



Participation group

Pankhurst-Fawcett Report

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PARTICIPATION GROUP

Scorecard - 2024

This year there is an improvement in our 2 key indicators for women's representation in formal politics and law.

27%

Indicator 1: voting women in the GMCA

For the first indicator, the number of women with voting rights around the Mayor's cabinet table has risen to 27% - as three of Greater Manchester's boroughs are now led by women.

38%

Indicator 2: judicial appointment

For our second indicator, the percentage of women appointed as judges in the Northwest in 2023/24 was 38%, up two percent from last year and the same as the average for England and Wales as a whole.

Both the participation indicators have improved on last year. The first indicator is from data compiled by reference to the websites of the councils. The second is from Judicial Diversity Statistics Ministry of Justice, North West region not GM specific..

More than half our Boroughs have women chief executives (60%), a higher rate than the national figure of 49%

For the first indicator, the percentage of women councillors across our region (despite a very slight fall in the overall number) remains at 42% (270 of 645 councillors) against a national average of 35%.

Representation of councillors who are women of colour has remained at 6% - very slightly higher than the national figure of 5%. This is lower than the proportion of women of colour in the UK population. There is still significant variation between Greater Manchester councils in percentage of councillors who are women of colour.

Table 1: Political Representation in Greater Manchester – by Gender and Ethnicity

	Number of women	% of all cllrs	Number of women of colour	% of all cllrs of colour
GM Councils 2021	255 (of 643)	40%	23	3%
GM Councils 2022	268 (of 645)	41%	32	5%
GM Councils 2023	272 (of 645)	42%	30	5%
GM Councils 2024	272 (of 645)	42%	37	6%
GM Councils 2025	270 (of 645)	42%	40	6%

For our second indicator, the percentage of women appointed as judges in the Northwest in 2023/24 was 38%, up two percent from last year and the same as the average for England and Wales as a whole.



Ethnic minority appointments are unchanged from last year at 7%, compared to 10% for England and Wales but the ethnicity data is not gender disaggregated.

Small improvements in political representation metrics – but better policies and data needed to boost diversity and equality in representation

There is a welcome increase in the case of our key indicator this year as the number of women on the Mayor's GM cabinet rose. Three of the ten authorities are now led by women so representation in Andy Burnham's cabinet has risen to 27%. If the (appointed) Deputy Mayor Kate Green is included, this figure rises to 33%. By comparison, the UK Cabinet now has 50% representation for the first time ever.

Who sits round the Mayor's cabinet table is dependent firstly upon the result of elections in the ten boroughs in Greater Manchester which determine the party that takes control. Following that, internal elections within the councillor group of the party that has won control, select their leader. It is important to note that both these elections (the public vote and the party vote to select the leader) are beyond the Mayor's control despite Andy Burnham's commitment to a gender balanced cabinet.

There is an encouraging increase in the levels of gender balance of the executives ('cabinets') of the individual ten authorities that make up Greater Manchester. Analysis shows that gender representation across the region has also improved since last year. In all but one of the GM authorities the gender balance of representation is higher than in the GMCA and the leadership 'pipeline' of senior women executive councillors is growing steadily stronger.



Participation group call to actions 2024

1

The Greater Manchester constitution makes arrangements to ensure diversity in cabinet discussions via shadowing arrangements to allow gender balance which effectively meaning our primary scorecard ask is technically fulfilled.

This picture of a gradual positive increase in gender balance in the Greater Manchester authorities may not feed through to representation in the Mayor's cabinet to equal that of the current UK Government (and thereby meeting GM4Women's key representation demand) by 2028. However, the shadowing arrangements, built into the current GM constitution, are designed to ensure equal representation round the table so effectively fulfilling this ask. They also serve to build leadership capacity in the region.

2

A secondary key ask is for all the GM authorities to adopt carer's leave policies.

Despite improvements in some authorities, the overall number of women councillors in Greater Manchester fell slightly to 270 but the percentage of women councillors remains at 42%. This figure is higher than the national average probably reflecting the Labour Party's electoral dominance in Greater Manchester because that Party has some internal procedural rules to promote better gender balance in candidate selection. However, caring responsibilities (of all kinds) impact on the ability of councillors to stay in office and build experience and expertise.

3

It remains crucial that the authorities in Greater Manchester monitor and publish diversity data to enable improved monitoring to take place.

In Greater Manchester 6% of councillors are women of colour however this percentage varies significantly across the ten authorities. Pushing for carer's leave and better diversity data should be the campaign focus for GM4women to make sure the small improvements reported here gain momentum and the data keeps improving.