

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

Fourth Delegated Legislation Committee

DRAFT GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED
AUTHORITY (PUBLIC HEALTH FUNCTIONS)
ORDER 2017

Monday 20 November 2017

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Friday 24 November 2017

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The Committee consisted of the following Members:

Chair: SIOBHAIN McDONAGH

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| † Bradley, Ben (<i>Mansfield</i>) (Con) | † Menzies, Mark (<i>Fylde</i>) (Con) |
| † Brine, Steve (<i>Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health</i>) | † Norris, Alex (<i>Nottingham North</i>) (Lab/Co-op) |
| † Cartlidge, James (<i>South Suffolk</i>) (Con) | † Rutley, David (<i>Lord Commissioner of Her Majesty's Treasury</i>) |
| † Cummins, Judith (<i>Bradford South</i>) (Lab) | † Snell, Gareth (<i>Stoke-on-Trent Central</i>) (Lab/Co-op) |
| † Docherty, Leo (<i>Aldershot</i>) (Con) | † Sobel, Alex (<i>Leeds North West</i>) (Lab/Co-op) |
| † Glindon, Mary (<i>North Tyneside</i>) (Lab) | † Stevenson, John (<i>Carlisle</i>) (Con) |
| † Green, Chris (<i>Bolton West</i>) (Con) | † Streeting, Wes (<i>Ilford North</i>) (Lab) |
| † Hodgson, Mrs Sharon (<i>Washington and Sunderland West</i>) (Lab) | Gail Bartlett, <i>Committee Clerk</i> |
| † Lewer, Andrew (<i>Northampton South</i>) (Con) | † attended the Committee |

Fourth Delegated Legislation Committee

Monday 20 November 2017

[SIOBHAIN McDONAGH *in the Chair*]

Draft Greater Manchester Combined Authority (Public Health Functions) Order 2017

6 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Steve Brine): I beg to move,

That the Committee has considered the draft Greater Manchester Combined Authority (Public Health Functions) Order 2017.

It is a pleasure to work with you, Ms McDonagh. This important order will confer local authority public health functions on the Greater Manchester combined authority, as agreed in the devolution deals, and support Manchester's wider programme of public sector reform.

The Government have already made good progress in delivering their commitment to implement the historic devolution deal with Greater Manchester. Since agreeing the first deal in November 2014, we have passed the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016, followed by a considerable amount of secondary legislation for Greater Manchester. That includes legislation to establish the position of elected Mayor—and, as this is my first chance to do so, I congratulate Andy Burnham; I have worked very closely with him in the House, and I know he will do a good job—and to confer new powers on housing, planning, transport, education and skills, to transfer fire and rescue functions and assets, and to set out the operation of the police and crime commissioner function, with the transfer to the Mayor on 8 May.

The order provides a further significant step for Greater Manchester, which has rightly identified public sector reform and population health improvement as priorities. The order provides for the conferral of certain local authority public health functions on the combined authority. If the order is agreed to, the combined authority will be able to exercise those public health functions concurrently with the 10 metropolitan district councils in its area.

The main new function is a conferral of a local authority's duty to take such steps as it considers appropriate to improve the health of the people in its area. The effect of the order will be to treat the combined authority as if it were a local authority, with the same duty to improve population health, the same consequential requirements to comply with guidance and the NHS constitution and the ability to enter into partnership arrangements with local authorities and NHS bodies.

The conferral of local authority public health functions will primarily do four things. First, it will enable a Greater Manchester-wide strategic leadership approach to the delivery of agreed public health functions and commissioning responsibility—for example, public health intelligence, health needs assessments and health protection measures. Secondly, it will support a Greater Manchester-wide strategic approach to tackling variation in health

inequalities, quality and service improvement to promote fair and equitable access, and achieving an upgrade to health outcomes for the population of the wider Greater Manchester area. Thirdly, it will support strengthened collaborative decision making for population health through the identification of Greater Manchester-wide commissioning priorities and intentions underpinned by shared principles and common commissioning standards—for example, commissioning for whole-system sexual health and substance misuse services. Finally, it will enable population health to be embedded across Greater Manchester's health, social care and wider public services through the Greater Manchester strategy and the population health plan.

The statutory origin of the draft order is the governance review and scheme prepared by the combined authority in accordance with the requirement in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. Greater Manchester published that scheme in March 2016 and, as provided for by the Act, the combined authority consulted on proposals in the scheme. The combined authority ran that consultation from March 2016 to May 2016 in conjunction with the 10 local authorities in its area. The consultation was primarily conducted digitally, including promotion through social media. In addition, of course, respondents were able to provide responses on paper, and posters and consultation leaflets were available in prime locations across Greater Manchester. As statute also requires, the combined authority provided the Secretary of State with a summary of the responses to the consultation in June, and the Secretary of State concluded that Greater Manchester's consultation was sufficient and no further consultation was necessary.

Before laying the draft order before Parliament, the Secretary of State considered the other statutory requirements in the 2009 Act. The Secretary of State considers that conferring these functions on the Greater Manchester combined authority is likely to improve the exercise of statutory functions in the area, and he has had regard to the impact on local government and communities, as he is required to do. Also, importantly, the 10 constituent local authorities and the combined authority have all consented to the draft order being made, as is required by statute.

The draft order, if approved, will confer local authority public health functions on Greater Manchester combined authority and enable it to play a key role in improving the health of the population of Greater Manchester. I commend the draft order to the Committee.

6.5 pm

Mrs Sharon Hodgson (Washington and Sunderland West) (Lab): It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Ms McDonagh. I thank the Minister for setting out the draft order in such detail. Let me say at the outset that the Opposition welcome it and do not oppose it, so I do not think we will be here much longer. I think everyone will be happy about that. [HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear!"] How to win friends and influence people.

Over the years, there has been much movement in Manchester towards a new style of local government, with a combined authority and now a metro Mayor, and it makes sense for public health duties to be undertaken by that new local government structure. I, for one, have no doubt that the former right hon. Member for Leigh,

Andy Burnham, will do excellent work alongside his combined authority colleagues to champion the improvement of public health in communities across Greater Manchester.

We have already seen visionary planning and passion with the creation of plans to improve the health and quality of life of people in Manchester, but I cannot miss an opportunity to remind the Minister of his responsibilities on public health—responsibilities that I know he takes seriously. He knows that severe cuts to public health budgets—there is expected to be an £800 million cut over the five years leading up to

2021—are having serious ramifications for public health services across the country, including in Manchester. The placement of duties on a new body as part of the new landscape of local government is to be welcomed, but the funding to provide for those duties must not be ignored and left out of the picture. The Government must get to grips with the wider public health agenda and not let it be sidelined in any way.

Question put and agreed to.

6.8 pm

Committee rose.

