

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED
AUTHORITY HELD ON FRIDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2026 AT TRAFFORD TOWN
HALL**

PRESENT:

GM Mayor	Andy Burnham (Chair)
GM Deputy Mayor	Kate Green
Bolton	Councillor Nicholas Peel
Bury	Councillor Eamonn O'Brien
Manchester	Councillor Bev Craig
Rochdale	Councillor Neil Emmott
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett
Stockport	Councillor Mark Roberts
Tameside	Councillor Eleanor Wills
Trafford	Councillor Liz Patel
Wigan	Councillor David Molyneux

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Group Chief Executive Officer, GMCA, GMFRS & TfGM	Caroline Simpson
Group Deputy Chief Executive	Andrew Lightfoot
Group Monitoring Officer	Gillian Duckworth
Group Chief Finance Officer	Steve Wilson
Bolton	Rachel Tanner
Bury	Lynne Ridsdale
Manchester	Tom Stannard
Oldham	Mike Barker
Rochdale	Julie Murphy
Salford	Stephen Young
Stockport	Michael Cullen
Tameside	Emma Alexander
Trafford	Sara Todd

Wigan	Alison McKenzie-Folan
Managing Director, TfGM	Steve Warrener
Director of Governance, Risk & Assurance,	Sarah Horseman
GMCA	
GMCA	Sylvia Welsh
GMCA	Ben Hopkins

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee,	Councillor John Walsh
GMCA	

GMCA 14/26 APOLOGIES

RESOLVED /-

That apologies be received and noted from Councillor Arooj Shah (Oldham), Councillor Tom Ross (Trafford), Shelley Kipling (Oldham) & Sue Johnson (Bolton).

GMCA 15/26 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

The Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, opened the meeting by welcoming a pay agreement between TfGM and trade union representatives. Thanks were given to all those who had worked on the deal. It was advised that the three-year top level pay deal would align TfGM colleagues with the Local Government Association (LGA) Financial Settlement. Work would now begin to ensure that staff received the uplift before the end of the financial year.

A meeting of the Transport for the North board would take place on 16 March, which neither the Mayor nor his substitute were able to attend. Nominations were therefore requested and it was unanimously agreed that Deputy Mayor, Paul Dennett, would attend the meeting of behalf of the city region.

Reflecting on the budget proposals, the Mayor welcomed the £3 billion Integrated Settlement that would allow for the implementation of the Greater Manchester Strategy

(GMS) across the city region. A pipeline of development across the ten districts would be implemented and this would support residents across Greater Manchester to access opportunities, including support for young people to access education and good jobs, as well as supporting those out of work back into employment.

It was highlighted that the Mayor's precept would also help to enhance the lives of residents, in particular the lifting of restrictions on older and disabled people's bus passes from 1 March. These communities would be able to enjoy 24/7 unrestricted travel across the city region, supporting individuals to live an independent life. The Mayor thanked colleagues for their work on the budget, which had allowed this change to happen.

Work to support approximately 8,000 children and young people in temporary accommodation across Greater Manchester was outlined. The Mayor highlighted the damaging impact upon a child if they were uprooted from the place in which they grew up and lost their friendship groups. There was an ambition to introduce free travel passes for children in temporary accommodation in the current financial year and an update would be provided to the Combined Authority once an implementation date had been agreed.

The Mayor welcomed that the proposed budget allowed for the maintenance of the £2 bus fare cap in Greater Manchester for the remainder of the calendar year. A hopper fare allowed passengers to travel on multiple buses within an hour period. The cap would continue to support residents in the city region to travel affordably as household budgets continued to face significant pressures.

To support Greater Manchester's taxi and private hire vehicle trade, the Mayor reaffirmed his commitment to end out of area working in the city region. Currently, nearly half of vehicles operating in Greater Manchester were registered with local authorities outside of the ten districts. There was an ambition for 100 percent of vehicles working here to be licensed here, which in turn would support local livelihoods and improve the safety of residents. In addition, funding would be available to taxi drivers to purchase vehicles that met the clean air standard. The support would be in the form of a £1000 grant or £5000 interest free loan to support the switch to cleaner vehicles.

Concern was expressed in relation to local government funding, notably the outcome of the Fairer Funding Review and its impact on Trafford Council's finances. The Mayor stated that Trafford was a well-led and well-run council that was suffering from decisions taken by different leadership over a decade ago. Every effort would be made by the Combined Authority to support Trafford Council, and any other of the nine districts, within the flexibilities of the outlined budget.

Manchester would shortly play host to the BRIT Awards, and the Mayor thanked Cllr Bev Craig and colleagues at Manchester City Council for their work in bringing this event to the city on 27 February. This was the first time that the award ceremony had taken place outside of London. To coincide with the awards, several other events would be taking place to support young people who were keen to break into the music industry. This included an event at New Century Hall and the New Brits Art Trail.

RESOLVED /-

1. That it be noted that agreement on a pay deal had been reached between TfGM and trade union representatives. Both the Mayor and Group Chief Executive welcomed the agreement and thanked colleagues at TfGM and from within the trade unions for their efforts to reach the agreement.
2. That in accordance with clause 11.3 of the Constitution, the Chair and Members agreed that under urgent business, Deputy Mayor Paul Dennett, be appointed as substitute member to attend the Transport for the North boarding meeting on 16 March 2026.
3. That it be noted that the budget for 2026/27 allowed for the maintenance of the £2 bus fare cap for the remainder of the calendar year.
4. That it be noted that pre-09:30 restrictions on concessionary travel passes for older and disabled residents in Greater Manchester would be lifted from 1 March 2026.
5. That it be noted that the budgets contained provision for free travel passes for children in temporary accommodation, with implementation dates to be confirmed at a future meeting of the Combined Authority.
6. That it be noted that a funding scheme to support Private Hire Vehicle drivers, registered with one of the 10 Greater Manchester local authorities, would be established to facilitate their transition to emission compliant vehicles.

7. That it be noted that the Mayor and Combined Authority remained steadfast in their commitment to end the working of taxis from out of area to protect the livelihoods of local drivers and improve the safety of residents.
8. That it be noted that concerns in relation to the Fairer Funding Review for local government and the negative impact this would have upon the finances of Trafford Council. Praise was extended to the current leadership of the Council for their work, and the offer of Greater Manchester-level support was made to support each of the ten authorities, where this was possible.
9. That thanks be extended to Councillor Bev Craig and colleagues at Manchester City Council for their work in bringing the BRIT Awards to Manchester on 28 February 2026. This would be the first time that the event had been held outside of London.

GMCA 16/26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED /-

There were no declarations of interests received.

GMCA 17/26 MINUTES OF THE GMCA MEETING HELD ON 30 JANUARY 2026

RESOLVED /-

That the minutes of the GMCA meeting held on 30 January 2026 be approved.

GMCA 18/26 MINUTES OF THE GMCA WASTE & RECYCLING COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2026

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Waste & Recycling Committee meeting held on 21 January 2026 be noted.

**GMCA 19/26 MINUTES OF THE GMCA OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE HELD ON 28 JANUARY 2026**

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny meeting held on 28 January 2026 be noted.

**GMCA 20/26 MINUTES OF THE GMCA STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD
ON 30 JANUARY 2026**

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the GMCA Standards Committee held on 30 January 2026 be noted.

**GMCA 21/26 MINUTES OF THE BEE NETWORK COMMITTEE HELD ON 29
JANUARY 2026**

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the Bee Network Committee held on 29 January 2026 be noted.

**GMCA 22/26 MINUTES OF THE AIR QUALITY ADMINISTRATION
COMMITTEE HELD ON 29 JANUARY 2026**

RESOLVED /-

That the proceedings of the meeting of the Air Quality Administration Committee held on 29 January 2026 be noted.

A. GMCA Revenue and Capital Budgets 2026/7 Overview

Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources, was invited to introduce the overarching report on the GMCA budget proposals for 2026/27. The report summarised the position on the Mayoral General Budget and Precept Proposals, the GMCA General Budget, GMCA Transport budgets including Transport Levy and Statutory Charge and the GM Waste Services Levy. It also set out the implications of the proposed budgets and the resultant charges on districts and the Mayoral Precept.

Councillor John Walsh, Chair of the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented the findings of the meeting that had taken place on 11 February 2026 in relation to the budget. In summary, the Committee:

- Noted that the General Mayoral Precept, excluding Fire, had increased by 44 percent.
- Hoped that the £2 bus fare cap would be extended for the remainder of the fiscal year, not just the calendar year.
- Welcomed alignment to the Greater Manchester Strategy and the allocation of the seven workstreams. The Committee would have measurable indicators for scrutiny over future years.
- Welcomed the lifting of the 09:30 concessionary travel cap for older and disabled residents.
- Called for further joint working between Greater Manchester partners (Fire, Police and TfGM) on corporate property.
- Requested clearer support on a line of site to high quality jobs.
- Raised concerns regarding clean air costs and requested to review this at a future date.
- Called for further scrutiny on how the overnight visitor levy would be implemented both locally and nationally.
- Raised the issue of pavement parking and noted that a Greater Manchester working party had been established on this issue.

- Highlighted cross boundary issues with waste and recycling, particularly between Cheshire East and Stockport, as well as a significant increase in fly tipping across the city region. A GM review of coordination and cooperation was requested.
- Supported the budget proposals and looked forward to future papers on the matter.

Councillor Walsh thanked the Group Chief Finance Officer for his comprehensive overview at the meeting and for answering Member's questions robustly.

Responding to the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Mayor highlighted that there were transitional costs in relation to the Bee Network, but it remained both on time and on budget. There was a recognition of the pressures on local authority budgets and the costs for local authorities had been deferred over several years. It was noted that the Mayoral Precept would pick up some of these costs.

The budget proposals committed to substantial benefits for residents, and it was highlighted that the increase in council tax was offset by a reduction in transport costs. The Mayor would return to the matter of pavement parking at a later date.

In the context of the BRIT Awards, the proposed overnight visitor levy would ensure that the costs of staging major events was not shouldered just by residents. This included cleaning, policing and transport costs.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor for Safer and Stronger Communities shared the concerns in relation to fly-tipping, which was often linked to more serious criminal activity. In response, the Deputy Mayor would raise this matter with the Chief Constable and continue to press the Environment Agency for robust action to combat the growing problem. A report of the Deputy Mayor regarding fly-tipping would be brought to a future meeting of the Combined Authority.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the contents of the summary report be noted.
2. That the comments highlighted on behalf of the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee be received.

B. Mayoral General Budget & Precept Proposals 2026/27

City Mayor Paul Dennett, GMCA Deputy Mayor, took the Chair for this item of business.

The report sought approval for the Mayoral General Precept for 2026/27 and recommended the setting of the Revenue Budget for 2026/27 as required under section 42A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (updated in the Localism Act 2011) and the precepts and relevant levels of Council Tax required under sections 40, 42B and 47 of the Act.

The Deputy Mayor warmly welcomed the work to support children and young people living in temporary accommodation, particularly the additional resources being made available by the Combined Authority and TfGM. It was also highlighted that £33m had been spent on the ‘A Bed Every Night’ scheme over the past five years. This had made a real difference across the city region in reducing rough sleeping by 42 percent.

Provision of £12m in the budget to purchase and repurpose vacant properties for families in need of temporary accommodation before being permanently rehoused would help to relieve pressures on local authority budgets in 2027/28.

The GMCA recorded its thanks to the Group Chief Finance Officer, supported by the GMCA finance team, for the significant work put into managing the overall budget process.

The Group Chief Finance Officer was invited to comment, expressing his thanks to the local authority treasurers of the ten Greater Manchester authorities who supported his team throughout the budget setting process.

The meeting was advised that a named vote was required to approve the proposals for the GM Mayoral General Budget. Members voted on the recommendations as follows:

District	GMCA Member	
Bolton	Cllr Nicholas Peel	Agreed
Bury	Cllr Eamonn O’Brien	Agreed

Manchester	Cllr Bev Craig	Agreed
Rochdale	Cllr Neil Emmott	Agreed
Salford	City Mayor Paul Dennett	Agreed
Stockport	Cllr Mark Roberts	Agreed
Tameside	Cllr Eleanor Wills	Agreed
Trafford	Cllr Liz Patel	Agreed
Wigan	Cllr David Molyneux	Agreed

Following the named vote, the Mayor welcomed the unanimous support for the outlined budget measures.

RESOLVED /-

1. That following a named vote, it was unanimously agreed that the Mayoral General Precept of £153.95 (Band D) comprising of £92.20 for functions previously covered by the Fire and Rescue Authority precept of £61.75 for other Mayoral General functions, be endorsed.
2. That the Mayor's General budget for 2026/27, as set out in the report, together with the calculation of the precepts and Council Tax rates set out in Appendix 2, be approved.
3. That the overall budget for the Fire and Rescue Service for 2026/27 covered by the Mayoral precept and the medium-term financial position for the Fire and Rescue Service, be approved.
4. That the use of reserves, as set out in section 3 of the report, and the assessment by the Group Chief Finance Officer, that the reserves as at March 2027 were adequate, be approved.
5. That the Portfolio Lead for Resources and Investment, and the GMCA, record its thanks to the Group Chief Finance Officer and his team, alongside the financial leads in each individual local authority, for their considerable work during the budget process.

The Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, retook the Chair from this point in the meeting.

C. GMCA General Revenue Budget 2026/27: Delivering the Greater Manchester Strategy

The Group Chief Finance Officer set out the GMCA General Revenue Budget for 2026/27, which proposed local authority contributions to be approved for 2026/27 of £5.875m. It was reported that the contribution included a reduction of £2,078k to be returned to local authorities recognising the removal of the funding previously received by the GMCA to support corporate costs.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the budget relating to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority functions, excluding transport and waste in 2026/27, as set out in section 2 of the report, be approved.
2. That the alignment of the GMCA revenue budget with the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) and the GMS delivery plan be noted.
3. That the accelerated recurrent removal of the £2.1m local authority contribution to GMCA corporate functions be noted and that the reduced local authority contributions of £5.87m, as set out in section 5 of the report, be approved.
4. That the allocation of £5m recurrent funding to local authorities from the Greater Manchester “partial reset” funding of £23m, be approved.
5. That the use of reserves, as set out in section 6 of the report, be approved.

D. GMCA Transport Revenue Budget 2026/27

The report set out the transport related GMCA budget for 2026/27 and proposed that the Transport Levy for 2026/27, included within the report, together with the consequential allocations to the district councils of Greater Manchester, be approved.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the budget strategy, risks, and issues which were affecting the 2026/27 transport budgets, as detailed in the report, be noted.

2. That the budget relating to transport functions funded through the Transport Levy for 2026/27, as set out in the report, be approved.
3. That a Transport Levy on the local authorities in 2026/27 of £129.926m, apportioned on the basis of mid-year population 2024, be approved.
4. That a statutory charge of £86.7m to local authorities in 2026/27, as set out in Part 4 of the Transport Order, apportioned on the basis of mid-year population 2024, be approved.
5. That the use of transport reserves in 2025/26 and 2026/27, as detailed in section 5 of the report, be approved.
6. That the use of flexibilities available to GMCA to use Integrated Settlement capital funding to manage the use of Reserves in 2025/26 and 2026/27 and over the medium term, be approved.
7. That the proposed financial assistance programme for Private Hire Vehicle owners to switch from older, non-compliant vehicles to newer, cleaner vehicles and the £1.25 m provision made in the 2026/27 budget in relation to scheme administration costs and any bad debts/loan write-offs, be approved.

E. GM Waste Budget and Resources - Budget and Levy 2025/26 and Medium-Term Financial Plan to 2027/28

The report sought comment on the budget and levy for 2026/27 and on the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to 2028/29. It was explained that these plans were to be delivered by a total levy requirement for 2026/27 of £186.5m, which represented a 4 percent average increase over 2025/26. At a local authority level, the levy changes ranged from 3 percent to 4.8 percent.

In addition, the MTFP proposed levy charges of £192.0m in 2027/28 and £197.8 in 2028/29.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the forecast outturn for 2025/26 be noted, and the proposal to return a further £10m of reserves to local authorities from the forecast in-year underspend, be noted.

2. That the proposed 2027/28 Trade Waste rate of £147.62, to allow forward planning by local authorities, be noted.
3. That the budget and levy for 2026/27 of £186.5m (4 percent increase), be noted.
4. That the risk position set out in the Balance's Strategy, and the intention to return a further £10m of reserves to local authorities in 2026/27, be noted.

F. GMCA Capital Programme – 2025/26 - 2028/9

The report presented an update in relation to the GMCA's 2025/26 capital expenditure programme and the 2026/27 capital budget and forward plan.

RESOLVED /-

1. That the current 2025/26 forecast of £585.9m compared to the previous forecast of £620.4m, be noted.
2. That the 2026/27 capital programme budget of £1,107m, and the forward plan, set out in the report and Appendix A, be approved.
3. That the addition of £1.839m of the Department for Transport Pavement Channels Grant to deliver cross-pavement channels for residents without access to off-street parking, as outlined in section 2.6.6 of the report, be approved.
4. That the addition of £15.6m to the 2026/27 capital programme for local highway's maintenance (£7.8m to be paid by local authorities and £7.8m retained by the Department for Transport (DfT) as a new incentive element), as outlined in sections 2.10.8 and 2.10.9 of the report, be noted.
5. That the utilisation of full capital to revenue 'switch' permitted under the integrated settlement flexibilities, be approved.
6. That the reallocation of £5.3m of CRSTS1/Integrated Settlement Streets for All funding from Oldham Council's Beal Valley scheme to support two new council-led projects: Park Road/Kings Road and Broadway Canal Link, as outlined in section 2.13 of the report, be approved.
7. That the addition of £1.4m to the 2026/27 Capital Programme for the Mayor's Renewable Fund to develop renewable projects, as outlined in section 6.4.1 of the report, be approved.