



ANNUAL REPORT: GMCA LGBTQ+ Advisory Panel

EFFECTIVE DATES: 2020/2021

Introduction:

In August 2018, Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, pledged to set up an LGBTQ+ Advisory Panel to support the work of a newly appointed LGBTQ+ advisor.

Formation of the GMCA LGBTQ+ Panel:

A panel of experts were selected to help tackle the inequalities lesbian, gay, bi and trans people face, and ensure they feel included, valued and safe. The LGBTQ+ Advisory Panel was established in 2018, with a diverse membership who represent the full spectrum of the LGBTQ+ community, bringing a wealth of experience and skills to the Panel. The Panel involves business leaders, public sector inclusion and equalities leads, representatives from charities and campaigning organisations, and key people from the LGBTQ+ community as well as the LGBTQ+ Adviser to the Mayor of Greater Manchester

Panel Administration:

For the period of the report, the panel was facilitated by Manchester Pride which was in receipt of grant funding for the purpose of advising and supporting the mayor in tackling inequalities faced by LGBTQ+ people within Greater Manchester, and collaborating where necessary with the partner agencies in order to assist the advisor and panel to meet specific commitments made by the Mayor to the LGBTQ+ community.

Manchester Pride was specifically responsible for providing administrative and secretarial support to the Greater Manchester LGBTQ+ panel, and for assisting the panel to meet specific commitments made by the Mayor to back the LGBTQ+ community and work with partners in all sectors, across Greater Manchester.

Work of the Panel:

Manchester Pride supported the panel in the research and development for key priorities.



The Panel has three priorities which were first established in 2019;

- Education; with a focus on training teachers to understand LGBTQ+ issues and how to manage any controversy
- Older LGBTQ+ people; specifically issues around housing, health and social care, arts and cultural programming for ageing LGBTQ+ people
- Outward facing priority; the promotion of Greater Manchester as an LGBTQ+ inclusive place to live and visit

During the period of 2020/2021 due to the Covid 19 Pandemic, the Panel agreed that the most urgent priority was to understand the needs of LGBTQ+ communities during the pandemic and to aid in recovery. The Panel tasked Manchester Pride to compile a report on 'The Impacts of Covid-19 on LGBTQ+ Communities' to help inform them on what the key issues were and to formulate suggestions and actions to the GMCA. Manchester Pride gathered information from a wide ranging number of sources from across Greater Manchester including its own survey, research and service user data from LGBTQ+ charities, quantitative data from grassroots community groups and organisations and public sector insight.

Key findings from the report included;

- A significant increase in LGBTQ+ people feeling isolated and removed from their communities
- A rise in concerns with regards to substance or alcohol misuse and relapses amongst LGBTQ+ people
- For LGBTQ+ young people, an increase in self-harm during the lockdown and an increase in experience of LGBTQ-phobia online
- Increase in accessing mental health support amongst LGBTQ+ people
- Research found that there has been a huge increase in demand on services with regards to discrimination and an unprecedented demand on Domestic Abuse services.

Working groups are being established to dive deeper into the report and formulate key areas of work and suggestions for the GMCA.

The panel also started reviewing The Greater Manchester Independent Inequalities Commission Report and working towards supporting the findings of the report and taking this further. This will become a framework for the panel going forwards.

Panel Members:

The LGBTQ+ panel consists of key individuals who identify as LGBTQ+, represent LGBTQ+ organisations or who actively campaign for the continued development of true equality for LGBTQ+ people.



Each member of the panel acts in a voluntary capacity. The current list of panel members is detailed below:

Carl Austin-Behan OBE DL (He/him) - *LGBT Advisor to Mayor of Greater Manchester - Manchester*
Lee Broadstock (He/him) - *Chair, GMP Pride Network -Tameside*
Jax Effiong (She/her) - *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager GMFRS, Chair EDI Working Group GMCA*
Lou Englefield (She/her) - *Director of Pride Sports and Football v Homophobia*
Mark Fletcher (He/him) - *CEO, Manchester Pride - Stockport*
Colette McKune (She/her) - *Group Chief Executive, Forviva*
Paul Martin OBE (He/him) - *CEO, LGBT Foundation*
Mike Mellor (He/him) - *Head of Commercial & Marketing, TfGM*
Jane Owen BEM (She/her) - *LGBTQ+ Advocate, representing Tameside*
Will Patterson (He/him) - *not affiliated with an organisation, representing Wigan*
Pierrette Squires (She/her)- *Chair, Bolton LGBT Partnership - Bolton*
Dr Louise Theodosiou (She/her) - *Consultant Psychiatrist, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust*

In addition to the above members there are also contributing observers who join the panel meetings for additional support, guidance and perspective. The contributing editors are listed below;

Craig Harris (He/him)- *Accountable Officer & Managing Director, NHS Wigan Borough CCG*
Farhana Hemani (She/her)- *Head of Engagement, Manchester Pride*
Kate O'Donnell (She/her)- *Founder, Artistic Director Trans Creative*
Darren Adams (He/him)- *Waterside Arts Manager, Trafford*
Cllr Oliver Ryan (He/him) - *Finance and Economic Growth Executive at Tameside Council*
Tara Hewitt (She/her) - *EDI Lead for Northern Care Alliance*
Rachel Williams (They/them) - *Training Manager, The Proud Trust*
Juergen Maier (He/him) - *CEO, Siemens UK*

Tenure for Panel Members

Panel members have been appointed until 30th April 2020 at which time they may apply to be re-elected or choose to vacate the panel and provide an opportunity for a successor to take a valued place.

Panel members will be monitored for their attendance and input to the work of the panel as a collective.

New panel members may be selected by Manchester Pride at any time to support the purpose of the grant and aims of the panel.



Meetings of the Panel

Meetings are held at locations throughout Greater Manchester. The panel meets on a monthly basis.

Guest speakers are invited to attend each meeting of the panel with a view to providing an insight into the work for LGBTQ+ equality that is being carried out in the borough. In 2020/2021 guest speakers have included:

- Rachel Williams from The Proud Trust on their schools' initiative 'The Rainbow Flag Award'
- Lawrence Roberts from LGBT Foundation on their 'Pride in Ageing' initiative supporting the older LGBTQ+ community
- Farhana Hemani from Manchester Pride on their All Equals Charter designed to support businesses and organisations in recognising and challenging all forms of discrimination.
- The Census team also presented to the panel on the additional questions on sexuality and gender which were being included in the Census for the first time. The panel supported the census team in ensuring adequate reach into diverse LGBTQ+ communities
- Sarah Cross from the GM Disabled People's panel presented on the work of the panel and discussed cross-working opportunities and closer alignment with all the equality panels

Accountability

The panel members are accountable to each other, the administrative body, and GMCA. Any issue relating to panel member accountability is managed by Manchester Pride.

Manchester Pride is accountable to the following contact officers at GMCA:

Andrew Lightfoot; Nick Fairclough

Manchester Pride has regular meetings with the contact officers and is committed to providing an annual report on the activity of the panel.

Snapshot of Activity from the LGBT Advisor

Obviously, it's been a very strange year for everybody due to COVID-19 but within the role as LGBTQ+ Advisor to The Mayor and GMCA I tried to continue as best I could to make sure that our Greater Manchester LGBTQ+ Community still felt connected. The weekly newsletter that I produce and send out on a Friday was and is greatly appreciated by so many individuals, community groups and businesses so that they



could share to their colleagues and networks. I increased this by also sending out to all 644 local councillors so that they could share with their networks.

I continued to meet with members of the LGBTQ+ Advisory panel regularly as well as Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officers from the various boroughs via Zoom & Teams.

As the start of the pandemic, I reached out to all the LGBTQ+ groups known to me across GM to offer help, support and to signpost them to other organisations who may be able to help with any issues that may arise. I also gathered intelligence and research of the impact Covid-19 was having on our community across GM, this was all fed back to GMCA, LGBT Foundation and the LGBTQ+ Advisory Panel. This was also carried out once we started the initial recovery.

All LIVE Pride events had to be cancelled last year which gave the opportunity for digital events to take place, on behalf of The Mayor, GMCA and the LGBTQ+ Community of GM I recorded and sent out messages of support to each of them as well as the supporting video for The Manchester Pride Vigil.

As the Vaccine started to get rolled out in collaboration with LGBT Foundation, we carried out a joint survey to better understand LGBTQ+ people's views on the COVID-19 vaccine, overall the survey results painted a positive picture with the vast majority of respondents saying they would definitely or very likely take the vaccine. A number of concerns were raised such as the government's decision to leave a long gap between vaccines, possible side effects, allergies, the longer-term impacts and the impact with long-term conditions including HIV.

Earlier this year we had the 10-year Census, for the first time in history the Census asked questions on sexual orientation and gender identity, I know that some people may feel unsure about sharing this information, so I worked hard with all the field managers across Greater Manchester to make sure that our voices were heard. The only way we improve funding for the future of Greater Manchester's LGBTQ+ Community was to make sure as many people completed the Census as possible.

Due to Lockdown National HIV Testing week was harder than normal to get people tested, however working with PASH Partnership (George House Trust, LGBT Foundation & BHA for equality) I managed to put out a series of videos on the importance of why people should get tested as well as if people had ordered a test kit to make sure they got tested and returned the test kits.

You may recall prior to COVID-19 I was looking at work regarding RSE in schools as part of the inclusive curriculum, after visiting a few Schools, Academy's and Colleges to see the work they were doing, one thing that shone out was the amount of brilliant work taking place across GM when it comes to LGBTQ+ Inclusion.

This included LGBTQ+ Pupil / Student or Staff networks, groups and clubs.



After conversations with teachers, teaching assistants and various staff members one thing that was highlighted was the idea of setting up a network of staff across GM so they can share best practice and look at how we can all work together to help overcome any barriers and pitfalls, looking at local services available to help them and to be confident in supporting young LGBTQ+ people, via training, as well as signposting into local youth groups.

I struggled to get past some of the school admin barriers, however after sending a few messages out on Social Media over 70 teaching staff contacted me and we managed to hold the first GM LGBTQ+ School Staff Network Partnership meeting – This has been followed up with a survey with the help of Liam Spencer at Denton Community College to help us gain a picture of LGBTQ+ inclusion across schools/colleges in Greater Manchester, to help us celebrate the progress and identify areas we can support with.

Additionally, we put together a Google Drive folder of resources that are free to use! If others have any resources that they would like to share, then please email them to me so I can add them to the drive for others to access. We are particularly interested in: Assemblies, LGBTQ+ Boards, LGBTQ+ group activities, LGBTQ+ inclusive Lessons

I have been working with all 10 Boroughs across Greater Manchester setting up the GM Pride Network Partnership where the organisers of the community pride events are working in collaboration to share expertise, knowledge, support and best practice.

With this, again due to the current uncertainty of LIVE events being able to take place – We wanted to make sure that all our LGBTQ+ Community could still engage with their respected communities in a meaningful way and via GM Digital Pride we hope to achieve this”.

The event will be streamed via StreamGM and there will be content from various acts / artists from all the boroughs split throughout the event so it doesn't matter if you're from Wigan, Bolton, Salford, Trafford, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport, Bury, Tameside or Manchester there will be something for you to keep you entertained.

Recently as it's been Pride Month and schools have starting to let in visitors it's been a pleasure going back out into the schools and talking about the work taking place across Greater Manchester as well as promoting and supporting our younger LGBTQ+ Community to be their true selves.

On behalf of Alder Community High School I just want to say a huge thank you for coming in to school on Friday to support with our Pride Week education and celebrations.

So many people have been to see me, both staff and pupils, to tell me how informative and emotive they found your assembly. Your experiences are everything that our pupils needed to be able to relate some of their learning and I feel that it's made a big difference.



We still have so much work to do but we will continue to make progress in creating safe spaces for our young people.

*Kindest regards,
Amy Howarth*

Hi Carl

Just wanted to say a huge thank you for your time today, it was a fantastic opportunity for our students! We hope to be able to work with you again in the future!

*Charlotte Morrison
Head of Citizenship, RE & PSHE*

“Hi Carl, thank you for the assembly you delivered at my sons’ school today. My son (who rarely comes home and talks about school) told me your inspirational story and how you’ve overcome prejudice in life. Thank you for helping open his heart and mind a bit more”. 👍

Requests and recommendations of the Panel

- The panel believes that a united strategy for public sector organisations is required to tackle the threat from anti-trans activity. The panel requests GMCA to investigate the potential to create or commission an information pack. The panel has suggestions for organisations which may be best placed to assist with such an information pack.
- The panel requests for GMCA to support and endorse The Proud Trust’s ‘Rainbow Flag’ initiative which is designed to support schools in LGBTQ+ education and ensure that best practice standards are being met and staff have adequate support in delivering LGBTQ+ education.
- The panel requests for GMCA to pledge, support and endorse Manchester Pride’s All Equals Charter which is designed to support businesses and organisations in recognising and challenging all forms of discrimination. The Charter is aiming to create a standardised approach to diversity and inclusion across the region and ensure Greater Manchester is truly a great place to live and work for all marginalised communities.
- The panel requests for GMCA to support and endorse the LGBT Foundation’s ‘Pride in Ageing’ initiative which ensures that older LGBTQ+ communities are represented, visible and their needs are being met at all levels.
- The panel requests for member images and personal bio information to be published on the GMCA website.