MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GMCA CORPORATE ISSUES AND REFORM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WEDNESDAY 18 APRIL 2018 6.00PM, AT CHURCHGATE HOUSE, MANCHESTER

PRESENT

Councillor Nathan Evans  Trafford Council (Chair)
Councillor Debbie Newall  Bolton Council
Councillor Stella Smith  Bury Council
Councillor Pickstone  Bury Council
Councillor Zahra Alijah  Manchester City Council
Councillor Luke Raikes  Manchester City Council
Councillor Colin McLaren  Oldham Council
Councillor Ateeque Ur Rehman  Oldham Council
Councillor Peter Malcolm  Rochdale Council (Substitute Member)
Councillor David Jolley  Salford City Council
Councillor Yvonne Guariento  Stockport Council
Councillor John McGahan  Stockport Council
Councillor John Bell  Tameside Council
Councillor Leanne Feeley  Tameside Council

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Andy Burnham  GM Mayor
Eamonn Boylan  Chief Executive, GMCA
Simon Nokes  Executive Director, GMCA
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
Paul Argyle  Multi-Agency Strategic Advisor to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, GMCA
Claire Norman  Director of Communications and Engagement, GMCA
CI/52/17 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Neil Butterworth (Rochdale Council) and Joanne Marshall (Wigan).

CI/53/17 CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

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

CI/54/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Peter Malcolm and Debbie Newall declared a Personal Interest in ‘Item 5 – The Response to the Kerslake Report’ by virtue of receiving a Firefighters’ Pension from GMFRS.

CI/55/17 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 20TH FEBRUARY 2018

The minutes of the meeting held 20th February 2018 and notes from the inquorate meeting held on 20th March 2018 were submitted for consideration.

Resolved/-

1. That the minutes of the Meeting held 20th February 2018 be approved as an accurate record.

2. That the notes from the inquorate meeting held on 20th March 2018, be noted.

CI/56/17 THE RESPONSE TO THE KERSLAKE REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of Dawn Docx, Interim Chief Fire Officer, GMFRS which detailed The Kerslake Report: an independent review into the preparedness for, and emergency response to, the Manchester Arena attack on 22nd May 2017 that was published on 27th March 2018. An extract from The Kerslake Report which referred to ‘The response of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) to the Arena attack, was detailed at the Appendix to the report. This report was requested by the Chair of the Committee.

The GM Mayor, Andy Burnham was in attendance and advised that he had commissioned a non-statutory independent review of the events and aftermath of the Manchester Arena
Terrorist Attack in July 2017 as part of his role as Police and Crime Commissioner. The Review had focused on Greater Manchester’s preparedness for and response to the attack and the nine days that followed it. The Independent Review was chaired by Lord Bob Kerslake, the former Head of the Civil Service. The Review made a number of recommendations for Greater Manchester emergency services, Government, other local and national bodies, and the media. The report highlighted several areas that went well, which included:

- Investment in emergency planning meant people were generally able to act with a high degree of confidence.
- Actions by individuals and organisations on the night demonstrated enormous bravery and compassion.
- Good judgement was exercised by key emergency personnel at critical points during the evening.
- The civic response was exceptional.
- Vital support and comfort was provided by family liaison officers and bereavement nurses.
- The removal of the deceased from the Arena was treated with care and sensitivity.

The Review also identified three key areas which did not go so well, which included:

- GMFRS did not arrive at the scene and therefore played no meaningful role in the response for two hours. That meant a valuable resource was not available to assist on the scene.
- The set-up of an effective emergency response line for families was seriously hampered by the complete failure of a telephony system provided by Vodafone. This caused considerable distress on the night to families who were frantically seeking to find out more information about what had happened to their loved ones.
- The Panel was shocked and dismayed by the accounts of the families of their experiences with some of the media. They spoke of being ‘hounded’ and of a ‘lack of respect’. The Panel believes that for families to have experienced such intrusive and overbearing behaviour at a time of such vulnerability was completely and unacceptable.

The outcomes of the Review were to help ensure that Greater Manchester could be fully prepared for any future incidents and also to share learning across the country. At the same time Greater Manchester was learning from colleagues in London and in other international cities where there have been terrorist attacks too. Dawn Docx advised that since the preparation of the report the outcomes of the Review had been discussed at a national level and the role of the National Inter-Agency Liaison Officer was now being clarified.

The Committee had a detailed discussion on the content of the response and raised the following queries and comments:-

A Member advised that she had recently attended a meeting of the Fire Task and Finish Group which had been set-up to co-design a focused performance report for GMFRS and suggested that a representative from the Fire Brigades Union could be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to discuss the morale of firefighters and how this could be improved moving forward. In response, Andy Burnham supported this request.
A Member advised that at the meeting of the Committee on 19th December 2017 the Interim Chief Fire Officer had attended and advised that the Committee was the body which had a statutory responsibility for scrutinising decisions relating to GMFRS. Firefighters had an extensive skillset and this could have assisted both Greater Manchester Police and North West Ambulance Service at the Arena attack, however, assistance from GMFRS was not requested. In response, Dawn Docx reported that the Review had highlighted the lack of communication between the agencies and improvements had now been put in place to ensure that this would not happen again as a GMFRS representative would be co-located with the other agencies at Gold Command and multi-agency learning would take place following the outcomes of the Review. In addition, procedures had now been changed at North West Fire Control to ensure that GMFRS were able to respond more flexibly to these type if incidents in the future.

Andy Burnham advised that the rendezvous point on the night was Manchester Cathedral, however, GMFRS crews followed their own protocol and deployed to Philips Park Fire Station, if they had attended the original rendezvous point they would have gathered intelligence from other agencies.

A Member mentioned that it was vital that North West Fire Control in Warrington and the GMFRS Command Room in Swinton act in a joined up way in response to any incident. Andy Burnham commented that the Review had highlighted the weaknesses at North West Fire Control and moving forward these arrangements would be reviewed to ensure that a joint Fire Control was still the correct decision for GMFRS.

Andy Burnham advised that the Review had made recommendations for National Emergency Response Arrangements to Government and he would be writing to the Prime Minister seeking Government support to implement these changes. He reported that Government had refused to fund the Kerslake Review.

A Members sought clarity that the Review would build in a more flexible approach to response if a similar incident was to occur. In response, Andy Burnham commented that the fire and rescue service culture was very different to other blue light services, in part responding to different operational challenges, and going forward this would be reviewed to implement a more flexible approach. Dawn Docx advised that a new Fire Plan was in the process of being written, that would be subject to consultation, and would focus on the future needs of both GMFRS and the local communities. Reference was made to the fire and rescue services improved relationship with the Health and Safety Executive and that Government needed to develop national guidance for such incidents.

Paul Argyle advised that protocols were in place for bespoke incidents and collaboration did take place on a daily basis with other blue light services.

The Chair made reference to the low morale of firefighters within GMFRS which had been caused by the outcomes from the Arena attack, low recruitment, proposed changes to the shift system and the pay dispute which and had seen the withdrawal of firefighters responding to cardiac arrests. Another Member advised that he had reflected on the findings from the review and comments raised and sought clarity on how these would be progressed. In response, Andy Burnham advised that following the outcomes from the Kerslake Review a GMCA Transformation Review was being implemented and the terms of reference for the
review were currently being finalised more details about the review would be submitted to the Committee in due course. The Review was due to conclude in December 2018.

The Chair made reference to the role of the current Fire Committee and in response, Andy Burnham advised that an internal governance review was in the process of taking place and a report would be submitted to the GMCA on 27th April 2018 detailing future proposals. He sought clarity on the cost implications of the review and how the non-fire and rescue service recommendations would be progressed. Also, could reports be sought from other attacks which had taken place both nationally and internationally to ensure that lessons could be learnt moving forward.

In conclusion, Andy Burnham confirmed that he would report back to the Committee with a formal response to each part of the Review and would share with the Committee the letter to the Prime Minister detailing the recommendations which were the responsibility of Government. He reported that the Arena attack was a brutal test to all emergency services and to Greater Manchester as a whole and in response Greater Manchester stood-up well.

It was reported that Kathy Oldham was the appointed Chief Resilience Officer for GMCA and the role included leading the Civil Contingences Resilience Unit and developing a resilience strategy for Greater Manchester. Reference was also made to the David Anderson QC’s report on MI5 and police reviews following the attacks in London and Manchester between March and June 2017 that was published by Government on 5th December 2017.

Andy Burnham advised that he had also commissioned a Preventing Hateful Extremism and Promoting Cohesion Commission Board that was chaired by Councillor Rishi Shori. The Commission had been set-up to run parallel with the Independent Review into Greater Manchester’s preparedness and response to the Manchester Arena and the findings from the Commission were due to be reported by the end of June 2018.

**Resolved/-**

1. That the content of the report, and comments raised, be noted.

2. To circulate the terms of reference for the GMFRS’s Review.

3. The Committee be regularly updated on progress on GM’s response to the Kerslake Review and the broader review of GMFRS.

4. That at the request of the Committee a representative from the Fire Brigades Union be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee.

**CI/57/17 GREATER MANCHESTER STRATEGY (GMS) PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD**

Consideration was given to a report of the Simon Nokes, Executive Director of Policy and Strategy, GMCA which presented a draft 2 year Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) Implementation Plan and a copy of the first six-monthly GMS dashboard report that was detailed at the Appendix to the report.
The Committee welcomed the report and commented that the dashboard would provide a better understanding of performance in the round and would allow Members to drill into the detail of the 10 priorities.

It was reported that the dashboard would be updated every six-months and would be reported to the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the GMCA and the GM LEP.

Resolved/-

1. That the actions set out in the 2 year GMS Implementation Plan and comments raised, be noted.

2. That the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) Performance Dashboard, which had been updated to reflect feedback from the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committees, be noted.

3. That the 2 year GMS Implementation Plan and the GMS Performance dashboard, be noted, prior to being submitted to the meeting of the GMCA on 27th April 2018, for consideration and formal approval.

CI/58/17 WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18 AND 2018/19

The Committee received an updated work programme following comments and suggestions made at the last meeting.

The Committee were requested to review their work programme going forward, noting that June’s agenda contained six items and it was suggested that the (1) GMFRS Communications Update and (2) GM Public Sector Apprenticeship Approach Update be taken as written updates and the GMCA Communications and Engagement Strategy and the GMFRS Accelerated Recruitment Training 2018/20 be deferred until July’s meeting.

In conclusion, it was agreed that the work programme should be updated as follows:-

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Resolved/- That the Committee’s Work Programme for the 2017/18 and 2018/19 be updated accordingly and considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

CI/59/17 FUTURE MEETING DATES 2018

Resolved/:  

1. That the next meeting of the Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the 2017/18 municipal year take place on Tuesday 19th June 2018 at 6.00pm at Churchgate House, Manchester

2. Agreed that the meeting dates for the Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the 2018/19 municipal year, take place on the following dates:-

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