

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GM POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL HELD ON FRIDAY  
29 JANUARY 2021 VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**PRESENT:**

Councillor Nadim Muslim	Bolton Council
Councillor David Jones	Bury Council
Councillor Nigel Murphy	Manchester City Council – (In the Chair)
Councillor Steve Williams	Oldham Council
Councillor Janet Emsley	Rochdale Council
Councillor David Lancaster	Salford City Council
Councillor Amanda Peers	Stockport Council
Councillor Allison Gwynne	Tameside Council
Councillor Graham Whitham	Trafford Council
Councillor Kevin Anderson	Wigan Council
Angela Lawrence	Independent Member

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Andy Burnham	GM Mayor
Baroness Beverley Hughes	GM Deputy Mayor
Ian Pilling	Acting Chief Constable, GMP
Robert Potts	Assistant Chief Constable, GMP
Chris Sykes	Assistant Chief Constable, GMP
Dave Russel	Chief Fire Officer, GMF&RS

**OFFICERS:**

Kevin Lee	Director GM Mayor's Office
Clare Monaghan	Director Policing, Crime and Fire, GMCA
Jeanette Staley	Salford City Council & GM Police and Crime Policy Lead
Gwynne Williams	Deputy Monitoring Officer, GMCA
Sarah Keaveny	Head of Comms, GMCA
Steve Annette	GMCA Governance and Scrutiny
Paul Harris	GMCA Governance and Scrutiny
Joanne Herron	GMCA Governance and Scrutiny
Paul Fearnhead	Area Manager, GMF&RS

**APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received on behalf Carolyn Wilkins, Lead Chief Executive, Policing, Fire and Crime, and Majid Hussain, Independent Member.

**PFCP/01/21 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items raised.

**PFCP/02/21 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2020**

**RESOLVED/-**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2020 be approved as a correct record.

**PFCP/03/21**

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made.

**PCFP/04/21**

**INITIAL RESPONSE TO HMIC REPORT  
GM POLICE PRECEPT DECISIONS FOR 2021/22**

Opening the discussion, the Chair proposed, and members agreed, that due to the commonality of many of the issues involved it would be helpful to consider together the proposals in relation to the precept and the report of the Acting Chief Constable on initial responses to the findings within the HMIC report.

The Greater Manchester Mayor then set out for the Panel a full statement on the HMIC report and the wider implications this presented for Greater Manchester Police going forward. He indicated that the HMIC report had necessarily prompted himself and the Deputy Mayor to undertake a frank reflection and critical assessment of the background to its findings. They acknowledged that there were longstanding issues about recording of crimes and support to victims by the Force, and whilst the Force had made some progress this had not been sustained. Funding cuts since 2010 had clearly had an impact on GMP's overall capability and performance, and whilst the reduction of £215M and loss of 2000 officers was a major cause of the problems identified by HMIC, it was their view not the only cause.

The Mayor indicated that he and the Deputy Mayor had reflected at length on the operational, structural, and cultural problems that prevented GMP being the Force that it should be. The Force had been slow to respond to changing times and changing demands upon it and had too often underplayed problems and failed to keep the Mayor and Deputy Mayor fully in the loop. In the light of the HMIC report the need now was for an open, honest, and critical review of the Force's practices and culture and to make positive changes building on the many examples of outstanding work and the dedication of many individuals, with the ambition of creating a culture of positive, accountable, victim-centred policing. He welcomed the initial actions taken by the Acting Chief Constable to begin that process and to sustain public confidence in the Greater Manchester Force.

The Deputy Mayor indicated that the Mayor's statement represented their joint view, and she reiterated the difficulties they had jointly encountered within a culture that was overly defensive and persistently resisted openness at the very top of the structure, and her own belief that the Force could not move forward without a change in leadership. She extended her thanks to the Acting Chief Constable for quickly picking up the immediate challenges and the positive messages coming from him both to the Force and to the public. She expressed confidence that GMP could and would rise to successfully meet the challenges ahead.

Turning to the consideration of the precept proposals, the Mayor indicated that the maximum precept allowed by the Government was £15 for Band D properties. A revised report containing responses to the public consultation which had concluded at midnight on the 28th January 2021 was provided at the meeting, from which it was clear that there was less appetite for the application of the maximum precept increase of £15 than there had been in previous years. The revised proposal was therefore for an increase of £10 which was

considered absolutely essential for the delivery of the operational plans for GMP in 2021/22 including the recruitment of 325 new frontline officers for Greater Manchester, but the impact of reducing the proposed precept increase to £10 would be a corresponding reduction of £3.8m in the income raised which would set total funding for police and crime in 2021/22 at £671m, an increase of £25.8m on the 2020/21 funding level, but lower than the level of funding anticipated by the Home Office in its assumption that all areas would implement the maximum precept rise.

The Panel noted that any increase in precept funding was effectively recurrent and therefore to not increase by the full £15 would involve recurrent impacts on police and crime funding from 2021/22 onwards, and that in order to manage its finances GMP will need to identify savings within the service, though the proposals for neighbourhood policing, the number of officers to be recruited and the major deliverables described in the original budget proposal were not expected to be affected by this change.

The financial impact for each Council Tax band of a £10 increase was reported as follows -

#### COUNCIL TAX BANDS

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
2021/22 proposed precept	145.53	169.78	194.04	218.30	266.81	315.32	363.83	436.60
2020/21 PCC precept	138.86	162.01	185.15	208.30	254.58	300.87	347.16	416.60
Change (£ per year)	6.67	7.77	8.89	10.00	12.23	14.45	16.67	20.00

The Chair then opened the meeting for contributions and questioning by members, and responses by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and the Acting Chief Constable, that included -

- Members welcomed the Mayor’s full and frank assessment of the situation facing the Force, and the pragmatic approach to reduce the level of the precept for 2021/22, but they sought reassurance that the budget shortfall would not impact on key priorities. Responding, the Mayor indicated that the budget reduction of £3.8M represented 0.5% of the overall Force budget. The Force would continue to have sufficient resources to support continued recruitment, but it would be up to the Acting Chief Constable and his team to identify at an early stage where operational savings could be achieved without impacts on key services.
- Members supported the imperative for change outlined by the Mayor but remained sceptical that everything that needed to be done could be done to achieve the desired operational model. The Mayor acknowledged that members were entitled to reserve judgement at this stage, but he referred to the inherent strengths within the Force, which when combined with the Panel’s pivotal role as a critical friend in the process going forward, must provide a measure of confidence for the future.
- The Panel welcomed and supported the hard work and commitment of police officers and stressed the importance that public confidence was retained during the change process, specifically in terms of neighbourhood and partnership working where so much progress had already been achieved. Politicians had to accept their responsibilities to act both as scrutineers and critical friends in a governance process that required openness and transparency and access to reliable evidence-based data. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor acknowledged the key role that local members would

play in identifying local priorities and improved community working and cooperation.

- Members reflected on the many positive achievements made by the Force in recent years, not least the degree of diversity achieved in the workforce that had delivered a young and diverse public facing image that better reflected the community mix in Greater Manchester, together with the commitment to neighbourhood policing, engagement and accountability, and many positive elements of community work emerging from the Covid-19 emergency. The Deputy Mayor acknowledged that whilst a lot of challenges remained there were also many strengths to be built upon.
- The commitment to maintain the recruitment of a further 325 police officers in 2021/22 on top of the 667 previously established and supported by this Panel and the public through the precept was welcomed, though it was also recognised that this itself would place pressures on the Force in terms of training and mentoring, and careful succession planning for the loss of experienced officers retiring from the Force.

Whereupon –

#### **MOTION MADE AND SECONDED /-**

In agreeing the proposal to increase the precept, the Panel is disappointed that instead of fairly funding the police directly, the Government continues to expect an increase to residents Council Tax bills, this time by £15 per Band D household, despite the inequalities and unfairness of the system. This is especially disturbing at a time of such uncertainty when residents across Greater Manchester are worried about the future of their jobs and how they make ends meet. We note that the £10 increase in precept leaves a £3.8m reduction in funding for this year and in future years and call on Central Government to properly fund the Police Service in Greater Manchester.

We acknowledge that last year's increase in precept delivered continued investment in neighbourhood policing including a named and contactable Neighbourhood Beat Officer and Police Community Support Officer for each ward in Greater Manchester. In addition, GMP is introducing a full-time school liaison officer in schools across Greater Manchester in the greatest need and request it. Investment has been made in an online crime reporting system alongside the improvements to the telephone system that has seen an improvement in the 101 service.

This year's increase in precept will contribute to schemes including:

- Funding for training and equipment cost for the 325 new officers.
- A new approach to safeguarding with 150 officers to keep our most vulnerable victims safe.
- Initiatives to reduce death and serious injury on the roads, supporting conventional enforcement with a more localised approach to educate drivers, including pilots of community lead speed-watch schemes.

We welcome the continued support given to Community Safety Partnerships and voluntary sector organisations giving them additional resources to tackle on a local basis issues including ASB, support victims of domestic and sexual abuse, and work on reducing offending and re-offending.

The Motion being then put, there voted -

**FOR the motion (9)**

Councillors Anderson, Emsley, Gwynne, Jones, Lancaster, Murphy, Peers, Whitham and Williams so voting.

**AGAINST the Motion (2)**

Lawrence (Independent Member) and Muslim so voting.

**Abstentions (0)**

The Chair declared the Motion to be **CARRIED**, and it was –

**RESOLVED /-**

1. In agreeing the proposal to increase the precept, the Panel is disappointed that instead of fairly funding the police directly, the Government continues to expect an increase to residents Council Tax bills, this time by £15 per Band D household, despite the inequalities and unfairness of the system. This is especially disturbing at a time of such uncertainty when residents across Greater Manchester are worried about the future of their jobs and how they make ends meet. We note that the £10 increase in precept leaves a £3.8m reduction in funding for this year and in future years and call on Central Government to properly fund the Police Service in Greater Manchester.

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2. To receive and welcome the report of the Acting Chief Constable on the initial actions and responses made by Greater Manchester Police to the findings of the HMIC report.

**PCFP/05/21 GREATER MANCHESTER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET 2021/22**

Steve Wilson GMCA Treasurer introduced a report which informed members of the proposed budget for Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) budget for 2021/22 and

updated Medium Term Financial Plan. The precept proposals for GMFRS in 2021/22 will form part of the Mayoral General Budget and Precept Proposals report to GMCA on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021. The Panel noted that the precept was to be retained at the same level for 2020/21 without implications for staffing levels. The Service exhibited a robust financial position with adequate levels of reserves going forward.

A member sought and received an assurance that not raising the precept level did not involve implications in terms of delivering the ambitions within the Fire Plan. Other members enquired whether there were any plans to review the number of station managers, and the Chief Fire Officer indicated that going forward it would be reasonable to envisage various areas of efficiency review and he welcomed members' willingness to embrace cultural change where that was found to be necessary. A member asked that a report be brought to a future meeting providing a breakdown of the Fire Service estate and its current valuation.

The Deputy Mayor indicated that there was considerable scope for the Government to better fund core fire services, emphasising that the standstill on the fire precept resulted in part from budget easement from planned recruitment that had not been fully realised in 2020/21 due to the Covid-10 emergency.

#### **RESOLVED/-**

1. To support the overall budget proposed for the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service in 2021/22; the proposed use of reserves to support both the Revenue and Capital budgets; the proposed Fire Service Capital Programme and proposals for funding, and the medium-term financial position for the Fire and Rescue Service covered by the Mayoral Precept.
2. To note that at the GMCA meeting on 12 February 2021 there will be an updated budget submitted, consistent with the precept proposals, and reflecting final tax base and Collection Fund calculations. and the final Revenue Support Grant settlement.

#### **PFCP/07/21 IOPS UPDATE**

ACC Sykes., GMP introduced a paper and provided members with an update on the progress in the continuing development of GMP's iOPS technology. He reported that Version 7 of Police Works was successfully launched in January and provided several welcome enhancements. A programme of further improvements to the platform was planned during the year ahead.

The Chair thanked the officers for the advance notice given of the downtime associated with the recent system upgrade. A member expressed concern about the lack of access to detailed local crime statistics. ACC Sykes agreed to look into these concerns as in his view substantial crime data should be readily available at local level.

Responding to members about the current levels of service compared to initial implementation, ACC Sykes cited examples of system stability, intelligence, search facilities and data security as positive outcomes, but accepted that challenges remained in terms of system speeds and individual elements of functionality.

#### **RESOLVED/-**

1. That the update be noted.

**PFCP/08/21            EU TRADE AND COOPERATION AGREEMENT- SECURITY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT**

A PowerPoint presentation provided Members with an EU Systems overview and an impact update post EU exit.

The Deputy Mayor indicated that the report highlighted the number of areas where ‘work Arounuds’ had been made necessary to replace previous direct access arrangements, which will continue to have impacts both in terms of demands on officer time and also delays in accessing essential information and initiating timely responses.

**RESOLVED/-**

That the presentation be noted.

**PFCP/09/21    DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 23 March 2021 at 3.00pm MS Teams

DRAFT