

JOINT GMCA AND AGMA SCRUTINY POOL

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

PRESENT

Bolton Council	Cllr Kevin McKeon Cllr Debbie Newall
Bury MBC	Cllr Stella Smith Cllr Roy Walker
Manchester CC	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 John McGahan
Tameside MBC	Cllr John Bell Cllr Gillian Peet Cllr Kevin Welsh
Trafford MBC	Cllr Pam Dixon Cllr Barry Brotherton
Wigan MBC	Cllr John O'Brien Cllr Pam Stewart

IN ATTENDANCE

GMCA	Andrew Lightfoot
GMIST	Allan Sparrow Susan Ford

Apologies were received from Cllr Zahara Alijah (Manchester), Cllr Jillian Collinson (Salford), Cllr Andrew Morgan (Bolton) Cllr John Walsh (Salford), Cllr Edward Houlton (Wigan) and Cllr Michael Young (Trafford).

17/18 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all those present. He reported that the GMCA had endorsed the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group on communications at their meeting on 24 February.

17/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by any member in respect of items on the agenda.

17/20 MINUTES OF THE GMCA AND AGMA SCRUTINY POOL MEETING HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2017.

The Minutes of the GMCA and AGMA Scrutiny Pool meeting held on 10 February 2017 were submitted for consideration. Councillor Brotherton reported that he had submitted his apology for the February meeting which were showing him as being present at the meeting.

RESOLVED/-

To approve the Minutes of the GMCA and AGMA Scrutiny Pool meeting held on 10 February 2017 subject to the removal of Councillor Brotherton's name from the list of attendees and its inclusion on the list of apologies.

17/21 GMCA/AGMA SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

A report was submitted requesting members received to review and amend the Work Programme for the Joint GMCA and AGMA Scrutiny Pool for 2016/17.

Members requested a formal update on the Employment and Skills Task and Finish Group at their meeting in April, in addition to the other reports on the agenda.

Councillor Neil Butterworth added that he would provide members with an update on the work being carried out by the Energy Task and Finish Group at the next Scrutiny Pool meeting.

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.

3. That GMIST request a formal update on the Employment and Skills Task and Finish Group for the next meeting of the Scrutiny Pool.
4. That GMIST respond to the correspondence received from the Chair of the Energy Task and Finish Group and note that an update from the Energy Task and Finish Group would be reported to the next meeting.

17/22 GMCA TRANSITION

Andrew Lightfoot, Deputy Head of Paid Service provided members with a brief update on the organisational changes underway in preparation for devolution to Greater Manchester and the election of the Mayor for Greater Manchester in May 2017.

He reminded members that the Greater Manchester Combined Authority was established in 2011, but over the next couple of months it will move into another iteration as a number of functions are brought together in an organisational reconfiguration including the Greater Manchester Fire Authority, The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and a number of AGMA units including New Economy and GMIST.

There are a series of Orders and Government legislation being prepared in advance of the Mayoral election on 4 May 2017, residents and prospective candidates can find out more information via the new GM elects website (<https://www.gmelects.org.uk/>). Eamonn Boylan (the current Chief Executive of Stockport MBC) has been appointed as the first full time Chief Executive for the GMCA and will be starting imminently, and the GM Mayor will take office on 8 May.

There have already been a number of Orders laid and passed by Government in relation to many of the GMCA new functions, including the GM Fire and Rescue Service and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Officers reported that further Orders are on track to support the election and transition for the GMCA.

GM will have unique powers in relation to the Mayor and the Combined Authority, to support this there are specific legislation being put in place regarding this broad range of powers.

HR consultations are ongoing with all staff who are affected by the organisational changes with no major issues arising from the TUPE processes. A phased transfer of staff begins from 1 April, with the majority of staff being transferred on 8 May. Work regarding systems such as finance, ICT, payroll etc; would built around the current GM Fire and Rescue Service systems.

The GMCA headquarters will be Churchgate House from April 2017, but not all GMCA staff will be based there.

Members asked how transport powers would be distributed in the new arrangements between TfGMC and the GM Mayor. Officers explained how these issues were currently

being worked through in detail but nothing should fundamentally change immediately. The GM Mayoral powers will specifically be in relation to the Buses Bill and strategic implementation for smart ticketing, but the relationship between these and the transport functions of the GMCA is being considered as part of the devolution arrangements. There would, however, be an ongoing need for a committee of all GM authorities to input into transport strategy for GM.

Members further reiterated the need for a joined up transport system for GM that includes the rail system. Officers reported that the GM Transport Vision includes all methods of public transport, and there is already work underway to influence transport regulation and transport provision which will enable smart ticketing to be as successful in our conurbation as other areas.

A member asked what the level of borrowing powers would be for the GMCA post April 2017. Officers confirmed that there are ongoing discussions with Treasury regarding this issue and that initial specified potential borrowing powers were not comparable with local authorities, however there had recently been a shift in this view and it was now looking more positive.

Members asked to have sight of the Overview and Scrutiny Order to further understand how the scrutiny function will be arranged going forward. Officers agreed to circulate the Order and informed members that the Scrutiny Working Group has been reviewing the scrutiny function over the past few months. This group included representation from local authorities and has reached some conclusions in line with legislation which will be shared with the GMCA. Their recommendations support a wider scrutiny function which will cover a broader range of functions and will require a greater number of scrutiny committees to have the capacity to undertake these additional responsibilities.

A member asked whether the organisational changes will include the joining of AGMA and the GMCA. It was confirmed that the GMCA will assume all the AGMA functions, but that legally the dissolution of AGMA may take a couple of years.

Members of the Pool asked whether they will be included in the GMCA Scrutiny function going forward and whether there would be the opportunity to develop their knowledge. Officers confirmed that through the new arrangements there would be the requirement for more members to be involved in overview and scrutiny, however members would continue to be appointed through their authorities as per the current arrangements. In addition to this, members further asked whether there would be a members allowance designated for scrutiny. Current arrangements do not include allowances for scrutiny members, but officers reported that this could change in the future.

Members asked that local authorities be informed as soon as possible as to the number of positions on the GMCA/AGMA Scrutiny Pool in order that time be given to local negotiations. Officers assured that this would happen, but reminded members that there was some work required in advance to determine political and gender balances.

A member asked whether there would be a Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) budget coming to GM as part of devolution. Officers reported that the Working and Health Programme is part of devolution deal with GM and Government and some of the GMCA team will oversee this budget going forward, it was suggested that this may be a useful area for members to scrutinise in the future.

Members of the Pool asked how likely GM would see the deregulation of buses through the Buses Bill. Officers have been assured through discussions (with MPs and senior servants) bill will receive royal ascent in early April but that an update could be provided to scrutiny at the next meeting.

Members recognised that as the remit of the GMCA grows further, that the capacity of the scrutiny function needs to echo this in order for detailed scrutiny to be effectively undertaken. Officers reported that the function and volume of work for overview and scrutiny has been considered by the scrutiny working group and included in their recommendations. This paper will be circulated to all GM authorities over the next couple of weeks and would also be shared with members of the Scrutiny Pool for comment. Members welcomed this, and further suggested that an item on the future of scrutiny be brought to the next meeting of the Pool.

Further to this, members urged that scrutiny continue to receive policy development at a pre-decision stage in order for timely and useful input. Officers re-iterated that this has been a central principle of overview and scrutiny for the past few years and the GMCA welcome this approach.

RESOLVED/-

1. To note the report.
2. To share the Scrutiny Order and the Centre for Public Scrutiny guide with members.
3. To consider the devolved Working Well Programme as a future item for scrutiny.
4. To receive an update on the progress of the Buses Bill at the meeting in April 2017.
5. To circulate the recommendations of the Scrutiny Working Group with members of the Pool and that an item on the future GM scrutiny function be brought to the next meeting.

17/23 GREATER MANCHESTER STRATEGY REFRESH

Andrew Lightfoot, Deputy Head of Paid Service GMCA reminded members of his previous presentation which shared the planned approach to a conversational consultation for the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) Refresh. The first phase was an open discussion which asked what was important to residents of GM, and received 1500 responses

The first iteration of the draft strategy has been created from those responses and shared with the GMCA at their meeting in February. Members of the GMCA asked that the strategy consultation be extended post-election of the GM Mayor to ensure that residents had further opportunities to engage and that the widest possible consultation be undertaken.

Both members and officers recognised that the 2013 strategy was out of date and a changing environment necessitated a refreshed GMS. The strategy shared some successes from the previous strategy including investment, technology advances and devolution, but there was a need to look at where we are now. There are a number of

current key issues for GM highlighted in draft strategy including productivity gap, low wages, the poverty agenda and challenges within the skills system.

The GMS defines a new vision for Greater Manchester as –
'By 2040 Greater Manchester will be one of the world's leading city regions, reaping the benefits of sustainable and inclusive growth across a thriving Northern economy. It will be ever more self-reliant, connected, dynamic, inclusive, digitally-driven, productive, innovative and creative. A destination of choice to live, work, invest and visit, GM will be known for the high levels of happiness and quality of life our people enjoy. No one will be held back, and no one will be left behind: all will be able to contribute to and benefit fully from the continued success of Greater Manchester.'

The draft GMS is clear about our priorities going forward focusing on strong people and strong place which continues the push to reform public services and focusses on improving outcomes through working with communities. It further recognises the need for economic growth across whole of GM and not just Manchester city centre, creating opportunities for all residents.

Members commended an excellent report and passionate vision. Specifically technological and digital development in GM was highlighted as exemplary but members felt that there was a need for an infrastructure to support these areas of growth through the sustained establishment of industries (and job creation) to ensure we can deliver on our aspirations. Members of the Pool urged for the need to see benefits in GM not just in other areas of the world and commented that the strategy does not go far enough in determining how GM will create new employment opportunities and economic growth in these sectors.

Members felt that the strategy needed more emphasis as to how we will practically achieve its aspirations. Its reference to 'no one left behind' could come across as quite flippant as currently lots of people currently are left behind. Members urged that the GMS should include plans to ensure high quality education for all to tackle the current skills gap and specific measures to address health and social care barriers that prevent people from working. Currently it seems that GM have limited control over education provision and influencing a curriculum which addresses the skills gap that GM requires. Officers recognised the deficit in skills delivery and its importance in relation to improving life chances and offered to look at how this part of the GMS could be enhanced.

Members expressed their pride in how hard officers in GM have worked over the years to ensure that the conurbation is the best that it can be for all its residents. There has been marked progress since the initial GMS, and the new document needs to be a visionary tool to drive progress in the future. Members reported a need for strong aspirations as devolution is an exciting time for GM.

The extension of the consultation period was endorsed by members. Lessons from the communications task and finish group should be used in the GMS consultation specifically in determining what devolution means for each community, and using a localised approach to improve engagement. Members felt that the draft GMS does not currently reflect this but that this approach could markedly improve the levels of engagement. Officers agreed to pick up the recommendations in light of the second phase of the consultation.

Furthermore, members commented that there was a need to generate passion and enthusiasm with the public, and that it would be an important part of the role of the GM

Mayor to promote a positive message regarding devolution and increase the rapport with residents.

A member commented that “strong people” may not be a term which would resonate with all people in GM and asked that officers give consideration to the use of the term “resilient”.

Members asked that the need for valuable practical vocational training for young people is highlighted through the GMS, as often those who are less academically able do not have the opportunity to develop their practical skills and given the ability to recognise the value they have in society. However these skills and trades are vital to the economic development of GM.

Members commented that there seemed a low level of engagement from young people in initial phase of the GMS consultation, and asked officers what will be done differently to engage with ‘hard to reach’ parts of the GM population. It was reported that GM was now getting the message out through young people forums and face to face events facilitated by neutral credible people. Officers continue to improve systems and processes to engage and consult all GM residents. .

Members urged for the need to summarise the GMS in a ‘one-page’ document to keep the message short, clear and concise and improve engagement with residents.

The Chair summarised the discussion and thanked members of their input.

RESOLVED/-

To note the report and amended timeframe for the second phase of the consultation.

17/24 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2016/2017

The next meeting of the GMCA/AGMA Scrutiny Pool will be held on Friday 7 April 2017.

1. GMIST to invite Sam Riley from the NW Skills Academy to the next meeting.

CHAIR