

**GMCA HOUSING, PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

11 APRIL 2019 AT 10.30AM AT THE GMCA OFFICES

Present: Councillor Lisa Smart (Stockport) (in the Chair)
Bury: Councillor Dorothy Gunther
Bolton: Councillor Andrew Morgan
Manchester: Councillor Paula Sadler
Manchester: Councillor Ben Clay
Oldham: Councillor Barbara Brownridge
Rochdale: Councillor Linda Robinson
Tameside: Councillor Mike Glover
Salford: Councillor Tanya Burch (substitute)
Trafford: Councillor Bernard Sharp (substitute)
Wigan: Councillor Fred Walker (substitute)

In attendance

GMCA Officers Liz Treacy (Solicitor and Monitoring Officer)
Matt Berry (Governance and Scrutiny Officer)
Anne Morgan (Head of Planning Strategy)
Steve Fyfe (Head of Housing Strategy)

M148/HPE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor Shamim Abdullah (Labour), Councillor Graham Whitham (Labour), Councillor Lynne Holland (Labour) Councillor Catherine Preston (Bury), Councillor Laura Booth (Stockport), Councillor Stuart Dickman (Salford) and Councillor Lynne Holland (Wigan).

M149/HPE CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

The meeting of this Committee scheduled for May 16th is cancelled, a diary cancellation will follow this meeting.

A Member noted that sending the full schedule of diary invitations to substitute members of this Scrutiny for the year ahead may aid in getting availability when they are required .

M150/HPE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were received.

M151/HPE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2019

To consider the approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2019, as a correct record

The Chair requested an update response from the GMCA regarding a recommendation submitted from this Committee on 10th January 2019. It is regarding item M127/HPE: GM Clean Air Plan Update. The recommendation was as follows:

That the GMCA are recommended to consider whether the 10 local authorities should work collectively to reduce particulate matter, by updating the Clean Air Strategy.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held 14 March 2019 be approved as a correct record.

M152/HPE GM HOUSING STRATEGY

Mayor Paul Dennett, Salford City Mayor and Portfolio Lead for Housing, Homelessness and Infrastructure introduced the item. It was noted that this is the first time the GM Housing Strategy has been brought to this Committee as a full document as it approaches the final stages of sign-off.

- The GM Housing Strategy has been co-produced by a range of stakeholders, and illustrates how the housing aspects of the GM Strategy is operationalised and framed alongside the GMSF and other broader issues relating to service transformation.
- The Strategy has taken an evidence based approach, and is focussed on building the 'right homes' in the 'right place' and meeting housing needs for GM and aiming to empower communities to create the localities that they want.
- The Housing Strategy is committed to delivering 30,000 social houses and 50,000 affordable houses. Affordable housing has been defined as around 80% of the market value.
- Achieving Carbon neutrality and the implications for delivery of the City Region's homes is also made operational in the strategy.
- Successful delivery of The Housing Strategy requires enablers such as partnerships, collaborations and communities. The Strategy has been developed in consideration of the following:
 - Social care partnerships .
 - Looking at existing housing stock, and work around healthy housing services
 - Ongoing work tackling rough sleeping,
 - Linking in with education and skills.
- The Strategy dictates that homes delivered must be safe, healthy, and accessible.

Members welcomed the presentation and raised the following questions and comments:

A Member requested that the terminology/language encapsulate that some boroughs have a collection of townships rather than just 'district centres'. It was confirmed that this will be considered and reflected in the Strategy.

A Member asked whether Section 21 Notice is included in the strategy. It was confirmed that whilst it may not be explicitly referenced in the document, 'No-fault-evictions' are included directly.

A Member queried the level of involvement of planning departments to avoid any potential political domination in decisions. It was noted that engagement with both politicians and officers has taken place with engagement of planning leads involved from the consultation phase. All districts have had the opportunity to engage political leads.

A Member noted that current planning applications should include medical practices, doctors, schools, and roads.

In terms of supporting rough sleepers, the use of cubicles rather than dormitories was highlighted as being a more preferential solution. It was stated that A Bed Every Night has been successful, with continued reassurance that enough accommodation is available for those who need it.

It was stated that conversations are ongoing with Government to agree the housing deal in GM, with the City Region being required to commit to a higher housing number in order that grant funding is made available. It was highlighted that the Planning system alone is unlikely to deliver what is required for GM. It was noted that having aligned strategies such as the GMSF and Housing structure and infrastructure strategy is the best place to lobby government.

A Member queried whether the Strategy would be more accessible as a document if the evidence base were separated out to produce a technical summary. The point was also made that housing quality needs to be delivered and that brownfield sites are often not suitable for housing, and may not be appropriate. It was highlighted that the evidence base is required to highlight the foundations that the strategy has been based on. It was stated that the GMSF has policy that all new build houses will meet standards. In terms of the suitability of brownfield land, this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by assessing the broader picture.

A Member noted the importance that housing represents as it is part of the foundation that strong communities are based upon. They noted that education could also be included as it is a fundamental factor. The point was made that Brownfield sites can often become viewed as essential green space to the public when being used for that purpose for a duration of time. The issue of housing affordability was also stated as still being of concern. It was clarified that education is included within the Strategy but terminology will be looked at, and can be made more explicit in the document. In terms of the use of Brownfield being suitable, this decision on land use will always be made individually by committee at district level. The chronic under supply of affordable housing was noted. It was stated that a further evidence base is required in order to have further conversations around affordability.

Regarding rough sleeping, a Member made the point that to provide sufficiently safe shelter for women, they should be provided with separate accommodation. This point was noted, and a response will be fed back in due course. Examples of district infrastructure issue were given with services such as housing, doctors and schools being required.

A Member asked around the building regulation outcomes of the Grenfell Public Enquiry, whether any advanced devolved powers can be sought to address aspects such as suspension

of 'right to buy' to protect social housing stock, interventions into private rented sector, and more control of investment from Homes England. It was clarified that building regulations may still change as the Public Enquiry progresses, the high density and urban core will subsequently need a fire safety focus in GM. In regards to private rented sector additional powers, landlord licencing is limited to 20% ownership by the local authority area, unless the Secretary of State agrees to increase. There are instances where this has been permitted, if GM Council leaders agree that this is wanted, it can be explored. In terms of suspension of Right to Buy, it would not be permitted by GM at this time, but it was noted that the City Region must continue to challenge. Having more influence and control over housing needs in GM was highlighted as being needed.

A Member noted how viability and deliverability of housing proposals can be challenging and asked how the Strategy can assist with this. An example was given of how the pressure that local authorities face to get houses built which can sometimes mean potentially losing infrastructure investment from Section 106 monies to prevent from developers from pulling out. It was clarified that there are variances across GM with typically with market usually in south of conurbation being vibrant and active. The Strategy puts GM in a better position to develop expertise and means that all partners are pulling together. Building as many fit for purpose affordable houses is the key delivery outcome.

RESOLVED/-

- That the report be noted.
- That this Committee request a further report as the first version of the Implementation Plan is being finalised

M153/HPE THE SMART ENERGY PLAN

Sean Owen, GM Environment Team for the GMCA delivered a presentation. The presentation made the following points:

The consultants report/plan written by Energy Systems Catapult in conjunction with the GMCA and Electricity North West aims to:

1. Set out a region wide carbon neutral vision
 2. Highlight the challenge GM faces
 3. Highlight Priority areas
 4. Propose Strategic activity
 5. Propose 5yr road map
- GM aspires to be the leading region in the UK to enable the transition and benefit from the innovation and green growth potential, through a whole system approach
 - 72% of energy consumed within GM is from buildings, both domestic homes and non-domestic offices, industrial, public

- Growth The GM forecast for 2035 is to have approximately an additional 211,000 new homes, for 300,000 extra residents; and 6.6 million m² of additional commercial and industrial floor space.

This continued anticipated future growth to 2035 will, unless action is taken, lead to:

- An additional 2,400 GWh/yr. energy.
- An increase of 0.4Mt CO₂ emissions increase under business as usual activity.
- Which represents a 3% increase in energy consumption.

The National Infrastructure Assessment (July 2015) states that “most charging should be slow and smart”, but “fast and rapid chargers will be needed to tackle range anxiety.”

It was stated that there is a critical requirement for innovation to come forward in the fields of transport, heating (decarbonisation of heating).

A Member queried hydro generation as this is used in Stockport via community lead approach work. It was noted that this approach cannot work in silo, and requires innovation and finance mechanisms. New finance investment opportunities are needed for hydro, such as PV and battery storage. These measures should be reviewed as a means. Fish stocks and environment issues must always also be considered.

A Member asked around retrofitting and what districts do to support to achieve targets set for 2038. It was clarified it is unlikely that central funding will be available to support this, and each organisation should look out for opportunities, with enablers needed. It was noted that Renewable Heat Incentive is available with a viable business case. Battery storage was highlighted as needing an increase of 4 kilowatts, the cost of batteries is dropping.

The point was made that Councillors constituents main concern will likely be in the rates and the rises of domestic energy bills and that any move to greener sources must be economically viable. This could be achieved by value sharing propositions that are better utilised and used with more scale.

A Member noted that offering incentives such as rates for solar panels is key to success with part of the challenge to push government to assist with incentives. It was stated that energy providers must make the most of feeding tariffs. Some districts have utilised this area more effectively than others. It was noted that bringing this across the City Region could be a future role for the GMCA.

A Member stated that with many energy providers being private and not UK based, influencing to shift to renewable energy is challenging. This needs a GM coordinated push to seek green suppliers.

RESOLVED/-

That the contents of the ESC report, its recommendations and Roadmap be noted

M154/HPE GMS SIX MONTHLY UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

It was highlighted that the timing of this report being taken to this Scrutiny could be reconsidered in order to get a more complete and detailed report which may come in 1-2 months after April.

It was highlighted that the report sets out a broad set of issues which this Committee scope covers. The areas not rated as 'Green' were:

- Housing Deal – position with Government still talking about housing package, some work has stalled in terms of governance arrangements for Housing package proposition.
- Waste - delay in national strategy

Members queried how far short the GM housing figures were of Government targets. Government expect a figure of 227 200, which was the original number proposed in the 2016 GMSF. Since then, the Local Housing Need Methodology was used to inform the estimate in the revised GMSF 2019 which came up with a housing need of 201,000. The gap of 27,000 has been stated as being needed to be filled by housing dealers with a rationale that GM should be delivering these. It was stated that other areas in the UK have had this issue, with only Oxfordshire making progress. It was clarified that there is a possibility that Government may be beginning to move away from the relationship where target figures are required to release funding. It is hoped that a practical relationship in terms of housing delivery is developed. It was stated that the succession of different housing ministers has presented some challenges in progressing this work.

The Euro Ignition Project which was noted as being rated as 'amber' was clarified as the Urban Innovation Action which is European Funding RDF for innovation projects around green infrastructure, (green walls green rooves) using sustainable urban drainage systems to support environment. Development pipeline to attract investors both public and private. Funding has been secured and wont be lost despite Brexit outcome.

A Member fed back on the format of this item which is presented as a streamlined version of the annual report, which represents a useful halfway marker on where this Committee is up to. Regarding the entry on the Assessment GM's Ability to Address 2020 action – Some were highlighted as not being completed, and it would be useful to complete these, even with a brief update to provide a high level update.

A Member noted the Go Neutral work, and asked around the selection process of the 11 business cases. It was clarified that the Go Neutral campaign resulted as an outcome following the 2018 Green Summit, Arup offered to conduct work pro bono. All GM Districts were requested to come forward with sites or land capable of supporting generation storage or heating assets. Business cases were put forward with 11 selected from 4 districts. These were selected form primarily brownfield sites which are not due to be developed on but capable of generation asset. More details of these case studies can be requested to come back to this Committee at a later date.

RESOLVED/-

That the report be noted.

M155 /HPE WORK PROGRAMME

It will be for the new committee in new municipal year to determine its own work programme at the meeting 11th June.

RESOLVED/-

That the Work Programme be noted.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

M156/HPE TFGM UPDATE ON TRANSPORT FOR THE NORTH ISSUES

Report of Simon Warburton, Transport Strategy Director, TfGM

RESOLVED/-

That the report be noted.

M157/HPE REGISTER OF KEY DECISIONS

https://www.gmcameetings.co.uk/downloads/download/92/register_of_key_decisions

RESOLVED/-

That the report be noted.

M158/HPE DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 11th June 2019 10.00, Boardroom, Churchgate House