

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED
AUTHORITY (GMCA) ECONOMY, BUSINESS GROWTH AND
SKILLS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
14 JUNE AT 2.00 PM AT GMCA OFFICES, CHURCHGATE HOUSE**

Present: Councillor Michael Holly (in the Chair)

Bolton: Councillor Susan Haworth
Bury: Councillor Mary Whitby
Manchester: Councillor Luke Raikes
Councillor June Hitchen
Stockport: Councillor Kerry Waters
Tameside: Councillor Stephen Homer
Trafford: Councillor Barry Brotherton
Wigan: Councillor Charles Rigby
Councillor Michael Winstanley

In attendance

GMCA Councillor Richard Leese, Portfolio Lead for Economy
Simon Nokes, Executive Director Policy & Strategy
Gemma Marsh, Assistant Director Skills
Matthew Ainsworth, Assistant Director Employment
Joanne Heron, Statutory Scrutiny Officer, GMCA
Emma Stonier, Governance and Scrutiny Officer

E49/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mudasir Dean (Bolton), Councillor George Hulme (Oldham) and Councillor Daniel Meredith (Rochdale).

E50/19 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Nominations were invited for the position of Chair of the GMCA Economy, Business Growth and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2019/20 Municipal Year. Councillor Michael Winstanley proposed Councillor Michael Holly and Councillor Barry Brotherton seconded the proposal. The Committee agreed that Councillor Michael Holly be appointed.

RESOLVED:

It was unanimously agreed that Councillor Michael Holly be appointed as Chair of the GMCA Economy, Business Growth and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

E51/19 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

The Chair invited nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the GMCA Economy, Business Growth and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2019/20 Municipal Year. Councillor Michael Holly proposed Councillor Michael Winstanley and Councillor Susan Haworth seconded the proposal. The Committee agreed that Councillor Michael Winstanley be appointed.

RESOLVED:

It was unanimously agreed that Councillor Michael Winstanley be appointed as Vice Chair of the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

E52/19 MEMBERSHIP FOR 2018/20

The Committee was asked to note its Membership for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

Members
Councillor Mudasir Dean, Bolton, CON
Councillor Susan Haworth, Bolton, LAB
Councillor Mary Whitby, Bury, LAB
Councillor Luke Raikes, Manchester, LAB
Councillor June Hitchen, Manchester, LAB
Councillor George Hulme, Oldham, LAB
Councillor Daniel Meredith, Rochdale, LAB
Councillor Michael Holly, Rochdale, CON
TBC, Salford, LAB
Councillor Kerry Waters, Stockport, LAB
Councillor Colin MacAlister, Stockport, LIB DEM
Councillor Stephen Homer, Tameside, LAB
Councillor Barry Brotherton, Trafford, LAB
Councillor Charles Rigby, Wigan, LAB
Councillor Michael Winstanley, Wigan, CON

Salford had now nominated Councillor Jim King who would be formally appointed at the June meeting of the GMCA.

RESOLVED:

That the Membership for the 2019/20 Municipal Year be noted.

E53/19 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT AND ANNUAL DECLARATION OF INTEREST FORM

Consideration was given to a report that reminded Members that the GMCA's Member Code of Conduct (Appendix 1 of the report) set out high expectations with regard to Members' conduct. As Members of the GMCA's overview and scrutiny committees are co-opted onto a GMCA Committee the GMCA's code applied to them when they were acting in this capacity. Members were also reminded that they were required to complete an annual declaration of interest form, which would be published on the GMCA's website.

RESOLVED:

Members noted the report and the GMCA's Code of Conduct (Appendix 1 of the report) and agreed to complete an annual register of interest form (Appendix B of the report).

E54/19 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members were provided with the Economy, Business Growth and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee's terms of reference be noted.

E55/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

E56/19 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 APRIL 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2019 were submitted for approval.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the last meeting held on 12 April 2019 be approved as a correct record.

E57/19 WORK PROGRAMME

Joanne Heron, Statutory Scrutiny Officer, introduced the 2019/20 work programme, provided for Members to develop, review and agree. The Committee agreed that further discussion in relation to the work programme would be undertaken in the induction session following this meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be noted and discussed further in the Scrutiny induction sessions.

E58/19 GREATER MANCHESTER STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND PERFORMANCE UPDATE

Simon Nokes, Executive Director Policy and Strategy, GMCA introduced a report which provided Members with the latest six monthly update of the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) implementation plan and performance dashboards. It was explained that the update provided progress against the agreed delivery milestones and ambitions, and updated the outcome measures for each of the priorities within the GMS priorities. The updated plan also provided new delivery milestones at 6 and 12 months.

Key areas highlighted included:

- That GM had greater control over progress in some areas than others which were impacted more by national Government. GM would focus on those areas of slow progress within each priority and where they were able to have an impact on this.
- The following areas were highlighted as particular areas of focus: young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs); apprenticeships; welfare benefit and the number of people claiming unemployment benefits and economic indicators within priority 4 and the potential impact of Brexit on these.

Member's comments and questions included the following:

- The reduction in apprenticeships numbers was highlighted and Members noted that it would be useful to receive further information on the GM Apprenticeship Action Plan. Officers noted that national policy had impacted on apprenticeships numbers and statistics in GM broadly aligned with the national picture. However, work was being undertaken at a GM level to monitor the situation and understand further the reasons for reductions.

The levy had impacted on numbers, although there had been an increase in higher level apprenticeships. The cost of apprenticeships had changed and the number of young people undertaking level 2/3 had decreased. Some of the work underway to improve numbers included; encouraging apprenticeship take up in SMEs; providing each Local Authority with a package of support and improving the quality and provision of apprenticeships. Public sector organisations were also pooling together resources to achieve economies of scale from the levy. Officers would share the action plan with the Committee following the meeting.

- The GM approach to managing Welfare Reform was raised and clarification was sought about whether GM intended to request further devolution from Government under the comprehensive spending review. GM already had employment support devolution and the working well programmes were highlighted in relation to this. Initial devolution of employment support and health had been extended to other groups including early help for people at significant risk of falling out of work. In addition, a programme of employment support for people with learning disabilities and autism would be launched later this year.

GM was also working on two new Working Well Programmes focusing on in work progression and support for the self-employed. It was noted that universal support and claimant advice was currently being reviewed which aimed to develop proposals for Government around future funding, following the end of the current Citizen's Advice Bureau funding arrangements in March 2020.

A more localised approach to the managed migration of people on employment support to universal credit would also be discussed with Government. Councillor Richard Leese stated that the GM Independent Prosperity Review had looked at health and productivity and this would be picked up further in the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) Implementation Plan. The GMCA had also recently launched their Public Service Reform (PSR) White Paper around the integration of public services which included the ability to get people back into work.

- What were the differences between the GM, West Midlands and Oxford/Cambridge Local Industrial Strategies and why was it felt that the GM LIS was the best roadmap for GM? The Committee were informed that the Oxford/Cambridge LIS had not been published and that there was currently no timeline for publication of this. It was felt the GM LIS was distinctive in its approach due to the undertaking of the Independent Prosperity Review and the proposals/recommendations which had come out of this. This also meant there had been an emphasis on the evidence base and innovative/challenging ideas.

The West Midlands LIS reviewed all sectors of the economy, whereas the GM LIS focused on four sectors where GM had recognisable global strengths. Additionally, it looked at where GM could contribute to UK economy growth and identified issues/challenges to unlocking growth. It was also emphasised that the fact it had been developed jointly with Government was a crucial strength.

- Internet connectivity across GM was discussed. It was stated that within some areas of GM residents still struggled to access a basic internet connection. The Committee were informed that a programme for upgrading to fibre broadband had taken place in 8 of 10 local authorities within GM (Manchester and Salford had been excluded as they were classed as urban areas). Furthermore, the £23m fibre connectivity programme of funding, from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, was due to be rolled out soon. This would connect public sector premises across GM and covered all 10 local authorities.

A GM Prospectus outlining a common approach to the way fibre was to be laid across the whole of GM was also under development. It was expected that this would encourage commercial companies to invest in fibre more rapidly, as some of the barriers to laying infrastructure would be removed. The Committee were also informed that rules around state aid needed consideration.

- The indicator for the proportion of KS2 children expected to meet national standards around reading and maths was green, however by KS4 21.2% secondary school pupils had fallen below the national standard. Members asked whether the reasons behind this drop between primary and secondary school were understood and if so was any action being implemented to encourage a reversal of this trend? GM did not have control over schools as this was a national policy area. It was also a very complex issue and it was difficult to identify the underlying causes of this drop off. School improvement was also an area which sat with the Regional Schools Commissioner.

The GMCA Bridge GM programme was designed to raise ambitions in schools by linking businesses with schools. However, GM recognised that the way in which it engaged with schools needed further work, to identify if there was any wrap around support which could be offered to secondary schools and to ensure that pupils progressed and attained national standards.

Work was needed with Local Authorities and the Department for Education (DfE) to understand the reasons behind this and what could be done to help schools achieve national standards. Education was not under the CAs remit but work was taking place across the 10 authorities through the Children's Board.

The Independent Prosperity Review had found a significant variation in educational provision in GM and a focus would be to drive consistency in provision within and between local authorities. The LIS also provided GM with a 9-month engagement opportunity with the DfE and consistency in educational standards could form part of these conversations. The Committee requested that an item around schools and progression between KS2 and KS3 be added to the work programme for 2019/20.

- Members asked if more detailed data around school performance within individual local authorities was available. All the dashboard data was included in online in the interactive package tableau. This included datasets which drilled down to borough/ward level. The Committee were informed that if required additional data could be accessed.
- Members queried whether variations in standards between schools could be impacted by teaching staff/school leadership. Overall it was felt well led schools performed better, however there were currently no systems in place which enabled effective interventions to be assessed and translated to other schools.
- Members asked how many schools/colleges in GM had the Bridge GM programme engaged with? It was reported that 174 out of 234 secondary schools/sixth form colleges had been engaged in GM. A plan was in place to reach full coverage by December 2019.
- Questions around NEET data (pg. 47) were raised as it appeared that the data presented did not add up. Officers confirmed that these figures would be clarified and provided to the Committee.
- Members asked what the proposed lane rental scheme referred to within actions around improving performance of the transport network? It was confirmed this was related to passing on costs associated with roadworks to companies.

RESOLVED:

1. That overall progress towards the achievement of the GMS 2020 ambitions and targets be noted.
2. That the updated GMS implementation plan and performance dashboard detailed at Annex A of the report be noted.
3. That the GM Apprenticeship Action Plan be circulated to the Committee.
4. That an item around school standards and transition between KS2 and KS3 be scheduled into the work programme for 2019/20.
5. That clarity be provided to the Committee around the NEET figures provided on pg.47 of the report.

E59/19

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members were provided with a proposed schedule of dates and times for 2019/20 meetings of the Committee. The majority of meetings will be held on the second Friday of the month from 2.00 – 4.00pm. Currently there are no meetings scheduled for August or April.

RESOLVED:

That the following dates/times of future meetings be agreed:

- Friday 12th July 2.00 - 4.00pm
- Friday 13th September 2.00 – 4.00pm
- Friday 11th October 2.00 - 4.00pm
- Friday 8th November 2.00 – 4.00pm
- Friday 6th December 2.00 – 4.00pm
- Friday 10th January 2.00 - 4.00pm
- Friday 7th February 2.00 – 4.00pm
- Friday 13th March 2.00 – 4.00pm

E60/19 GM WORK & SKILLS PROGRAMME UPDATE

Members noted the report of Councillor Sean Fielding, Portfolio Lead for Education, Skills, Work & Apprenticeships that provided Members with an update on the progress of key work and skills priorities in GM and development work underway to refresh the skills and work plan, in light of the Independent Prosperity Review findings and the emerging Local Industrial Strategy.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

E61/19 BREXIT MONITOR

RESOLVED:

That the Brexit Monitor be noted.

E62/19 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 12 July 2019, 2.00 – 4.00pm, Boardroom, GMCA Offices, Churchgate House, Oxford Road, Manchester, M1 6EU

