

# **GREATER MANCHESTER WOMEN AND GIRLS' EQUALITY PANEL**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of the GM Women and Girls' Equality Panel is 'to enable women and girls to live their best life in Greater Manchester'. The Panel will adopt a fully inclusive approach, where women and girls in their full diversity, regardless of address, race, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, trans women, non-binary people and gender fluid people who identify as Women and Girls or other protected characteristics, have equality of opportunity to start well, live well and age well in Greater Manchester.

### **Key Objectives:**

Establish the Women and Girls' Equality Panel as a fixed piece of GMCA infrastructure to address gender equality in GM.

Establish a clear vision for women and girls in Greater Manchester, by building on work to date, to understand issues and inequalities affecting their lives, and recognising women and girls' particular experience of COVID.

Shape and inform responses to those issues in the current context of the coronavirus pandemic, by developing a detailed two year action plan (aligned to the Greater Manchester Strategy), focusing on priority areas for intervention in addressing gender inequality within GM policy making and delivery, including:

### **COVID 19 Recovery –**

Activity to recognise the differential impact of the COVID pandemic on women and girls (including exacerbation of some pre-existing inequalities/generation of new ones) and ensure that a gendered lens approach is adopted to restarting the economy and society and used in the development and delivery of the three phases of the wider GM recovery planning: Release of Lockdown; Living with COVID; and Build Back Better. In addition to the specific priority areas below, the panel may wish to focus on restarting/changing public transport and access/role of IT.

### **Safety –**

Activity under this priority could look to make advancements in informing best practice around violence against women and girls (including trafficking and anti-slavery) and could look to identify other key areas of focus around women and girls safety in Greater Manchester, including those arising from, or exacerbated by, the COVID pandemic and lockdown.

### **Education, Employment, Business and the Economy –**

Activity under this priority could involve greater understanding of disadvantage experienced by women and girls as the economy restarts and rebuilds, including: intersectionality between issues such gender and the widening inequality gap in education between privileged and disadvantaged pupils; increasing unemployment and occupational segregation; and access to childcare. Areas of focus may also include female progression into senior roles, disadvantage experienced related to part-time working, specific support for female entrepreneurs, reskilling and working with education and skills systems to ensure greater access and take up of STEM subjects and other growth areas of the economy.

### **Health –**

Activity under this priority could look to recommend specific focus areas of best practice. This could include understanding both physical and mental health issues arising or exacerbated by Covid, and working with health and care colleagues to ensure appropriate support and services are in place, such as Alcohol Support, Community Support Services, Healthy Lifestyles and the importance of integrated approaches to Women's health.

### **Representation in public life –**

Building on the initial research undertaken regarding the representation of female politicians in Greater Manchester, the Panel could consider women's representation in all aspects of public life and begin to understand how issues such as childcare and parental leave influence the extent to which females are prominent in public life.

Work with GMCA Scrutiny Committees and the wider GM system to ensure that gender equality is actively considered in decisions made to help make the conurbation a better place to live, work and study and do business, and that, where appropriate, a differentiated approach is adopted. The panel will link with other

equalities panels and recovery planning structures, such as the Recovery Coordination Group, to apply a gendered lens to the emerging recovery plans.

Form key lines of enquiry driven by ambitious targets, and a comprehensive evidence base.

Lead and facilitate co-produced responses to identified instances of gender imbalance.

Make recommendations to GMCA, partners from across the public, private and voluntary sectors to drive and operationalise change

### **Accountability:**

The Panel will be accountable for the production and delivery of a work programme. The Panel will be required to report on progress, issues and key findings annually to GMCA.

### **Membership:**

The Panel is open to all women who want to apply and will be made up of representatives from a range of organisations and sectors, ensuring the viewpoints of women and girls, including those who have protected characteristics, from a cross-sector of society are represented. The Panel aspires to have representation across geography as well as ensuring it captures the views of women and girls from different socioeconomic groups, business, VCSE and the public sector.

For the first year the Panel will be chaired jointly by Brenda Warrington, Portfolio Lead for Equalities and Ageing (and Chair of the Women & Girls Task and Finish group), and Pam Smith, Chief Executive Portfolio Lead for Equalities and Ageing (and also a member of the Task and Finish group). This will provide a level of consistency at the current time and enable the swift establishment of the Panel. The position of Chair will be reviewed on an annual basis. Beverly Hughes, GM Deputy Mayor will also be a core member of the Panel, ensuring appropriate representation and leadership regarding policing, crime, personal safety and abuse in the Panel's work and operation.

Membership of the Panel will be for two years. The Panel will meet regularly and will be convened initially by the GMCA. Subject to a successful recruitment campaign for Panel members, the first meeting will be held in September 2020, after which Group meetings will be held on a quarterly basis

Each Member will be of sufficient standing to be able to advise on key matters pertaining to policy and activities, engage with their networks and ensure that they represent the views of other individuals / organisations working in similar fields.

The Panel will also draw on a wider network of alliances and working groups to assist in steering its agenda and actively promoting women and girls' equality. This could include, for example, men as allies, which might explore some of the important actions and behaviours that men can take to support and achieve progress on gender equality.

### **Roles of the Panel:**

The **Joint-Chairs** will ensure that:

- Meetings of the Group are conducted in a fair and transparent business-like fashion;
- Agreed conclusions, recommendations and action points are clear; and
- A shared culture and language, common purpose and trust are endorsed through a collaborative leadership style.

### **Members of the Group** will:

- Be expected to engage between meetings with a wider group of organisations/individuals, speaking on their behalf at the Group and feeding back progress into their networks;
- Champion the work of the Group to encourage wider participation and lobby on key sector issues;
- Make every effort to attend meetings. Substitutes will be allowed by exception.
- Be prepared for the meetings, and have read papers circulated in advance;
- Commit a minimum of eight half days to the work of the Group over a period of 12 months;
- Take forward any actions that they have agreed to develop, and report back any progress to the Group in the timescales agreed;
- Endorse a collaborative and co-operative model and work to ensure its achievement; and
- Ensure that no conflict arises, or could reasonably be perceived to arise, between the work of the Group and their private interests – financial or otherwise. They must declare publicly any private interests which may, or may be perceived to, conflict with the Group.

Group Members must not use, or attempt to use, the opportunity presented by the Group to promote personal interests or those of any connected person, firm, business or other organisation.

Reasonable travel and other out of pocket expenses incurred through the work of the Group will be reimbursed.