

Date: 24th January 2024

To: Open Government Partnership (OGP) Local

Government Letter of Support: Call for new members to OGP Local 2024

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) is pleased to submit an application to join OGP Local. This submission is part of our continued commitment to advancing the principles of open government across the city region, improving better access to information, and increasing public participation and public accountability.

By submitting this application to OGP Local, we endorse the [Open Government Declaration](#) and commit to upholding the principles within it.

We acknowledge that by becoming a member of OGP Local, we will need to collaborate with people, communities, and organisations across the city-region to deliver an open government action plan and implement its commitments. In doing so, we will embed the values of open government in our OGP Local process and will ensure that any resultant action plan is transparent, participatory, and accountable.

GMCA is proud to say that it is the first combined authority in the country to apply to join OGP Local. As one of the first combined authorities in the country, it has been at the forefront of the UK devolution agenda, bringing power and responsibility closer to the people of Greater Manchester. To continue to drive positive change for all, it is imperative that we have strong, inclusive, and abiding relationships with multi-stakeholder groups and the citizens of Greater Manchester. The inclusion of GMCA as an OGP Local member will enable us to proactively participate as part of the global OGP community and share our wealth of experience and knowledge on best practice approaches across other jurisdictions, and with those demonstrating alignment with any thematic focus of our action plan.

Becoming an OGP Local member would also present an opportunity to enhance our approach to open governance principles and further embed our organisational commitment to leading by example when it comes to transparency and citizen engagement. The driving force for this activity is the unique Greater Manchester Information Strategy, which states a clear desire to bring together stakeholders across the city-region from multiple sectors, to create a better, more open, and more inclusive, information ecosystem.

As part of this strategy, one of the six core missions is focused on fostering trust between the people, communities, and businesses of Greater Manchester through greater transparency. Becoming an OGP Local member will allow us to increase our accountability as part of this strategy and align closely with one of the key thematic priorities for OGP in improving access to information. This will be done through proactive engagement with stakeholders from across various sectors and with

citizens directly, to ensure that all voices are considered in how we manage, share, and use information.

Co-creation and engagement has been a key element of our work over the years and is evidenced through the strong relationships we currently hold across a range of audiences across the city-region. Membership would also allow us to further develop our participation agenda, embedding a more systematic approach to participation across the organisation.

We recognise the need for a robust, multi-stakeholder co-creation process to define an action plan for our OGP Local membership. We commit to ensuring that the resources are made available in order to co-create, implement, and learn from the commitments that will be included within any action plan.

If given the opportunity to become a member of OGP Local in the 2024 call, the Information & Data Governance team, led by our Deputy Data Protection Officer, John Curtis, will be responsible for leading the OGP Local process within GMCA, and liaising with the OGP Support Unit.

We are excited about the prospect of joining the OGP Local community and feel confident in being able to raise the profile of open local government within the Greater Manchester region and beyond through our existing and well-established networks. As a city-region, we have evidenced that we are small enough to work closely together and aim for common goals, but big enough to make a difference.

Thank you for your consideration.



Gillian Duckworth
GMCA Solicitor and Monitoring Officer

23rd January 2024

Ref: **Support for GMCA OGP Local bid**

To: Open Government Partnership (OGP) Local

Holyoake House
Hanover Street
Manchester
M60 0AS
UK

hello@opendatamanchester.org.uk
www.opendatamanchester.org.uk

To who it may concern,

On behalf of Open Data Manchester CIC (ODM), please accept this letter of support for the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's (GMCA) application to become a member of OGP Local. ODM is committed to promoting transparency, collaboration and innovation through open data initiatives and we believe that GMCA's commitment to OGP principles aligns with our own mission to promote responsible data practices that focus on the needs of all and ensure that data is used in ways that help people, our planet and prosperity.

ODM recognises the importance of fostering open government practices at a local level. GMCA's dedication to transparency, citizen engagement and the use of open data to drive positive change is evident through many elements of their work. This is particularly evident in context of the Greater Manchester Information Strategy which has a strategic imperative of creating greater transparency for people, communities and business across Greater Manchester.

As key stakeholder in the city region and a member of the Greater Manchester Information Board, Open Data Manchester have witnessed and supported the efforts that GMCA have taken to enhance access to public information, encourage civic participation and promote accountability. We firmly believe that GMCA's involvement in OGP Local will lead to enhanced governance, increased public trust and a more vibrant and engaged community across the Greater Manchester city-region.

ODM pledges its full support to GMCA's commitment to joining the OGP Local community. Should GMCA become a member of OGP Local, ODM will look to collaboratively engage and support them in the development and co-creation of any action plan and help partner with them to further promote the work being undertaken across Greater Manchester in an open government context.

ODM are already an active member of the OGP community and sit on the national Open Government Network steering committee. We are confident that GMCA's inclusion in the network will add value to the OGP network and help drive positive change, inspire other regions and solidify Greater Manchester as a leader in open government initiatives.

Sincerely,



Julian Tait
CEO