

Greater Manchester Housing Strategy Listening Event

The table below outlines the main point raised through the roundtable discussions from an invited stakeholder event held at First Choice Homes Oldham offices on the 25 September 2018.

	Table 1. Lead facilitator – Helen Brzowski-Arc 4	Table 2. Lead facilitator- Merron Simpson-Campbell Tickell	Table 3. Lead facilitator- Tim English –Oldham Council	Table 4. Lead facilitator – Bryn Cooke- Oldham Council
New Build and Housing delivery	<p>Space standards/energy efficiency standards not helping viability in some markets. Helpful if GM considers supporting a level playing field and harmonising policies around development/design standards across the region.</p> <p>GM need to consider and be prepared to fund Oldham to help rebalance the GM north/south divide. Recognize land values and remediation costs.</p> <p>GM could support more detailed feasibility work on Oldham Mill sites and support the larger levels of subsidy required to make these viable.</p> <p>There is a role for GM to help support co-ordinate new development with the Council Homes England and developing partners and help buy and release more land for development</p> <p>Ideas that GM could explore, pooling of s106 receipts and districts then bid into GM to access it.</p>	<p>Viability a major issue. Should GM have a viability appraisal for all 10 boroughs. Current approach too inconsistent. Can GM pilot innovate a better approach to Section 106. Make GM attractive by improving consistency of approach in planning, joining up one public estates works, greenbelt, land assembly. Gap funding and link to GMSF.</p> <p>Good quality PRS sector should not be overlooked to help increase numbers.</p> <p>Increased densities around metro-link hubs could work well but will GM direct funding to greatest need or where viability gap is greatest?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased buyer interest in recent years – and increase in sales • But outstripped in terms of costs inflation • Lack of new sites coming forward • New entrants (RPs) coming into the market driving prices of land up • Protracted discussions • Inconsistency across the 10 in how they view viability appraisals – lack of consistency is causing delays • One option would be for GMCA to produce a consistent approach and a panel of consultants who are instructed in that approach <p>Actions / Asks</p>	<p>Key role for GM and Oldham is to work together to rebalance the north and south prosperity divide. Need to work together to put together a comprehensive regeneration/renewal ask to government and for the Oldham Partnership and GM to allocate grants/resources towards Oldham that is attractive and demonstrates what the Oldham Partnership can and is funding and where it needs support and resource.</p> <p>This is not just a housing issue but must be seen as jobs, transport, land, viability, gap funding as part of one package.</p> <p>Oldham needs to work as a wider partnership with GM to help make the area more commercially viable, more marketed, more attractive and appealing as a GM destination.</p> <p>Large scale holistic regeneration/renewal is required not just about building more homes. This is not the answer for all parts of the local housing market.</p>	<p>Land supply/viability key issue for Oldham and grant funding/renewal programmes needed to resolve.</p> <p>GM could have a role in developing a central commuted sum pot that can be re-distributed across GM.</p> <p>GM would make the most difference in being able to support access to grant funding/CPO powers to unlock unviable/stalled sites, particularly brownfield.</p> <p>GM could make a difference by supporting the rationalisation of listed buildings and heritage assets. Encourage use of smaller number of best examples and help release others for redevelopment.</p> <p>Lobbying by GM for the removal of HRA borrowing cap across whole of conurbation, plus higher Homes England grant rates for new Social Housing not just restricted to areas of high affordability.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A set of key principles about how to do s106 at GM level, more structure to it ... so there is more consistency (developers would welcome this) • Establish a Strategic Gap Funding / Marginal Viability fund – to put money in to make sites work • Disseminate policy from top to bottom of GM and council (to give certainty) – currently, planning case officers are working differently to the council policy in some places because it's not been communicated 		
Existing Homes	<p>An under occupancy of larger homes. Supporting older people to move and potentially release them would be useful to consider at a GM level.</p> <p>PRS-GM could support more lobbying at national level to pilot a range of innovations/ approaches to disrupt the current poorer quality lower end of the market i.e. buy back scheme, level of landlord profit/tenant fees lobbying for more regulation that may force poor landlords out of the market.</p> <p>Control over Public subsidy being paid to landlords for poor quality stock that has cat 1 or 2 hazards.</p> <p>GM could better co-ordinate other policy factors that influence PRS such as Serco distribution of properties, out of borough homelessness placements that can have</p>	<p>Can GM help rebalance in - equality. Could there be a GM wide agreement on for example HMO'S and landlord incentives and enforcement in particular on standards of property.</p>	<p>Need to work with GM to redress the significant churn in some areas. The loss of community identity and the need to develop a long term sustained regeneration/renewal approach.</p> <p>GM focus would help Oldham on lobbying central government on the combined impacts of welfare reform, out of borough property investment in PRS driven by profit. Out of borough temporary accommodation placements. Creating very fluctuating communities and high turnover, poor quality standards.</p> <p>GM could support developing a more comprehensive evidence base on the impact of national policy on existing communities and how it is driving distortion in the PRS market.</p> <p>GM could support the piloting and innovation in landlord redress schemes.</p>	<p>GM have a strong role to play in supporting districts with skills and capacity to better co-ordinate and support Infrastructure improvements. For example Transport, schools and health.</p> <p>Lobby and link housing benefit/UC payments to minimum housing standards required to be eligible for public funds.</p> <p>GM developing shared housing/downsizing initiatives which are centrally promoted and assistance provided to simply the process i.e. vetting and removal costs paid etc.</p>

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	a destabilising effect on PRS sector.			
Connecting Housing, Health and Social Care	<p>GM can encourage more targetted health money into housing innovations like Warm Homes Oldham. Successful models need to be rolled out and accelerated across GM.</p> <p>Need for GM to share what works well with local care organisation structures, promote social prescribing and tackling root causes of poor health and housing conditions through this method.</p> <p>GM need to agree a combined pot of funding for far greater integrated commissioning of services.</p> <p>GM to consider wider integration of funding streams across housing health and social care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homes for the future – Lifetime Homes ... • External walls do the load-bearing so you can change the internals easily • We're not building enough bungalows ... not cost-effective • All work in a silo – housing, health, soc care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focusing on their own statutory duties ○ Rather than working collectively around the person • Housing to be part of Locality Plan discussions ... <p>Asks/Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Commissioning ... for innovation (small % eg. 1% = £60m joint commission given to those who would do the innovation) – this is what GM can help with, getting everyone together on the same page 		<p>A key role in helping and supporting the rebalancing housing markets agenda.</p> <p>GM have a role in commissioning more housing related support services to existing homes through more pooling and integration of budgets across housing health and social care.</p> <p>Supply of suitable alternative products in advance of introducing a downsizing scheme seen as key.</p>
Quality and Safety		<p>GM can play a strong role in influencing more new development to be lifetime homes standard/ more future proofed/retrospectively easier to adapt, remodel, add to or make smaller.</p>		<p>Co-ordinated GM approach with regard to PRS enforcement/standards (creation of a more enforcement focused central team?)</p> <p>Development of a GM landlord accreditation scheme.</p>
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping	<p>Felt to be a GM displacement issue, other Local authorities in GM and wider buying up cheap PRS housing stock or renting it to discharge statutory responsibilities out of borough.</p>	<p>Not enough capital to produce right accommodation.</p> <p>Welfare reforms limit what housing can be accessed.</p> <p>Is Housing First effective?</p>	<p>GM could help develop more shared housing models and build on the success of the current partnership working and initiatives taking place across GM.</p> <p>Develop a bond scheme to provide better access to PRS</p>	<p>GM have a role to play to review housing and planning policies across the region. e.g. opportunities to align better.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of borough temporary accommodation placements and temporary accommodation agreed protocols and

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	<p>GM could develop a winter provision plan.</p> <p>GM could work better with lettings agents what are the opportunities to pilot more short term accommodation through this route.</p> <p>GM wide solution for example on a PRS social bond, housing first model</p>	<p>Good that GM are co-ordinating and working across standardising approaches.</p> <p>GM have a role in how PRS works well and may not work well and how Empty Homes can be better utilised.</p>	<p>GM could do more to understand the barriers to housing and how more 'floating support' could be commissioned to help keep tenancies more sustained across tenures</p>	<p>opportunities for joint procurement explored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocations Policies in particular on consistency of awarding housing need banding and homelessness priorities. <p>Awareness campaign across GM to promote alternative to on street cash donations to beggars/rough sleepers.</p>
Custom build				Expand central resource to help support local community groups, particularly via bids to Homes England.
Access and Affordability	<p>Universal Credit having significant need to lobby nationally the impact to accessibility of even base social housing offer. Many existing tenants cannot even afford current affordable housing offer, let alone aspire to move along the housing market into other tenures.</p> <p>GM vision should articulate the type of communities we need to make the region prosper and look at:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How people can save • How and the effect of affordability tests to access social housing. • Develop a range of alternatives other than the traditional mortgage market recognizing informal economy/self employed. Diversity of communities. Not everyone buys properties in the same way. 	<p>Less churn, fewer properties are available, less choice, over reliance on poorer quality PRS sector.</p> <p>Cheaper PRS stock in Oldham is distorting the market and drawing in new communities that impact significantly on public services, G.P.s, schools etc.</p> <p>Asks/Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity in message around capital funding for accommodation for homelessness from Mayor • Developers have been receptive to the SIB ... but what might their offer be for Housing First – need to find out at GM level? 	<p>Big idea is that approximately £1bn is spent annually across GM on housing subsidy costs via Universal Credit housing allowances or Housing benefit. 70% goes approximately to the RP sector and 30% to private landlords.</p> <p>Could GM have this budget devolved and therefore be better placed through restrictions on paying for example poor landlords who do not meet standards.</p>	<p>No incentives on PRS landlords to improve standards due to steady rise in rental income as a result of a lack of social stock, increased migration and high level of out of borough placements (i.e. MCC, Sirco and London Boroughs) driving up rents but still low in comparison to rest of GM and NW.</p>

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Involvement and engaging the community	<p>New build problematic to balance local needs.</p> <p>GMSF going out to public consultation at the wrong time? Too close to Christmas.</p> <p>Is more consultation required at a local community level on GMSF sites</p>			<p>Mayor and GM need to articulate the consequences of not achieving government housing targets and intended GM economic growth levels much better. i.e. GM economy shrinks and free for all at a local level via planning appeals. Selective planned greenbelt release at strategic locations with correct infrastructure far better and can contribute directly to required economic rebalancing across GM.</p>
Research, evidence and data		<p>Asks/Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a GM-wide approach to balancing up the types, sizes, tenure, affordability of homes – to take steps to reverse inequality <p>A GM-wide approach might include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Procurement of temporary accommodation ○ Conversions to HMOs ○ Consistent approach to rents and landlord incentives – so they can't play the landlords off against each other ○ Conditions on quality of accommodation and nature of incentives ○ Selective licensing areas (Oldham has more than other councils) – or 	<p>GM have a role to play to better understand and share evidence and data on migration trends, travel to work, housing market signals, housing market position statements to better understand and inform strategic policy.</p>	<p>Capacity funding and resource to investigate workable option to redress current imbalances in the local housing market.</p>

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Connectivity across the conurbation	<p>Metro-link very positive for Oldham. However would benefit hugely if metro-link connectivity began to develop vertically across Oldham, Rochdale, Ashton. Manchester etc rather than the horizontal growth.</p> <p>Huge potential for more tram stops across Oldham current lines.</p> <p>GM can play a part in joining up GMSF land holdings and infrastructure fund to make most of these opportunities</p> <p>GM needs to link across to how schools fit into transport and housing sites.</p> <p>GM can play a key role in marketing the less prosperous areas of the conurbation and highlighting their connectivity. Oldham town centre is just 2.5miles away from Manchester Town Centre.</p> <p>Some locations in Oldham have a significantly seen a reduction in connectivity. Transport issues must be central to GM housing agenda.</p>	<p>Tram/Train cross borough connectivity difficult, often have to go into City centre first e.g. Oldham to Bolton no direct links.</p> <p>No night time buses, ticketing systems not well integrated.</p> <p>Actions/asks of GM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the tramline to more places (eg. to Ashton, Bolton, Saddleworth etc) • Do better at interchange nodes – so that the tram station and bus station are next to each other • A single ticketing mechanism and pricing policy across all forms of transport • Need for GM investment in transport to match Oldham's housing ambitions ... so, "if we develop the town centre offer, increase housing density in key place, create the demand – then we would like GM to invest in line with that ambition (this goes further than just 'giving Oldham its share of investment in the tram network' 		<p>Meaningful GM policies to support true economic rebalancing across GM i.e. to take forward the creation of a North East GM quadrant Enterprise Zone, with direct incentives for investors/developers who support vision of high quality facilities.</p> <p>Explore all options for Metrolink orbital expansion i.e. Oldham to Ashton and Ashton to Stockport/Airport City.</p>