

The Next Level: Good Lives for All in Greater Manchester

The report of
**The Greater Manchester
Independent Inequalities
Commission**



This is the time... And this is the place

Greater Manchester Independent Inequalities Commission

Model of Interacting Inequalities

Demographic Inequalities

- Age
- Sex and Gender
- Race/Ethnicity
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Religious Affiliation
- Caring Responsibility
- Language
- Migrant/
Undocumented Status/
Asylum Seeking
- Etc.

Entrenched and Intersecting Inequalities

Socio-Economic Inequalities

Housing
and Lived
Environment



Education
and Skills



Power,
Voice and
Participation



Income,
Wealth and
Employment



Connectivity
(Transport/
Digital)



Access to
Care and
Support



Geographic Inequalities

- International
- National
- Regional
- City/Town
- Neighbourhood
- Community
- Etc.

Wellbeing and Quality of Life
Equal Ability to Participate in Society



The Greater Manchester Independent Inequalities Commission

Chair: Kate Pickett

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Neil McInroy
CEO of the Centre for Local Economic Strategies



Andrew Westwood
Professor of Government Practice and Vice Dean Faculty of Humanities, University of Manchester and Associate Partner at Public First



Lord Simon Woolley
Director and founder of Operation Black Vote, and cross-bench Peer

Our Recommendations

There is a vast amount of good work being done and many areas in which Greater Manchester is leading the way and making progress. But now is the time for a step change in its delivery. Our recommendations focus on how Greater Manchester can both respond to the immediate challenges created by the pandemic, and pivot towards a new way of doing things that puts tackling inequality at its heart. We have not tried to provide a comprehensive blueprint for tackling all inequalities in Greater Manchester – that is beyond the scope of our short Commission. Instead, we have focused on some key ways in which Greater Manchester could seek to shift wealth, power and opportunity to those too often denied it.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) can set goals and show leadership, but ultimately the vision will only be achieved by the whole system working together: GMCA, local authorities, health and the wider public sector, businesses and trade unions, the community and voluntary sector, and local residents. The Commission recognises that many of the big shifts needed to tackle inequality are outside of Greater Manchester's control and sit with national government – for instance, the urgent need to repair our social safety net by reforming Universal Credit and lifting statutory sick pay.

The double hit of the pandemic and a decade of austerity has also put local authority budgets under more pressure than ever before. This makes it all the more urgent to be creative with the powers and resources that are available – targeting resources to where they are most effective and working in partnership with communities.

The Commission hopes that our proposals will take Greater Manchester to the next level in creating a good life for all, built on the strong foundations already present in the city-region.

An Essential Pivot

1. Put **wellbeing and equality goals** at the heart of the Greater Manchester Strategy and align budgets, portfolios and activities to these so that good lives for all is the focus of everything Greater Manchester does.
2. Convene a **GM Anchor Action Network** and use their spending, investment and soft power to drive social value, support disadvantaged groups and create good, secure, living wage¹ jobs.

People Power

3. Create a **People's Taskforce** to put power into people's hands at every level of Greater Manchester and a **People's Assembly** to contribute to priority setting and work with public authorities in delivering them.
4. Give the **Equality Panels more teeth** with a stronger mandate and resources to constructively challenge public bodies.
5. Establish an **independent Anti-Discrimination** body to tackle breaches of the Equality Act.
6. Agree a joint commitment across GMCA, districts and statutory partners to **tackle inequality faced by minority groups** with a clear plan for roll out.
7. Develop a **GMCA Race Equality Strategy**, backed by a plan to increase representation of Black and Asian minorities in senior positions in GMCA and tackle race inequality in health, education, policing, work and housing.

¹ In this document, the term 'living wage' is used to mean the Real Living Wage calculated annually by the Resolution Foundation and overseen by the [Living Wage Commission](#)

Good Jobs, Decent Pay

8. Set up **'GM Works'** to create good jobs, upskill and reskill people to take up these jobs and provide apprenticeships and 6-month Job Guarantees for disadvantaged groups in key sectors.
9. Set an ambitious target for every employer in Greater Manchester to **pay the living wage and offer living hours by 2030**, using the Good Employment Charter, conditions on access to public goods, services and contracts and support for businesses in low paid sectors to get there.
10. **Bridge the skills divide** with universities, colleges and training providers working jointly to improve access to training, life-long learning and in-work progression schemes for disadvantaged groups.

Building Wealth

11. **Create a Community Wealth Hub** to support and grow co-operatives, mutuals, social and community enterprises, staffed by people from the co-operative and community sector who understand the market.
12. Set up a **Community Investment Platform** to tap into local savings, unlock community investment and build-up assets to share wealth with everyone in Greater Manchester.
13. Set up a **Land Commission** to look at ownership and control of land in Greater Manchester, its impacts on inequality and potential solutions.

Services for a Good Life

14. Move towards **universal basic services** in which education, health, childcare, adult social care, housing, transport and digital connectivity are provided to all and lobby central government to invest and devolve funding to make this a reality.
15. Launch an **Education Challenge** to give every child an equal start in life by levelling up schools in deprived areas, supporting young people's transition at 16 and improving access to activities that build social skills, confidence and resilience.
16. Scale up **public and social sector housebuilding** to deliver affordable, decent homes, backed by a plan to acquire land, rental properties, new builds and commercial properties for social housing.
17. Amplify the **Greater Manchester Model of integrated public services in 10 pathfinder deprived neighbourhoods and pilot an income guarantee** in one or more to tackle inequality, using community-led priorities, cross-service teams, pooled budgets and participatory budgeting.

In our full report we give detail on these recommendations and encouragement for other actions, including GMCA's role as a convener of calls to action for national actions and policies.

