

**GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY (GMCA)  
HOUSING, PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE, 13 DECEMBER 2017 AT 6.00 PM, GMCA, CHURCHGATE  
HOUSE, 56 OXFORD STREET, MANCHESTER M1 6EU**

Present:	Councillor:	Lisa Smart (in the Chair)
	Councillors:	Councillor Karen Garrido (Salford) –Substitute Councillor Lynn Holland (Wigan) Councillor Rebecca Moore (Manchester) - Substitute Councillor Andrew Morgan (Bolton) Councillor Adrian Pearce (Tameside) - Substitute Councillor Linda Robinson (Rochdale) Councillor Bernard Sharp (Trafford) Councillor Robert Sharpe (Salford) Councillor Elaine Sherrington (Bolton) Councillor Fred Walker (Wigan) Councillor Jamie Walker (Bury) Councillor Elise Wilson (Stockport) Councillor James Wilson (Manchester)
	Councillors in attendance:	Councillor Alex Ganotis, Portfolio Lead, Green City-Region (Stockport), Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester
	Officers:	Mark Atherton, Assistant Director Environment (GMCA), Susan Ford, Statutory Scrutiny Officer (GMCA), Kevin Lee, Office of the GM Mayor (GMCA), Julie Connor, Assistant Director, Governance Scrutiny (GMCA) and Anne Morgan, Head of Planning Strategy (GMCA)
Apologies:	Councillors:	Councillor Michele Barnes (Salford), Councillor Gillian Peet (Tameside), Councillor Hannah Roberts (Oldham) and Councillor Elaine Sherrington (Bolton)
	Officers	Eamonn Boylan, Chief Executive (GMCA), Dr Jon Lamonte, Chief Executive (TfGM) and Dr Carolyn Wilkins, Lead Portfolio, Green City-Region, Chief Executive (Oldham)

**M26/HPE URGENT BUSINESS, IF ANY, INTRODUCED BY THE CHAIR**

A supplementary agenda containing item 6a Interim National Infrastructure Assessment Consultation (report of Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester) was published and dispatched to Members on 11 December 2017. The reason for the urgency was to allow Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to comment on the response before it be considered and approved by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority on (GMCA) on 15 December 2017 and submitted within the deadline for responses on 12 January 2018. The item would be considered at item 6a of the agenda.

## **M27/HPE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Smart declared an interest in agenda Item No. 5 Carbon Neutral Greater Manchester – Setting the Vision, Goals & Targets Beyond as a member of the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority.

## **M28/HPE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING DATED 16 NOVEMBER 2017**

Arising from minute M22/HPE, it was noted that an email to the permanent Members of the Committee outlining the opportunities to be involved in this area of work (housing strategy) and to consider which Members might like to support this work going forward had been sent to Members on 11 December 2017.

Arising from minute M23/HPE, it was reported that a briefing note from Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) to answer the transport questions raised by Members at the last meeting was circulated with the agenda for this meeting.

As there were a number of substantive items on the agenda, the Chair had agreed that the GMSF Update item would be sent to Members as a briefing note. This was sent to Members on 7 December 2017.

It was noted that Councillors Bernard Sharp and Jamie Walker were appointed to the Committee at the GMCA meeting on 24 November 2017.

**RESOLVED:** That the committee approved the minutes of the last meeting on 16 November 2017 as a correct record.

## **M29/HPE CARBON NEUTRAL GREATER MANCHESTER – SETTING THE VISION, GOALS & TARGETS BEYOND 2020**

Councillor Alex Ganotis, GMCA Portfolio Leader for Green City Region, introduced a report which outlined GM's existing greenhouse gas emission reduction targets and the work to propose a new target date for GM to become carbon neutral.

The low carbon agenda affected the quality of life of all GM's residents. The GM Green Summit, which will take place on 21 March will provide a forum to agree the most effective interventions that GM will need to implement to become a carbon neutral city region. The Summit will also engage with the key audiences who need to be won over to help GM meet these aspirations. Work is already underway to develop policy ideas, including work which examined the ways that energy was generated for homes and workplaces; encourage more sustainable travel; improve air quality; make better use of green spaces; growing economy; tackle fuel poverty and innovate through the use of low carbon technology. Crucially the policies emerging from this work would be based on expert evidence.

The Assistant Director Environment led Members through the circulated presentation 'towards a carbon neutral Greater Manchester' and highlighted the economic opportunity that GM's low carbon sector presented: currently the environmental goods and services sector is worth around £6.7 billion annually and with 45,000 jobs.

A question and answer session followed, the main points referred to were:

- Has GM got the balance right between initiatives to achieve a reduction in energy demand and stimulating green energy generation? In many senses this was two sides of the same challenge, but nonetheless care was needed to ensure that GM's resources were not spread too thinly. Also it is worth noting that encouraging small businesses (98% of GM businesses) to adopt energy-saving measures was extremely difficult, even if the measure were low or no cost.
- Members were concerned that many poorer households struggled with fuel bills and chose to use gas, a fossil fuel which is cheaper than electricity (which could be generated cleanly). The Portfolio Holder advised that 'The Big Clean Switch', a GM backed scheme that encouraged residents to switch to a provider who sourced electricity from renewable sources at an extremely competitive tariff.
- It was also raised that there were 'food deserts' in GM, places where residents struggled to access high quality, affordable fresh food. Members were assured that initiatives to address food poverty were underway including work to promote locally sourced food. Food poverty would be considered at the Green Summit.
- Members asked how the green agenda could be incorporated into the planning process for new developments. The Portfolio Holder explained that the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) had selected Greater Manchester one of four 'pioneer areas' (a river catchment, an urban area, landscape, and a marine area). As the UK's 'urban pioneer' area GM will pilot future policies, strategies and ways of working that could deliver environmental change through planning gain.
- A discussion took place about the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority's (GMWDA) aim of zero waste. One challenge to achieving this goal was that currently there was only an end market for high grade plastics and so low grade plastics such as yoghurt pots could not be recycled. A public education programme was needed and focus should be placed on companies reducing packaging and waste.
- A Member asked how GM's buildings, particularly older properties and listed buildings, and reducing new build's carbon footprint could be addressed. A Warm Homes Fund had been recently launched which focused on people who suffer energy poverty. It was noted that 80% of current buildings would still be in use in 2050 and making them fuel efficient was a significant part of GM's work. The way that listed and protected buildings are upgraded falls under the remit of district plans and policies, but GM was working in partnership to support this work. The GM energy advice programme (launched in October 2017) is a free service that provided advice, support and energy saving measures to fuel poor and vulnerable households. The scheme is open to eligible people in all types of tenure. Customer-facing council and housing association staff and local community groups refer people into the programme who would then seek the funding for improvements to be made. Whilst important this programme would reach about 2,000 homes in Greater Manchester of the 1.2 million homes that needed help.

- Further detail was requested on 'balancing the grid' and municipal energy companies. It was explained that grid balancing has become increasingly important with the increased use of renewables which means that in windy or sunny weather energy generation can outstrip demand and so renewable power sources may need to be taken out off the grid. The use of battery technology potentially presents an opportunity to develop smart grids in local areas where 'excess' renewable energy can be stored. Greater Manchester was currently exploring the options and benefits of establishing a municipal energy company.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the report which set out the requirement for a definitive goal and targets for greenhouse gas emissions beyond 2020 be noted.
2. That the accompanying presentation which outlined the challenges and opportunities of achieving the target set be noted.
3. That it be agreed that the carbon impacts should be considered as a core requirement in all relevant cross cutting and issue specific policies, strategies and plans.

**M30/HPE CONGESTION AND GREATER MANCHESTER**

The Mayor's opening remarks acknowledged that congestion in Greater Manchester was getting worse, resulting in poor air quality, acting as a drag on GM's economy and contributing to poor productivity. To help GM find new solutions to this Transport for GM had undertaken a public consultation exercise on the Mayor's behalf. 7,000 responses were received, demonstrating the importance of this issue for residents.

The views of respondents presented a very challenging picture regarding the impacts of congestion and the solution would include multiple interventions across all transport modes including: tackling traffic pinch points; improved buses services; improving the tram and rail network; encouraging car sharing; supporting walking and cycling; and integrated ticketing. Steps to achieve an improved bus service for GM were already underway and would be progressed in 2018. Alongside work on bus provision, a Strategic Transport Board would be established to hold service providers across all modes of transport to account.

In summary, the Mayor explained that there was no single solution to the problem of congestion. However, Greater Manchester could not continue with a fragmented system and his work would focus on this next year. The Mayor suggested that how the Strategic Transport Board was going to function would be of interest to the committee and agreed to provide a briefing note so Members could feed into the process.

Members asked a number of questions, including:

- How were mayoral powers being used and when residents would see a difference? It was explained that powers relating to the improvement of GM bus services and the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) were already supporting work to improve congestion. There was an increased focus on building in town centres, to ensure new homes were connected with transport hubs. The Mayor also had compulsory purchase powers and the power to

establish Mayoral development corporations. These powers could enable the Mayor and the GMCA to drive development and regeneration across the area and provide a more intervention approach to housing and planning. It was anticipated that there would be improvements in bus services by 2021.

- A discussion took place about connectivity and the need for integrated ticketing to support affordability and accessibility. HS2 (the planned high-speed railway to link London, Birmingham and Manchester), Northern Powerhouse Rail (to improve connectivity between the key economic centres of the North) and developments at Piccadilly station would also improve connectivity.
- A Members asked about the powers required for rail reform. The Mayor advised that Greater Manchester proposal to manage local rail stations had been rejected by the Department for Transport. However GM wanted to ensure that there were significant improvements to local stations, particularly access for those with restricted mobility.
- Members asked about initiatives to encourage cycling. There was concern expressed about integrating cycling with the tram system, which was a particular problem for residents who lived near tram stops with no cycle hub. It was suggested that a pilot where residents could take their bikes on trams during off peak times could be introduced. The Mayor wanted to use funding to develop cycling infrastructure including the use of city forest parks, using green spaces or old industrial infrastructure to divert traffic off the roads. The City of Trees initiative was transforming Greater Manchester's landscape by restoring underused and unloved woodland, which included cycle paths.
- A discussion took place about air quality. Although a congestion charge was not an option GM wished to pursue, other ways to improve air quality must be implemented. Clean air zones were being considered alongside other interventions. There was a risk that Greater Manchester would be fined if it could not meet the thresholds for key air pollutants so it was crucial that GM had a credible plan to tackle this issue.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the presentation be noted.
2. That officers be requested to produce a briefing note explaining the role of the new Strategic Transport Board.

## **M32/HPE NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE CONSULTATION DRAFT RESPONSE**

Members considered the report of the Mayor of Greater Manchester, presented by the Head of Planning Strategy that provided a briefing on the interim national infrastructure consultation that was launched on 15 December 2017. It was noted that the response was a working draft and the deadline for the final response was 12 January 2018.

The emerging issues were noted as:

- Maximising the opportunities offered by devolution.
- An integrated infrastructure plan for greater Manchester to support the delivery of the Greater Manchester Strategy.
- Infrastructure to support the delivery of new homes.

- Capturing the value from infrastructure investment.
- Well designed and performing industry.
- Replacing European Union (EU) and investment bank funding.

A Member requested that in developing the response, all aspects were integrated and should highlight how major infrastructure should be used to reinvigorate areas that could not attract funding. It was explained that the derelict land grant was being considered and the response did aim for integration but it was hard to achieve. The point about the potential for national significant infrastructure to drive investment could be incorporated into the response.

Members welcomed the points regarding representation on the design panel and land value detailed in the response.

It was agreed that Members would be provided with a copy of the final response.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the report and key issues identified (section 2.5 of the report) be noted.
  2. That the emerging issues for GM (section 4 of the report) be noted.
  3. That the Committee's comments be taken into account in the final version.
  4. That it be noted that work on responses to the detailed questions was still underway and the final response would be signed off by the GMCA Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Lead.
  5. That the final version of the consultation response be circulated to the Committee.

## **M32/HPE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Statutory Scrutiny officer, GMCA presented a report, which asked the committee to outline specific requests to be addressed by the report authors in preparing the reports coming forward to this committee.

It was suggested and agreed, that a presentation on the waste strategy would be considered at the meeting on 15 March 2018.

Following a meeting with other Overview & Scrutiny committee Chairs to discuss cross cutting themes, the Chair reported that the transition of the waste governance arrangements would sit under the remit of the Corporate Issues & Reform Overview & Scrutiny committee until the waste became a function of the GMCA in April 2018 when it would fall under the remit of the Housing, Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Chair agreed to report back to Members about where the homelessness theme would sit.

- RESOLVED:** That the Statutory Scrutiny Officer, GMCA be requested to update the work programme as detailed above.