

**GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY (GMCA)  
HOUSING, PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE, 16 NOVEMBER 2017 AT 10.30 AM, LORD MAYOR'S  
PARLOUR, MANCHESTER TOWN HALL**

- Present: Councillor: Lisa Smart (in the Chair)
- Councillors: Elaine Sherrington (Bolton)  
Andrew Morgan (Bolton)  
James Wilson (Manchester)  
Rebecca Moore (Manchester – Substitute)  
Hannah Roberts (Oldham)  
Peter Malcolm (Rochdale – Substitute)  
Linda Robinson (Rochdale)  
Michele Barnes (Salford)  
Councillor Adrian Pearce (Tameside – Substitute)  
Bernard Sharp (Trafford - Substitute)  
James Wright (Trafford – Substitute)  
Fred Walker (Wigan)
- Officers: Eamonn Boylan (Chief Executive, GMCA)  
Julie Connor (Assistant Director, Governance and  
Scrutiny, GMCA), City Mayor Paul Dennett (Salford),  
Rod Fawcett (Transport Policy Manager, TfGM),  
Susan Ford (Statutory Scrutiny Officer, GMCA), David  
Hodcroft (Principal, GMCA), Nicola Kane (Head of  
Planning Strategy, GMCA), Steve Rumbelow (Lead  
Chief Executive, Rochdale), Steve Fyfe, (Head of  
Housing Strategy, GMCA), Elise Wilson (Stockport),  
and Lynn Holland (Wigan)
- Apologies: Councillors: Anne Stott (Rochdale), Robert Sharpe (Salford) and  
Gillian Peet (Tameside)

**M18/HPE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

The Committee were informed of the following changes to its membership:

- Councillor Bernard Sharp (Trafford) will be joining the committee as a full member following the resignation of Cllr Robert Chilton. (For this meeting Councillor Sharp was attending as a substitute).
- Councillor Jamie Walker was noted as Bury's nomination (replacing Councillor Rachel Skillen).

Councillors Sharp and Walker will be formally appointed at the GMCA meeting on 24 November 2017.

Councillor Anne Stott (Rochdale) who was appointed as Vice-Chair at the Committee's last meeting had resigned from the committee due to clashes with meeting dates and attendance. Members asked and the Chair agreed to appoint a Vice-Chair at the meeting. The Chair asked for nominations for the role of Vice-Chair, Councillor Elaine Sherrington proposed Councillor Andrew Morgan and Councillor Michele Barnes seconded the proposal.

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Andrew Morgan be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Housing, Planning & Environment Overview & Scrutiny committee for the 2017/18 municipal year.

**M19/HPE URGENT BUSINESS, IF ANY, INTRODUCED BY THE CHAIR**

There was no urgent business introduced by the Chair.

**M20/HPE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at the meeting.

**M21/HPE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING DATED 18 OCTOBER 2017**

It was reported that a briefing note on homelessness and information on planning appeals requested at the last meeting was circulated to Members on 15 November 2017. The Head of Planning Strategy, GMCA advised that the planning information provided appeals lost in terms of the five year housing issues and was the most up to date list from districts. It was reported that appeals on green belt land were not being lost. However, the appeals lost in Bolton and Wigan that were discussed at the meeting, were about proposed developments on protected land rather than green belt.

**RESOLVED:** That the committee approved the minutes of the last meeting on 18 October 2017 as a correct record.

**M22/HPE GREATER MANCHESTER HOUSING AFFORDABILITY**

Members considered the report of the Portfolio Lead for Planning, Housing and Homelessness that provided the committee with baseline evidence on housing affordability and related issues in Greater Manchester (GM). City Mayor Paul Dennett welcomed the Committee's engagement in the development of the GMCA's housing strategy moving forward and suggested that scrutiny representatives be invited to attend the Housing and Planning Commission to participate and influence this important area of policy.

The report and presentation provided an overview of the complex issues relating to housing affordability in GM. The presentation brought together the most up to date data available from published sources. It provided the committee with a starting point for discussion around the issues raised and to inform considerations of where the committee might want to focus attention on in future meetings.

The main points raised to were:

- Members acknowledged it was a complex area, nonetheless it was important for GM to identify priorities. Members were reminded that much of the work around housing was a district responsibility and so a GM housing strategy had to work closely with districts to address issues. Collaborative work on the GMSF would address the conurbation's housing numbers, but a richer understanding of housing needs around affordability and tenure was required.

Work in this area would continue as the strategy evolved, and once agreed there would be an operational plan underpinning the strategy to deliver the outcomes GM needed.

- A discussion took place about the difference between social and private rental costs. In some wards there was a significant difference. The current lack of traction the planning process to provide enough affordable housing was noted. It was suggested that the definition of affordability and the difference between social rents, affordable rents and market rents was variable across the conurbation. For some districts there was only marginal difference between these, whilst in the city centre there was a significant variation, between social and affordable rents and market rental values. Currently GM is exploring a number of mechanisms to increase the affordability of homes being built, including providing support with land remediation costs.
- There was also a further challenge for GM to raise the income levels of residents to give them allow more choice in the housing options. It was advised there was no agreed definition and there was no relationship to income and the housing market. Data was highlighted an important. Whilst there were national data sets, the methodologies behind them were debate. It was suggested that an organisation like a fair rents commission could be beneficial in GM.
- Members questioned the appetite of the government to intervene in the private rented sector and recommended that Districts should use the powers they had effectively, for example landlord licensing. One positive development in GM was that a private rental sector market was emerging, with larger investors who had a longer term view of their investments. It was also noted that it was important that residents in private rented accommodation understood their rights. Tenant groups were identified as one way of ensuring this information was readily available.
- The Committee were informed that the new Department of Communities and Local Government figures for last year's housing completions had just been released. For GM there were 7892 completions in 2016-17. This was a 28% rise on the previous year (for England it was 15%), but GM was still behind target of 10,708 units. There was variability across districts in delivery for example Salford had contributed 2.5k units.
- Members asked for assurance that districts were sharing best practice. Officers confirmed that this was the case.
- Land banking was a problem for GM and a radical solution was required. Whilst discussions were underway with government, it was not a quick solution. It was suggested that there may be potential to unlock the viability of particular site using the existing powers of districts.
- In terms of affordable housing, the strategy needed mechanisms to address those people in larger homes, who wanted to move, an attractive option was needed.

- A Member asked about demographics, particularly the increase in the numbers of older people and suggested that this was an issue for Districts. GMSF, health, social care and housing. Officers confirmed that joint work on this issue was already underway.
- Members were reassured that the current work on the housing strategy was both addressing the complexity of this policy issue and was seeking deliverable solutions to these challenges.
- Members would be circulated with further information about how they might be involved with this work. Councillor Linda Robinson expressed an interest in the ten year homelessness strategy.

**RESOLVED:** That the committee:

1. Noted the presentation.
2. Circulate an email to the permanent members of the committee outlining the opportunities to be involved in this area of work and to consider which members may like to support this work going forward.
3. Requested that as work on housing affordability and the GMCA housing strategy develops that it be brought to the committee prior to it being considered by the GMCA.

## **M23/HPE GM TRANSPORT STRATEGY 2040: A SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY PLAN FOR THE FUTURE**

Consideration was given to a presentation provided by the Transport Policy Manger and Head of Strategic Planning and Research (Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM)), which described TfGMs aim for a fully integrated public transport network.

The main points referred to were:

- Cycling safety was a major issue. TfGM acknowledged there was work to do in this area in terms of funding. In addition, work was taking place on a longer term walking and cycling strategy. More work was needed to address public concerns around safety as well as increasing the numbers of cycling routes outside the city centre.
- Disabled access at both Metrolink and railway stations was highlighted as an ongoing challenge in the design for ease of access and the maintenance of stations. Lifts which were out of order were a particular issue. Officers agreed and advised that a disability design reference group had been set up to provide views and advise on topics such service provision and facility design.
- A Member pointed out that the fabric of Bury Metrolink stop (as one of the first stops on the network) was dated. Members drew attention to further access issues across the Metrolink network, for instance the lifts at the Sale stop.

- Officers acknowledged that some stations did look tired and infrastructure needed to be constantly refreshed, and updated to take into account the access needs of all users. This was part of the current refurbishment programme.
- A discussion took place about Bolton's new bus rail interchange and it was suggested that the comments of disability groups had not been implemented in the final build.
- Members suggested that a deeper dive was required to understand the issues involved. Officers recommended that a Project Manager attend a future meeting to explain the design process and how issues were addressed. Members with issues about particular stations were asked to send questions to TfGM officers.
- It was suggested that Wythenshawe be considered as a transport hub within GM's strategic work on improving transport connectivity. Officers agreed that Wythenshawe was important and issues such as poor transport connections were being addressed through improving bus services and a more integrated ticketing.
- Members were concerned about poor transport links and the lack of integration between different transport modes. Better communication and information to explain how travellers could undertake journeys across different operators and transport modes. Officers explained that in order to provide a truly integrated system, greater powers to influence the provision of services was needed.
- Members welcomed the presentation but would like to know more about implementation rather than strategies.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the presentation be noted.
2. That an item exploring inclusive design, access and safety issues be brought to a future meeting.

## **M24/HPE INTERMIN NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT CONSULTATION**

The Head of Planning Strategy, GMCA presented a report that provided a briefing for Members on the interim national infrastructure consultation that was launched on 13 October 2017.

It was agreed that the draft response to the consultation would be sent to Members for comment and views would be fed back to the GMCA. The response would then be considered at the next meeting on 13 December 2017.

It was highlighted that Lord Andrew Adonis, Chair of the National Infrastructure Commission was visiting the GM Mayor to discuss the interface of the high-speed railway (HS2), classic rail and northern power house rail.

In response to a question, it was reported that remediation work on land with major structural issues was not covered in the consultation as the Commission did not see this as part of its remit. It was considered as infrastructure. This point would be added to the consultation response.

- RESOLVED:** That the committee:
1. Noted the report and key issues identified in Section 2.4 of the report.
  2. Noted the previously GMCA/Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) recommendations in Section 3.4 of the report.
  3. Requested that the draft consultation response be brought to the next meeting.

## **M25/HPE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Statutory Scrutiny officer, GMCA presented a report that set out the committee's work programme for Members to develop, review and then agree. Members were asked to outline specific requests to ensure that the committee's work programme remained current.

Members and officers identified the following areas, which would be used developed to the work programme by the Statutory Scrutiny officer, GMCA:

| Meeting Date     | Topic   |
|------------------|---|
| 13 December 2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• National infrastructure consultation draft response.</li><li>• Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF).</li><li>• GM Carbon Neutral.</li><li>• Congestion – response to the Mayoral consultation.</li></ul> |
| 15 January 2018  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work around town centres.</li><li>• Transport – accessibility and embedding it in the GM strategy including cycling safety.</li></ul>   |
| To be scheduled  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Housing.</li><li>• Work being undertaken on busses, regulation and providers.</li><li>• Waste.</li></ul>  |

- RESOLVED:** That the committee:
1. Requested the Statutory Scrutiny Officer, GMCA to update the work programme.
  2. Agreed that transport investment training would be provided prior to the next meeting on 13 December 2017 at 5.00 pm.