



Greater Manchester All Party Parliamentary Group

Chair Lucy Powell MP
Vice Chairs Lord Goddard of Stockport, Ivan Lewis MP, Baroness Morris of Bolton, Chris Green MP, Jim McMahon MP
Secretary Jonathan Reynolds MP
Treasurer Yasmin Qureshi MP

Non-Verbatim Minutes

Greater Manchester APPG

Delivering Great Homes for Greater Manchester

St. Thomas' Centre, Ardwick Green North, Manchester

12:00 – 14.00, Friday 20th July 2018

Welcome and Introductions

Lucy Powell, MP for Manchester Central and Chair of the APPG, welcomed everyone and thanked GMCVO (new sponsors of the APPG) for hosting. She said this would be a different kind of GMAPPG meeting which would focus on 'listening' to experts and practitioners across the GM housing sector about delivering quality affordable housing at scale.

Delivering Great Homes for Greater Manchester

Paul Dennett, the Mayor of Salford and the GMCA Portfolio Lead on Housing, made a short presentation. He said he was glad to finally see housing high up on the political agenda, as it is more important now than ever. He raised several housing challenges in the city-region: the under-delivery of homes, especially affordable ones; thousands of households in the region are waiting for social homes; the private rent market is growing whilst home ownership plateaus; and rough sleeping is a challenge.

The Mayor was keen to stress that devolution could be used to provide housing solutions. As GMCA Housing Lead, Dennett said the region's strategy was to provide 'safe, decent and affordable housing,' including sustainable and age-friendly properties. The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework, despite its delays, and the Housing Investment Fund can provide this. To date, the Housing Investment Fund has delivered 5,500 homes in the city-region over the past two years. Dennett also stressed the importance of 'soft power' – such as influencing people, placing pressure on the government and working cooperatively – in successfully delivering great homes. Despite setbacks from the ONS and the central government, the Mayor said that the Combined Authority is 'moving in the right direction,' but he could not see a point in setting a target for homebuilding they would be unable to meet.

In order to deliver quality homes at the necessary scale, Dennett said that Greater Manchester's councils must work together on creating a new definition of 'affordability', tackling homelessness and partnering with Homes England and the government. The region's



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Housing First pilot, one of just three in England, is currently developing 500 homes for people with complex needs. Still, this government's programme of austerity has decimated local government. The Mayor has just two people working with him on the Housing team at the moment; reintroducing a 'place-making' team for the region is essential for his work. Housing is not simply about numbers – it should also be about creating homes and places that stand the test of time and are genuinely enjoyable to live in.

Helen McHale, representing *Greater Manchester Housing Providers*, said that the group's collective work had changed the conversation surrounding housing in Greater Manchester. Thanks to them, she said, affordable rents and social housing are on the agenda. The government and local leaders do not always understand what housing providers are capable of; the GMHP are prepared to build market-level properties, especially where the market has failed. Building new homes can improve the 'quality and accessibility' of the rental market, as well as providing jobs and skills in the construction industry.

Representing the *Home Builders' Federation*, **James Stevens** agreed with McHale's point about housing providers, saying that 'for better or worse,' the private sector is a great contributor to the building of new homes in England. The industry can help Greater Manchester to achieve its objectives; after the publication of the Spatial Framework, companies will have peace of mind regarding the region's housing plans. He argued that placemaking should not come before homebuilding, as providers will need to experiment with different methods before deciding on a suitable one. Although the industry will have to put up with traditional skills provision for the time being, the Federation would be happy to work with the Combined Authority to make sure training courses are relevant and up to industry standard.

Nick Cumberland of *Homes England* said that they want to do more in Greater Manchester, but they will need the correct figures from the Office of National Statistics before they can move forward with home building. They recently announced new strategic partnerships, including one with Great Places, to allow them to buy more strategic sites and to decide what sort of development they will be (e.g. private/social/etc.) Homes England can help local authorities to unlock flexible homes.

Responding to the representatives from the Home Builders' Federation and Homes England, **Paul Dennett** said that the Spatial Framework must be a priority, but it must be perfect before the public enquiry. The country must increase its provision of affordable homes; there are barely any affordability requirements in national planning policy right now. Skills provision is also an issue; the Combined Authority is aware that it will never be able to deliver the necessary number of homes without solving the skills crisis. With regards to Homes England,



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the Mayor said that there is a better way of providing housing than on a national scale (as Homes England does). Greater Manchester is losing housing stock rapidly due to Right to Buy; even homes that are currently being built are victim to it.

Deborah McLaughlin of *Capita* raised the issue of bureaucracy, saying it was incredible how long it takes to start actually building a home. Greater Manchester leaders should be looking to its partners to support place-making and regeneration schemes. Land is always a challenge: housing providers should help to reduce their footprint by taking up less land. As a regeneration company, **Matt Whiteley** explained that HIMOR aim to ‘make places’ rather than simply building homes. They want just 40% of homes in inner-city areas to be apartments. Most people – especially those with families – do not want to live like this and their needs must be met.

The Parliamentarians in attendance raised several issues regarding housing. **Lucy Powell** was concerned about skills within the housing sector. Greater Manchester represents a huge amount of apprenticeship spending; surely this could be used to support housing needs. Similarly, **Liz McInnes**, *MP for Heywood and Middleton*, said it was ‘concerning’ to hear about the uselessness of further education students in the construction industry. **Lord Andrew Stunell** said that the industry is facing ‘acute national problems,’ revealing that 80% of construction trainees never make it to the field, as the quality of recruitment is poor and job security is weak. Greater Manchester’s guaranteed housing funds for the next few years can allow leaders to take advantage of that and fund construction. The Combined Authority has great purchasing power so it can justify looking at modern manufacturing methods for large-scale production.

Some Members of Parliament were focused on social housing issues. **Afzal Khan**, *MP for Manchester Gorton*, and **Lucy Powell** said that ‘right-sizing’ was an issue in their constituencies, as one-bedroom social homes are currently a rarity. **Liz McInnes** said that whilst modular homes can be built cheaply and in just a day, making them ideal for social housing, they are not the sort of homes one would aspire to. **Barbara Keeley**, *MP for Worsley and Eccles South*, made a similar point, saying that the quality of current housing (both social and private) was an escalating part of her casework. Both **Liz McInnes** and **Cllr Kate Butler** floated the idea of regenerating ‘dying’ town centres and using up brownfield land by creating housing within them. McInnes said that she was not worried that councils could become ‘victims of their own success’ by attracting those who are struggling, and said it was a ‘price worth paying.’

Paul Dennett warned that the Spatial Framework can make it easy to think of housing as a ‘numbers game,’ when ultimately it is all about people. The Combined Authority and housing



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providers need to build the 'right homes in the right places.' **Bryn Philips**, of *Shelter*, suggested that American-style Community Land Trusts (CLTs) could solve the issue by allowing local communities to own land. People rightly want a sense of attachment to their homes and CLTs could provide this. Dennett replied that he was personally very supportive of them. He said the Combined Authority needs to take risks, and that cooperation was more important than competition in the housing sector.

Conclusion

The meeting concluded with Lucy Powell MP thanking guests for attending, as well as the sponsors: GM Housing Providers, United Utilities, MAG, Natwest, Amey and GMCVO.

At the conclusion of the meeting The GM Housing Providers launched their *Ambition to Deliver* programme, a manifesto that pledges to meet the city-region's growing housing needs over the next 20 years.

The GMAPPG were keen to support Paul Dennett and write to/or meet the Housing Minister. Great Homes for Greater Manchester would continue to work and collaborate with Paul Dennett with a view to holding a Housing Summit to showcase innovation and great housing solutions across GM.

Attendee List

Name	Organisation
Lucy Powell	House of Commons
Barbara Keeley	House of Commons
Liz McInnes	House of Commons
Tony Lloyd	House of Commons
Afzal Khan	House of Commons
Lord Andrew Stunell	House of Lords
Paul Dennett	Salford City Council
Kate Butler	Stockport Council
Peter Deen	Oldham Council
Linda Robinson	Rochdale Council
Daalat Ali	Rochdale Council
Martin Donaghy	Bolton Council
Nick Peel	Bolton Council



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Ciaran Tully	GMHP and NHF
Anne Morgan	GMCA
Aisling McCourt	GMCA
Mike Wright	GMCA
Matt Whiteley	HIMOR
Helen McHale	GMHP and Stockport Homes Group
James Stevens	Home Builders Federation
Deborah McLaughlin	Capita
Tony Lloyd Goodwin	CLES
Charlie Norman	Mosscafe St. Vincent's Housing
Graham Whitham	Greater Manchester Poverty Action
Lee Sugden	Salix Homes
Sam Stafford	Barratt Developments
Dave Power	One Manchester
Stephen Kinsey	One Manchester
Prof Hisham Elkadi	University of Salford
Mark Waite	Bloor Homes
Jordan Gresham	Taylor Wimpey
Tim Heatley	Capital and Centric
Nick Cumberland	Homes England
Anna Bensky	Peel Holdings
Nick Cumberland	Homes England
Bryn Phillips	Shelter
David Burch	CLES
Richard Radcliffe	Great Places
Michael Taylor	Manchester Metropolitan University
Jonny Morgan	Electricity North West
Helen Nicholson	Irwell Valley
Tricia Grierson	Johnnie Johnson Housing
Glyn Tully	Levitt Bernstein Architects
Kal Gill-Faci	Levitt Bernstein Architects
Catherine Foot	Centre for Ageing Better
Lisa Jowrey	Arawak Walton
Tom Togher	Salford Citizens Advice Bureau
Matthew Gardiner	Trafford Housing Trust
Henry Gregg	National Housing Federation
Rachel Yakes	Alzheimer's Society



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Rachael Richards

Luke Barnett

Sam Stafford

Bernard Gallagher

Liam Gregson

Ian Gregg

Helen Spencer

John Ryan

Michael Stephenson

Sasha Deepwell

Pete Coventry

Annika Hjelmkog

Jennifer Gregory

Matt Jones

Alex Whinnom

Marion James

Gaynor Kenyon

Kirith Ahluwalia

Charlotte Morris

Vinny Roche

Elizabeth Stanley

Robin Lawler

Margaret Rowe

Brian Boag

Simon Greenhalgh

Cath Moss

Social Communications

Social Communications

Bow

Arcon Housing Association

Northern Housing Consortium

Riverside

Great Places

Shelter

Greater Manchester Citizens Advice Bureau

Irwell Valley

Onward Homes

University of Manchester

Office of Barbara Keeley MP

ForViva/City West

GMCVO

Guinness Partnership

United Utilities

Royal British Legion

University of Salford

First Choice Homes

Wraparound

Northwards Housing

University of Salford

University of Salford

LTE Group

Manchester for Europe