

Item 4

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GMCA CORPORATE ISSUES AND REFORM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE TUESDAY 19 JUNE 2018 1.00PM, AT TRAFFORD TOWN HALL

PRESENT

Councillor Nathan Evans	Trafford Council (Chair)
Councillor Hamid Khurram	Bolton Council
Councillor Tim Pickstone	Bury Council
Councillor Annette Wright	Manchester City Council
Councillor Raymond Dutton	Rochdale Council (Substitute)
Councillor Peter Malcolm	Rochdale Council
Councillor David Jolley	Salford City Council
Councillor Yvonne Guariento	Stockport Council
Councillor John Bell	Tameside Council
Councillor Gillian Peet	Tameside Council

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Dawn Docx	Interim Chief Fire Officer, Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service (GMFRS)
Leon Parkes	Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Service Support, GMFRS
Gwynne Williams	Deputy Monitoring Officer, GMCA
Richard Paver	Treasurer, GMCA
Jane Forrest	Assistant Director, Public Service Reform, GMCA
Maura Appleby	Stockport Council
Susan Ford	Statutory Scrutiny Officer, GMCA
Emma Stonier	Governance and Scrutiny, GMCA

CI/01/18 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR 2018/19

The Statutory Scrutiny Officer asked for nominations from Members for the role of Chair for the 2018/19 Municipal Year. Councillor Peter Malcolm (Lab, Rochdale) proposed Councillor Nathan Evans (Con, Trafford) and Councillor John Bell (Con, Tameside) seconded the proposal. It was agreed that Councillor Nathan Evans (Con, Trafford) be appointed as Chair

of the Corporate Issues and Reform Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2018/19 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Nathan Evans (Trafford) be appointed as Chair of the Committee for the 2018/19 Municipal Year.

CI/02/18 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR 2018/19

The Chair asked for nominations for the role of Vice-Chair. Councillor Nathan Evans (Con, Trafford) proposed Councillor John Bell (Con, Tameside) and Councillor Gillian Peet (Lab, Tameside) seconded the proposal. It was agreed that Councillor John Bell (Con, Tameside) be appointed as Vice-Chair for the 2018/19 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor John Bell (Tameside) be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2018/19 Municipal Year.

CI/03/18 MEMBERSHIP FOR THE 2018/19 MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Committee noted its Membership appointed by the GMCA on 25 May 2018 for the 2018/18 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED:

That Membership for the 2018/19 Municipal Year be noted.

CI/04/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Stella Smith (Bury Council), Linda Holt (Stockport), Ann Duffield (Trafford Council), Colin McLaren (Oldham) and Joanne Marshall (Wigan).

CI/05/18 MEMBER'S CODE OF CONDUCT AND ANNUAL DECLARATION OF INTEREST FORM

Members noted the Code of Conduct for their GMCA role. Members were reminded to complete the annual declaration of interest form and return it to the Governance and Scrutiny Officer within 28 days of their appointment onto the Committee.

RESOLVED:

1. That Members noted the code of conduct.
2. That Members complete the annual declaration of interest form within 28 days of their appointment onto the Committee.

CI/06/18 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Member's received the Terms of Reference for the Corporate Issues and Reform Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Terms of Reference be noted.

CI/07/18 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

There were no Chair's Announcements or urgent business raised.

CI/08/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

CI/09/18 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 18TH APRIL 2018

The minutes of the meeting held 18th April 2018 were submitted for consideration.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18th April 2018 be approved as an accurate record.

CI/10/18 SCHOOL READINESS UPDATE

Jane Forrest, Assistant Director Public Service Reform (PSR) GMCA, presented a report which provided an update on the School Readiness Work Programme in GM.

Members raised the following comments and questions:

-) A Member asked how localities were to be made aware of the local picture for school readiness. Engagement with localities had taken place regarding the GM measurements; local measures would feed into the data collection system and working with local leads was intended to ensure that the picture for localities is understood and identifiable.
-) How it was intended to engage with the pre-school nursery provision sector? Officers informed Members that work was underway to strengthen the links between health services (in particular health visitors) and early year's settings. Training has been rolled out on settings and lead staff appointed to assist with relationship building at a local level. The parent programme was also highlighted as being a strong lead into resource available.
-) That schools had raised concerns about mental health issues in children at primary age level and above and how the school readiness agenda aligned with this? The importance of peri-natal attachment to mental health was highlighted and it was noted that parenting programmes had positive outcomes for children with behavioural problems and/or mental health issues. Improving transition planning, from nursery to school, was a key component and setting standards for this was being considered.
-) What would be the difference between GM school readiness measurements and national measurements? Officers noted that the key difference would be around timings. GM wants to identify potential problems at an earlier stage so that support can be provided prior to a child reaching school. The supporting measure of success for this was currently being developed.
-) A Member raised the ongoing issue of children starting school who were not toilet trained. GM needs to get better at identifying children in need that require more intensive support. It was hoped that the data work underway would help to assist with identifying children and families who required this support. Workforce development and training with early year's staff was also planned.

-) Concern about the rise in the number of children on the child protection register and the ambitious 2020 target for this work was noted in relation to this context.
-) The potential implications on schools needed to be assessed and consideration as to how this was managed was required.
-) Issues around the identification of mental health problems and access to support was highlighted and it was questioned whether there would be more educational psychologists required to support earlier interventions? At pre-school level mental health issues were expected to be outlined in the Education/Health Care Plan. The evidence base for mental health treatments for children under 5/6 was not robust and a broader menu of early mental health interventions was important.
-) Queries were raised about how the school readiness work would translate into practice and whether there was the requisite funding and resources available for implementation. Officers noted the importance of sharing good practice in improving measurements and the use of data in driving improvements. The data collected should enable targeted investment decisions and the identification of those children and families which need the most support. Workforce development and the ability to identify early warning signs was also a key strand to maximise the impact and skills of those working with families to improve outcomes.
-) That it would be helpful if future reports included the previous baseline so progress could be effectively assessed.
-) Clarity was sought regarding when the 2 year School Readiness Action Plan had commenced. Officers confirmed that the start date had been 1 April 2018. Members requested that the report scheduled for November 2018 included progress made against the action plan.
-) Had there had been any pushback from localities regarding the recommended actions/measurements? Officers noted that the GMCA had worked with localities to understand joint priorities and identify gaps. The final plan and priorities had been developed in partnership.
-) A Member asked whether there was any specific developments relating to children entering school who either no English or with English as a second language. It was highlighted that one of the school readiness measurements in development looked at increasing communication and language development. The University of Manchester has also carried out research tracking these children and this has indicated that in the majority of cases they catch up with their peers.

Members requested that the report recommendations were strengthened to state that ‘the Corporate Issues and Reform Overview and Scrutiny Committee will assist with the development of the School Readiness Programme’.

RESOLVED:

-) That the Committed assisted with driving the delivery and development of the School Readiness work programme.
-) That the GMCA would work with the Committee’s task and finish group for School Readiness to support work programme delivery.

CI/11/18 GMFRS PERFORMANCE OUTTURN 2017/18

Dawn Docx, Interim Chief Fire Officer, gave a report which provided an overview of the GMFRS's achievements and performance against its purpose and aims over the preceding year.

Key items highlighted were;

-) There had been a small increase in deliberate fires compared with 2016/17, with the largest proportion of these being related to loose refuse, wheelie bins or small refuse/rubbish/recycle containers. Work was underway with partners to tackle this.
-) That the average response time was within the target of 5 minutes 45 seconds at 5 minutes 38 seconds.
-) 97.36% of appliances were crewed and available during 2017/18, was an improvement when compared to the 96.84% reported in 2016/17.
-) Frontline uniformed establishment is 1239 and was currently showing a shortfall of 147 firefighters. GMFRS had a significant recruitment campaign underway and was aiming to recruit 332 firefighters over 2 years.
-) Accidental dwelling fires had increased by 2.77% (55) when compared to 2016/17. This was the highest proportion of all the met brigades and research was being undertaken as to the reasons for this.
-) There had been 21 fatalities as a result of fire incidents; the highest it had been for 5 years. This included the 4 fatalities at the Walkden incident and fatalities related to suicide.
-) The number of false alarms increased by 3.6% (489) when compared to 2016/17 and 42% of false alarms originate from a non-domestic automatic fire alarm (FADA). Work was required to reduce this figure.
-) The volume of business safety activities was down. It was highlighted that this was reflective of the number of specialist Fire Safety staff being below establishment and following the Grenfell Tower major incident, resources being redistributed in support of the High Rise Task Force and associated activities.
-) Hostilities against firefighters had increased by 50% (31). This was noted as being unacceptable and GMFRS was working with key partners to reduce these. This increase had also been seen nationally.
-) The recruitment campaign underway has had a significant focus on attracting females and BAME groups into the service to ensure it is more representative of the communities in GM.

Members raised the following comments and questions:

-) What work was GMFRS undertaking to tackle sickness absences and provide support to firefighters suffering from mental health issues? GMFRS had introduced TRIM, an intervention developed by the Army to help deal with stresses. This was a tailored service and early indications were showing it was proving successful. Work has also been undertaken to reduce the stigma around mental health and to raise awareness about recognising signs of mental health problems.
-) Whether GMFRS intended to run a media campaign, relating to hostilities against firefighters, to assist with tackling this issue. Campaigns, via social media, are all year

round regarding hostilities, especially at key times of year such as bonfire night. All attacks against firefighters were also logged. It was noted that more work was required to reduce these numbers.

-) Members welcomed the commitment to increasing diversity and asked what actions had been taken by the Positive Action Team to reach out to under-represented groups. Members were informed that GMFRS had targeted groups, visiting a diverse range of organisations, for example gyms, mosques and community centres to engage with and demonstrate the role of a firefighter. There has also been opportunities to attend firefighter taster days.
-) Was there a specific reason why the number of firefighters was not at the level required? Members were informed that recruitment had been on hold and this needed to be considered in the context of austerity and the requirement, like all public services, to make savings and efficiencies.
-) Whether smoking was still a significant cause of accidental fires? It was confirmed that this remained an issue, as well as new risks from e-cigarettes, and that this continued to form a part of the prevention agenda.
-) The differences in reporting between fire services was highlighted and Members asked whether there were any plans to align reporting to enable effective comparison between services. Fire Services now fell under the remit of HMICFRS and would be in their inspection regime this year. It was expected that this would be looked at as part of their inspection agenda.
-) Incidents of malicious false alarms were raised and clarity sought around what these were. It was confirmed that these related to incidents where fire alarm systems have been deliberately activated or have contacted North West Fire Control indicating an occurrence of fire when this is not the case. GMFRS was committed to reducing these numbers.
-) A Member asked whether the crewed and available figure of 97.3% was for all appliances or for those rostered to be available. This was managed on a day-to-day basis and the main reasons impacting this were noted as being; reductions in available staff, sickness absence, annual and emergency leave and overall operational staffing numbers.
-) Attention was drawn to the increase in safe and well checks and Members asked whether there was evidence to support the benefit and impact of these. Members were updated that work had been done to assess the benefits and the future role of safe and well checks was being included in the review of GMFRS's prevention services.
-) Whether GMFRS worked with partners across GM in relation to suicide prevention? GMFRS worked with other partners as part of their ongoing prevention strategy. A Member stressed that it was important they were involved with the GM Multi-Agency Suicide Prevention Strategy.
-) A Member highlighted the work GMFRS undertook with the Prince's Trust which was not included in the report.
-) Members asked for clarity around the reasons for the gender pay gap figures. This was the first year this had been published and GMFRS needed to better understand these figures. The gap has reduced as the fire service figures have now been included within the overall GMCA figures.

-) Member's raised the possibility of the Committee visiting the new training centre at Bury to assist new and current Members in carrying out their scrutiny function in relation to fire. It was confirmed that a visit will be arranged.

RESOLVED:

-) That the GMFRS performance for 2017/18 was noted.
-) That a visit to the Fire Training Centre at Bury was arranged for all Members.

CI/12/18 PROGRAMME UPDATE – SCRUTINY PANEL BRIEF

Dawn Docx, Interim Chief Fire Officer, presented a report which provided an update on the progress of the GMFRS Programme for Change. The Programme for Change is being driven by the need to understand the future requirement for firefighter resources. Consultation was due to take place with staff, members of the public and the Corporate Issues and Reform Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The review will focus on 3 core aspects of provision; prevention, protection and response provision. Governance arrangements were outlined and it was noted that there was a Trade Union Forum, a Staff Reference Group and an Independent Advisory Panel (IAP) which will all feed into the Programme Board. Membership of the IAP has been drawn from the wider GMCA and includes the Chief Constable, the Director of HR at Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) and the HR Transition Lead at the GMCA. The Committee will be provided with regular reports on progress and the final report was expected in 2019.

Members raised the following questions and comments;

-) That this approach provided an opportunity to apply the lessons learnt, outlined in the Kerslake Report, within GMFRS.
-) That the IAP membership was drawn from local organisations. It was therefore asked whether there was any opportunity to have another panel member from an external organisation, for example another fire service. It was highlighted that the panel included the Chief Constable of GMP, representing a uniform organisation, who had had success in increasing workforce diversity. Additionally the IAP included other sectors which GMFRS could learn from.
-) Whether the review could look at re-introducing fire safety inspections in schools. It was confirmed that this would be taken back for consideration in the review.

RESOLVED:

That the update on progress of the GMFRS Programme for Change was noted.

CI/13/18 a) GMCA CONSTITUTION REVIEW 2018/19

Members received a report on the GMCA Governance Review. The report had been presented to the GMCA on 27 April 2018 and the Committee were asked to note the decisions made by the Mayor and the GMCA.

The Fire Committee had been disbanded on 9th May and the Home Office had agreed to amend the Fire Order to enable responsibility to be delegated from the Mayor to the Deputy

Mayor (Policing and Crime). Permission was also being sought to rename the Police and Crime Panel and Police, Crime and Fire Panel.

A final decision regarding the set-up of the Waste and Recycling Committee was expected at the GMCA on 29 June 2018. Two nominations had been requested from each district (except Wigan) for this committee. Views were also being sought from districts as to the functions, size and membership of the Transport for Greater Manchester Committee (TfGMC). It had been decided to reconstitute the existing TfGMC until the end of July.

Members commented that clarity was needed about the functions of Scrutiny and the Police, Crime and Fire Panel in holding the fire service to account. Political representation on the Police, Crime and Fire Panel was also highlighted and it was requested that consideration was given to the panel including cross party political representation.

A Member asked about blue light collaboration and specifically whether the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) had been incorporated in the governance review. NWAS are not under the remit of the GMCA and therefore do not fall within GMCA governance procedures. It was also noted that the Health Scrutiny Committee receives regular reports on NWAS Performance. There is a statutory duty to look at collaboration and where possible plans are shared and training coordinated between services.

b) KEY DECISIONS AND BUDGET SCRUTINY

Members considered a report which clarified the GMCA's implementation of the key decision process regarding financial matters, proposed that the financial threshold for key decisions was amended in two instances and reviewed the current budget scrutiny arrangements and sought approval to an amendment to the Committee's call-in arrangements. The amendment proposed was that if the Committee had had an opportunity to scrutinise the budget then this would not be subject to call-in procedures.

Members highlighted the proposal to exclude from the GMCA's financial threshold of £500,000 key decisions relating to the settlement of any actual or threatened legal proceedings and requested that the Scrutiny Committee was provided with information regarding these retrospectively. Officers confirmed that a mechanism to report back on these would be incorporated into the amendments.

In relation to budget scrutiny Members stated that it was crucial the Committee had the opportunity to scrutinise budget proposals in full prior to submission to the GMCA.

RESOLVED:

-) That the Committee noted that the following categories of delegated decisions to officers do not constitute key decisions as in each case they are about the implementation of a previous decision agreed by the GMCA and /or the Mayor, which scrutiny has had the opportunity to review:
 - i. Any decision to borrow money to meet the short term borrowing requirements of the GMCA, to fund the approved capital programme, to refinance maturing debt or to restructure the long term borrowing of the GMCA in line with the provisions of the Treasury Management Strategy approved by the GMCA;

- ii. Any decision to invest funds in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy approved by the GMCA;
- iii. The acceptance of tenders for contracts wholly or mainly involving capital expenditure where the GMCA's approval to the detailed capital scheme has previously been issued.

) That it be agreed that the GMCA's financial threshold of £500,000 for key decisions is amended to exclude decisions in the following categories:

- i. The settlement of any actual or threatened legal proceedings in the interests of the GMCA (the Committee requested that there a retrospective reporting mechanism be incorporated into procedures for these decisions);
- ii. The payment of 'passported' grants from central government whose grant conditions include express instructions on how and where monies are spent, so that the GMCA or the Mayor are unable to vary any aspect of the payment of that grant. Currently the Bus Service Operators Grants fall within this category.

) That it be agreed that the Corporate Issues and Reform Overview & Scrutiny Committee's Call-In Arrangements were amended in relation to its Budget Scrutiny functions as follows:

Budget Scrutiny

Provided that the views and recommendations (if any) of the Corporate Issues & Reform Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the proposals for the Transport levy, Waste levy and statutory contributions, non-mayoral GMCA Budget, Mayor's draft General Budget and Mayoral combined authority precept have been formally reported to both the Mayor and the GMCA and considered by them, the decisions of the GMCA to set the annual budgets, levies and precept shall not be susceptible to call in.

CI/14/18 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received the draft work programme for 2018/19. The Statutory Scrutiny Officer informed Members that the GMCA Head of Communications had requested that the GMCA Communications and Engagement Strategy Report was deferred to September. This was agreed by the Committee.

It was agreed that a 30 minute session would be held prior to the next meeting on 17 July 2018 to allow Members to focus on the work programme.

RESOLVED:

That the Statutory Scrutiny Officer update the work programme as noted above.

CI/15/18 FUTURE MEETING DATES

The Committee agreed the following programme of meetings for the Municipal Year 2018/19;

-) Tuesday 17 July 2018 at 6.00pm at Churchgate House, Manchester
-) Tuesday 21 August 2018 at 6.00 at Churchgate House, Manchester
-) Tuesday 18 September 2018 at 6.00pm at Churchgate House, Manchester
-) Tuesday 23 October 2018 at 6.00pm at Churchgate House, Manchester
-) Tuesday 20 November 2018 at 6.00pm at Churchgate House, Manchester
-) Tuesday 11 December 2018 at 6.00pm at Churchgate House, Manchester
-) Tuesday 22 January 2019 at 1.00pm at a venue to be confirmed
-) Tuesday 12 February 2019 at 6.00pm at Churchgate House, Manchester
-) Tuesday 19 March 2019 at 6.00pm at Churchgate House, Manchester
-) Tuesday 16 April 2019 at 6.00pm at Churchgate House, Manchester
-) Tuesday 21 May 2019 at 6.00pm at Churchgate House, Manchester
-) Tuesday 18 June 2019 at 6.00pm at Churchgate House, Manchester
-) Tuesday 16 July 2019 at 6.00pm at Churchgate House, Manchester