

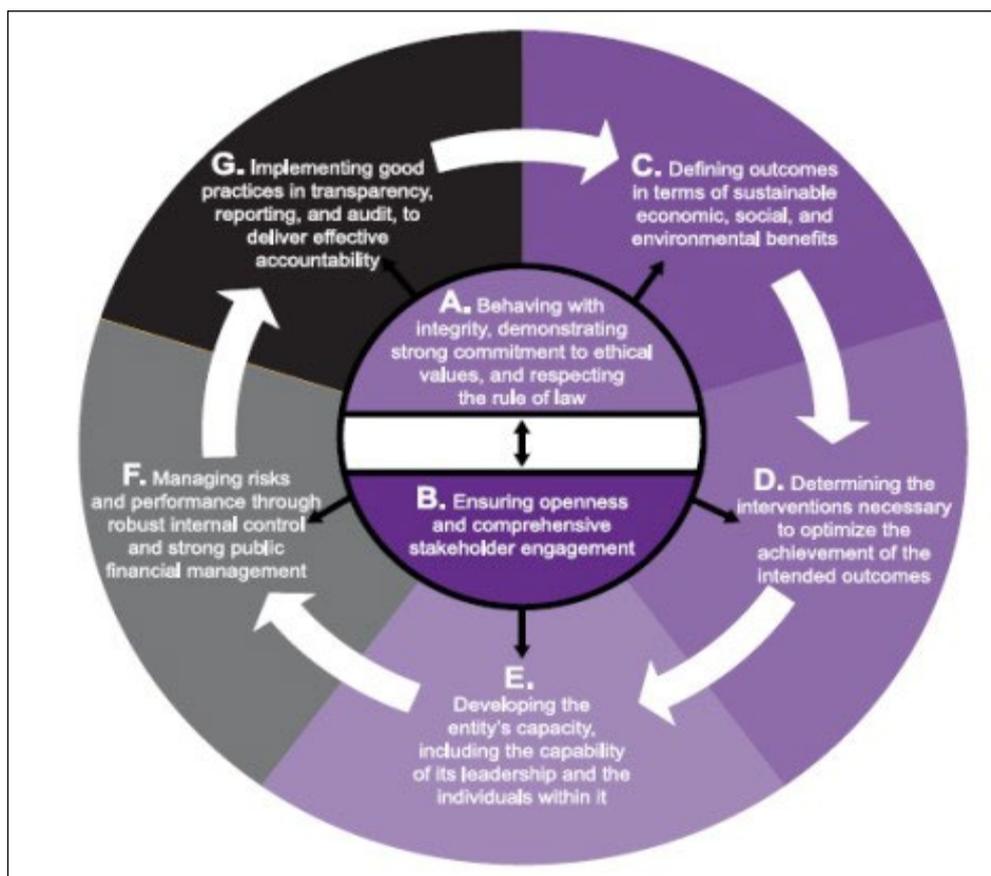
**ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2020-21**

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## INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Annual Governance Statement sets out how the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) meets its governance standards detailed in the [Code of Corporate Governance](#). It also describes how it meets the requirements of regulation 6(1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in relation to the publication of an Annual Governance Statement to accompany the Annual Accounts. It is a document which looks back retrospectively over the past year and identifies where the GMCA has demonstrated good governance and looks forward as to areas where focus should be given in relation to governance over the coming year. The GMCA's corporate governance framework is structured around the seven good governance principles set out in the 2016 CIPFA guidance (see fig.1):



**Fig.1 Seven Principles of Good Governance**

## LEGISLATIVE, STRATEGIC AND POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 The GMCA was established on 1 April 2011 by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Order 2011 and comprised of ten members, being the Leaders of the constituent councils. The GM Mayor was re-elected on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and will remain in office until May 2024. The Mayor is the chair and 11<sup>th</sup> member of the GMCA. The Mayor also appoints the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime who has substantial delegated authority covering policing and crime. All members have clear portfolio responsibilities as listed below:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Representing</b>	<b>Portfolio Responsibility</b>
Mayor Andy Burnham	GM Mayor	Policy & Reform, Transport
Baroness Beverley Hughes	Deputy Mayor	Safe & Strong Communities (Police and Fire)
Cllr Martyn Cox	Bolton	Culture
Cllr Eamonn O'Brien	Bury	Young People & Cohesion
Sir Richard Leese	Manchester	Healthy Lives & Quality Care
Cllr Arooj Shah	Oldham	Community, Co-operatives & Inclusion
Cllr Neil Emmott	Rochdale	Green City Region
Mayor Paul Dennett	Salford	Housing, Homelessness & Infrastructure
Cllr Elise Wilson	Stockport	Economy & Business
Cllr Brenda Warrington	Tameside	Equalities
Cllr Andrew Western	Trafford	Digital, Clean Air, Education, Skills, Work & Apprenticeships
Cllr David Molyneux	Wigan	Resources & Investment

2.2 Each GMCA member appointed by a constituent council may appoint an elected member of another constituent council to act as an assistant portfolio

holder whose duties will be to provide support and assistance to the GMCA member in the carrying out of that member's duties in respect of the portfolio responsibilities allocated by the Mayor. Portfolio Assistants also have the right to attend meetings of the GMCA and speak but they have no voting rights. This is set out in the constitution.

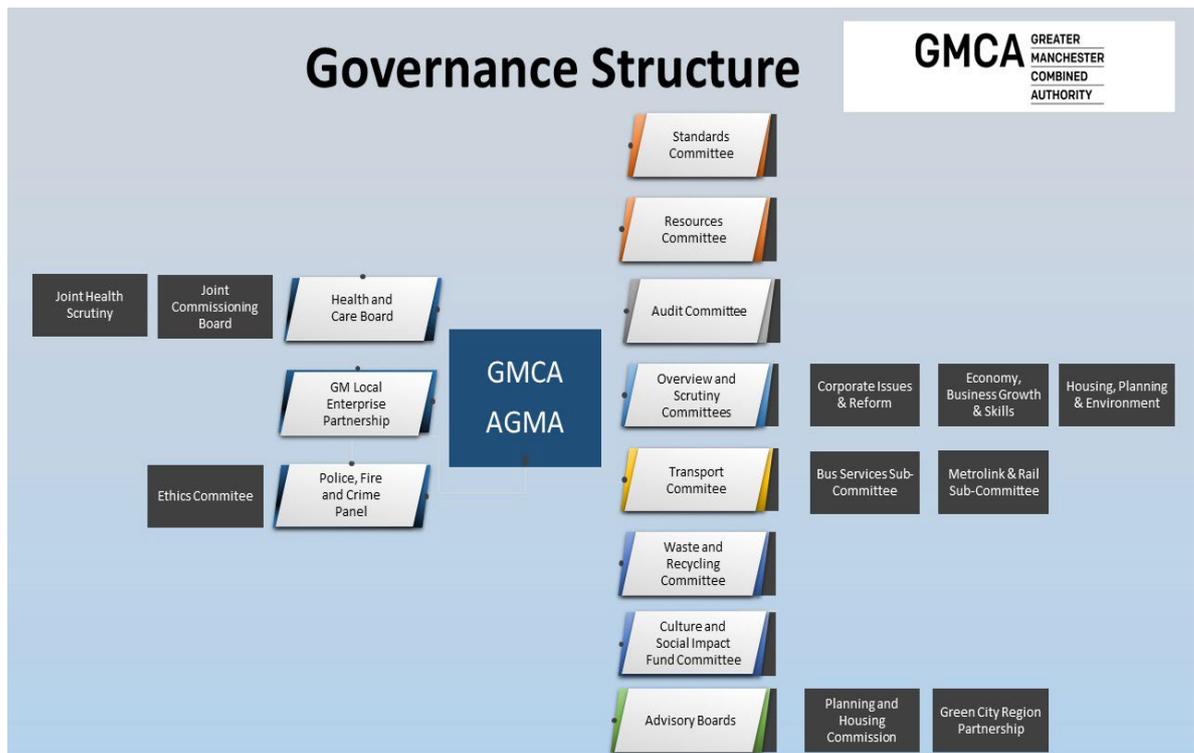
2.3 On public service issues the GMCA members and the Mayor each have one vote, and generally questions are decided by a majority vote. Questions on matters requiring a vote of more than a simple majority are set out in the 2011 Order. The Mayor is required to consult members of the GMCA on his strategies. The GMCA also examines the Mayor's (non-Police and Crime) spending plans and is able to amend those plans if two-thirds of members agree to do so.

2.4 The GM Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is a private sector-led voluntary partnership, with a core function to provide strategic leadership and private sector insight (alongside the GMCA) to help deliver the city region's growth ambitions. The GM LEP jointly owns (along with the GMCA and voluntary sector) the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) and is responsible for providing strategic direction to ensure that the strategy is successfully delivered.

2.5 The GMCA and the Constituent Councils are members of the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA). They have entered into joint arrangements, including an Operating Agreement, and the establishment of a joint committee called the AGMA Executive Board, which oversees the work and strategic direction of AGMA, leads on policy, and has delegated decision-making powers from the 10 Greater Manchester councils. AGMA has the same membership at the GMCA.

2.6 A range of statutory and non-statutory member-led committees and boards sit below the GMCA and LEP, with responsibility for overseeing work in relation to the various portfolios. The three Overview and Scrutiny Committees each have 15 members and responsibility for Corporate Issues and Reform;

Economy, Business Growth and Skills; and Housing, Planning and Environment. The GMCA Audit Committee, as a statutory body, plays a key role in overseeing risk management; governance systems and financial management. The GM Transport Committee oversees the travel services provided by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM).



**Fig.2 Governance Structure**

## **LEGISLATIVE ARRANGEMENTS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

3.1 Within the UK, a disaster response system exists, underpinned by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The system helps to support the coherent and integrated emergency response and recovery between national and local levels. At a local level, the backbone of this system is partnership working through a Strategic Coordinating Group and its associated structures, together with a Recovery Coordinating Group and appropriate sub-groups. These, in turn, are recognised and supported by MHCLG and other Government Departments, assisting a two-way dialogue in the emergency that is additional to more normal day-to-day arrangements.

3.2 Although GM is well practised in working in this way across a wide range of emergencies, the current Covid-19 emergency has a range of specific characteristics that has required GM to keep the emergency structures under review and to ensure that they link across into established governance and decision-making arrangements. The emergency structures are designed to support and not replace local 'business-as-usual' systems.

3.3 Contrary to the majority of emergencies experienced since the introduction of the current UK framework, the Covid-19 emergency required a whole system response, affecting the whole of society and requiring sustained effort over at least the next year based on current projections. Work is underway to review transition into a longer-term recovery, and there may be a need for recurrent response activity during the recovery period. Therefore, it is likely to require flexibility in future structures and approaches to facilitate the reinstatement of business as usual as Government legislation and regulations change and the UK moves to a new normality.

3.4 In response to the Covid-19 emergency, GM had established a multi-agency response structures that dovetailed with the national emergency response framework, whilst also being adapted to address local need. A C19 Executive Group, co-chaired by the Chief Constable of GMP and the Chief Executive of GMCA, has been sitting since early March 2020 with districts strongly engaged through Chief Executive portfolio leads and a local authority Chief Officers Group. A GM Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable, supports the C19 Executive and had in turn, established a number of thematic sub-groups, emergency operation cells and sector coordination groups. In line with UK doctrine, a Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) was set up in the early stages of the response and has been running in parallel with the C19 Executive. The C19 Executive and RCG work closely together, with the Chair of the RCG sitting on the C19 Executive.

3.5 The structures have worked well over the last year and continue to meet. Recently the SCG has reviewed its arrangements with a view to stepping

down into recovery in step with the national roadmap. Part of this will look to how we can retain the benefits gained from collaborative working between stakeholders across GM as well as integrating the work into core business. However at the current time GM structures remain in response phase.

3.6 With regard to GMCA decision making during the Covid-19 Emergency, the GMCA Constitution gives delegated authority to the Head of Paid Service, to take any action which is required as a matter of urgency in the interests of the GMCA, in consultation (where practicable) with the Chair of the GMCA. These decisions have been published in accordance with usual practice.

3.7 The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 came into effect on the 4 April 2020. These Regulations remove the requirement for local authorities to only hold meetings in person, make provision for members of local authorities to attend meetings remotely and for public and press access to these meetings.

3.8 Following the development of a technical solution and the required procedures and protocols, virtual meetings of the GMCA and its committees have been held. The regulations applied to local authority meetings held before 7th May 2021.

3.9 The regulations in 3.7 above expired on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021 which has required a move back to in person meetings for the GMCA and its formal committees. The in-person meeting requirements still have to comply with Covid safety requirements meaning work has been undertaken to ensure appropriate venues are used, enabling members to participate in meetings safely and for members of the public to attend in they so wish. GMCA meetings and committee meetings are still livestreamed live to enable access to members of the public and to assist with transparency.

## **HMICFRS INSPECTION OF GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE – DECEMBER 2020**

- 4.1 In December 2020 HMICFRS published 'An inspection of the service provided to Victims of crime by Greater Manchester Police (GMP)'. The focus of this assessment was to understand the experience of the victim; this is known as a Victim Service Assessment. The report highlighted a number of causes for concern and made a number of recommendations for Greater Manchester Police with specific timeframes for completion. The force, in response to these recommendations initiated a comprehensive action plan to support and intensify ongoing activity. The action plan had specific focus on the immediate recommendations, recommendations to be completed within three months and recommendations to be completed within six months.
- 4.2 The appointment of the new Chief Constable, Stephen Watson, in May 2021 was a critical step in responding to the issues outlined by HMICFRS and also in responding to the findings of the independent review of structures, culture, practices, and processes that was commissioned on behalf of the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor.
- 4.3 The Chief Constable has developed an GMP Implementation Plan which was presented to GMCA on 10 September 2021. This aims to make significant improvements to GMP. In the meantime, progress against the recommendations from the HMICFRS inspection continues to be monitored via the GMP Gold Group established to respond to the inspection results. This group is chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable and is attended by representatives from the Home Office and Mayor's office. The force has also been engaged as part of the Police Performance Oversight Group process, which will bring further scrutiny and support from across policing.

### **SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY**

- 5.1 The GMCA's Code of Corporate Governance sets out how the GMCA operates, how decisions are made and the procedures that are followed to

ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. The Code of Corporate Governance can be found in Part 7 (Section E) of the [GMCA Constitution](#).<sup>1</sup>

5.2 The Annual Governance Statement demonstrates how the GMCA is delivering its services in the right way in a timely, inclusive and accountable manner and will be certified by the GMCA Chief Executive and the Mayor, after consideration of the draft by the GMCA Audit Committee. GMCA's external auditor reviews the Annual Governance Statement as part of the assessment of their value for money responsibilities.

5.3 The GMCA's governance framework comprises the legislative requirements, principles, management systems and processes – including the GMCA's Constitution, Operating Agreement and Protocols – and cultures and values through which the Authority exercises its leadership, fulfils its functions, and by which it is held accountable for its decisions and activities.

5.4 The following sections of this document describe how the GMCA fulfils the requirements set out in the seven principles of good governance.

## **GOVERNANCE REVIEW ACTIVITY 2020/21**

### **GMCA Audit Committee and GM Joint Audit Panel**

6.1 The GMCA Audit Committee is responsible for overseeing the effective operation of the systems of governance including risk management, internal control, and treasury management. It is a legal requirement for the GMCA to have an Audit Committee as this also ensures a high standard of openness and transparency. The Committee met five times during 2020/21 and discussed a range of matters including the Risk Strategy & Register, the Treasury Management Strategy Statement & Activities and the Statement of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/who-we-are/accounts-transparency-and-governance/>

Accounts for the GMCA and associate bodies – additionally, the Committee also receives and consider the findings of both internal and external audit.

6.2 The GMCA Audit Committee oversees all aspects of GMCA including Mayoral functions. In line with the Home Office Financial Management Code of Practice. The Mayor has also established a Greater Manchester Joint Audit Panel which oversees the control environment of the Chief Constable and the GMCA (Police and Crime) functions, performing the functionality of an Audit Committee. The Panel assists the Mayor in discharging his statutory responsibilities to hold the Chief Constable to account and to help deliver an effective policing service. To minimise duplication and bureaucracy and to maximise value for money shared internal audit arrangements are in place to support the Mayor and the Chief Constable. The GMCA Audit Committee receives the minutes of the Audit Panel as part of its agenda and receives the annual report of the Chair of the Joint Audit Panel.

### **Head of Audit and Assurance Annual Opinion 2020/21**

6.3 Based on the work undertaken by Internal Audit in respect of 2020/21 the opinion of the Head of Internal Audit is that limited assurance is provided on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of GMCA's framework of governance, risk management and internal control. This opinion is based upon the findings of the audit work undertaken during the year. The opinions issued generally provided assurance over the operation of internal controls within the activities being audited. The opinion is reflective of the fact that as GMCA is still a relatively new organisation, some of the wider governance and organisational risk management arrangements yet to develop to a mature and consistent state. It should be noted however that GMFRS, does have mature risk management arrangements and all audits undertaken on GMFRS activities provided a reasonable level of assurance.

### **Annual Review of the System of Internal Audit 2020/21**

6.4 An assessment of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit Function has been undertaken by the Head of Audit and Assurance and considered and endorsed by the Audit Committee. That assessment concluded that the work that was performed in 2020/21 was in conformance with PSIAS.

A Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme has been implemented within the Internal Audit Team and an Internal Audit Effectiveness Plan for 2021/22 developed as a result of the assessment, which will assist in the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the team moving forwards.

The GMCA Audit Committee reviewed the assessment at its meeting on 27 April 2021 and endorsed the actions proposed to ensure ongoing effectiveness and quality of the GMCA Internal Audit service.

An External Quality Assessment (EQA) of the Internal Audit Service will be undertaken in 2021/22 with the findings of that reported to the Audit Committee, any resulting recommendations will be included within the Internal Audit Effectiveness Plan.

### **GMCA Standards Committee**

6.5 The GMCA has a Standards Committee to deal with matters of conduct and ethical standards regarding members of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and its committees should they arise. It also provides a reviewing function for key policies in relation to the behaviour and actions of elected members whilst serving in their Greater Manchester capacities. The Committee has considered whistleblowing, anti-fraud & anti-piracy policies, reviewed the GMCA Members Code of Conduct, and looked at fraud in the age of Covid-19 at their meetings this year.

**PROGRESS IN ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED IN THE 2019/20 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

<b>Action Identified in 2019/20</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>
<p>That the revised Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure be agreed and finalised; and that awareness of the policy and how to access it be embedded throughout the organisation</p>	<p>The revised Whistleblowing Policy was agreed by the Standards Committee in November 2020 – and immediately incorporated into the Inside GMCA Whistleblowing page for all staff to access.</p> <p>The Whistleblowing Policy is accessible through the Key Information hub which is linked on the home page of GMCA Intranet.</p>
<p>The revised Complaints Procedure to be developed, produced and published; and that awareness of the procedure and how to access it be embedded throughout the organisation.</p>	<p>The revised Complaints Procedure was agreed by the Standards Committee in November 2020.</p> <p>The Complaints Procedure is accessible through the Key Information hub which is linked on the home page of GMCA Intranet.</p>
<p>Following the introduction of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 – ensure</p>	<p>Following the introduction of the regulations – the GMCA Governance Team secured use of the Microsoft Teams ‘Live Events’ portal to allow for all public facing meetings to be broadcast live to the</p>

<p>that transparency of decision-making is maintained, and that online tools for meetings are made as accessible to all as possible.</p>	<p>public via the GMCA website and made clear and accessible through a link at the top of each relevant meeting page.</p> <p>The meetings were also recorded and then subsequently uploaded to the website – allowing them to be viewed back in full at any time for full transparency.</p>
<p>That the organisational challenges raised in terms of new working environments/ways of working continue to be subject to ongoing review throughout the pandemic period.</p>	<p>A task group led by the Monitoring Officer Resetting the Way We Work Group was established in summer 2020, membership drawn from across the CA plus TU &amp; Health &amp; Safety reps has met frequently to oversee arrangements for a Covid safe working environment both in the office and at home. The Group reports to the Chief Executives Management Team.</p> <p>During 2021 the work continues to develop a new hybrid operational working model for the organisation ensuring the safety of staff working arrangements and delivery of the business. This work is ongoing with a new model due to be in place by September 2021.</p>

<p>GMFRS to ensure that the progress against the areas identified for improvement is completed as part of the Service Improvement Programme ahead of HMICFRS re-inspection in late 2021.</p>	<p>Effective progress has been made on the internal improvement action plan, with the majority of actions now completed, in particular those relating to Cause of Concerns. Outstanding actions have been reviewed and linked to priority change projects detailed within the Annual Delivery Plan and Directorate Action Plans, and progress will be monitored through the internal governance framework.</p> <p>A self-assessment on our progress has been provided to HMICFRS, ahead of our second inspection, which commenced on 7th June 2021. The inspection activities will take place over six weeks, concluding with a hot de-brief on 19th July. The findings report is expected to be published towards the end of Q3 2021.</p>
<p>That the ongoing integration of resources between TfGM and the CA continues to develop – including the development and introduction of relevant GM Transport Sub-Committees.</p>	<p>2020 saw the successful introduction of the Bus Services and the Metrolink &amp; Rail Transport Sub-Committees, each chaired by the Vice-Chairs of the Transport Committee and with membership drawn from the Transport Committee.</p>

	<p>This has allowed for regular in-depth and detailed scrutiny of the specifics of each area.</p>
<p>That Member status be achieved on the GM Good Employment Charter through excellent employment practices</p>	<p>Member status of the GM Good Employment Charter was conferred upon The Greater Manchester Combined Authority in the December 2020 tranche of announcements, having been able to clearly demonstrate excellence in the required key characteristics of employment practice.</p>
<p>Following the launching of a health and wellbeing area on the CA intranet. Ensure that knowledge of the area is embedded throughout the organisation</p>	<p>The redevelopment and expansion of the internal Health and Wellbeing area had taken place in response to Covid-19. It forms a hub of relevant resources and is accessible through HROD on the home page of the intranet.</p> <p>Staff are regularly reminded of its availability and it is regularly referenced in weekly video updates to staff from the Chief Executive and Senior Management colleagues.</p> <p>People Services have also established Health and Wellbeing workshops for managers and those</p>

	<p>wanting to develop. The workshops focussed on introducing Wellness Action Plans and Stress Risk Assessments, their benefits to individuals and line managers, as well as how to conduct the Stress Risk Assessment.</p>
<p>Establishment of a GMCA-wide risk management framework to embed consistent risk management policy and practice throughout the organisation, at an operational and strategic risk level. The Head of Audit and Assurance will take responsibility for development and implementation of the framework</p>	<p>The GMCA Risk Management Framework has been developed and approved. It is in the process of being rolled out and embedded across GMCA. The Corporate Risk Register has been refreshed in line with the new Framework and Directorate risk workshops will take place in Q1/Q2 2021/22 to develop operational risk registers.</p>
<p>Continued monitoring of the implementation of external audit actions through the new audit action tracking process being implemented by Internal Audit in 2020/21.</p>	<p>Internal Audit will work with external audit to coordinate follow up work on follow up of recommendations raised as part of the external audit.</p>

## AREAS FOR FOCUS IN 2021/22

<b>Good Governance Principle</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead(s)/GMCA Officer Lead</b>
B. Ensuring Openness and Comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement	Following the agreement of the Greater Manchester Franchising Scheme for Buses 2021 – ensure that appropriately robust governance oversight is in place throughout the transition process.	Deputy Monitoring Officer  <i>Monitoring Officer</i>
E. Developing the Entity's Capacity, Including the Capability of its Leadership and the Individuals Within It	The establishment of new ways of working in the post-Covid environment. Resetting the way we work as an organisation to ensure that hybrid ways of working are adaptable to the needs of all staff within the organisation.	Assistant Director of Governance & Scrutiny  <i>Monitoring Officer</i>
F. Managing Risks and Performance Through Robust Internal Control and Strong Public Financial Management	Robust arrangements to put in place to monitor delivery, performance and risk – ensuring the successful delivery of the Greater Manchester Strategy	Assistant Director of Governance & Scrutiny  <i>Monitoring Officer</i>
F. Managing Risks and Performance Through Robust Internal Control and Strong Public Financial Management	Implementation of the CIPFA Financial Management Code of Practice by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertaking full self-assessment against the code to identify areas for improvement.</li> <li>• Reviewing the constitution to ensure right governance in place.</li> <li>• Assess links to Capital Strategy and Prudential Code.</li> <li>• Implementing greater transparency of financial reporting to scrutiny committee.</li> </ul>	GMCA Treasurer

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of business processes and management accountability.</li> <li>• External comparisons to identify areas to review.</li> <li>• Determining the approach to longer term strategy to manage resources, reserves, and risk.</li> <li>• Reflecting the code in update to AGS.</li> </ul>	
G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to delivery effective accountability.	Development of a protocol to improve the consistency and transparency of arrangements for Mayoral Advisors.	Deputy Chief Executive

## SUMMARY

9.1 The GMCA has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to best practice and good corporate governance within the principles of the framework, demonstrated by a pro-active adoption of this framework and delivery of improvements suggested in the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20.

9.2 As the organisation moves forward in 2021, the Greater Manchester Strategy will be refreshed and finalised by September 2021. The refreshed Strategy will incorporate the objectives and actions from the Living with Covid 1 year Plan and also the Mayoral Manifesto commitments – in particular relating to Transport. There will be a strong focus on delivery with robust arrangements put in place to monitor delivery, performance and risk. These arrangements are being developed and will be in place alongside the refreshed Strategy in September 2021. There will be a continued focus on ensuring the effective delivery of the GMS priorities through strong governance arrangements, which are designed to support this delivery.



Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester and Eamonn Boylan, Chief Executive on behalf of Members and Senior Officers of Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

Date **17<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

### **Glossary of terms**

GMCA	Greater Manchester Combined Authority
GMS	Greater Manchester Strategy
GMP	Greater Manchester Police
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
GMFRA	GM Fire and Rescue Authority
GMFRS	GM Fire and Rescue Service
GMWDA	Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority
AGMA	Association of Greater Manchester Authorities
PfC	GMFRS Programme for Change
SIP	GMCA Service Review and Integration Programme
SMT	The Senior Management Team
ELT	Extended Leadership Team

## **Appendix – CIPFA SOLACE – Good Governance Principles**

### **A. BEHAVING WITH INTEGRITY, DEMONSTRATING STRONG COMMITMENT TO ETHICAL VALUES, AND RESPECTING THE RULE OF LAW**

The GMCA reviewed and updated its Constitution during 2021, and was agreed by the CA in June 2021, to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate. The Constitution incorporates an Operating Agreement between the GMCA and the ten Constituent Councils, which governs the exercise of concurrent functions.

The GMCA Standards Committee meets twice annually and deals with matters of conduct and ethical standards of GMCA Members.

A Code of Conduct for Officers and for Members form part of the GMCA Constitution. The Code of Conduct for Members is reviewed annually by the Standards Committee, most recently in November 2020. The GMCA Standards Committee has the ability to undertake a review should any member of the GMCA or its committees fail to adhere to the Code. Each member receives an annual reminder of their duties under the Code.

A Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure is in place, last reviewed and updated in November 2020, a revised draft was presented to Standards Committee in line with the review period in March 2020. Information on how to report concerns are easily located on both the external facing website and the staff intranet. An Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy forms part of the Constitution.

The Complaints Procedure was updated in November 2020 to ensure that it remains fit for purpose going forward. Information on how to submit complaints, the process, and relevant FAQs are provided on the external website.

Declarations of Interest is a standard agenda item on all GMCA meetings, minutes of which are published on the external website, and members are asked to complete a register of their personal and pecuniary interests on an annual basis. These are uploaded to each councillor's individual portfolio via the GMCA's governance portal and are also viewable on the website.

A Greater Manchester [Independent Ethics Committee](#) is now fully established in order to help build trust and public confidence in policing. The Committee advises the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, and Greater Manchester Police on the complex dilemmas that policing faces in the modern world. The committee has been given a wide remit, with GMP pledging to give access to the service's systems and people. When established, it was the first of its type in the country. The committee decides which issues it wants to consider, as well as having issues referred in by both GMP and the Deputy Mayor. Members of the public can raise issues with the committee - but it does not consider individual complaints about police. The committee considers both broad thematic issues - such as discrimination, safe drug use, and surveillance - and practical day-to-day issues, such as the use of body-worn cameras by police officers.

'Role of the Monitoring Officer' is a statutory role under section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The Monitoring Officer is to report on matters they believe are, or are likely to be, illegal or amount to maladministration; to be responsible for matters relating to the conduct of members; and to be responsible for the operation of the Constitution.

## B. ENSURING OPENNESS AND COMPREHENSIVE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Meetings of the GMCA and its committees are live-streamed and retained for later viewing by all members of the public via the GMCA's YouTube channel/Public-I portal. GMCA Committee agendas, reports, and minutes are published on the GMCA website. Inspection Copies of papers for each meeting are kept in reception at the GMCA's offices at Churchgate House.

The GMCA website includes publication of all Key Decisions, Officer and Mayoral Decisions, and Forthcoming Decisions. Reports for GMCA Committees are released into the public domain unless specifically excluded for items that are private and confidential; such reports must be marked Part B, and justification for keeping a decision confidential must be provided.

The GMCA is committed to ensuring that public meetings are DDA compliant, and all venues have now been confirmed as compliant – this includes the use of hearing loops and the ability to produce agenda papers in alternative formats if requested.

The GMCA runs a Consultation Hub website to ensure that local residents are able to actively engage with decisions and projects. Recent consultations included topics such as the Homelessness Prevention Strategy, the Gender-Based Violence Strategy, and Active Travel Fund Schemes, among others.

The GMCA is founded on a long-term relationship between local authorities through the previous arrangements under the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities. The GM Health and Social Care Partnership Board brings together over 70 health service providers and through its unique relationship has secured devolution of health and social care budgets. In addition, the GMCA maintains formal and informal partnerships through committees such as the Transport Committee; Planning and Housing Commission; Police, Fire and Crime Panel; GM

Culture and Social Impact Fund Committee; GM Green City Region Partnership; and the GM Local Enterprise Board.

The GM VCSE Accord ensures that there is a shared commitment and close partnership working with Greater Manchester's 16,000 VCSE organisations.

Community engagement events regularly take place (including the GM Youth Combined Authority; the Mayor's Disabled Peoples Panel; LGBTQ+ Panel; and the Faith, Race & Women's Panel). Regular feedback mechanisms are offered through the proactive use of social media platforms and the supporting of surveys such as the 'GM Big Disability Survey' – which provided important insight into the issues faced by disabled people across GM during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Areas for Focus in 2021/22:

- Following the agreement of the Greater Manchester Franchising Scheme for Buses 2021 – ensure that appropriately robust governance oversight is in place throughout the transition process.

### C. DEFINING OUTCOMES IN TERMS OF SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

The coronavirus pandemic has highlighted more than ever the importance of securing Greater Manchester's long-term ambition to create a green and prosperous city-region. The Clean Air Plan, Spatial Framework and Minimum Licensing Standards plans form part of this vision, looking to offer a better quality of life for everyone living and working in the city-region.

The GM Strategy and Implementation Plan have been agreed as the overarching Strategy for all GM work. Performance against the Strategy's priorities and performance is reported to three Overview and Scrutiny Committees on a 6-monthly basis. The GM Strategy and information graphics used in the GM performance report describe the anticipated impacts of the delivery of the GM Strategy.

The GMCA Business Plan further defines GMCA's vision, objectives and outcomes in relation to economic, social and environmental developments within GM. The GMCA Business Plan and subsequent publications have been developed with stakeholders to ensure the organisational priorities and objectives are in line with shared ambitions.

As the organisation moves forward in 2021, the Greater Manchester Strategy will be refreshed and finalised by September 2021. The refreshed Strategy will incorporate the objectives and actions from the Living with Covid 1 year Plan and also the Mayoral Manifesto commitments – in particular relating to Transport. There will be a strong focus on delivery with robust arrangements put in place to monitor delivery, performance and risk. These arrangements are being developed and will be in place alongside the refreshed Strategy in September 2021. there will be a continued focus on ensuring the effective delivery of the GMS priorities through strong governance arrangements, which are designed to support this delivery.

Despite its significant detrimental impact, the pandemic has highlighted the importance of securing Greater Manchester's long-term ambition to create a green and prosperous city region. Brought together, the developing Greater Manchester Spatial Framework, Clean Air Plan and Minimum Licensing Standards provide a holistic view of the city region's economic, social and environmental ambitions, looking to offer a better quality of life for everyone living and working in the city-region. Greater Manchester's Five-Year Environment Plan sets out a further suite of actions that will support the conurbation's goal of carbon neutrality by 2038.

Capital programmes for both transport and economic development schemes are assessed using a fully rounded appraisal mechanism which includes deliverability alongside social, economic and environmental considerations.

The GMCA Social Value Policy is actively applied in commissioning and procurement activities. This Policy has been updated to reflect the revised objectives in the Greater Manchester Strategy Our People, Our Place and will support commissioners to set out their procurement and contract management requirements to maximise relevant social value, and providers to develop and submit proposals.

#### D. DETERMINING THE INTERVENTIONS NECESSARY TO OPTIMISE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE INTENDED OUTCOMES

The strategic, crosscutting nature of much of the GMCA's work means that delivery is often achieved through collaboration with GM partners including GMP, TfGM, the GM Health & Social Care Partnership and GM Councils.

A strong evidence base is developed to underpin all decisions of the GMCA, including a robust evaluation of service delivery. One example of this is the devolved Working Well: Work and Health Programme, which helped approximately one in five of its clients into a job and the principles of which are now being used in nationally commissioned programmes.

Internal and external stakeholders are engaged through consultation on key strategies and plans – for instance the GM Strategy, Culture Strategy, and the GM Spatial Framework – to help determine how services and other courses of action are planned and delivered. The Our Pass concessionary scheme for young people which successfully launched in September 2019 was developed with the GM Youth Combined Authority, whilst the GM Good Employment Charter which launched in January 2020 was co-designed with employers, trade unions, professional bodies and academics.

To ensure robust planning that covers strategy, plans, priorities and targets, the GMCA operates a Budget Timetable including peer scrutiny from Leaders and Treasurers on each of the GMCA budgets.

The GMCA seeks to achieve 'social value' through service planning and commissioning. A Procurement Strategy is part of the GMCA Constitution, and this is supported by a GMCA Social Value in Procurement Policy. The GM Procurement Hub offers a centralised procurement service that can support joint commissioning across GM organisations. A recent example of this could be seen in the securing of a world-class digital infrastructure, in which GMCA have appointed Virgin Media Business to deliver up to 2,700km of new fibre-optic

broadband infrastructure across the region, allowing businesses and residents across the region to benefit from next generation connectivity – supporting economic growth and jobs.

An updated social value policy has been developed, with closer links to the Greater Manchester Strategy. The new policy will ensure social value plays a key role in the city region's public procurement and wider priorities, sitting at the heart of work to tackle inequalities and build a better, fairer and greener economy in Greater Manchester. The updated framework will guide delivery of social value within public sector contracts across the GMCA, individual local authorities and NHS organisations. It will support commissioners to set out their procurement and contract management requirements to maximise relevant social value, and providers to develop and submit proposals.

## E. DEVELOPING THE ENTITY'S CAPACITY, INCLUDING THE CAPABILITY OF ITS LEADERSHIP AND THE INDIVIDUALS WITHIN IT

Each Member has a clear role profile in relation to their portfolio. The assigned portfolios are published through the GMCA website, so members of the public are aware of which member of the GMCA has strategic responsibility for which area. Leaders meet regularly with senior officers in relation to their portfolio.

Member Induction Sessions are held at the beginning of each year, and Member capabilities and skills are supported through the Member development programmes. Informal briefings are provided to Members in advance of all Audit Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

The Chief Executive Officer's role has been widened to include oversight of Transport for Greater Manchester. Part 3 of the GMCA Constitution sets out a Scheme of Functions Delegated to Chief Officers and those exercisable only by the GMCA to ensure clarity over the types of decisions that are delegated and those that are reserved for collective decision making of the Board.

Strategic management oversight and direction is provided through the Chief Executives Management Team, which is also the Incident management Group for emergencies, the Senior Leadership Team. The wider Leadership Team, Senior Leadership Team and Extended Leadership Teams meet regularly to discuss and share knowledge.

An increased focus on leading the delivery of system change through the Greater Manchester Strategy with improved co-ordination the GMCA and with Place has required:

- A wider range of Directors coming together to pull the 'professional specialisms' from across the CA together to lead/drive the organisation as a whole to meet agreed priorities. No one team can deliver system change
- A generic 'Director' role with a specialist portfolio – to show role is about working cross the organisation with 'blocks of activity' grouped under

Directors. By definition these 'Directorates' will rely on each other to deliver 'whole system change'.

- Corporate/Enabling Services are integral part of driving forward overall outcomes of the CA and the work of individual Directorates

These renewed directorates have been based on what the CA is trying to achieve:

- We want everyone to be Life Ready with the skills needed throughout live to succeed (Edn/Skills block)
- We want people to have good jobs in a prosperous economy (Economy block)
- We want people to live in vibrant and safe places (Place Making and Police/Fire/Criminal Justice blocks)
- We want GM to be a Low Carbon city region at the forefront of the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution (Green and Digital blocks)
- We want joined-up public services that support individuals' holistically, focussing on prevention and the promotion of the best life chances (Public Service Reform block)

A comprehensive GMCA business plan is in place and can be found on the GMCA's [website](#)<sup>2</sup>. This includes a set of performance targets. All the actions are drawn from the GMS and monitoring performance against the GMS is delivered through the Implementation Plan whose performance dashboard is reported through the Scrutiny Committees, and to the GMCA, on a six-monthly basis.

The GMCA has developed a GM Good Employment Charter and the GMCA itself has now achieved Member status through its own excellent employment practices.

The integrated staff Personal Development Plans first developed through 2017/18 as part of enhanced HR and organisational development service for overall GMCA continue to take place. Further recent initiatives include:

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/2242/gmca\\_business\\_plan\\_2019\\_full\\_public.pdf](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/2242/gmca_business_plan_2019_full_public.pdf)

- The launching of a health and wellbeing area on the intranet that includes a comprehensive suite of online support, virtual learning and opportunities to have face to face support
- An expanded portfolio of e-learning modules for staff and manager including equality and diversity awareness
- The launch of Mi Learning with a suite of new and improved managerial support tools to help people managers improve their knowledge and skills
- Leadership Development Programme procured and being rolled out across GMFRS
- Specialist recruitment strategies - Firefighter and Senior Recruitment - utilising Digital Technology

In addition to staff engagement surveys – regular monthly ‘pulse checks’ were now embedded within the organisation. These pulse checks were particularly important in helping to gauge how staff were feeling in terms of the move to a ‘new normal’ in ways of working and a hybrid mix of office and homeworking across the organisation.

Areas for Focus in 2021/22:

- The establishment of new ways of working in the post-Covid environment. Resetting the way we work as an organisation to ensure that hybrid ways of working are adaptable to the needs of all staff within the organisation.

## F. MANAGING RISKS AND PERFORMANCE THROUGH ROBUST INTERNAL CONTROL AND STRONG PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The GMCA Corporate Risk Register (CRR) was reviewed and updated on a quarterly basis throughout during 2020/21. The CRR identifies risk ownership for specific risks and is owned by the Governance and Risk Group. The GMCA Audit Committee receives quarterly updates on the CRR. Given the Covid-19 pandemic, a Covid-19 risk register was developed in April 2020 which will continue to be monitored in 2021/22.

The Audit Committee is responsible for overseeing the effective operation of the systems of governance, risk and Internal control arrangements. New Internal Audit arrangements were implemented in 2019/20 with the appointment of a new in-house Head of Audit and Assurance and the establishment of an in-house GMCA Internal Audit team. The Internal Audit Plan is approved by Audit Committee, and Internal Audit provide quarterly progress reports to Audit Committee. The Head of Audit and Assurance produces an Annual Assurance opinion.

There is an established Scrutiny process comprised of three themed committees (Corporate Issues & Reform; Economy, Business Growth & Skills; and Housing, Planning & Environment) with each being subject to the scrutiny / call-in process whereby any Member of Constituent Councils can refer items for possible scrutiny. Areas for each scrutiny committee to are also proposed by the Chair and other members of the committees who are the owners of each committee's work programme.

GMCA's Revenue and Capital Budget and Monitoring Reports; Mayoral General Revenue and Capital Budget and Monitoring Reports; Mayoral Police and Crime Revenue and Capital Budget and Monitoring Reports; Treasury Management Strategy and Treasury Management Outturn Reports are all subject to appropriate reviewing, scrutiny and challenge where appropriate through the Corporate Issues & Reform Scrutiny Committee and via the Audit Committee.

Areas for Focus in 2021/22:

- Continuing to embed the GMCA Risk Management Framework across all Directorates within GMCA
- Robust arrangements to put in place to monitor delivery, performance and risk – ensuring the successful delivery of the Greater Manchester Strategy
- Implementation of the CIPFA Financial Management Code of Practice

## G. IMPLEMENTING GOOD PRACTICES IN TRANSPARENCY, REPORTING, AND AUDIT, TO DELIVER EFFECTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

Transparency of decision-making is achieved through live streaming of key meetings, a centralised FOI process, and through the GMCA Communications Strategy.

In terms of reporting: the annual accounts with narrative introduction; GMCA Annual Performance Report; Police and Crime Annual Report; Head of IA Annual Assurance Opinion; Annual Governance Statement; and Statement of Accounts are considered by the GMCA Audit Committee and the GMCA and contained within publicly viewable agendas.

New External Auditors (Mazars) were appointed from 1 April 2018, and they have produced an external audit findings report. The Audit Committee has oversight on the final accounts process. Actions taken to implement External Audit Recommendations will be reported as part of a combined audit recommendations tracker for 2021/22 as part of a revised audit action tracking process.

The Annual Internal Audit Opinion sets out compliance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and for 2020/21 confirmed that work had been undertaken in line with PSIAS. As the Internal Audit service was brought in-house in 2019/20, it was agreed with Audit Committee that the service would be subject to an external quality assessment within the next two years.

### Areas for Focus in 2020/21:

- Development of a protocol to improve the consistency and transparency of arrangements for Mayoral Advisors.