

Greater Manchester Equality Panels update May 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/>

Disabled People's Panel

In the last three months ...

The Disabled People's Panel have focussed on a wide range of topics, including welfare benefits, the nighttime economy, changes to voting requirements and the Good Landlord Charter. The Panel continue to highlight problems relating to debt, benefits and social care and have undertaken a project with British Gas Energy Trust. Panel representatives have also met the Government's Disability Unit and Minister for Disabled People.

Highlights include ...

The Mayor of Greater Manchester outlined to the panel his vision for devolving control of benefits from Westminster to Greater Manchester to better support disabled residents through personalised, community-based assistance, which has become a key element of his Manifesto. Panel members will work with the Mayor on any future proposals.

Over the next three months ...

The Panel have been developing a new workplan for 2024/25, including an event in the Good Employment Week highlighting the issues facing disabled people face in the world of work.

Faith and Belief Advisory Panel

In the last three months ...

The Faith and Belief Advisory Panel have been working with the LGBTQ+ Equality Panel to provide support for their Pledge to End Conversion Therapy and develop a longer-term relationship exploring wider issues and attitudes within the two communities. The Panel also continued its ongoing contribution to action networks tackling food insecurity, homelessness, climate change, hate crime and digital inclusion.

Highlights include ...

At their March meeting, GMCA Leaders signed a new Faith, Belief, and Interfaith Covenant. Developed by the Panel in partnership with GMCA officers, the Covenant sets out principles and commitments that will drive engagement, collaboration and delivery between public services and the Faith and Belief sector.

Over the next three months

Develop a delivery plan for the Covenant to ensure it achieves positive change for GMCA and the sector, including exploring how the Covenant can support local relationships between Councils and Interfaith Networks. The Panel will also be strengthening the role of Faith in the VCFSE Accord and preparing for a change in Co-Chairs, with Rabbi Warren Elf MBE and Dr Jill Brennan standing down after three years.

Greater Manchester Equality Alliance

In the last three months ...

GM=EqAI have explored how their guidance document on "Hearing the Voice of Lived Experience in Policymaking" can support the Integrated Health Board's new People and Communities Participation Strategy. The Alliance produced a briefing on the draft Department of Education guidance on "Gender Questioning Children". Members have also been consulted on the 5 Year Environmental Plan Refresh, the Greater than Violence Strategy and Women's Health Strategy.

Highlights include ...

An inaugural GM=EqAI Celebration and Showcase event was held with members and partners to launch our recently published Year 3 Evaluation Report and celebrate the accomplishments of the alliance.

Over the next three months

GM=EqAI will be engaging in conversations around the Local Transport Plan, Virtual Wards, 18+ Skills and Education, Changing Futures programme and Good Employment Week.

Race Equality Panel

In the last three months...

The new panel members have come together in-person three times, building relationships and setting priorities. Members also elected two Co-Chairs and two Vice Chairs. The panel have met with the Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester, and the Director of the Good Employment Charter, as well as GMCA officers developing the new Race Equity Framework.

Highlights include...

The Deputy Mayor welcomed the input of the panel in shaping policing and crime plans. An output of the discussion was a follow-up session with Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to explore key issues around recruitment and retention of ethnically diverse officers.

Over the next three months ...

In addition to the meeting with GMP, the panel will be finalising their priorities, planning the panel's involvement in Good Employment Week, and hold a development session on system leadership.

LGBTQ+ Equality Panel

In the last three months...

The LGBTQ+ Panel has set an annual plan and goals for its workgroups - ending conversion practices, tackling hate crime and ensuring the safety of LGBTQ+ people in public spaces - working with colleagues across GMCA and public services to have a positive impact in LGBTQ+ communities. The panel have also elected two new Co-Leads, bringing fresh energy and emphasis to the Panel's work.

Highlights include...

Working with the Faith and Belief Advisory Panel on ending conversion practices in communities. In addition, the panel met with Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, to discuss his support for LGBTQ+ people, including safe spaces and extra-care housing.

Over the next three months...

Expanding our cross-panel work on ending conversion practices, preparing for another summer of meeting LGBTQ+ communities at local pride events across the city-region, and surveying the LGBTQ+ population to greater understand their experiences of hate crime. The panel will also be developing a safer spaces accreditation scheme to promote safety and inclusion. In addition, the panel will open recruitment to enable greater diversity of members.

Older People's Equality Panel

In the last three months...

The Older People's Equality Panel have explored a range of issues including financial hardship for older people, Ageing in Place, hate crime, victim support, age inclusivity in the workplace and improving digital participation. The Panel met with programme leads for Adult Social Transformation to discuss their progress over the last year and how they will ensure older people can influence in a service led environment.

Highlights include...

Co-Chair Nakib Narat attended the [February GMCA meeting](#) to speak in support of the new Greater Manchester Age Friendly Strategy (2024 -2034). Nakib also spoke at the launch of the Greater Manchester State of Ageing Report.

Over the next three months...

The panel will focus on Age Inclusivity in the Workplace and how to work with employers to improve flexible working options, including hosting an event in Good Employment Week exploring this issue.

Women and Girls Equality Panel

In the last three months ...

The Women and Girls Equality Panel held our first Strategy Day to plan our 2024 work programme and beyond. We welcomed our new Panel members, heard the latest gender equality data from GM4Women2028, and met with representatives from the Violence Reduction Unit, Transport for Greater Manchester, GMCA, the Good Employment Charter, Greater Manchester Police and the Women's Health Strategy. The panel have also held engagement sessions on the Local Transport Plan and Greater Than Violence Strategy.

Highlights include ...

In partnership with Manchester City Council, the panel promoted access to anonymous voting for victims of domestic violence by organising training for Women's Aid staff and promoting key dates and documents on our social media channels. The panel also took part in an International Women's Day walk.

Over the next three months ...

The panel will be planning our Good Employment Week session on Health and Wellbeing across a women's life course in the workplace, which will take place on 19th June 2024. The panel will continue to work on the development of processes to further embed the Women and Girls Equality and gender mainstreaming into policy making. In addition, the panel will be supporting the next GM4Women2028 public event on 2nd July, with our focus likely being on capacity building for girls entering politics, advocacy and campaigning.

Youth Combined Authority

In the last three months ...

The Youth Combined Authority explored the Culture Strategy refresh, continued to discuss developments to the Manchester Baccalaureate (MBacc), talked about the 5 Year Environmental Plan refresh with the GMCA Environmental team, and met with Transport for Greater Manchester to look at their vision refresh for the Local Transport Plan 2040.

Highlights include

The YCA have produced a report on the Mbacc which will be shared with the Mayor of Greater Manchester and GMCA officers. We also had a farewell for the current cohort, who finished their term in March, and marked their achievements over their two year term.

Over the next three months ...

The new panel membership will begin their two year term in April 2024, working on the themes set out in the [GMYCA Vision document](#) and building relationships through an introduction meeting and a development day. They will also work on engaging around Good Employment Week, to include working with other equality panels to amplify our voices on this topic.