

Greater Manchester Equality Panels update January 2024

The Equality Panels have been established to advise, support and challenge political leaders and policymakers to tackle the discrimination and disadvantage that cause injustice and inequality in society, and champion Greater Manchester as an inclusive city-region. For more information on the Equality Panels please visit <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/equalities/>

Faith and Belief Advisory Panel

In the last three months ...

The Faith and Belief Advisory Panel have explored the contribution our organisations and networks can make to the Climate agenda, contributing to the Our Planet, Our Faith Conference and Green Summit. This contributes to the panel's aims of supporting Climate and Social Justice through a range of Action Networks.

Highlights include ...

International events have been a challenging time for our members, who continue to strive for unity and cohesion. The Panel Co-Chairs joined the Mayor of Greater Manchester in a [statement](#) on the need for solidarity within and across our communities

Over the next three months ...

The Panel are developing a Faith and Belief Covenant for Greater Manchester, which will foster more productive partnerships with public services and strengthen the role of our local Interfaith Networks and the impact they make in our communities.

Youth Combined Authority

In the last three months ...

The Youth Combined Authority have explored the new Manchester Baccalaureate and how this will support more young people to access technical education pathways, delivered a session at the Green Summit around food waste and hidden hunger, and discussed the resources of the water safety partnership to identify how these can be improved.

Highlights include ...

The YCA Chair spoke at the '[Greater than Violence' strategy launch](#), showing the input of the young people and the YCA into this work, and our commitment to working alongside the Violence Reduction Unit in its implementation.

Over the next three months ...

The YCA are developing a new vision document for the next set of members to work on when they begin in April 2024, which identifies key themes of interest such as Transport and Active Travel and Education, Employment and Skills. They are also continuing to influence new policy such as the next Five-Year Environmental Plan.

LGBTQ+ Equality Panel

In the last three months...

The LGBTQ+ Equality Panel been revisiting their foundational aims and priorities, making sure that all the work we do aligns with these aims and that GMCA and LGBT Foundation are best supporting the Panel to achieve this. We have also prioritised the development of a Communications plan that will make sure that people across GM who could use the support of the Panel know who they are, what they are doing and how to contact them.

Highlights include ...

Starting to collaborate with the Faith & Belief Advisory Panel on building support for ending conversion therapy in communities of faith and belief. We also held a meeting with Cllr. Bev Craig, Portfolio Leader for Economy, Business and Inclusive Growth and Leader of Manchester City Council, to discuss how LGBTQ+ people of all ages across Manchester could be better supported by the priorities of the Panel.

Over the next three months ...

The Panel will be meeting with the Mayor of Greater Manchester to discuss how LGBTQ+ equality can be embedded into his manifesto for re-election. We will also be responding to the Government's new guidance on Gender Questioning Children for schools, helping those affected by this publication to help to make schools safe spaces for trans young people. We will also be developing an action plan for 2024 which will prioritise setting clear and achievable goals for each of the Panel's workstreams.

Race Equality Panel

In the last three months...

The Race Equality Panel underwent a refresh of its membership, with twenty-five new panel members recruited, who will be taking forward the brilliant work done by their predecessors.

Highlights include...

A celebration event with the Mayor of Greater Manchester and Portfolio Leader for Equalities and Communities recognised the work of the previous Panel. In addition, a series of in-person engagements have provided a robust induction for the newly recruited panel members

Over the next three months...

The Panel will firm up its priorities for the next twelve months and will be appointing its Co-Chairs. The Panel will then begin engagement with system stakeholders and community forums. Also, the Panel will be supporting development of the new Hate Crime Strategy and the Civic Leadership Programme

Women and Girls Equality Panel

In the last three months...

The Women and Girls Panel have followed up on women's safety concerns raised by the public at the Right to the Streets Legislative Theatre event. The Panel also gave input into Transport for Greater Manchester's Violence Against Women and Girls Campaign. In addition, the Panel have met with the Integrated Care Partnership to discuss how the barriers to women's good health, raised by the Panel throughout 2023, will be addressed.

Highlights include ...

The Panel met with Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, for our annual in-person meeting, raising our strong desire to be more integrated into decision making and to support with gender-mainstreaming. We discussed our concerns with regards to childcare, women's health and employment, and female entrepreneurs' access to business support. Important outcomes of this meeting are stronger links with TfGM, the #IsThisOkay Campaign and the Growth Company.

Over the next three months ...

The Panel will be inducting its new panel members, including our first in-person strategy day to establish our priorities for 2024. The Panel will be contributing to the development of an action plan for the Greater Than Violence Strategy and in the refresh of the Greater Manchester Strategy.

Disabled People's Panel

In the last three months ...

The Disabled People's Panel has continued to focus on the impact of poverty and the cost-of-living crisis on disabled people. The Panel have been working with policy leads to highlight problems relating to debt, benefits and access to advice. The Panel also attended the meeting of the Greater Manchester Association of Directors of Adult Social Services to highlight barriers to independent living.

Highlights include

One of the Panel's co-chairs attended the Greater Manchester Combined Authority meeting in November to address the Greater Manchester response to the Disabled People's Panel Big Disability Survey. You can watch the GMCA meeting [here](#) (starts around 26min30sec). The Panel helped the huge victory for collective working in stopping the closure of railway station ticket offices, as well as contributing to local and national policy on care charging, disability benefits, institutional abuse and the UK Covid Inquiry. The Panel held the national Disabled People's Organisation conference at the People's History Museum with Andy Burnham giving keynote address. And one of our co-chairs, Sara Crookdake received an MBE.

Over the next three months ...

The Panel are developing a new workplan from April 2024 and will be identifying key themes. For the remainder of this year 23/24, the Panel will focus on the Good Landlord's Charter, Welfare Benefits, Elections, the Built-Environment and Social Care Charging.

Older People's Equality Panel

In the last three months...

The Older People's Equality Panel have been exploring barriers experienced by some older people when accessing council services or information. This addresses concerns of increased digital exclusion for older people.

Highlights include...

An informal audit of Council websites from an age friendly perspective was conducted. Panel members presented their key findings to the GMCA Digital Inclusion Team and locality leads for digital inclusion and look forward to working with Councils to improve community engagement, both digitally and non-digitally.

Over the next three months...

The panel will focus on how Adult Social Care Transformation is impacting the lives of older people.

Greater Manchester Equality Alliance

In the last three months...

GM=EqAI have continued to engage in productive conversations with policy makers. We also have implemented several internal developments in response to member suggestions.

Highlights include...

Our interactive workshop session exploring how GM=EqAI can deliver our environmental commitments under the VCFSE Accord. GM=EqAI members also met with the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police to discuss our concerns about increased arrest rates and poor treatment of people in custody suites.

Over the next three months...

We will be finalising and publishing our guidance on "Hearing the Voice of Lived Experience in Policy Making". Topics we are looking forward to this year include the Department for Education guidance on gender questioning children, the new Greater than Violence Strategy, Five-Year Environmental Plan refresh, Women's Health Strategy, and 18+ skills and education.