



Greater Manchester All-Party Parliamentary Group

Chair Lucy Powell MP
Vice-Chairs Lord David Goddard Afzal Khan MP
Yvonne Fovargue MP Baroness Newlove
Jim McMahon MP Nav Mishra MP
Secretary Jonathan Reynolds MP
Treasurer Yasmin Qureshi MP

MINUTES

Covid-19 Recovery Series

Education, Employment and Skills in Recovery

Building back Greater Manchester's growth potential

10:00 – 11:30 Tuesday 21st July

CONTEXT

In the third session in our 'Recovery Series', this meeting will focus-in on the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on education, employment and skills in Greater Manchester and how the city-region can reboot its growth potential and innovation.

Greater Manchester's universities, colleges and schools have been hit hard by Covid-19 and the city-region at large faces the potential of record unemployment. The future of work, how we work and the skills and jobs we need to accelerate growth will be very different as we move into recession and recovery.

This education, employment and skills session will bring together sector leaders, Parliamentarians, business and civic institutions to look at the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on Greater Manchester's future growth potential, assess what skills and training pathways are needed to turbocharge recovery, and how the city-region can build an inclusive economy, improve life chances of residents, and level-up through a skills led approach.

The Chancellor's Economic Statement included £1.6bn of investment to scale-up employment support, training and apprenticeships as part of the 'Kickstart Scheme'. This GMAPPG session will provide a timely opportunity to take stock and look at what is needed to kick start education, employment and skills across Greater Manchester to drive a successful recovery, accelerate innovation, and build back with green jobs and high value, resilient industries.

Many Greater Manchester schools, colleges and universities have been hit hard by Covid-19 and face challenging times. Students and apprentices face record unemployment, not to mention their studies being interrupted – effectively delaying skills we need in the future labour market. The Education Select Committee has launched an Inquiry into the 'Impact of Covid-19 on education and children's services'. This session will also look at the short term impacts, such as the effects of school closures and exam cancellations, and longer-term implications particularly for the most vulnerable children and young adults.

The GM APPG Covid-19 recovery series provides an opportunity for GM MPs, Peers, Mayor and stakeholder to come together, co-ordinate and collaborate on specific GM asks and concerns and raise them at Westminster and with Government.

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KEY QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED:

- How can we **build back better** growth in GM – post-Covid-19?
- What are the skills and support GM needs for a resilient recovery?
- What are the future growth sectors and what future skills and work does GM need?
- How can GM achieve a more inclusive economy and deliver the green jobs and skills needed?

10:00 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Lucy Powell MP, Chair of GM APPG

- Welcomed all participants for coming to this important “virtual” session for GM APPG, the 3rd meeting of the Covid-19: GM Recovery Series.
- The next session is on **Transport and Travel in Recovery** on Friday 18th September, 11:00 – 12:30 with Rt Hon Andy Burnham GM Mayor.
- There will also be a session on **Housing in recovery with Great Homes for Greater Manchester** with Salford City Mayor Paul Dennett and Rt Hon Andy Burnham in early October (date tbc)
- Thank you to everyone for attending and giving MPs the opportunity to hear about the challenges and recovery routes for Greater Manchester’s education, employment and skills at this critical time and for taking part in the conversation on how to rebuild, rebalance and recover.

10:10 IMPACT AND RECOVERY: EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS

Lucy Powell MP, Chair of GM APPG

- We want to hear about the impact of Covid-19, the key challenges around education, employment and skills and what is needed to help drive a sustainable and resilient recovery

Professor Francesca Gains, Professor of Public Policy at University of Manchester and Academic Co-Director of Policy@Manchester

- Referring back to pre-Covid-19 we had a well developed regional strategy, close working between institutions, devolution of adult skills budget and looking to develop our strengths
- Pandemic exposed inequalities, loss of income for LAs, uncertain future for the UoM due to the loss of overseas student, vulnerabilities in research funding framework
- We should capitalise on some changes, create highly paid skilled jobs across all sectors, accessible to all, addressing inequalities and working towards net zero
- Resilience - need for highly paid skilled jobs and we cant rely on hospitality and retail sectors
- How to solve the productivity problem? – innovation eco system, research, in HE/FE building on training across the sectors and the region
- What are the risks to achieving a more inclusive economy?

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- Gendered nature of local employment
 - Sectors that have been harder hit are sectors where women are over represented
 - Green growth, manufacturing, STEM sectors – men are overrepresented
- Understanding of gender and other inequalities so we target education and skills and retraining so we bring in under-represented groups to boost skills and pay rates

Lucy Powell MP, Chair of GM APPG

- The inequality of gendered and BAME job losses needs to be on the table

Jo Purves, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Academic Development, University of Salford

- Learnt an enormous amount about the UoS student body
- Digital exclusion – in the move to online has shown barriers to technology/ internet
- Providing laptops and dongles for students without access to broadband
- Stops people from being socially mobile
- Increased hardship funding
- How we look at the education system for the future
 - Join up FE and HE skills
 - Working very closely with industry to develop apprenticeship programmes
 - Technical skills at level 5/ pre A level
 - Siemens, TalkTalk – digital STEM based/ practical focussed courses
 - Universities have access to more advanced equipment so can help
- Arts and creative industries are very vulnerable
 - Creative students need digital skills aswell
 - Capitalise on their creative skills digitally
- AMRC/ research and bussines and enterprise/ SME link up
- Sutable/ Green/ Smart Contrustion Boom
 - MMC, Retrofit
 - Greener more sustainable way of living

Lucy Powell MP, Chair of GM APPG

- Interesting look at the digital divide.

Richard Caulfield, North West Area Director and Mental Health & Wellbeing Lead for the Association of Colleges

- Pay tribute to school and college leaders that switched to online
- 70,000 online students
- Digital poverty is crucial if we keep people learning
 - Not just tech, housing conditions, shared accom doesn't have the space etc
- Clear plan for a skills led recovery
- Retain Young People (YP) in education
 - Ensure the transition in HE/FE goes well

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- Transport challenge to get people to education, if not that could impact upon NEETs and other disadvantaged groups
- 18-19 year olds staying on in education
 - Staying on into next year to pick up additional skills to come into the work place at a high lever
- Kickstart Gov Scheme
 - Great but we need to make sure advice and guidance is clear so people can navigate the systems
- Need more focus on Adult Skills
 - Risk of initiative-itus

Lucy Powell MP, Chair of GM APPG

Devolution/place based decision making would help us to address some of these problems with initiative-itus.

Luke Freeman, Director, FinTech North

Fintech definition – application of digital tech in financial services

MCR leading location for FinTech outside London

Nothing unique in fintech skills – good proxy for the broader digital and tech community/ skills

Covid-19 impact:

- Acceleration of digitisation
- Core skills in demand that benefit and grow GM economy
- Much more informed set of choices being made in terms of value
- Coding/ programming skills
- Skills for user interface/ user experience
- Certain types of methodology
 - Agile/ Scrum
- Data science and data analytics
- Cyber crime skills
- All of these skills we already have before the pandemic/ potential growth in those sectors
- There is a receptive group/ open to training/retraining to get vocational/ core digital skills

Whats stopping measures being taken to make GM a leading place in the UK with the provision of courses for people to be work ready in terms of digital skills?

-

Lucy Powell MP, Chair of GM APPG

GCHQ and other Public Sector opportunities and we need to take.

Katie Gallagher, Managing Director, Manchester Digital

Pre-Covid-19 there was an acute skills shortage resulting in companies are growing:

- Not balanced in terms of gender, ethnicity or backgrounds
- Skills gap meant employers looked elsewhere e.g. bootcamps

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- Vacancies - 33% digital/ tech vacancy gap

Post-Covid-19

- Nuanced picture/Data doesn't represent the future of employment
- Businesses that have done well during pandemic doesn't mean that they will do well during economic uncertainty
- Booking.com/ AutoTrader – flatlined now and will continue to do so
- Public Sector employment in GM
 - o DFE
 - o DWP
 - o GCHQ
- Digital inclusion
 - o Digital Skills is v broad – everyone needs them but there are different levels
 - Life skills – online banking etc
 - Ability to exploit tech platforms
 - Capability to build tech
- Employers
 - o Annual Digital Skills Audit
 - Employers are still looking for computer science grads
 - Apprenticeships very low
 - Corporates take them
 - Smaller companies (that take up most of the sector) take v few
 - o Not set up to support them
 - o Work to be done to make employers take apprentices and understand/ support them
- Whilst the economy slows, digital recruitment etc, its important we don't lose the good work that has been done in GM, keep employing from diverse backgrounds, make sure we keep the talent coming through, so we don't emerge with a worse skills gap than before

Lucy Powell MP, Chair of GM APPG

It is a shame that Grad/PHD level is more valued and we should work to change that.

10:40 RESPONSE AND DISCUSSION

Afzal Khan MP

- Thank you to everyone that has contributed
- Need to be coordinating more
- Collaborating so we can continue this conversation
- Digitisation has accelerated to another level
- Inequality gap exists – GM has grown but 10% of the most deprived are in the GM wards

Graeme Woodworth, Mustard Tree

- Trying to combat digital poverty in an agile way

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- Concerned about volume of people coming into the centres
- Only taking 60 not 200 work placements this year due to Covid-19
- Freedom support offer now online

Lucy Powell MP, Chair of GM APPG

We always thought the digital evolution would be the great leveller but in fact it has been the opposite.

Richard Caulfield, AOC

- Real focus on YP and people dropping out of the labour market
- Those people that were struggling beforehand, they are so far from the labour market, for them to even access the vital skills
- Training in retail and hospitality which is where the most jobs have been lost

Lucy Powell MP, Chair of GM APPG

Low entry/ apprenticeship/ easy entry – with the significant retreat in the hospitality sector, where are those entry level jobs going to come from? Other sectors need to help.

Cllr John Walsh, Executive Support Member for Education and Learning, Salford City Council

- Opportunity to look at education curriculum
- Literacy poverty is now digital poverty
- Education should meet the needs of all learners
- Remodel and reshape our curriculum to meet the new “now” – need to do it quickly

Sandra Coeling, Stockport Homes/ Chair of GMHP Group looking at Employment

- Pre-Covid-19:
 - o Trying to get people into better jobs not just entry level jobs
 - o Digital was an area people were looking at
 - o 27 Housing Providers
 - Big employers
 - Lots of tenants
 - How can we use leverage to get people into high paid jobs and out of poverty?

Katie Gallagher, Managing Director, Manchester Digital

- Apprenticeships seem a solution on surface but some people might need to look at traineeships first
- Employers need to understand the value and meet you half way
- Employers haven't been prepared for some of the social issues
 - o Don't have a HR department, support systems etc. need a central resource centre to cover that
- Curriculum
 - o Education suffers from short term thinking

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- Computer science GCSE – very dull, nobody wants to do it
- Job titles/ Standardisation in education

Craig Stone, Great Places Housing Group

- Labour market information
 - Can be sketchy in terms of what the opportunities are
 - What the jobs are/ where they are – where is the shortage?
 - Clarity around what jobs, how many and where is crucial
 - YP find it difficult to see the correlation between what they are studying and jobs

Elizabeth Stanley, Wrap Around Partnership

- Interested in the life journey of people with special needs
- Impact of lockdown on children with special needs
 - No physio, speech and language therapies
- If we have to lockdown again what can we do to support those families better?
 - Some will have lost jobs, struggling to manage
 - In GM can we plan to make sure that families, parents, and carers have the support they need if a situation like this happens again?

Lucy Powell MP, Chair of GM APPG

We do need to make sure that vulnerable children are not left behind. I will link you in with CA lead on these issues.

Michael Taylor, Manchester Metropolitan University

- Difficulty of getting small employers over the line/ ready for degree apprenticeships
- The way the levy is set up means SMEs can't access it

Lucy Powell MP, Chair of GM APPG

We need to be more creative and flexible.

Luke Freeman, FinTech North

- Job market can seem confusing to YP
- Employers need to be more clear/ communicate what the opportunities are
- Role for educators to promote the benefit of courses/skills in a way that links the benefit/ qualification to a job/sector

Richard Calufield, AOC

- Colleges are working with careers and enterprise company in GM
- GM have a group of employer which work with curriculum team and look at job opportunities
- Apprenticeships are not the whole picture
- More space in education traineeships etc to support all sectors of the community

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Francesca Gains, Policy @ UoM

- Join up HE, FE, Public and Private to get an ecosystem working
- Childcare needs to be part of the picture

11:30 SESSION ENDS

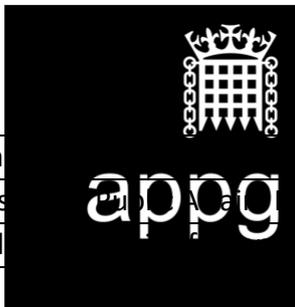
ATTENDEE LIST

First Name	Last Name	Role	Organisation
Dane	Anderton	Senior Lecturer	University of Manchester
Wayne	Campbell	Business Manager	Six Town Housing, GMHP
Richard	Caulfield	NW Regional Director	Association of Colleges
Sandra	Coleing	Assistant Chief Executive	Stockport Homes Group
Anthony	Cottam	Head of Employment and Enterprise	Bolton at Home
Joanne	Fallows	Head of Technical Training and Assurance	Electricity North West Limited
Luke	Freeman	Director	FinTech North
Prof Francesca	Gains	Professor of Public Policy and Academic Co-Director of Policy@Manchester	University of Manchester
Katie	Gallagher	Managing Director	Manchester Digital
Kate	Green	MP	House of Commons
Holly	Harrow	Senior Manager Relationships and New Business	Homes England
Greig	Lees	Head of Regeneration	Northwards Housing
Rachel	Massey	Assistant Portfolio Holder for Children's Services	Rochdale Council
David	Meller	Cabinet Member for Economy & Regeneration	Stockport Council
Navendu	Mishra	MP	House of Commons
Charlotte	Morris	Public Affairs Manager	University of Salford
Richard	Mortimer	Head of Economy, Work & Skills	Stockport Council
Nicola	Mosley	Employment and Skills Advisor	Trafford Housing Trust
Catherine	Pealing	Interim Assistant Director - Education	Wigan Council
Lucy	Powell	Chair and Shadow Minister for Business and Consumers	GM APPG
Joanne	Purves	Pro Vice-Chancellor International and Regional Partnerships	University of Salford
Elizabeth	Stanley	Founder	Wrap Around Partnership
Fiona	Stanton	Head of Policy	Northern Powerhouse Partnership
Craig	Stone	Community Investment Manager Manchester South & South Yorkshire	Great Places Housing Group

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Marianne	Webb	Treasurer	Yasmin Qureshi MP	University of Manchester
Graeme	Woodworth	Head of Corporate and Public Affairs		Mustard Tree
Chloe	Wright	Finance Manager		Wigan Council
		Assistant Director Skills and Enterprise		

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