

THE GM BRIEF

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we are **GREATER
MANCHESTER**



The GM Brief: June 2026

Welcome to the first in a new series of monthly briefings.

Welcome to the first in a new series of monthly briefings focussing on work to deliver our collective vision for Greater Manchester: a thriving city region where everyone can live a good life.

We're sharing this new brief with you, a select and trusted group of partners who are vital to our business and who we work closely with across our priority areas, to keep you updated on how we are progressing against our shared ambitions.

As you'll be aware Mayor Andy Burnham is currently running as the Labour candidate in the Makerfield by-election, which will take place on Thursday 18 June. Whilst we are currently in a pre-election period, the business of Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Transport for Greater Manchester and Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue continues. Rest assured we have robust plans in place for this period, and for any changes that may or may not come in the weeks and months ahead. There is more information in the briefing.

As we approach one year on from the launch of the Greater Manchester Strategy, we're building on strong progress across all our priorities.

Continuing this momentum will rely on the ongoing support and collaboration of partners across the public, private and voluntary sectors. Together, we can keep delivering at pace — accelerating housing, strengthening our transport network, connecting people to opportunity and embedding prevention in communities — to ensure the benefits of growth are shared by all who live and work in Greater Manchester.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement.

Caroline Simpson

Group Chief Executive, GMCA, TfGM, GMFRS

Key Updates: Greater Manchester Strategy – June

The first edition provides an overview of progress to date. Going forward, key updates will focus on recent developments or announcements.

Since the launch of the GMS, we have delivered visible outcomes across all seven workstreams, an example of which are outlined below.

Healthy homes for all

Everyone will live in a good, warm, safe place they can call home. With support from the Government, our Housing First approach and unit will turn the tide on the housing crisis.

We've delivered a significant number of outcomes in the first 12 months of the strategy, including but not limited to:

- £11.7m package of measures to help unlock empty homes and tackle temporary accommodations pressures, including £10.5m to support lease-or-repair of empty properties for temporary and

settled accommodation, and £900,000 to employ Empty Homes officers.

- More than 100 social and private landlords have registered as Supporters of the Charter, covering more than 234,000 homes - 50% of households that rent in the city-region.
- Using our integrated pipeline approach to unlock investment capacity and resources and fund the building of well-connected new homes, investing in schemes like Victoria North and Salford's Adelphi Village.

Future focus:

- Working with government to support our Greater Manchester housing ambitions – we can only fulfil our commitment to approve 75,000 new homes, including 10,000 energy efficient homes for social rent, by 2030 with the right support, including accessing underspend from the National Housing Delivery Fund.
- Delivering our ambition to build more social housing than we are losing through right to buy, working with Homes England to prioritise funding for GM for the Social and Affordable Homes Programme.

For more information on this workstream, Tom Hinchcliffe is the Senior Responsible Officer – tom.hinchcliffe@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Safe and strong communities

Our streets and public transport system will be safe and clean in peaceful, integrated and welcoming communities. We'll have consistently high performing police and fire services.

We've delivered a significant number of outcomes in the first 12 months of the strategy, including but not limited to:

- The Violence Reduction Unit worked with the VCFSE sector to design and implement a unique community-led approach - these projects are now established in all ten boroughs of Greater Manchester, giving local residents the opportunity to set local priorities and make decisions about local spending to work with children, young people and families to prevent violence and improve community confidence in the service.
- Launched TravelSafe LiveChat for the Bee Network, providing an enhanced experience for passengers using LiveChat to report issues and concerns, with timely referral arrangements.

Future focus

- Operation Vulcan will be deployed to areas experiencing high levels of harm and crime in each of GM's 10 LAs by 2029, leading to reduced crime and anti-social behaviour.
- By 2029 there will be sustained improvements in perceptions of safety on and patronage on the Bee Network, and by 2035 the Bee Network will be the safest in the country.

For more information on this workstream, Neil Evans is the Senior Responsible Officer – neil.evans@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

A transport system for a global city region

- The Bee Network will connect people to jobs, education and leisure opportunities like never before. With better, safer, easier and more affordable connections – all under one Bee Network brand.

- We delivered two pilots and then made permanent the removal of travel time restrictions for the concessionary bus pass to allow disabled and older passengers to travel before 9.30am - a key announcement at the GMS launch event.
- Launched digital Our Pass and half price bus travel offer for 18-21-year-olds.

Future focus

- Improvements to joined-up customer information, with the first phase of Active Travel information coming to the Bee Network App.
- Support and participation in the Government's summer campaign, to give 5–15-year-olds free bus travel in August.
- The introduction of rail to Bee Network with trains on the Glossop and Stalybridge line the first to join in December 2026. The change will involve seventeen stations getting Bee Network branding, new signage, and consistent customer information. Crucially, these lines will also adopt contactless tap and go technology, making paying for travel easier and more convenient.
- We will have the UK's first fully electric, integrated transport system across active travel, bus and tram services, supporting carbon neutrality by 2038.
- By 2040 we are aiming for no-one to be killed or seriously injured on our roads.

For more information on this workstream, Danny Vaughan (daniel.vaughan@tfgm.com) and Fran Wilkinson (fran.wilkinson@tfgm.com) are the Senior Reporting Officers.

Clear line of sight to high quality jobs

GM will be the UK's leading engine of social mobility, with all children and young people having the opportunity to thrive with a clear path towards a good job in our growing economy.

We've delivered a significant number of outcomes in the first 12 months of the strategy, including but not limited to:

- Reached a landmark in technical education, with more than 350 employers across Greater Manchester pledged to host over 1,000 additional T Level industry placements in every borough, adding to the substantial number already being delivered through colleges' existing offer.
- Secured 5,800 additional college places for young people across Greater Manchester, helping more young people continue in education and reducing the risk of them becoming NEET.
- Supported more than 22,000 out-of-work residents into employment through tailored skills and employment support, and helped 2,700 adults progress to Level 3 qualifications in priority sectors.

Future focus

- Making the best use of devolved, flexible funding to help more people have the skills to get into work where employers need them.
- Improving support for young children and families so more children are ready for school and can get early help with speech, language and development when they need it.

For more information on this workstream, Nicola McLeod is the Senior Responsible Officer – nicola.mcleod@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Everyday support in every neighbourhood

A network of inclusive and empowering Live Well centres, spaces and support offers will unite people, communities and services. Together, we'll co-create the conditions for healthier, happier lives with belonging, hope, and opportunity.

We've delivered a significant number of outcomes in the first 12 months of the strategy, including but not limited to:

- £46.5 million funding for our pioneering Live Well ambition, including a nation-leading £16.5 million contribution from The National Lottery Community Fund. This will be used to bring communities, residents, the voluntary sector and public services together to reduce health, social and economic inequalities and enable people to thrive.
- Since its inception, Live Well has been providing a stronger shared framework around these ambitions and wider reform activity across the GMCA and with partners. Using this additional funding, we will work to embed everyday support through a network of 100 Live Well spaces of hope and connection.

Future focus

- Moving the Prevention Demonstrator into delivery phase, working with government to agree ways of impact evaluation, unblocking national system conditions that impact early and collective action and devolving relevant funding.

- Ensuring Live Well centres and spaces will be available from every neighbourhood by 2029, driven by local people and supported by the VCFSE sector and integrated public service teams.
- By 2029, we will improve the wellbeing of young people (tracked through the #BeeWell survey) by at least 1% annually.

For more information on this workstream, Jane Forrest is the Senior Responsible Officer – jane.forrest@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

A great place to do business

Our ten-year integrated pipeline has increased our economic output and spread the benefits of growth across the city region, helping to rebalance our community, and achieve the opportunities in our Growth Locations. GM's productivity is now above the national average (from 70% in 2025) & still growing.

We've delivered a significant number of outcomes in the first 12 months of the strategy, including but not limited to:

- Greater Manchester has reinforced its economic position through significant growth-enabling investments, including starting to build Atom Valley Sustainable Materials and Manufacturing Centre, the launch of the latest Culture Fund, and targeted support for businesses through the Foundational Economy Innovation Fund.
- Greater Manchester remains nationally recognised for its integrated, place-based approach to economic development, and we have also continued to strengthen Greater Manchester's global profile through a series of international trade missions.

Future focus

- Our ten-year integrated pipeline will create 10,000 jobs by 2029 and 5 million sqft of new employment space by 2035.
- By 2029, innovations within the Foundational Economy have been adopted via public procurement and commissioning and have led to material changes in outcomes.

For more information on this workstream, Lisa Dale-Clough is the Senior Responsible Officer – lisa.dale-clough@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Digitally connected people and places

GM will be a fully digitally enabled city-region, giving people the connectivity, tools and know how to work and live smarter. We'll do this by ending the digital divide and building connected communities with access to digitally-enabled public services and economic opportunities.

We've delivered a significant number of outcomes in the first 12 months of the strategy, including but not limited to:

- Reinforced our position as a leading digital city region, securing additional investment of over £2 million from the UK government to catalyse and augment delivery. This funding has enabled the delivery of new programmes, including the Digital Inclusion in School and Connected Homes programme, and position GM as a test bed for national policy priorities.
- Running a community Wi-Fi pilot in one area, Creating Digital Infrastructure place plans across 3 GM localities, and Digital Place Makers piloted in these localities.

- Promote and celebrate initial adoption of GM Digital Infrastructure Wayleave for Housing, enabling the connection of 4k homes, and GM LORAWAN network launched.

Future focus

- Developing an initial pilot for a model of community Wi-Fi in 2027 and extending to 3 localities by 2029.
- Increasing the take up of cyber and digital MBACC pathways, and cyber T-levels, ensuring every resident has a clear pathway to high-quality digital jobs.

For more information on this workstream, Jo Munnelly is the Senior Responsible Officer – joanna.munnelly@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Underpinning the workstreams are cross-cutting approaches to:

A more equal future:

- The Race Equity Framework is strengthening leadership and accountability and lived experience is embedded in policy making through Equality Panels and other boards.
- New GM VCSE Accord signed in 2026 to tackle inequalities collaboratively.

For more information on this theme, Eve Holt is the Senior Responsible Officer – eve.holt@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

A greener future:

- All of Greater Manchester's building improvement programmes are progressing to expectation. As our strategic energy and heat planning capability continues to mature, datasets are being

consolidated for a future GM energy planning tool. Simultaneously we are co-designing a heat zoning delivery model with Government to support the development of future district heat networks.

- Reducing carbon emissions from transport and shifting modes towards public and active travel is delivering visible, system-wide change. 166 km of Bee Active Network has now been delivered and Metrolink expansion and Pay As You Go rail are also progressing well.
- Nature is beginning to recover with 18 new Sites of Biological Interest (247 ha) progressing to designation. 15 new habitat management plans have been commissioned to support future improvements. Our Integrated Water Management Plan with United Utilities and Environment Agency is progressing advanced flood risk modelling and surface-water projects are being delivered across GM districts.

For more information on this theme, Mark Atherton is the Senior Responsible Officer – Mark.atherton@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Changes for our Combined Authority

Mayoral

As you'll be aware, Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, stated his intention to run in the Makerfield by-election. He was given permission to seek selection by the Labour Party, and he has been confirmed as their candidate for the by-election.

Wigan Council have officially declared the by-election will take place on Thursday 18 June and we are now in a pre-election period.

If Andy Burnham is elected as a Member of Parliament, a Mayoral by-election will be held within 35 working days of the GMCA declaring the vacancy exists. If he is not elected as an MP, he will remain as Mayor.

The business of our organisations will of course continue, and Deputy Mayor Paul Dennett is able to take Mayoral decisions if required.

Kate Green as Deputy Mayor for Safer and Stronger Communities, will continue in role during this period. The Transport and Active Travel Commissioners, Vernon Everitt and Dame Sarah Storey, will also continue in their roles.

Local elections

Following the local elections on 7th May, there have been significant political changes across Greater Manchester councils. Labour retained control in Bury, Manchester, Rochdale, Salford, Trafford and Wigan, but with reduced majorities in several areas and notable gains for Reform UK, which made substantial gains across the region. Leaders have now been confirmed in Bolton, Tameside and Wigan, with conversations continuing about how Oldham will form its council.

These local changes will feed into GMCA governance, with updated nominations to boards and committees confirmed at the GMCA AGM in June. We'll share an update on this in the next briefing.

Greater Manchester's Good Growth featured at UKREiif

UKREiif took place in Leeds at the end of May. It's the UK's biggest property and infrastructure event, connecting people, places and

businesses to accelerate and unlock long-term investment and economic growth.

To coincide with the event, there were several major announcements affecting Greater Manchester:

The Great North partnership hosted the inaugural Great North Investment Summit ahead of UKREiiF. The event saw the launch of a new investment prospectus, backed by Chancellor Rachel Reeves, which showcases transformative projects worth more than £14 billion, including Greater Manchester projects like Atom Valley and MIX MANCHESTER.

Also at the Summit, NatWest announced a £20 billion funding commitment over the next ten years to drive economic growth across the North.

It followed a Government announcement at the weekend of an initial strategic assessment into a potential bid for the Olympic and Paralympic Games to be hosted in the North of England in the 2040s. The assessment will test if hosting could deliver transformational regeneration and growth in the North and is further endorsement of our region's sporting excellence and our ability to deliver world-class events.

At UKREiiF, Atom Valley Northern Gateway Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) announced Stephen Dance OBE as its Chair, marking a significant milestone as the MDC moves into the next delivery phase of one of Greater Manchester's most ambitious regeneration programmes. It follows the announcement in March of over £50m from the Good Growth Fund for transport infrastructure to serve Northern

Gateway, alongside £15m for the Sustainable Materials and Manufacturing Centre elsewhere in Atom Valley.

GM as pilot area in Life Sciences Large Investment Portfolio

The government has announced over £80 million of new investment in the UK life sciences sector to support the development and manufacture of vital medicines, including treatments for cancer and mental health conditions.

The funding, backed by the Life Sciences Innovative Manufacturing Fund, is expected to create more than 500 skilled jobs and strengthen the UK's ability to produce medicines at home.

The selection of Greater Manchester as a pilot for the Life Sciences Large Investment Portfolio reinforces our position as a strong and growing hub for life sciences and aligns strongly with our local strategy of growing the sector, creating high-quality jobs and improving access to new treatments.

Improvements to the region's transport system

In the next few months dozens of new electric buses will be added to the Bee Network fleet. The buses, built in Northern Ireland, will support our ambition to deliver a green transport system that contributes to our Five-Year Environment plan and our target of becoming carbon neutral by 2038.

This summer will see a significant programme of improvement across Metrolink. The works are part of a £150 million investment to ensure the network can continue to service growing demand.

It is now just six months to go until trains on the Glossop and Stalybridge lines become the first to join the Bee Network. The change will involve seventeen stations getting Bee Network branding, new signage, and consistent customer information. Crucially, these lines will also adopt contactless tap and go technology, making paying for travel easier and more convenient.

More lines will follow in 2027 and 2028, with all 96 local stations expected to become part of the network by 2030.

Major investment in culture across the city region

Over £15m is being delivered over three years to support our cultural institutions and we are leading the way in arts investment. Funding will now be directed to both iconic, economically significant venues (such as HOME and the Hallé) and to grassroots, local initiatives—linking directly to our “good place to do business” workstream and the wider good growth narrative.

Annual Report on Gender-Based Violence

In collaboration with our partners, the 2025-26 Gender-Based Violence Annual Report has been published in video format.

The report highlights the impact of intentional Gender-Based Violence policy and strategy delivery on individuals, looking through the lens of lived experience and service delivery partners.

A fairer deal for renters and higher standards for homes

The Renters' Rights Act is the biggest overhaul of the private rented sector in a generation, giving tenants stronger security, fairness and protection. It ends "no-fault" evictions, introduces open-ended tenancies, tightens rules on rent increases, bans bidding wars and strengthens protections against discrimination. It also raises standards, extending decent homes requirements and reinforcing action on issues like damp and mould.

In Greater Manchester, this builds on years of local leadership to improve renting. Through the Good Landlord Charter, strong enforcement against rogue landlords and our Housing First approach, we are supporting responsible landlords while taking action on unsafe and poorly managed homes. Over half of rented homes in the city region are now covered by the Charter, setting a clear benchmark for standards.

Greater Manchester has also helped shape the legislation. Following suggestions from council enforcement officers, we secured a key amendment removing the requirement for 24 hours' notice before inspections - closing a loophole that could deter tenant complaints and strengthening councils' ability to act quickly.

King's Speech: What it means for Greater Manchester

The King's Speech in mid-May set out an ambitious legislative programme, with 37 bills proposed for the next parliamentary session—many of which have direct relevance for Greater Manchester's priorities around growth, connectivity and public service reform.

Transport and infrastructure

Proposed legislation on rail and transport is particularly significant. The Railways Bill was carried over from the last parliamentary session and will support next steps for Northern Powerhouse Rail, strengthen east–west connectivity and enhance access to Manchester Airport—critical to unlocking economic growth. It also signals a more formal role for mayors in shaping the rail system, aligning with Greater Manchester's ambitions for a fully integrated Bee Network. Alongside this, draft legislation on taxi and private hire services presents an important opportunity to improve safety and standards, although further work is needed to address challenges such as out-of-area licensing.

Economy and investment

The Government set out they will introduce an Overnight Visitor Levy Bill that will devolve new fiscal powers to mayors, enabling reinvestment into projects that improve their areas, raising living standards and drive growth. This Bill will play a role in shaping how growth and infrastructure are funded in city-regions like GM.

Health and public service reform

The NHS Modernisation Bill and the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act signal further reform of the health system, including a strengthened role for local leadership. For Greater Manchester that introduces the ability to appoint a Deputy Mayor for Health reporting jointly to the health service and the Mayor and tasked with driving improvements that directly improve people's health. Recruitment for that role is currently underway.

Social Housing

The Social Housing Bill sets out reforms to Right to Buy, which will reduce the number of social homes sold through the scheme. This addresses a longstanding challenge in the social housing system and removes a disincentive for the building of new social housing. This will strengthen the supply of new social housing and support our ambition to build more social housing than we are losing by 2027.

Next steps

Several key bills—including on social housing, health and major events—will progress through Parliament from early June, while a number of others will carry over from the previous session. Together, this legislative programme offers a significant opportunity to advance Greater Manchester's agenda—provided we continue to work closely with Government to shape delivery in ways that reflect the needs and strengths of our city-region.

Keeping our communities safe through severe national 'terror' threat

The UK national terrorism threat level has been raised from 'Substantial' to 'Severe', meaning an attack is considered highly likely. This is a precautionary, national measure and does not indicate a specific or imminent threat to Greater Manchester or any other area.

The safety of residents and communities remains the top priority. Greater Manchester Police are increasing patrols across the city region, with a particular focus on providing visible reassurance to Jewish communities in north Manchester, Bury and Salford. Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service and the Greater Manchester Resilience Unit are working closely with police, local authorities and partners to monitor risks and coordinate activity.

Upcoming events:

- London Tech Week – week commencing 8th June
- Bee Network exhibition opening at the Transport museum – 10th June
- NHS Confed Expo in Manchester – 11th June
- Invest Manchester hosts Mythos Manchester film and TV finance event – 11th June
- World Cities Summit in Singapore – 14th June
- Housing 2026 in Manchester – 23rd-25th June