

## Greater Manchester Equality Panels update July 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 Panel agreed priorities for the coming year; disabled people and work, poverty, social care and strengthening the Panel. There have been monthly Panel and Easy meetings focussed on Work Support and Employment, the potential impact of the General Election, accessible voting, preparing for the Social Care Commission and meeting with the Adult Social Care Transformation Team.

*Highlights include ...*

Supporting Greater Manchester Law Centre with its newly funded project to improve specialist benefit advice to disabled people. In addition, Greater Manchester Councils continued to include information on accessible voting on Polling Cards, a commitment we achieved last year, and the Panel emailed all Greater Manchester General Election candidates to highlight the barriers to political participation for disabled people

*Over the next three months ...*

The Panel will review its workplan for 2024/25 post General Election with a focus on our key priorities. The co-chairs are now working together on 'strengthening the Panel' to ensure we maximise engagement and impact of the panel, building on all the hard work done so far.

### **Faith and Belief Advisory Panel**

*In the last three months ...*

Following the recent signing of the Faith, Belief and Interfaith Covenant, the Panel has developed a delivery plan, and met with Council officers to help ensure the Covenant is aligned with local strategies. The Panel have also elected new Co-Chairs, with our existing Co-Chairs Rabbi Warren Elf MBE and Dr Jill Brennan standing down after three years of service and new Co-Chairs Revd Ian Rutherford and Manjari Patel.

*Highlights include ...*

The Panel co-chair presented to the VCSE Leadership Group which has approved a recommendation to include the 'F' within VCFSE (Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise), as well as expanding Faith and Belief representation on the group. In addition, the Panel have collaborated with the LGBTQ+ Equality Panel to develop and approve a Faith and Belief Panel Pledge to End Conversion Therapy.

*Over the next three months ....*

Progress delivery of the Covenant Delivery Plan ensuring alignment with the VCFSE Accord, and planning for a Faith and Belief business event in October's Good Employment Week. The focus of the July Panel meeting will be on the role of Faith and Belief in enabling our communities to 'Live Well'.

### **Greater Manchester Equality Alliance**

*In the last three months ...*

GM=EqAI have engaged with partners from Transport for Greater Manchester on the Local Transport Plan, with researchers exploring the impact of Virtual Wards, GMCA colleagues on plans for Adult Skills and Education, as well as the next iteration of the Multiple Disadvantage Support Offer (Changing Futures). A roundtable was held with Local Infrastructure Organisations to discuss emerging priorities and share learning and insight. The Inclusive Language Sub-Group has also finalised new guidance on Social Class.

*Highlights include ...*

Facilitating an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) focused Action Learning Set workshop with VCFSE Accord partners to understand and develop constructive solutions to solve EDI related issues within the Accord workstreams. This increased understanding of how to address issues by learning from best practice.

*Over the next three months ...*

GM=EqAI will be running a learning session for members on GMCA governance and partnership structures to strengthen partnership working, influence and impact. In addition, GM=EqAI will be engaging with Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service to test the priorities and target actions of their new Fire Plan, and host a session in support of Good Employment Week

### **Race Equality Panel**

*In the last three months...*

The Panel have been developing their aims and objectives on the key themes of health, employment, policing and housing, as well as being actively involved in the Hate Crime Working Group

*Highlights include...*

The Panel held a System Leadership session facilitated by Sharon Amesu of She Leads for Legacy. Panel members were also involved in the Graduation Ceremony for the Civic Leadership Programme.

*Over the next three months ...*

The Panel will meet with Greater Manchester Police to explore their Police Race Action Plan, prepare for a Panel business event in Good Employment Week, and support a new research project on racial inequalities in social housing, supported by a new facilitating team.

### **LGBTQ+ Equality Panel**

*In the last three months...*

The Panel has developed a communication plan for working with policymakers, to ensure the work of the panel is appropriately supporting GMCA's equality initiatives. The LGBTQ+ Panel has also completed other governance work, including ratifying new policies and processes, and welcomed a new Panel facilitator.

*Highlights include...*

The Panel launched a Hate Crime Survey, that will support both Greater Manchester Police and the Greater Manchester Hate Crime Working Group by accurately demonstrating levels of anti-LGBTQ+ hate crime across the city-region. In addition, the Panel met with the Women and Girls Equality Panel to discuss the Pledge to Ban Conversion Therapy.

*Over the next three months...*

The panel will be welcoming two new members, as well as hosting two recruitment open days in September and October. The Panel will be meeting with Transport for Greater Manchester to discuss an LGBTQ+ accreditation scheme, and with the Disabled People's Panel and the Youth Combined Authority to discuss supporting the Pledge to Ban Conversion Therapy. The panel will also be hosting an event for Good Employment Week, showcasing census data on LGBTQ+ employment inequalities.

### **Older People's Equality Panel**

*In the last three months...*

The Panel have focused on Digital Participation and Financial Hardship, as well as being represented at nine other meetings relating to a range of issues including financial hardship for older people, ageing in place, hate crime, take up of benefits and entitlements, age inclusivity in the workplace and developing training and support on use of digital apps relating to health services.

*Highlights include...*

Panel members attended the Mayoral hustings organised by Greater Manchester Older Peoples Network in April and were pleased to hear informed responses from all candidates on how issues impact older people. All candidates were in favour of establishing a commissioner for ageing and older people in England and happy to explore the option of a commissioner for Greater Manchester.

*Over the next three months ...*

The panel will continue to work with organisations and community groups to assess awareness of the changes in impact and schedule for the digital switchover. The focus of the panel meeting in August will be care settings, in advance of this we will be gathering qualitative data on experiences across boroughs.

### **Women and Girls Equality Panel**

*In the last three months ...*

The Panel continues to work with the Greater Manchester Apprenticeship & Careers Service (GMACS) and Curriculum for Life to support the development of content for young women and girls. This Panel have also led the collaborative design of a new Panel Engagement Framework that will embed the Equality Panels into policy making, trialling this with plans for panel involvement in the refresh of the Police and Crime Plan.

*Highlights include ...*

The GM4Women2028 public event at Salford University saw two Panel organised workshops on capacity building for girls and young women entering politics, advocacy and campaigning, and how to turn ideas into action. Over 100 people attended the event where we connected with community groups, charities, trailblazing girls, feminist leaders, and policymakers.

*Over the next three months ...*

We will hold a further session with Transport for Greater Manchester on the Local Transport Plan, and the Mobility Scooter Policy and Bikes on Trams. In addition, the Panel will be planning Good Employment Week public engagement session on Health and Wellbeing across a women's life course in the workplace.

### **Youth Combined Authority**

*In the last three months ...*

The new YCA members began their two-year term, engaging in a development day to develop key skills for their roles in this term, as well as sessions exploring civic leadership roles with Youth Leads UK and meeting with Greater Manchester Apprenticeship & Careers Service (GMACS)

*Highlights include ...*

The YCA have worked closely with the GMCA MBacc team to ensure young people's voices are at the centre of the plans for the future of technical education in Greater Manchester. The young people have collated young people's thoughts and recommendations, and three YCA members presented their report and findings at the MBacc Summit in July.

*Over the next three months ...*

The YCA will explore Our Pass and its integration into the Bee Network app at their July meeting, as well as electing an internal YCA Leadership Team to lead on planning and delivering future meetings. The group will meet with the Mayor during their September meeting to discuss how they can align their work with the Mayoral priorities and share work done on the MBacc to date.