PURPOSE OF REPORT:

This report sets out a proposal to realise the Mayoral commitment to establish a GM Disabled People’s Panel including key principles, remit and budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Leaders are asked to:

- Approve the recommended remit and key principles of the GM Disabled People’s Panel.
- Support funding for the GM Disabled People’s Panel of £80,000 from February 2019 until March 2020, subject to final approval of the Combined Authority budgets.

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1. Greater Manchester recently launched the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) with its bold new vision to make Greater Manchester one of the best places in the world to grow up, get on and grow old - a region where no person or place is left behind.

1.2. The GMS is co-owned by the GMCA, the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector to ensure that all partners in the public, private and VCSE sector can work together to achieve our shared vision for the city region.

1.3. Building on this approach, the GM VCSE Accord sets out a new agreement between the Greater Manchester Mayor and Combined Authority and the VCSE sector based on a relationship of trust.

1.4. The Accord sets out a framework for the delivery of that shared vision and our commitment to reduce inequalities. We recognize this will only be achieved through new ways of working which are shaped and driven by our communities themselves. This is essential if we are to truly unlock the full potential of our citizens and communities.

1.5. A key task will be to ensure that the voice of disabled people is at the heart of GM delivery with an active role in shaping and challenging policy.

1.6. It is therefore proposed to establish a GM Disabled People’s Panel with our partners in the GM Coalition of Disabled People (GMCDP) to champion new, improved standards of working with disabled people.

2. **COMMITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT**

2.1. GMCDP has a 30 year history of promoting the independence and inclusion of disabled people including the removal of the barriers disabled people face and challenging discrimination.

2.2. The Mayor was invited to attend a roundtable event organised by GMCDP in September 2017 along with representatives of disabled people’s groups from across Greater Manchester.

2.3. The event was an opportunity to explore the developing GMS and to better understand disabled people’s issues with a view to developing practical new solutions.

2.4. It was recognised that we need to have a positive vision of disability, adopting the Social Model of Disability which recognises that it is society that creates many of the barriers that prevent disabled people from having equal opportunities.
2.5. A number of major themes were discussed including the role of Independent Living; Transport; Housing; Skills and Employment; and Greater Manchester’s commitment to be an autism friendly city region.

2.6. The Mayor proposed the establishment of a GM Disabled People’s Panel to ensure that the voice of disabled people is at the heart of GM delivery.

2.7. It was agreed that GMCA would work with the GMCDP and partners from disabled people’s organisations to develop proposals in line with the principles of the GMS and VCSE Accord.

3. **REMIT AND KEY PRINCIPLES**

3.1. Following discussion with GMCDP and their consultation with a wide range of GM disabled people’s groups, it is proposed that a panel is established to advise the Mayor, the Leader with portfolio for Equalities and GMCA on key issues relating to disability.

3.2. A number of key principles have been established to guide the development of the panel which reflect the approach of the GM VCSE Accord to deliver our shared vision with our commitment to reduce inequalities.

3.3. In particular the panel will:

- Champion new, improved standards of working with disabled people’s organisations
- Be proactive in creating new partnerships and encouraging the diverse voices across Greater Manchester to have an active role in shaping and challenging policy
- Reflect the skills and knowledge of a diverse range of impairment specific groups
- Reflect the seven needs of Independent Living including Information; Peer Support; Housing; Equipment; Personal Assistance; Transport; and Access
- Recognise the Social Model of Disability
- Be independent, inclusive, transparent and accountable to its member groups and disabled people across Greater Manchester
- Benefit all disabled people across Greater Manchester, irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity, faith, sexual identity or age.

3.4. Membership of the panel will be established through an open and transparent application process, designed in partnership with the GMCDP, through which the Mayor will invite applications from representatives of disabled people’s groups across Greater Manchester. The recruitment process will ensure a balance of representation from across all disabilities, geography and broader equalities characteristics.

3.5. Potential panel members will be able to demonstrate their capacity to give insight into issues affecting disabled people in Greater Manchester, drawing on their own
experience, but also looking beyond it to consider what actions and policies will work best to make Greater Manchester the best place to grow up, get on and grow old.

3.6. Detailed membership criteria and panel composition will be finalized by GMCA and GMCDP, subject to the Mayor’s approval.

4. COORDINATING THE GM DISABLED PEOPLE’S PANEL

4.1 Work to develop and manage the GM Disabled People’s Panel has been scoped and the following requirements identified:

**Strategic Development**
- Hosting the Panel and providing secretarial and administrative support
- Working with the GMCA Policy and Strategy Team to establish and maintain membership of the Panel representative of GM Disabled People’s Groups from across the city region reflecting the skills and knowledge of a diverse range of impairment specific groups
- Working with the GMCA Policy and Strategy Team to identifying strategic priorities and developing a work programme based on the shared vision of the Greater Manchester Strategy

**Organisational Development**
- Providing appropriate resources to coordinate and facilitate the work of the Panel
- Liaising with key stakeholders including the Mayor’s office, GMCA and partner agencies

**Transparency and Accountability**
- Complying with all relevant data protection legislation and regulations
- Developing a Code of Conduct, Terms of Reference and communication strategies

**Evaluation**
- Producing an Annual Report of achievements and recommendations each year for the duration of the Grant Period

5. WORK PROGRAMME

5.1 As noted above, a strategic work programme will be developed once the panel is established with initial discussions highlighting key issues such as Independent Living; Transport and Access; Employment and Skills; Housing; and Autism Friendly Greater Manchester.

5.3 Given the breadth of this agenda, it will be important to ensure available GMCA and partner resources currently engaged in supporting disabled people are aligned to the aims of the Panel.

5.4 In particular, Transport for Greater Manchester works in partnership with a number of Disabled People’s Organisations on initiatives including:
• Hosting the **Disability Design Reference Group** (DDRG) with Breakthrough UK. Bringing together disabled people from across the city region to review the full range of transport projects, from design and construction of infrastructure through to development of online systems and services, to maximise accessibility for all residents.

• Working with Henshaws, a specialist charity providing support, advice and training, and developing initiative to help anyone affected by sight loss and other disabilities, to raise awareness of **travel and transport support** including concessionary passes.

• Facilitating the GM **Travel Training** Forum. Bringing together organisations from across GM which provide training and guidance to young people and adults to enable them to make journeys safely and confidently on their own.

• Maintaining the **Ring and Ride** service providing an accessible, low-cost minibus service for people who have difficulty in using public transport.

• Working with Alzheimer Society Greater Manchester to train staff in **dementia awareness** to recognise and support people who may be suffering from dementia.

• Leading on the transport workstream with **Our Manchester Disability Partnership** to identify the needs of people living with disabilities and explore solutions.

5.5 It is therefore proposed that the panel’s initial work programme focuses on those priority areas without this existing support and that transport and access issues are overseen by the DDRG.

5.6 This approach will commence with a joint meeting of the panel and the DDRG in Spring with a review after the first twelve months.

6. **DELIVERY AND NEXT STEPS**

6.1. Beyond the support that can be provided by GMCA and partners, it is recognized that additional capacity will be required to establish and maintain the panel.

6.2. It is proposed that a GM disabled people’s organisation should take on this coordinating role and that GMCDP are best placed to take this forward.

6.3. The scoping work suggests funding will be required to provide additional capacity to develop and manage the Panel.

6.4. Given that this project represents a key GM priority, it is recommended that funding is provided in the total of £80,000 between February 2019 and March 2020, subject to the final approval of Combined Authority budgets.
7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Recommendations are included at the start of this paper.