

FUTURE OF GREATER MANCHESTER

In this time of national uncertainty, socially and economically, Greater Manchester is taking the initiative and setting out our bold plans to give people, communities and businesses hope and confidence for the future. Our plans will set out how Greater Manchester is 'open for business' globally, how we will thrive and prosper into the future, how we will support everyone to reach their full potential, and how we will ensure that nobody is left behind.

The **Greater Manchester Strategy *Our People, Our Place*** sets a clear vision for GM – to be one of the best places in the world to grow up, get on in life and grow old – where there is:

- A good start in life for everyone
- Good opportunities for our young people, who are equipped for life
- Good employment for all in our thriving, productive zero carbon economy
- Good connectivity – digitally and by public transport – within all parts of Greater Manchester
- Good, affordable housing in stronger and safer communities
- A good cultural and leisure offer for everyone in a green city region
- Good health, support for people to live fulfilling lives and quality care for those who need it
- A good quality of life in an 'age-friendly' city region

People are at the heart of everything we do and our USP is an advanced devolution deal that allows us to reflect that in our policies. In each generation Greater Manchester has matched economic progress with social advancement. We are a place that has always delivered industrial innovations but never forgotten the people who power that economy.

Greater Manchester was the beating heart of the industrial revolution, the birthplace of everything from commuting to the computer. But these innovations are matched with social progress in the Trades Union Congress, the suffragettes and the cooperative movement.

This radical spirit is central to Greater Manchester's identity. We do things differently here, and do things first.

As politics in Westminster is focussed on the debate over Brexit, our focus in Greater Manchester is on growth, investment and reform of public services in order to ensure that everyone here is supported to achieve their potential and that nobody is left behind. We will do this by working in partnership with our communities, public services, voluntary sector and businesses.

And we are already making great strides in implementing this vision, for example:

- A determined effort to tackle the problems of rough sleeping is already beginning to have an impact, including via the Bed Every Night campaign
- The new Police and Crime Plan focuses on the importance of safety and security of people, places and businesses and their role in promoting and enabling well-being across the board
- We are investing in the UK's largest joined-up cycling and walking network, revolutionising how journeys are made and enabling people to travel actively in their community
- We are reducing the amount of time people have to stay in hospital by better supporting people in their homes and communities. We are improving access to primary care, driving up the quality of care homes and transforming children's mental health services. Greater Manchester recently became the first place in the country to publish waiting time data for children's mental health
- We are rethinking support for older people, with the World Health Organisation recently designating Greater Manchester the UK's first age-friendly city-region
- We are part of the prestigious 100 Resilient Cities Network and developing a Resilience Strategy for the City Region

- We have invested in a multi-million pound Business Productivity and Inclusive Growth Programme which will support GM employers to raise their productivity and create high quality jobs.

But we want to go further, and faster. That is why we are publishing a number of bold plans for consultation that will shape the future of our city region for generations to come. From building the homes we need to cleaning up the air we breathe, we are making the decisions that are required if we are to realise our ambitions for Greater Manchester. In keeping with our USP, these plans are not just about our economic future but our social responsibilities too. That's why, for example, our Housing Vision ensures we develop housing solutions to address the needs of all our residents. And it's why we are taking bold action to help our young people get on in life and seize the opportunities available in Greater Manchester.

The plans are all interlinked and together will mean significant decisions will be taken, many of which will have an impact on the things which are most important in our lives. By publishing these plans we are showing that Greater Manchester is a confident, forward-thinking city region – with a plan for the future.

Reformed Public Services

We can only support people to achieve their full potential and ensure that we are creating the Greater Manchester we all want to live in if we change the way in which public services work. We need to integrate services around people and their needs, focusing on prevention, developing new models of support, and sharing information across the public sector to design and deliver better services. Our reform priorities are focused around early years, life readiness of young people, tackling homelessness and ensuring that people are supported in ageing well. For example in early years we are striving to ensure Greater Manchester meets or exceeds the national level of 'school readiness' by 2020 by developing our workforce, developing new antenatal care models and ensuring good nursery provision with excellent places for children to play and learn.

Last month we therefore set out a bold plan for a pioneering model for public services, our **Public Services White Paper**, which will see communities, public services and the voluntary sectors working hand in hand to reform services and focus on delivery, breaking down the silos between services. These plans will be one of the key pillars for delivering the overarching aims of the Greater Manchester Strategy and considering how we push forward devolution in the city region.

A Good Start in Life for Young People

We want our young people in particular to be ready for the changing world into which they are growing up, and to have the right skills to seize the opportunities that are available in, and will be attracted to, Greater Manchester. That is why we have been focusing on **Life Readiness**, working with the Youth Combined Authority. As part of this we are developing an exciting Opportunity Pass for our young people. I am proposing that this will offer all 16-18 year olds free travel on buses in Greater Manchester from September on a two year trial basis, to help connect them with opportunities across the conurbation – to access the right course to develop their future career, to travel to the many leisure and cultural offers of Greater Manchester or to travel to employment. In this way it will support not only young people but employers alike by ensuring greater access to the skills our businesses need. Young people have also said that they want a Curriculum for Life (a series of learning experiences that develop young people's knowledge and life skills) and a UCAS style portal (which will help young people understand the changing world of work and apply for the wide range of opportunities available). Both of these are currently in development.

Good Employment for All in our Thriving Economy

We want to ensure that everyone can access secure fairly-paid, flexible employment, with opportunities to progress and develop. All the evidence (from organisations such as Be the Business

and others) suggests that companies who invest in their workforce are also the most productive. So we are developing a **Good Employment Charter**, working with key business representative organisations, public sector employers, the voluntary and community sector, Trade Unions, and others. This will not only support our employers to become more productive, but also build on GM's history of social innovation and putting people at the heart of Greater Manchester.

We also want to ensure all residents have the skills to get on in life and achieve their full potential. Through improved skills, innovative thinking and access to talent, GM businesses will be more successful locally, nationally and globally. This will enable our economy to create exciting, well-paid jobs in new industries, and increase the competitiveness of our high employment sectors, leading to a thriving and productive economy in all parts of GM. That is why GM is currently developing a **Local Industrial Strategy**, which will embed a Local Skills Plan to ensure all residents can benefit from the opportunities in Greater Manchester. The Strategy will be clear on our strengths which make Greater Manchester a great place to do business, and help to attract new business and new industries to Greater Manchester, as well as the challenges we face particularly around skills, infrastructure and health where more focus and investment is needed. It is being jointly developed with Government and will be agreed in March.

Digitalisation and decarbonisation will be at the heart of every global city region in the future, and therefore a key part of our Local Industrial Strategy. It is for this reason that we have already launched a **Digital Strategy** focusing on business opportunities, skills, infrastructure and how digitalisation will transform public services. As part of this GM, along with Government, is investing £40m to use the power of large scale public procurement to accelerate private sector investment in full fibre to the premises infrastructure across GM – which will also be a foundation for early roll out of next generation 5G mobile networks in the City Region. We are also taking a leading role in the drive to carbon neutrality having launched our clear ambition to advance the date of carbon neutrality by at least a decade. We know that there are clear advantages by acting first on this agenda, so we will be publishing a **5-year Environment Plan** at the Green Summit in March, which will set out our challenges, actions and investments to put us on the path to achieving a high quality, resilient environment, with the social and economic opportunities that offers.

Good Connectivity

Ensuring people can move around Greater Manchester to access jobs and leisure opportunities is vital to all residents, communities and businesses. We need to ensure the continued development and integration of our transport system to make sure that it fully supports our businesses and residents in fulfilling their potential.

Greater Manchester has attracted global attention for the £160m investment in cycling and walking, led by our Cycling and Walking Commissioner. Metrolink continues to go from strength to strength and has in excess of 40 million passenger journeys a year. This will continue to expand and in the next 18 months we'll see the opening of a new tram lines to the Trafford Park and 27 new trams on the network to provide the capacity we need.

But a further step-change in investment in our public transport infrastructure and travel alternatives is needed too. The Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 (2017) set out a future vision for "world class connections that support long-term sustainable economic growth and access to opportunities for all". The ambition is to deliver a fully integrated and sustainable transport system that provides real choice to people travelling in GM and enables us to reduce car use to no more than 50% of daily trips, with the remaining 50% made by public transport, waking and walking. This would mean a million more trips each day using sustainable transport modes in Greater Manchester by 2040 and would help to make our communities less congested and polluted, and safer for everyone.

The new **Transport Delivery Plan 2020-2025** sets out our plan for the next five years to make rapid progress on delivering this vision. In addition to prioritising new development sites in locations that are already accessible by public transport, we are setting out bold investment and reform plans for improving all parts of our transport system.

This includes: further investment in new infrastructure to make cycling and walking the natural choice for short journeys; at least £100m investment in our town and city centres to make them pleasant, thriving, well connected places; more capacity on our Metrolink network, supported by zonal fares and contactless payment; investment in improved park and ride facilities and electric vehicle charging infrastructure; investigation of the feasibility of new rail and Metrolink stations across Greater Manchester; and significant investment in critical highways infrastructure to relieve congestion hotspots and improve access to development sites. The Delivery Plan also identifies how Highways England and Network Rail will need to work closely with Greater Manchester to ensure the right critical investment in our rail and motorway networks to support our residents and businesses.

And reforms will also be required to ensure that we have the powers we need to deliver our 2040 Vision for an integrated transport system. This includes reforms to our bus network to allow it to operate as a single network, with simple fares and ticketing, and an excellent customer experience. Greater Manchester is leading the way on bus reform nationally, as the first mayoral Combined Authority seeking to make use of new powers in the Bus Services Act 2017. In doing so, the Combined Authority has decided to consider the introduction of a proposed bus franchising scheme for Greater Manchester and that assessment, which will compare franchising with other realistic options of reform, continues to be developed. Once that assessment is completed, it will be considered by the Combined Authority with a view to having the assessment independently audited. Subject to the conclusions of both the assessment and any audit, we will consult with the public about this important issue.

Finally, the Delivery Plan also identifies potential sources of investment to achieve greater long-term certainty over transport funding. In particular, we want to establish a fully devolved, long-term infrastructure budget for Greater Manchester, as recommended in the National Infrastructure Commission's recent National Infrastructure Assessment. We are encouraging Government to consider this through the National Spending Review.

Good, Affordable Housing

We want to take a new approach to housing to tackle the housing crisis, to ensure our housing solutions address the needs of all our residents: those who are homeless or one step away from being homeless; issues of affordability and quality of housing; ensuring the right housing for older people in communities which avoid the risk of isolation; and aspirational housing. So today we are launching our **Housing Vision** which sets out what GM needs from its current and future housing and the challenges and issues with today's housing. Over the coming months, based on feedback and consultation, this will be turned into a Housing Strategy which will set out how GM might go about achieving that vision.

Part of that Strategy will be the development of a GM definition of affordable housing and the GM Spatial Framework includes a new policy commitment to deliver at least 50,000 affordable homes by 2037, and a major drive to ensure at least 30,000 of these are social homes. To support this last month the Combined Authority agreed to support this exciting vision by investing some of the surpluses from our £300m Housing Investment Loan Fund to support the delivery of truly affordable housing, tackle empty homes and issues in the private rented sector including rogue landlords. We will also launch a major new drive to raise standards in the PRS, including the development of a GM Good Landlord standard.

Sustainable Places

People care passionately about the places where they live and we need to be creating vibrant communities, with a sense of belonging and pride. This is not only about the right housing in the right places but also a wide range of other factors too – about infrastructure, access to culture, jobs and the quality of the environment. GM is already working with City of Trees to increase the number of trees in Greater Manchester and is a Defra Urban Pioneer city region, acting as a testbed for new ways to improve the natural environment.

We are therefore bringing together all these issues into a draft **Greater Manchester Spatial Framework** for consultation. This plan is all about creating sustainable places in Greater Manchester – where people can achieve their full potential. That requires important decisions to be made about the pattern of future growth, taken in an integrated way, to reflect the inter-relationships between all communities and parts of Greater Manchester socially, environmentally and economically. The Spatial Framework has therefore been radically re-written to reflect the comments received on the last draft. It focuses on making the most of our brownfield sites and bringing forward development in town centres and our most sustainable locations. It also cuts the green-belt take by over 50% and offers far stronger protection for the most valuable spaces – spaces which are important for people's health.

As part of this we have recognised that we need to develop a far stronger housing and employment offer within our Town Centres – as their role as retail centres changes, and to ensure our Town Centres with their proud history remain vital sustainable communities which are in well-connected locations. That is why the **Town Centre Challenge** was launched last year to support all Districts across GM to help bring forward innovative plans, and generate confidence with the private sector, to build a strong resilient future for GM's Town Centres. This is a national issue where Greater Manchester is leading the way in helping to find solutions. The role of GM's Town Centres is vital to the future of GM, to support development in sustainable locations and reduce the need for new development in the Greenbelt. That is why we are delighted that, as a result of the Town Centre Challenge, we are today bringing forward plans to go out to consultation on creating a **Mayoral Development Corporation** to support the regeneration of the Town Centre West area of Stockport – a once in a generation opportunity to re-draw/re-balance the Town Centre to deliver a new urban village (with up to 3000 homes) and to support economic growth. This is the first time a Mayor has exercised their devolved power in this way to kick-start redevelopment of a town centre location.

We also know that the right infrastructure needs to be in place if we are going to support a changing and growing conurbation. Not only the physical infrastructure, but also the social infrastructure that people rely on such as schools and health services. But there are already challenges with GM's existing infrastructure, and the future demands on our infrastructure are going to change for example from how our energy system will adapt to more Electric Vehicles and how we heat our buildings. We are taking these challenges seriously which is why today we are launching an **Infrastructure Framework** which sets out the key challenges for the physical and social infrastructure, and how GM may need to respond. Over time this will help shape important investment decisions and priorities. As part of this GM has already secured substantial funding from Government to deliver the infrastructure needed to make some housing schemes across the conurbation viable.

Culture is also at the heart of creating vibrant welcoming places, and a sense of belonging and pride. Building on the history of doing things differently and first, and recognising that the creativity of the people of GM is part of the DNA, GM is currently consulting on a **Cultural Strategy** which will be finalised in the next couple of months and will support both our international competitiveness and confident, inclusive communities. This is being backed by £7m of investment in a Cultural and Social Impact Fund across two years and the Great Places project which aims to test and develop the cultural offer for the future, built on what residents value.

Good Health

We know that poor health is affecting far too many of our residents and their quality of life, as well as keeping them out of employment. That is why the reform of health and social care has consistently sat at the heart of the GM reform agenda. One of the reasons for poor population health in GM is the poor air quality around the heaviest used parts of our road system and key centres. These are however some of our most sustainable locations for future growth. The issues of poor air quality are also adversely affecting some of our most deprived communities, and children are particularly vulnerable to polluted air. Therefore tackling the issue of Air Quality is an imperative.

The **Clean Air Plan** that is in development will aim to ensure that we tackle this challenge in the near term and ensure that our city region can grow in a sustainable way that promotes opportunity and better health for all. Although no decisions have been made yet, the GM Clean Air Plan will aim to safeguard all our residents from air polluted by high levels of Nitrogen Dioxide whilst protecting the poorest in our communities from any financial penalties.

Conclusion

We want to work with Government to implement these plans. But we need to acknowledge that the current state of local government finances are precarious and have a direct effect on our ability to deliver the change and impact we, and Government, aspire to achieve. To implement some of these plans we will need to have a different, stronger partnership with Government, and more co-design and control over areas such as skills and transport, and a place based approach to housing, health and welfare, if we are to drive forward the vision set out in the Greater Manchester Strategy.

The plans we are bringing forward today are bold and ambitious. They seek to make it clear to Government and the world that Greater Manchester has a plan for our future, and we are clear about what we need to do to achieve it. They are vital to help people take charge of their own lives, achieve their full potential and have a sense of hope and optimism for the future.