

GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 26th March 2025

Subject: Retained Business Rates Update

Report of: Councillor David Molyneux, Portfolio Lead for Resources & Investment and
Steve Wilson, GMCA Treasurer

Purpose of Report

The report provides an update on the position in respect of the new 100% retained business retention scheme agreed as part of the Trailblazer Devolution Deal (TDD). It includes the latest position on the current GM business rates funded schemes, the forecasts for 2024/25 expenditure and income and seeks support for proposed 2025/26 schemes, funded from the income expected to be received in 2024/25.

The paper also considers the latest developments in relation to the future of business rates retention including the proposed national reset in 2026/27, the GM partial reset, the approach to the enhanced GM investment and growth zones and the impact of the wider GMCA funding landscape following the introduction of the Integrated Settlement.

This paper also references further work proposed to consider the future approach to business rates growth stimulated directly or indirectly through GM investment.

Recommendations:

The GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to:

Consider and comment on the report and note the recommendations which will be considered by the GMCA at its meeting on the 28 March 2025 as below.

The GMCA is recommended to:

1. Note the forecast, as at the end of quarter 3, for 2024/25 business rates income
2. Note the planned income for 2025/26.
3. Approve the proposed 2025/26 GM use of the 2024/25 business rates income
4. Note the position in respect of the future developments in relation to retained business rates, including:

- National business rates reset
- GM partial reset
- Approach to the use of income secured through the enhanced business rates retention zones
- Alignment of future business rates income with the GMCA Integrated Settlement

Contact Officers

Name: Steve Wilson, GMCA Group Chief Finance Officer

Telephone: 07725 481067

E-Mail: steve.wilson@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Name: Laura Blakey, Director of Strategic Finance and Investment

E-Mail: laura.blakey@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Name: Claire Postlethwaite, Director of Operational Finance

E-Mail: Claire.postlethwaite@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Equalities Impact, Carbon and Sustainability Assessment:

N/A

Risk Management

An assessment of the major risks faced by the authority is carried out quarterly as part of the reporting process. Specific risks are identified in the report.

Legal Considerations

There are no specific legal implications with regards to this report

Financial Consequences – Revenue

The revenue finance implications are set out in detail in the report.

Financial Consequences – Capital

There are no capital expenditure implications of the issues contained in the report.

Number of attachments to the report:

Comments/recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Paper to be presented to GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20th March 2024

Background Papers

- GMCA 22nd March 2024 “Retained Business Rates Update”

Tracking/ Process

Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution .

No

Exemption from call in.

Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?

No

GM Transport Committee

N/A

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

To be considered in March

Retained Business Rates Update 2025/26

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The report provides the Combined Authority with an update on the position in respect of the new 100% retained business retention scheme agreed as part of the Trailblazer Devolution Deal (TDD). It includes the latest position on the current GM business rates funded schemes, the forecasts for 2024/25 expenditure and income and seeks support for proposed 2025/26 schemes, funded from the income expected to be received in 2024/25.
- 1.2 The paper also considers the latest developments in relation to the future of business rates retention including the proposed national reset in 2026/27, the GM partial reset, the approach to the enhanced GM investment and growth zones and the impact of the wider GMCA funding landscape following the introduction of the Integrated Settlement.
- 1.3 This paper also references further work proposed to consider the future approach to business rates growth stimulated directly or indirectly through GM investment.

2. Background

(i) The 100% GM Retained Business Rates Scheme

- 2.1 The original 100% business rates retention pilot was introduced in 2017/18 as part of the Greater Manchester Devolution Deal and was introduced with the stated intention of:
 - Giving GM authorities an incentive to grow local tax bases by ensuring they see long term rewards from growth.
 - Maintaining a predictable income stream against which authorities can take long term investment decisions; and
 - Ensuring that GM authorities can continue to provide a full range of local services, whilst recognising that decisions about spending priorities should be made locally by locally elected representatives accountable to local taxpayers.
- 2.2 The Government's commitment to the funding approach and the intentions behind the pilot were strengthening with the inclusion of a new 10-year business rates retention scheme as part of the 2023 GM Trailblazer Devolution Deal (TDD).

- 2.3 The new TDD business rates scheme commenced on the 1st April 2024. Under the scheme GMCA and the ten GM local authorities continue to retain 100% of business rates growth from the base year (2013/14). This allows all local business rates growth to be retained in GM rather than 50% under the standard approach across England. The difference between the 50% standard retention and the 100% retained in GM is considered the benefit of the 100% scheme and is the main focus of the funding streams considered in this paper.
- 2.4 The final MOU for the TDD business rates retention scheme can be found in appendix 1.
- 2.5 The original agreement between GM partners was that the benefits of the scheme, to the extent that there should be any, would be shared for investment both at individual district level and for GM wide initiatives. Under the original agreement districts would receive at least 50% of the benefit with up to 50% being invested in GM schemes.
- 2.6 The initial operation of the scheme saw 50% of the income transferred to the combined authority for potential investment in GM wide schemes with subsequent decisions made to return some of that funding back to districts. In 2020/21 during the peak of the financial impact from the coronavirus pandemic, the full 100% benefit of the pilot was retained by districts to support their response to Covid-19.
- 2.7 In 2022/23, as part of the consideration of proposed GM investments utilising the income derived from the 2021/22 financial year, it was agreed that the benefits of the pilot would be split on a 75:25 basis in favour of the ten GM local authorities. This arrangement has continued with the introduction of the TDD and has allowed greater funding certainty for all parties.
- 2.8 Prior to 2020/21 funding decisions were effectively taken two years in arrears, allowing for the income for any individual year to be confirmed following the end of the financial year in questions and the conclusion of audit processes. Following the retention of 100% of the benefit by districts in 2020/21 we moved to considering GM proposals one year in arrears. The proposals we are seeking members' approval for today, for commitment in 2025/26, are therefore funding from the forecast income for 2024/25 (see later section).

(ii) The Wider Business Rates Landscape in GM

2.9 Alongside the 100% business rates retention arrangements which operate across the whole of GM there are a number of sub-GM geographically specific areas that benefit from enhanced business rates retention arrangements. These are as follows:

Investment Zones Enhanced Business Rates Sites

- Part of previous Government's Investment Zone policy
- Up to two Investment Zones in GM will have 25-year 100% retention with no reset
- Total area of 600 hectares
- Two areas have been agreed which are the "Manchester/Salford Smile" to the south of Manchester & Salford City centres and the Northern Gateway part of the Atom Valley site.
- The use of funding generated through these zones must be focused on advanced manufacturing and materials

TDD Growth Zones Enhanced Business rates sites

- Part of TDD for GM and West Midlands
- Up to three Growth Zones Enhanced Rate Retention sites in GM will have 25-year 100% retention with no reset
- Use of funding must be focused on Advanced Manufacturing & Materials
- Total area 600 hectares
- Three areas have been agreed, which are, A boundary including sites to the north and East of Manchester City Centre, a site covering Salford Quays and Trafford Wharfeside, and a site in Trafford Park.

2.10 The five zones all benefit from the 25-year scheme without a reset although at the point of a national reset the baseline for the zones will move to 2023/24, the inception date of the zones, which will erode some of the growth in those areas achieved prior to this date.

2.11 The areas have been chosen and approved by the CA on the basis that any local authority with a zone within their boundaries will be no better or worse off financially as a result. The funding available to GMCA from the zones will therefore be limited to the difference between what they are actually able to retain through the enhanced designation and what they would have been able to retain without that status. This

means at the point of the national reset and any subsequent resets (including the end of the scheme in 2034/35) the benefit of the enhanced status and therefore the funding available to GMCA increases.

2.12 The five areas described have been chosen to maximise income over the 25-year life of the schemes.

3. Existing Commitments from the 100% Retention Pilot

3.1 Table 1 below shows the current position on agreed commitments to be funded from the 25% of funding held at the CA from income up to the end of 2024/25 (based on the Q3 forecast).

3.2 The table shows that based on the estimated income as at the end of Q3 all of the funding was allocated.

Table 1 – 2021/2022 – 2024/25 Existing Business rates Commitments

Description	Actual Spend 2021/22	Actual Spend 2022/23	Actual Spend 2023/24	Forecast Spend 2024/25	Total Planned Spend
Funding					
Funding Carried Forward	(36,465)	(20,302)	(11,319)	(6,158)	(36,465)
Year End Adjustment	(1,243)				(1,243)
Income @25%		(16,317)	(20,643)	(22,043)	(59,003)
Additional funding at risk				(1,815)	(1,815)
Interest Receivable				(1,700)	(1,700)
Annual Funding Available	(37,708)	(36,619)	(31,962)	(31,716)	(100,226)
Commitments					
<u>Greener</u>					
Districts low carbon - Renewables and Retrofitting		1,600	1,600	1,704	4,904
Support for Net zero		400	800		1,200
Journey to Net Zero		484		480	964
Net Zero Social Homes		80	300		380
Flood Risk Management		80	250	250	580
5 Year Environment Plan	958	515	628	1,070	3,171
SOBC				500	500
GM Resilience Officer	120				120
<u>Fairer</u>					
Election	3,800			4,200	8,000
Good Employment Charter	274	987	545	600	2,407
Full Fibre Revenue Costs	158				158
GM Digital Strategy	551	250			801
GM Digital Transformation			900	1,400	2,300
GM Digital Inclusion, Growth and Places			650	1,250	1,900
Unified Architecture	990	1,190	523		2,703
Good Landlord Charter		150		250	400
Employment legal advice service		100			100
Skills & Work / Apprenticeships		1,800	500	500	2,800
Youth Combined Authority	50	13			63
Cricket Strategy	200	200	200		600

GMHSCP		480			480
GM System Programme - Multiple Disadvantage				1,572	1,572
Live Well				500	500
Building resilience for ageing populations					
<i>More Prosperous</i>					
GM Productivity programme	4,748	4,220	9,281	6,900	25,149
Industrial Strategy	793	2,727	602		4,122
Support for Growth and International Engagement		1,170	930	1,500	3,600
Marketing Manchester and MIDAS	750	750	750		2,250
GM Frontier sector FDI Attraction and Promotion			1,750	2,750	4,500
Development of Growth Locations		1,200	1,800	2,650	5,650
Business Angels		1,000		250	1,250
International Rebound Programme		150			150
International Partnerships		150			150
Enterprising You		650			650
Growth Company Other		350		0	350
GM Information Strategy			280	280	560
Trailblazer Implementation			1,000		1,000
<i>Place Based</i>					
Cultural and Social Impact Fund	1,000	1,100	1,125	1,100	4,325
Places for Everyone	264	2,425	250	250	3,189
RIF - Youth Homelessness Prevention	750	750	1,000	300	2,800
One Public Estate - OPE Support Officer		56			56
Residents' Insight survey		250	70		320
Systematic Public Participation				200	200
Night-time Economy			70	90	160
Housing Stock condition survey & Research				225	225
Prosperous and Connected Places				515	515
Housing Delivery				350	350
GM Music Commission				80	80
<i>Other</i>					
Cheshire Business Rates for Bus Reform	2,000	23			2,023
Total Expenditure	17,406	25,300	25,804	31,716	100,226
Closing Position	(20,302)	(11,319)	(6,158)	(0)	(0)

4. 2024/25 Retained Business Rates Income

- 4.1 2024/25 is the first year of income accruing through the new TDD scheme. Whilst there are some minor differences in the operation of the scheme, including the removal on the “no detriment” clause, the broad principles are the same.
- 4.2 The funding available for investment in 2025/26 is based on the 2024/25 Q3 forecast from GM Local Authorities with a adjustment based on previous trends, for the final quarter’s income. As in 24/25 we have made an assessment of the deposit interest accumulated through the holding of income at least one year in arrears.

4.3 The forecast benefit of the pilot for 2025/25, as at quarter 3, broken down by district, is shown below and totals £98.63m with the 25% retained by GMCA standing at £24.7m.

Authority	Net Rates income 50% scheme £000	Net Rates income 100% scheme £000	100% Pilot Benefit £000	75% Retained by Authority £000	25% Retained by GMCA £000
Manchester	392,286	417,223	24,937	18,703	6,234
Bolton	138,935	145,935	7,000	5,250	1,750
Bury	69,979	72,529	2,550	1,913	638
Oldham	128,022	132,964	4,942	3,707	1,236
Rochdale	130,547	141,500	10,953	8,215	2,738
Salford	158,926	174,492	15,566	11,675	3,892
Stockport	91,354	98,925	7,571	5,678	1,893
Tameside	114,379	123,250	8,871	6,653	2,218
Trafford	74,487	81,289	6,802	5,102	1,701
Wigan	148,917	158,356	9,439	7,079	2,360
GM	1,447,832	1,546,463	98,631	73,973	24,658

4.4 The planned income for 2025/26 will be confirmed later this month. However, no commitments will be made from this funding until the 2026/27 budget discussions.

5. Proposed 2025/26 Schemes

5.1 Following the introduction of the Integrated settlement covering circa £630m of capital and revenue funding for GMCA from the 1st April 2025, a new approach has been taken to the allocation of business rates funding for the 2025/26 financial year.

5.2 The original business rates retention pilot, and the new TDD business rates deal can be seen as fore runners to the GM Integrated Settlement. The funding received through business rates retention has been the most flexible funding received by combined authorities, however the introduction of the Integrated Settlement will lead to increasing levels of flexibilities for some of the previous grants GMCA received which are now included in the integrated settlement.

5.3 Much of the benefits of the integrated settlement flexibilities will accrue through the multi-year SR settlement will commence on 1st April 2026 with more limited opportunities in 2025/26, however GMCA needs to be ready to maximise the benefits of the new opportunities and take decisions in a more flexible way.

5.4 The approach to the allocation of 2025/26 retained business rates funding is seen as a key step in developing this more flexible approach.

5.5 Funding decisions for 2025/26 were therefore subject to a more strategic evaluation compared to previous annual allocations, with the process acting as a testbed to inform the approach to discretionary funding available through the Integrated Settlement. This approach involved a new template and scoring process which ranked proposals against both an evidence-based assessment and their fit to the following Mayoral priorities:

- Economic Growth
- Live Well
- Housing First
- MBacc

5.6 An overall funding pot totalling £28m has been identified for commitment against the list of prioritised schemes for 2024/25.

5.7 The final funding is made up of three sources in addition to the current forecast of £25.7m income. These are:

(i) Additional Q4 2023/24 Income not committed (£2m).

The final income for 2023/24 was £1.986m higher than the overall forecast used to set the 2024/25 spending envelope and leaves available funding to be carried forward against the previously agreed commitments.

(ii) Deposit Interest accrued (£1.5m)

In 2024/25 the funding held in the business rates reserve has generated a significant level of deposit interest. Average deposit levels of c£35m have generated interest back into the business rates reserve of c£1.5m which is now available alongside the 24/25 income.

(iii) Additional Q4 Income

Previous years have seen consistent increases in Q4 income compared with the Q3 forecast. It is proposed historic trends are used to assess a likely increase in 2024/25. This is assessed to be in the region of £2m. Given funding is committed a year in arrears there is no risk to this approach as any shortfall in the final figure will be the first call on 2025/26 income.

- 5.8 The original funding envelope was set at £28m based on Q2 forecast but, based on the above assumptions income is now forecast to be c£30m.
- 5.9 There were £75.5m in initial asks which were sifted through an assessment against the priorities set out above. £48.4m in total asks were then invited to submit full proposals.
- 5.10 A final set of funded proposals is shown below. The proposed schemes total £28.192m in asks of Retained Business Rates.

Table 2 – Proposed 2025/26 Business Rates Commitments

Description	Cost 25/26 (£'000s)
Funding	
Funding Carried Forward	(1,986)
Income @25%	(24,658)
Additional funding at risk	(2,000)
Interest Receivable	(1,500)
Estimated Funding Available	(30,144)
-	
Commitments	
Housing First	3,335
Live Well	6,073
Growth, Industrial Strategy and International Strategy and Engagement	2,085
GM International Attraction & Promotion Services	1,380
Inward Investment Services	1,370
GC Angels	1,000
Good Employment Charter	550
Care Smarter Pilot	434
GM Global Partnership	88
Business Growth Hub	6,098
Night-Time Economy	90
Business Decarbonisation	600
Local Authority Business Compliance Team	580
GM Culture Fund	1,250
GM Music Office	300
5 Year Environment Plan	2,207
GM Workforce Productivity Programme	88
Gender Based Violence - Education	300
Building resilience for ageing populations	64
Creating safer spaces on travel & transport for women & girls	300
Total	28,192
Closing position	(1,952)

- 5.11 The business support programmes being funded that will be delivered via GM's Business Growth Hub contain interdependencies. Whilst the proposals approved set out specific allocations, outcomes and impacts, their delivery will be managed and monitored as a connected and inter-dependent programme of work that supports business growth.
- 5.12 In addition to the schemes assessed above there is an additional requirement for GM to match fund the Live Well programme. GM will make a significant local contribution to match fund the £10m economic trailblazer from DWP. GMCA will contribute £5m in 2025/26 with an additional £5m contribution agreed by the Integrated Care Board (ICB). This will be funded via any headroom in 2024/25 Retained Business Rates income (currently £1.952m) and the business rates funding currently held in arrears.
- 5.13 As in previous years, retained business rates funding works alongside other GM funding to compliment local investment. For 2025/26 proposals for the Housing First initiative and M-Bacc are further supported by Housing Loan Fund surpluses and earmarked reserves respectively.
- 5.14 The learning from the allocation of Retained Business Rates from this year will feed into the process for 2026/2027, at which point allocations will be made alongside the budget setting for the Integrated Settlement to form one integrated process (see Integrated Settlement Report to March GMCA meeting).

6. Future strategy for retained business rates schemes

- 6.1 Whilst the introduction of the TDD 10-year retained business rates scheme has provided some much-needed clarity following a number of years of annual extension to the pilot, there is still a significant level of uncertainty and potential change in relation to the scheme. The implementation of a long mooted national reset for the scheme has now been confirmed by the Government for 2026/27 and this will have a significant, but at this stage unclear, impact for both GMCA and all ten GM local authorities. At the point of a national reset the agreed GM Partial Reset, confirmed in the TDD, will be enacted.
- 6.2 In addition to these national changes the management and approach to the use of retained business rates in GM will need to evolve in line with the evolution of the integrated settlement.
- 6.3 Finally, the approach to the premium earned from the enhanced status zones in GM will now need to be finalised alongside the work on a GM Investment programme. The certainty provided by a 25-year business rates retention without reset will allow

GM to borrow against future business rates income for the first time. This will need a clear agreement on the approach to borrowing, the assumptions underpinning that approach and the management of risk between GMCA and the constituent local authorities.

6.4 The key elements to be considered in agreeing the strategy for the future of business rates retention in GM are considered below:

(i) Impact of the National Reset

In December 2024 the Government announced it would go ahead with the long-planned reset to the business rates retention model in April 2026. The reset will impact all local authorities across England and not just those that are part of the 100% retention arrangements.

At the same time the Government set out plans for future resets of the business rates retention arrangements every 3-5 years. This means that we need to plan for at least one further reset occurring in the remaining period of the current 10-year TDD scheme, between 2029 and 2031.

The full impact of the planned reset is uncertain and will coincide with the 2026 revaluation and other rates reforms which will introduce new multipliers to support the high street. A national working group, including GM representatives, is developing the detailed proposals with the first government consultation planned for Spring 2025.

Whilst the specific details are not known, there are clear risks for GM authorities.

At the point of a reset the baseline level of business rates will be recalibrated and the growth seen since the introduction of the 50% retention scheme will be re-distributed across the sector based on the broader approach to local government funding. Whilst the funding will remain in the local government sector the allocations may change significantly. There is therefore significant uncertainty and risk for both the individual GM local authorities and the CA

Potential impact on Local Authorities

- Current funding through the 100% RBR scheme is relatively easier to predict, reasonable stable and has increased year-on-year.

- Funding will change from a system based on actual growth generated at a local level to a formula based “fair funding” approach nationally
- There will be winners and losers based on the redistribution
- Local Authorities currently receiving a share of the benefit of a 100% retention scheme, such as those in GM, have more current funding at risk than those in the standard 50% scheme
- Current growth is estimated to be £1.2bn nationally and c£200m in GM

Potential Impact on Combined Authorities

- Combined authorities including GMCA are not part of the Local Government Financial settlement (LGFS) and therefore at the point of reset, all funding currently received by CAs will be redistributed to Local Authorities and CA funding will reduce to zero
- The benefit of the 100% scheme will start from zero on 1st April 2026 therefore only growth in 2026/27 will be available to CAs that year. GMCA’s share of growth has averaged circa £2m each year although this is somewhat distorted by provisions and write offs.
- Greater Manchester will benefit from the agreed partial reset (see below) at the point reset so funding of £23m PA will commence in 2026/27.

(ii) GM Partial Reset Mechanism

At the time of the original 100% business rates retention pilot the MOU agreed between GM authorities and the Government included the provision for what is described as a “Partial Reset”. Under this clause “some or all” of the business rates growth generated by direct investment from the GM authorities would be “disregarded” in the event of a national business rates reset.

This provision was subsequently incorporated into the TDD MOU as a commitment to fund £23m through the partial reset mechanism. The value was based on an assessment of 50% of the value of business rates generated through investment by the end of 2025.

The original proposal for the use of the partial reset was to provide core funding for GMCA, this was updated in the discussions with Government for the TDD agreement to cover a number of areas of expenditure included core CA function, ongoing schemes funded from RBR and “buying out” the LA contribution to the CA running costs.

(iii) Strategy for managing the impact of resets

The loss of funding to GMCA and the significant uncertainty in relation to LA funding means the business rates reset planned for 2026/27 represents a significant risk to those bodies. Until the impact is understood at individual authority level the ability for long term planning is significantly impacted.

There are three areas where we can mitigate the impact of the national reset, these are:

- The GM partial reset agreement and associated funding of £23m pa
- The current practice of spending GMCA share of RBR one year in arrears
- The exemption from the reset of the five enhanced business rates areas.

GMCA are working with officers across the GM local authorities to model options to use these mitigations to allow the CA to continue to invest in critical GM wide programmes of work such as Live Well and the GM Growth Programme, as well as increase certainty and provide funding to the individual local authorities.

At the same time as developing local options to mitigate the impact we will continue to work closely with colleagues in MHCLG to both understand, and where appropriate influence, the final arrangements for the reset.

We will report back to the CA in due course including seeking any required approvals on future distributions of business rates funding.

(iv) Approach to GM Investment

Investment and Growth Zone Enhanced Business Rates Areas

The introduction of the Investment and Growth Zones in GM give increased certainty of funding over a 25-year period. The fact that this funding is not subject to reset will allow longer term decision making, including in part or full, the use of these future revenue streams to secure up front borrowing for investment.

The capital funding enabled by this approach will form part of the GM investment pot used, alongside other sources of borrowing, grant and external finance, to fund the 10-year integrated GM investment pipeline.

Work has commenced with a subgroup of LA treasurers and place directors to develop the principles of an approach to borrowing against this income including the level of commitments made and how risk might be shared across GM bodies.

Business Rates Generated through GMCA Investment

Alongside the potential to borrow against future business rates income from the enhanced zones there are also ongoing discussion about an approach to schemes funded from GMCA grants or loans which allows funding to be recycled over time and therefore fund a greater volume of projects.

This would involve an approach where a proportion of the growth in business rates enabled by the direct or indirect investment of GM funds, for example additional transport infrastructure or direct investment in commercial property, would be returned to GMCA to repay that original investment.

7. Future Alignment with the Integrated Settlement

- 7.1 Retained business rates has been a key source of funding for GMCA because of its flexibility. For this reason, since the commencement of the scheme the funding has been treated as a discrete source of funding with decisions made separately from other funding which has tended to be grants based for specific purposes set by Government departments.
- 7.2 As we move to an integrated settlement the flexibility of the wider funding increases. This will be combined with the introduction of an outcomes framework which is less directly aligned to functional delivery areas and will be delivered by more cross cutting integrated initiatives. The overall funding pot for the delivery of the Greater

Manchester Strategy (GMS) should be treated more as single core funding source to deliver these outcomes and the objectives of the GMS.

- 7.3 Whilst the integrated settlement will not be fully flexible between pillars, the local growth pillar will be and will, in effect, give the same level of flexibility seen in the case of retained business rates. It is likely, therefore, that from 2026/27 onwards decisions will be made in relation to the overall funding pot, and retained business rates funding needs to be absorbed into that funding envelope rather than treated as a discrete source of funding for a specific list of programmes.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 The GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to:

Consider and comment on the report and note the recommendations which will be considered by the GMCA at its meeting on the 28 March 2025 as below.

The GMCA is recommended to:

- Note the forecast, as at the end of quarter 3, for 2024/25 business rates income
- Note the planned income for 2025/26.
- Approve the proposed 2025/26 GM use of the 2024/25 business rates income
- Note the position in respect of the future developments in relation to retained business rates, including:
 - a. National business rates reset
 - b. GM partial reset
 - c. Approach to the use of income secured through the enhanced business rates retention zones
 - d. Alignment of future business rates income with the GMCA Integrated Settlement

Description	SLT Lead	Planned Spend 2021/22	Planned Spend 2022/23	Planned Spend 2023/24	Proposed 2024/25 Spend	Total Spend
		£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Funding						
Funding Carried Forward		(36,465)	(20,302)	(11,319)	(6,158)	(36,465)
Audit Adjustment		(1,243)			0	(1,243)
Income @25%			(16,317)	(20,643)	(22,043)	(59,003)
Additional funding at risk					(1,815)	(1,815)
Interest Receivable					(1,700)	(1,700)
Annual Funding Available		(37,708)	(36,619)	(31,962)	(31,716)	(100,226)
Commitments						
Greener						
Districts low carbon - Renewables and Retrofitting	Mark Atherton		1,600	1,600	1,704	4,904
Support for Net zero	Mark Atherton		400	800		1,200
Journey to Net Zero	John Wrathmell		484		480	964
Net Zero Social Homes	John Wrathmell		80	300		380
Flood Risk Management	Andrew McIntosh		80	250	250	580
5 Year Environment Plan	Mark Atherton	958	515	628	1,070	3,171
SOBC	Mark Atherton				500	500
GM Resilience Officer	Andrew Lightfoot	120				120
Green Spaces Fund (NEW)	Mark Atherton				0	0
Fairer						
Election	Steve Wilson	3,800			4,200	8,000
Employment Charter	John Wrathmell	274	987	545	600	2,407
Full Fibre Revenue Costs	Phil Swan	158				158
GM Digital Strategy	Phil Swan	551	250			801
GM Digital Transformation	Phil Swan			900	1,400	2,300
GM Digital Inclusion, Growth and Places	Phil Swan			650	1,250	1,900
Unified Architecture	Phil Swan	990	1,190	523		2,703
Good Landlord Charter	Andrew McIntosh		150		250	400
Employment legal advice service	John Wrathmell		100			100
Skills & Work / Apprenticeships	Gemma Marsh		1,800	500	500	2,800
Youth Combined Authority	Gemma Marsh	50	13			63
Cricket Strategy	John Wrathmell	200	200	200		600
GMHSCP	Steve Wilson		480			480
GM System Programme - Multiple Disadvantage and Complex Needs	Jane Forrest				1,572	1,572
Live Well Joint Investment Fund	Jane Forrest				500	500

Description	SLT Lead	Planned Spend 2021/22	Planned Spend 2022/23	Planned Spend 2023/24	Proposed 2024/25 Spend	Total Spend
More Prosperous						
GM Productivity programme	John Wrathmell	4,748	4,220	9,281	6,900	25,149
Industrial Strategy	John Wrathmell	793	2,727	602		4,122
Support for Growth and International Engagement	John Wrathmell		1,170	930	1,500	3,600
Marketing Manchester and MIDAS	John Wrathmell	750	750	750		2,250
GM Frontier sector FDI Attraction and Promotion	John Wrathmell			1,750	2,750	4,500
Development of Growth Locations	Andrew McIntosh		1,200	1,800	2,650	5,650
Business Angels	John Wrathmell		1,000		250	1,250
International Rebound Programme	John Wrathmell		150			150
International Partnerships	John Wrathmell		150			150
Enterprising You	John Wrathmell		650			650
Growth Company Other	John Wrathmell		350		0	350
GM Information Strategy	John Curtis			280	280	560
Trailblazer Implementation	John Wrathmell			1,000		1,000
Place Based						
Cultural and Social Impact Fund	Andrew McIntosh	1,000	1,100	1,125	1,100	4,325
Places for Everyone	Andrew McIntosh	264	2,425	250	250	3,189
Reform Investment Fund - Youth Homelessness Prevention	Jane Forrest	750	750	1,000	300	2,800
One Public Estate - OPE Support Officer	Andrew McIntosh		56			56
Residents' Insight survey	Claire Norman		250	70		320
Systematic Public Participation	Claire Norman				200	200
Night Time Economy	Andrew McIntosh			70	90	160
Housing Stock condition survey & Research	Andrew McIntosh				225	225
Prosperous and Connected Places	Phil Swan				515	515
Housing Delivery - NEW	Andrew McIntosh				350	350
GM Music Commission - NEW	Andrew McIntosh				80	80
Other						
Cheshire Business Rates for Bus Reform	Steve Wilson	2,000	23			2,023
Total Expenditure		17,406	25,300	25,804	31,716	100,226
Closing Position		(20,302)	(11,319)	(6,158)	(0)	(0)

Proposal	Description
GM Music Office	A music office for Greater Manchester, which supported and coordinated the full range of opportunity for music and musicians in Greater Manchester, from music hubs, music education, the, MBacc, FE and HE, through to music export, talent development and diverse employment opportunities for performers, freelancers, practitioners, labels, studios and venues, would mark Greater Manchester out as the place in the UK for musicians and the music industry.
GM Culture Fund	In February 2023 GMCA agreed a three-year funding commitment of £1.25m from Retained Business Rates. This is the last year of the three-year commitment, sector and public consultation will take place through 2025, with a paper on options for 2026 onwards to be brought to GMCA in Summer 2025,
Green Economy - Business Decarbonisation	The core focus of this programme is to deliver the below range of services to tackle the market failures linked with the transition to a net zero economy - provision of resource efficiency, support to businesses, engaging businesses on supply chain resilience and sustainable procurement, support to implement net zero strategies and policies, engaging businesses to measure their carbon footprint.
Care Smarter Pilot	The Care Smarter Pilot is intended to pilot expanding the approach to supporting innovation adoption that has been tested and refined by the Made Smarter Programme for manufacturers into the Health and Care Sector. Made Smarter supports Manufacturers to adopt Industrial Digital Technologies, backed by a small grant.
GC Angels	This is an Early-Stage Innovation Funding Scheme which will build on GM’s successful GC Angels (GCA) Local Growth Fund Pilot approach and improve the supply of innovation capital to diverse early-stage GM businesses, something not fully addressed by other existing mechanisms. The scheme offers direct funding to bridge the ‘equity gap’ for innovative SMEs struggling to find the finance they need to grow
Business Growth Hub	GM Business Growth Hub (GMBGH), part of The Growth Company, is Greater Manchester’s Growth Hub (DBT) and provides a comprehensive, inclusive support offer to entrepreneurs and businesses across Greater Manchester, to start, innovate, and grow.
GM Global Partnership	The GM Global Growth Partnership is intended to build on GM’s assets/existing activity of CA, GC (MIDAS/MM/BGH), Chamber, DBT by providing a new, first stage, underpinning platform and physical space for comprehensive and sustained city-region to city-region business trade, and investment relations.
GM International Attraction & Promotion Services	Marketing Manchester (MM) has provided strategic expertise and tactical delivery of marketing, communications and promotional activity that raises the profile of Greater Manchester (GM) on a regional, national and international stage.
Good Employment Charter	Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter is a voluntary membership and assessment scheme, which aims to raise employment standards across all sectors and geographies of Greater Manchester.
Growth, Industrial Strategy and International Strategy and Engagement	The GM Local industrial Strategy (LIS) outlines a set of long-term policy priorities to guide industrial development and provides a plan for good jobs and growth, and its priorities are directly integrated into the current Greater Manchester Strategy, the GM International Strategy and GM Innovation Plan. Since 2019, a coordinated programme of work has been successfully carried out to implement the actions in the strategy with a focus on growth, productivity and international engagement, sector and cluster development, and related activity to support growth in local authorities, supported by previous Retained Business Rates funding.
Inward Investment Services	MIDAS delivers inward investment activities for Greater Manchester, to attract predominantly foreign owned companies to the city region. This creates jobs for residents, contributes to the spatial priorities set out in the growth locations, and increases economic productivity and inclusive growth.
Local Authority Business Compliance Team	The Business Compliance Support (BCS) programme recruits apprentices and graduate compliance officers, employed in GM’s Local Authorities, to proactively target GM businesses with regulatory support covering environmental health, trading standards and licensing. BCS officers provide self-help guides, workshops, over the phone and in-person consultations to businesses to help them understand and meet regulatory requirement.
GM Workforce Productivity Programme	This new sector service will work with businesses to undertake an organisational needs analysis to understand the company’s growth ambitions and skills gaps/shortages. This would cover areas such as: talent attraction/acquisition, managing performance and building capability, and workforce and succession planning.

Proposal	Description
Housing First	These proposals will enable us to lead and coordinate action across the whole GM housing system, promote Housing First principles, work innovatively and at pace with partners to drive system transformation, provide specific expertise and capacity to support local authority teams, and advocate for the radical reforms needed to solve the housing crisis. GM Housing First will deliver the healthy homes that people need which in turn will support growth and prevent negative outcomes.
Live Well	Live Well has become the umbrella for a significantly wide range of thematic and priority area work (Neighbourhoods, Health, safer communities, children and early years, live well housing offer, ageing well, employment and economic inactivity and so on) and is the central element of our 10-year Growth and Reform Plan. To note, another £5m is required to provide the match funding to meet the commitment from DWP.
Building resilience for ageing populations	1 FTE will lead the delivery of a range of activities which support GM's resilience work focused on older people, building on the capacities and work of the GM Resilience team and GM Ageing Hub. The focus of this work is to apply an older people's lens to resilience programming, which involves assessing the specific vulnerabilities and capacities of older people and encouraging them to take a more proactive role, we can support older people to become more resilient – with wide-ranging benefits for themselves, their families, and their wider communities.
MBacc	The Greater Manchester Baccalaureate is a significant mayoral manifesto ambition that has already gained traction within the GM system. It sets GM apart from the rest of the country, further enhanced by the devolution trailblazer deal for post-16 and the all-age careers mandate to oversee all publicly funded careers provision.
Green Spaces Fund	The Green Spaces Fund was established in 2022. It has since funded over 100 community led green space creation and enhancement projects across Greater Manchester. The Mayor's 2024 manifesto contained the commitment to continue the fund over the course of his current term of office.
5 Year Environment Plan	The proposal is for revenue funding to: maintain capacity to deliver the Plan and its wider delivery through bidding for additional external capital and revenue funds, undertaking research/feasibility in advance of delivery, communication with businesses and residents, training, convening and coordinating delivery of the 5YEP with over 150 GM organisations, utilizing GM's unique Mission Based Approach.
Entry Schemes	As part of the GMS, we aim to support GM residents in finding good employment. Currently, the core GMCA has just 9 entry-level apprentices across 7 departments, with an additional 34 from the Management Trainee and Place Graduate Schemes. This proposal aims to remove financial barriers for directorates by providing central funding to engage in employing apprentices and creating entry scheme opportunities
Gender Based Violence - Education	The proposal is to undertake a two-stage programme. These insights will be used to codesign an age-appropriate programme for girls aged 10-16 years aimed at improving outcomes on key areas including aspiration (linked to MBACC take up) and wellbeing/
Creating safer spaces across travel and transport for women and girls	To develop a 'safe spaces' on public transport (static sites and mobile fleet) through the implementation of an 'Ask for Angela' scheme and roll out of Virtual Reality led enhanced training to staff.
Night-Time Economy	The funding would see the delivery of a mayoral priority around the night-time economy and would enable the continued delivery of the existing Night - Time Economy Strategy, as well as funding the delivery of the new Night-Time Economy Strategy (due to be launched this year)