMBER 2025**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Audit Committee meeting held on 24 November 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 177/25            MINUTES OF THE BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE HELD ON 27  
NOVEMBER 2025**

**RESOLVED /-**

That the proceedings of the meeting of the Bee Network Committee meeting held on 27 November 2025 be noted.

**GMCA 178/25            APPOINTMENTS AND NOMINATIONS TO GREATER  
MANCHESTER BODIES**

Sarah Bennett, 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 15 substitute members (11 Labour, 2 Lib Dem, 2 Conservative) be appointed to the GMCA Waste and Re-cycling Committee as follows:

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Substitute Member</b>
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Bolton	Nadeem Ayub (Labour)
Bury	TBC
Rochdale	Mohammed Arshad (Labour)
Manchester	TBC
Oldham	Pamela Byrne (Conservative)
Salford	Arnold Saunders (Conservative)
Stockport	Grace Baynham (Lib Dem)
Tameside	Andrew McLaren (Labour)
Trafford	Simon Lepori (Lib Dem)
Labour GM	Peter Davis (Oldham)
Labour GM	Gina Reynolds (Salford)
Labour GM	David Lancaster (Salford)
Labour GM	Deena Ryness (Stockport)
Labour GM	Hugh Roderick (Tameside)
Labour GM	Olly Baskerville (Trafford)

2. That the appointment of Councillor Gary Lloyd (Wigan, Labour) to the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee, replacing Councillor Joanne Marshall (Wigan, Labour) be approved.
3. That the re-appointment of Grenville Page and Susan Webster as Independent Members to the GMCA Audit Committee, for a period of one year be approved.

**GMCA 179/25      UPDATE TO THE CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW ELECTRONIC SEALING**

Sarah Bennett, Deputy Monitoring Officer, presented a report seeking agreement for an amendment to the Constitution to enable the GMCA to apply its Common Seal electronically.

**RESOLVED /-**

That the amendment to the Constitution as detailed in this report, to enable to the GMCA to affix its Common Seal electronically, be approved.

## **GMCA 180/25      ON THE RIGHT TRACK FOR GROWTH: THE GREATER MANCHESTER RAIL VISION TO 2050**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented a report setting out the “On the Right Track for Growth: The Greater Manchester Rail Vision to 2050” – a bold strategy for transforming rail in the city region and underpinning the region’s next decade of growth.

The report set out a bold, long-term strategy for transforming rail in Greater Manchester. It aimed to deliver a modern, integrated, and high-capacity rail network by 2050, positioning Manchester Piccadilly at the heart of growth for the North. The vision was structured around phased improvements to 2030, expansion to 2040, and full transformation by 2050, supporting economic growth, decarbonisation, and improved quality of life. The plan was underpinned by deeper devolution, partnership with government and industry, and a focus on integrating rail into the Bee Network. Key highlights included the following:

- Greater Manchester’s 2050 Rail Vision was a 30-year plan to create a fully integrated, high-frequency, carbon-neutral rail network, supporting 75,000 new homes and £90bn in economic uplift across the North West.
- **Manchester Piccadilly as the Hub:** The strategy placed Manchester Piccadilly at the centre of regional and national connectivity, with plans for new underground infrastructure and expanded services to drive growth and regeneration.
- **Phased Delivery:**
  - By 2030: Integrate local rail into the Bee Network, deliver five new stations, and upgrade all existing stations.
  - By 2040: Expand Metrolink to all boroughs, introduce metro-style services, and regenerate key hubs.
  - By 2050: Achieve a fully integrated, decarbonised, and high-capacity network, including new lines and underground stations.

- **Devolution and Reform:** The vision called for a statutory role for GMCA in rail service specification, fares, and customer standards, working closely with government and the new Great British Railways (GBR) to secure local commissioning powers. This would be pursued through the Railways Bill which was currently going through parliament.
- **Bee Network Rail Integration:** By 2030, eight priority corridors would be integrated, with pilots for enhanced services and accessibility improvements already underway. The Bee Network would deliver multi-modal ticketing and capping, improved customer experience, and regeneration around stations.
- **Fares Reform:** From December 2025, ticketing would be simplified, reducing average fares by 5.6% and paving the way for contactless payments and full integration with the Bee Network.
- **Regeneration and Development:** The programme would unlock land for new housing and regeneration around key stations, supporting inclusive growth and increased rail ridership.

## **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the 'On the Right Track for Growth - Greater Manchester Rail Vision', which has been developed in partnership with GM Local Authorities, the Greater Manchester business community (CBI, BTAC & Chamber of Commerce) and rail industry partners; and the subsequent next steps to develop a joint investment and delivery plan be noted and endorsed.
2. That the update on the Railways Bill legislation be noted.
3. That the ongoing work to deliver Bee Network Rail Integration by 2030 including development work underway with Northern Trains Ltd to assess and scope the case for Greater Manchester part-funding additional rail services in Greater Manchester as part of a Bee Network Rail Integration pilot for the 24-month trial period between December 2027 and December 2029 (i.e. from 2027/28 onwards) be noted.
4. That a future update, to include details of the service enhancements and a proposed funding mechanism, including any implications on the GMCA Transport Revenue Budget be submitted to the GMCA.

## **GMCA 181/25      FREE ALL DAY BUS TRAVEL FOR OLDER AND DISABLED PEOPLE**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, introduced a report setting out the findings of the Free All Day Bus Travel trials, noting that any decision to remove the 9.30am travel restriction would be subject to finalisation and approval of the GMCA Transport Revenue and Mayoral Budgets; the legal process required to amend the Greater Manchester Local Concessionary Scheme; and approval by the Mayor.

Following the first trial over August 2025, a November trial had been put in place purposefully as one of the busiest months of the year. The headlines findings were similar to those from the August trial, with the majority of older and disabled people using the ability to travel between 9 and 9.30 to avoid the most pressured points of the morning peak, but there was some level of usage during the whole early morning period, with no overcrowding being reported, with drivers having seen no negative effects, and instead avoiding the potential 9.30am bump in demand for services. There would of course be a significant financial aspect to measure in as part of the final decision and this would need to be considered as part of the budget setting process.

The Mayor then invited Jas Taylor to address the GMCA with comments on behalf of the GM Disabled Persons Panel. Jas stated that the bus pass trial had been received with incredible excitement by the members of the Panel and had coincided with their own co-production work on accessibility of city transport. The co-production work had found that there was a stark increase in satisfaction when people were able to use their passes without restriction. One of the focus groups had found that six of the seven attendees had used their bus pass before 9.30am to attend on that morning, something that had not previously been possible. It helped lived engagement, it helped with work opportunities and with securing health appointments, the potential positive knock-on effects of this decision could not be overstated.

### **Comments and Questions**

Councillor Eamonn O'Brien advised that members of the Bee Network Committee regularly commented on the importance of accessibility for all across the GM

transport network, and that if this decision could be taken it would mark a very positive step towards this.

It was noted that proposals around the lifting of such restrictions had been tabled before to the government at the national level. It was felt that GM should use its position to lobby the government to truly consider implementation of this at the national level. The Mayor agreed and asked that the results of the trial be sent on to the Secretary of State for Transport.

Members emphasised the importance of establishing that true growth could not take place without that growth supporting all residents, and it was vital not to look at this through a lens of cost implications over social value.

#### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the findings of the trials be noted.
2. That it be noted that any decision to remove the 9.30am travel restriction would be subject to finalisation and approval of the GMCA Transport Revenue and Mayoral Budgets; the legal process required to amend the Greater Manchester Local Concessionary Scheme; and approval by the Mayor.
3. That the comments made by Jas Taylor on behalf of the GM Disabled Persons Panel be received.
4. That the results of the all day bus travel trial will be sent on to the Secretary of State for Transport.

#### **GMCA 182/25      IN HER SHOES: REVIEW OF SAFETY FOR WOMEN & GIRLS ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

Councillor Helen Hibbert, Chair of the Task & Finish Group, was invited to present the final task and finish review of 'In Her Shoes', which has been endorsed by members of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee, GM Joint Health Scrutiny Committee and GM Police, Fire and Crime Panel on the safety of women and girls on public transport and the wider public realm.

It was decided given the time that could be given to such a wide-ranging topic that the focus in this instance would be given to the transport network. However, this was

a significant area and covered many of the portfolios of work undertaken within the Combined Authority. A woman was killed by a man every three days in the UK, 200 rapes were recorded every single day, and it was known that this was significantly underreported. All women had examples of lived experience around normalised abuse towards women. It was important face this head on and fully recognise, understand address these issues, and part of this was a prevention first approach.

The report contained a number of key recommendations, including ensuring strong political and organisational leadership so that the safety of women and girls becomes embedded across all GM portfolios and authorities; the importance of realising it was not just the transport journey itself that was important but equally the journey to and from – and designing the public realm accordingly; and ensuring that data is available to the required level of granularity to inform decision making.

The Mayor welcomed the report, reflecting on work that was taking place to address these issues and how this needed to scale up further. He advised that a detailed report would be prepared on how the recommendations would be addressed.

Kate Green (TfGM) was then invited to make a short presentation to the GMCA on the early findings of the GM TravelSafe Live Chat function and how this could change experiences on public transport.

Deputy Mayor for Safer and Stronger Communities Kate Green was then invited to comment on the involvement of her team and Greater Manchester Police. She stated that the results of the review were stark, and that a situation where over half of the public of the region did not feel absolutely safe when making use of the network was not acceptable. The full context of safety for women & girls, including the broader picture around travelling to and from the network formed a central tenet within the 10-year Gender Based Violence Strategy. Further detail was also provided on a number of safety initiatives and preventative/educational work running across the region.

## **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the final review be endorsed.
2. That the update on the review made by the Chair, Councillor Helen Hibbert, be received.

3. That the presentation highlighting the early impact of TravelSafe Live Chat be received.
4. That a detailed response to the Task & Finish Group recommendations be submitted to the GMCA.

**GMCA 183/25      A NEW MODEL OF PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY: LIVE WELL, PREVENTION DEMONSTRATOR & ECONOMIC INACTIVITY TRAILBLAZER DEEP DIVE**

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester and Caroline Simpson, Group Chief Executive, presented a report setting out an update on the delivery of Live Well as the driving force of a new model of public service delivery across the city region.

Greater Manchester faced deepening inequalities and rising demand on services. Achieving a new model of public service requires rebuilding trust and embedding participation from communities. Live Well was a unique opportunity for democratic renewal, combining grassroots participation and representative democracy to transform public services. The Participation Playbook signalled this step-change—kickstarting a process that would strengthen the relationship between communities, public services, and the local state.

The Participation Playbook demonstrated Greater Manchester’s commitment to making participation central to achieving GMS aims—reducing inequalities, prevention, trust, community power, and better outcomes. It provided shared language, practical methods, and starting points for councils, VCFSE organisations, universities, and national partners, showing that the system was ready to take participation forward.

The 11 November Participation Playbook launch had marked a significant milestone in Greater Manchester’s journey towards becoming a truly participatory city-region. It brought together over 250 people from every part of the system, demonstrating both the scale of interest and the collective readiness to embed participation as core to how GM works. The event showcased practical participatory methods, generated collective commitments, and demonstrated the passion and readiness across the system to embed participation as a defining feature of how GM works.

There were some immediate behaviour change and follow-on Actions already underway including:

- Manchester Metropolitan University embedding Playbook principles into equitable research practices and aligning work with the GM Respectful Research Charter.
- Manchester City Council exploring use of the Playbook in adult social care transformation.
- Odd Arts convening a community-led proposal for Hulme's community centre the same week.
- CAMHS teams beginning to use Playbook tools in children and young people's participation.
- VCFSE organisations including Bolton Together, Trafford networks and GM System Shifters beginning to use Playbook materials for training and development.
- Health Innovation Manchester, GM Mental Health Network and several housing partners exploring how the Playbook can support service design.

Mayor Burnham invited Cllr John Walsh, as the Chair of the GM Overview & Scrutiny Committee to provide the Committee's feedback following a recent discussion. He stated that this included a wish to see prioritisation of integration with primary care; the welcoming of 50% of Live Well funding being allocated to the VCSFE sector; the importance of developing collaborative approaches to data sharing & evaluation frameworks; and ensuring that Live Well remained accessible, flexible and appropriately resourced to avoid overload and maintain high quality levels.

#### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That support be given to taking Live Well to the next level throughout 2026 by making it a visible, practical offer for residents. This would include embedding Live Well in each locality and harnessing the power of local partnerships to deliver integrated, accessible support.

2. That it be noted that this next step is vital to strengthen and accelerate prevention in practice, ensuring Live Well continues to be a driving force for better outcomes for residents across Greater Manchester.
3. That the comments highlighted on behalf of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee be received.

#### **GMCA 184/25      COMMISSIONING BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN IN GREATER MANCHESTER**

Councillor Tom Ross, Portfolio Leader for Green City Region, provided an update report on the progress made on outlining a proposal for the GMCA to establish an Off-Site Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Responsible Body Service for the Greater Manchester local authorities. The service was designed to help the GM local authorities meet the Environment Act 2021 requirement for a 10% biodiversity uplift in new developments, particularly when this could not be achieved on-site.

#### **RESOLVED /-**

1. That the background to the Responsible Body Service be noted.
2. That the commissioning of the Responsible Body Service be approved.
3. That the authority be delegated to the Managing Director of GMCA, in consultation with the Group Chief Finance Officer and Group Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, to enter into agreements with the Local Authorities as described in Clause 5.2.

#### **GMCA 185/25      REVENUE BUDGET UPDATE – QUARTER 2**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment, presented a report informing members of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority financial position at the end of September 2025 (Quarter 2) and forecast revenue outturn position for the 2025/26 financial year.

#### **RESOLVED /-**

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

**GMCA 186/25      CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE – QUARTER 2**

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

**RESOLVED /-**

That the current 2025/26 forecast of £620.4m compared to the previous forecast of £652.9m be noted.

**GMCA 187/25      TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND  
ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY MID-YEAR REVIEW  
REPORT 2025/26**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment, presented a report containing the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Mid-Year Review Report 2025/26.

**RESOLVED /-**

That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Mid-Year Review Report 2025/26 be approved.

**GMCA 188/25      GREATER MANCHESTER INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK  
REQUESTS**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment, presented a report seeking approval for an equity investment of up to £500,000 to C3 Biotechnologies Limited.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That an equity investment of up to £500,000 to C3 Biotechnologies Limited be approved.
2. That authority be delegated to the GMCA Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the GMCA Solicitor and 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.

**GMCA 189/25      EXCLUSION OF 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 190/25      GREATER MANCHESTER INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK  
REQUESTS**

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment, presented a report seeking approval for an equity investment of up to £500,000 to C3 Biotechnologies Limited.

**RESOLVED /-**

1. That the contents of the report be noted.