

Item 4

JOINT GMCA AND AGMA SCRUTINY POOL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2017 AT MANCHESTER TOWN HALL

PRESENT

Bolton Council	Cllr Kevin McKeon Cllr Andrew Morgan
Bury MBC	Cllr Stella Smith Cllr Roy Walker
Manchester CC	Cllr Ahmed Ali Cllr James Wilson
Oldham MBC	Cllr Cheryl Brock Cllr Colin McLaren
Rochdale BC	Cllr Neil Butterworth Cllr Michael Holly Cllr Sara Rowbotham
Salford CC	Cllr David Jolley
Stockport MBC	Cllr Yvonne Guariento Cllr Iain Roberts
Tameside MBC	Cllr John Bell Cllr Gillian Peet
Trafford MBC	Cllr Michael Young Cllr Barry Brotherton
Wigan MBC	Cllr John O'Brien Cllr Pam Stewart

IN ATTENDANCE

GMCA	Richard Paver Cllr Angeliki Stogia
GMFRS	Andrea Hefferman
GMIST	Julie Connor Lindsay Dunn Susan Ford

GMWDA

John Bland

OPCC

Jayne Stephenson

TfGM

David Daughney

17/09 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Zahara Alijah (Manchester), Cllr Barry Brotherton (Trafford), Cllr Jillian Collinson (Salford), Cllr Pam Dixon (Trafford), Cllr John McGahan (Stockport), Cllr Garth Harkness (Oldham), Cllr Debbie Newall (Bolton) and Cllr John Walsh (Salford).

17/10 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all those present.

17/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Non prejudicial declarations of interest in respect of agenda item 6 were received from Cllr John Bell (GMFRA), Cllr John O'Brien (GMFRA) and Cllr Michael Young (GMWDA).

17/12 MINUTES OF THE GMCA AND AGMA SCRUTINY POOL MEETING HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2016

The Minutes of the GMCA and AGMA Scrutiny Pool meeting held on 13 January 2017 were submitted for consideration.

RESOLVED/-

To approve the Minutes of the GMCA and AGMA Scrutiny Pool meeting held on 13 January 2017.

17/13 GMCA/AGMA SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

Members received a report to review and amend the Work Programme for the Joint GMCA and AGMA Scrutiny Pool for 2016/17.

Susan Ford, GMIST informed members that an initial report and draft recommendations of the Communications Task and Finish Group would be shared at today's meeting and an update by the renewable Energy Task and Finish Group will be brought to Scrutiny Pool in March.

RESOLVED/-

1. To note items for the 2016/17 Scrutiny Work Programme.
2. To note the progress with Scrutiny's Task and Finish work as set out in section 2 of the report.

17/14 GMCA/AGMA BUDGETS 2017/2018

Richard Paver, Treasurer, GMCA introduced a presentation that provided Members with an overview of the GMCA and AGMA Budgets for 2017/18.

The presentation provided a high level summary of the reports which went to the meetings of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the Joint GMCA/AGMA Executive Board and the Police and Crime Panel on 27 January 2017. Links to these reports were highlighted in the covering report.

The Financial settlement for Local Authorities was issued on 15 December and for the districts and Fire Authority it represented year 2 of the 4 year settlement offered in 2016/17. For the Police and Crime Commissioner it represented a further 1 year settlement.

When the final settlement for GM is announced it will be on the basis of participation in the 100% business rates pilot. It is recognised that there will be significant developments during 2017 with an Elected Mayor for the City Region and the increase in devolved powers. The scope of the Combined Authority will be extended as the transfer of responsibilities for the Police and Crime Commissioner and Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service. Within this context, the budgets for both GMCA and AGMA are being presented for 2017/18 only.

David Daughney, Head of Finance, TfGM gave an overview of the Transport budget review process and levy. Following scrutiny, the recommendation was for a standstill in the levy, after adjustments and a refund to districts of £88million this becomes £104million. The budgets for 2017/18 include additional costs in relation to both 'non avoidable' items and new responsibilities and activities. Key issues in the transport budget, the levy budget position for 2017/18 and a summary of the Transport Capital Budget were highlighted to Scrutiny Pool members.

A member asked what the level of transport related reserves for 2016/17 and 2017/18 are forecast at and if Transport Capital Budget Metrolink Schemes was attributable to the new scheme in Trafford.

Officers clarified that the forecast for 31 March 2017 was £157m and the budgeted balance for 31 March 2018 was £46m. The £20m increase in Metrolink Capital Schemes is mainly made up of the Trafford Park extension, however other schemes such as the second City crossing were incorporated into this amount.

Richard Paver provided an overview of non transport revenue budgets with associated priorities, pressures, risks and proposed savings for 2017/18, including detail of AGMA and GMCA reserves.

Members of the Pool asked for a breakdown of the Mayoral Election costs and expressed their concern with regards to the cost implications associated with ensuring each eligible individual receives a candidate booklet rather than one per household.

Officers explained that the amount reflects the cost of administering the stand alone election and it anticipated that the amount will be significantly less for future elections as they will coincide with districts elections. Furthermore, the model for conducting the election is overseen by the Electoral Commission.

A member asked if the amount budgeted for the GM Spatial Framework would be likely to increase following consultation. Richard Paver confirmed that the estimate for this was reasonable for both 17/18, 18/19 through to completion.

A member asked if it was a coincidence that the savings proposals for 2017/18 were 10% for each budget heading. Officers reported that 10% was the savings target set for the various activities.

The grant funding regime for 2017/18 was discussed along with the requirement to negotiate borrowing powers that need to be in place for 8 May 2017 for the GMCA.

Andrea Hefferman, Director of Corporate Support, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority (GMFRA) provided a budget summary and position statement for GMFRA. In order to secure a four year funding position, the Authority had submitted their efficiency plan to the Home Office which requires savings to 2019/20 of £13.5m. Frontline fire fighter posts are expected to reduce to deliver savings of £7.8m and there are savings of £4.6m related to back office functions.

With regards to the Fire Authority precept, GM are the second lowest stand alone Fire Authority in the country and GMFRA are seeking to increase their precept by 1.99 % in 2017/18. It was reported that 2016/17 would see the first recruitment in 7 years of fire fighter posts and a further 100 will be recruited in this current year. Diversity has been promoted in the recruitment process which has resulted in a more reflective workforce of the communities served. Budget pressures such as resourcing large scale incidents such as the 2015 Boxing Day floods and the lack of capital grant funding and national changes to the fire and rescue service were highlighted as potential risks to the efficiency plan.

Members welcomed the approach with regards to recruiting and asked for clarification on the numbers of women and from the BME community to reflect a more diverse workforce. It was confirmed that recruitment had not yet taken place, however attracting a more diverse range of applicants is a key area of focus to ensure that the service reflects the communities it serves.

A member asked for clarification on the additional cost implications as a result of not implementing the new shift duty system for fire fighters. It was explained that the implication of not introducing the system meant greater operational flexibility was not being achieved. The Deputy Chair of GMFRA and Vice Chair of Scrutiny clarified that negotiations with staff and trade unions to implement shift changes are ongoing in order to reach agreement and negotiate a settlement to sustain the community safety of the residents of GM at the same time as delivering savings.

It was confirmed that income potential of the new training facility at Bury was not included in the budget at this stage as this is speculative.

Jayne Stephenson, Chief Finance Officer, provided an update on the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner precept and budget proposals for the one year settlement on behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).

The police grant for 2017/18 has been cut by 1.4%, therefore an increase to the police precept of £5 was proposed and supported by the Police and Crime panel. The precept increase will raise additional income with a commitment to be used for an additional 70 front line police constables. Officer recruitment will sustain police officer numbers, replacing officers that leave the force through natural turnover. This is regarded as an opportunity to transform the diversity of GMP's police officers.

Members welcomed the figures provided with regards to the recruitment from BME background. However, the gender balance was not reflected in the report and was an area that Scrutiny Pool were interested in. Jayne Stephenson provided a verbal update on the recruitment of women police officers and gave an overview of those in senior rank up to and including Assistant Chief Constable level. The figures for gender are available and it was agreed that these would be circulated to members.

A member asked about the policy not to replace PCSO's in GM. Jayne Stephenson clarified that there is not a policy to not replace them, there is however a training capacity issue. The current priority is to recruit police officers, 100 of which were previously PCSO's. The number of PCSO's at the end of year will be 598 and this figure will increase to 658 next year.

A member asked if the Police and Crime Commissioner had responsibility for witnesses and if so, was there any funding attached to this. It was confirmed that this is nationally funded but there was further potential for devolution of services provided to victims and witnesses.

John Bland, Treasurer and Deputy Clerk of Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority (GMWDA) introduced the budget and levy 2017/18 and the medium term financial plan to 2021/22 to the Scrutiny Pool.

The 2017/18 levy is proposed to increase by an average of 5.27%, which is in line with previous updates. There are proposals to move resources between GMCA and GMWDA in 2017/18, utilising the transport and waste levies, so as to ensure that the impact of a gross 53.50% increase is mitigated at district level on an invest to save basis. Steps are being taken to reduce future year's levy burdens through the identification of cost reductions in the contract and work on further promoting recycling and utilizing targeted proportionate enforcement action for non-compliance.

A member asked if it was likely that we will reach a stage where low grade plastics can be recycled. John Bland explained it was more cost effective to design these plastics out of the system and revert to using recyclable packaging.

A member expressed their concern with regards to the underlying need for an investment of £77m and asked if there would be any similar proposals going forward. John Bland explained that the details of contract were part of commercial negotiations.

RESOLVED/-

1. To note the report.
2. To provide information with regards to gender recruitment statistics in GMP to Scrutiny Pool.

17/15 GMCA COMMUNICATIONS AND TASK AND FINISH GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

Councillor Angeliki Stogia, Chair of the GMCA Communications Task and Finish Group presented the findings of the GM Scrutiny Pool's task and finish group on communications.

The report's findings offered valuable insights into the way that the GMCA's work is perceived by internal and external stakeholders where, during this time of rapid change, effective and consistent communication is vital part of GMCA's relationship with residents.

Some of the report's recommendations anticipate activity already being taken forward by the newly convened GM Communications Team. However it is hoped that task and finish group's findings will inform thinking about the development of communications products for elected members and residents and be built into future work planning and decision making about GM communications. It is anticipated that the GM communications team overseen by the GMCA and the deputy head of paid service will ensure that the recommendations are progressed and provide updates back to GM Scrutiny.

The recommendations were summarised and discussed and subject to any amendments will report to the GMCA on 24 February.

Members offered support for the report and the recommendations and discussed the requirement to engage all parties as soon as possible in order to support the upcoming Mayoral election.

Officers updated Scrutiny Pool on the development of a new web site that would provide key messages with regards to the role of the Mayor and the new devolved powers. Members requested that consideration should be given to wider communication and engagement with key stakeholders that do not necessarily use the internet or social media.

RESOLVED/-

1. To note and endorse the recommendations in the report and presentation.
2. To endorse for consideration and approval of the GMCA/AGMA Joint meeting on 24 February.

17/16 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2016/2017

10 March 2017

7 April 2017

All meetings would be held 1:00pm - 3:00pm at Manchester Town Hall unless otherwise advertised.

CHAIR