I am writing to you to state my support for the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub and the subsequent application by the Hub to become a member of the World Health Organisation’s Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.

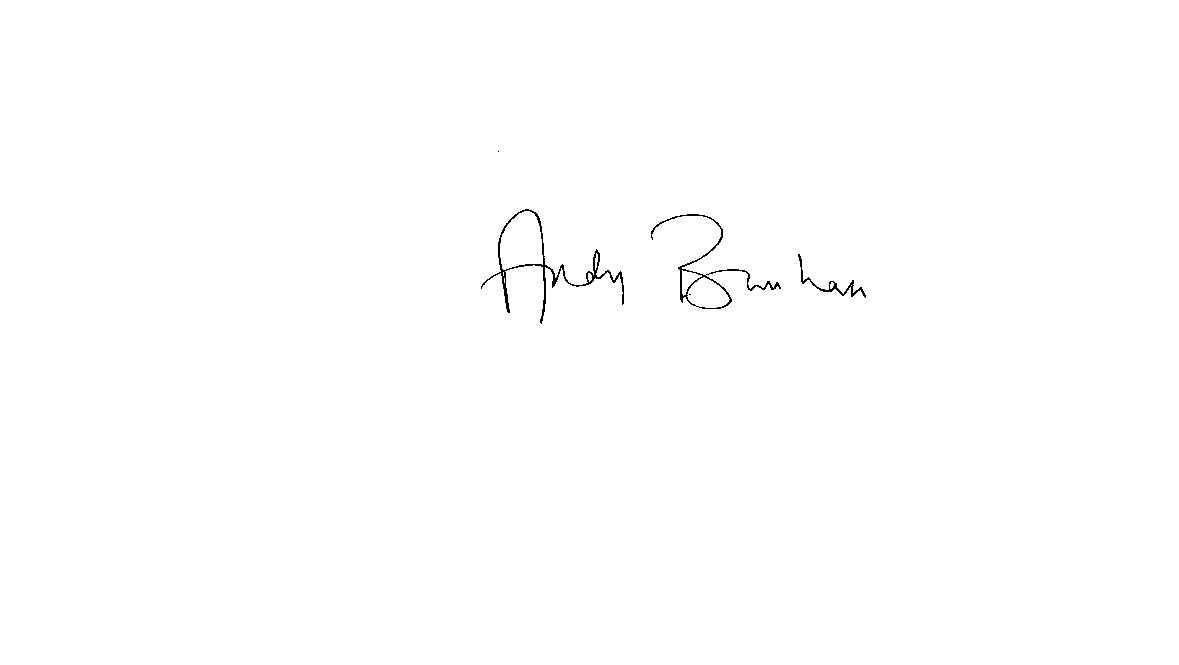
Following on from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority’s establishment of the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub to oversee the GM Strategy on Ageing, we feel the next step for the conurbation should be to ascertain international accreditation, and membership of the WHO global network is something that we hope to achieve, while Salford and Manchester are already members of the network, we would like to elevate the status of the whole conurbation to membership of the network. It is felt in Greater Manchester that we could learn a lot from the best international examples of age-friendly cities, but also, that we could be of benefit to the network, due to our unique situation regarding the powers granted to us at a local level through devolution agreements.

The issues of Ageing are something the Greater Manchester Combined Authority has always been very interested and supportive of. As a world city-region, we are keen to showcase Greater Manchester on a global platform in order to learn from, and hopefully provide benefit for, other cities around the world. While there is a clear economic benefit to encouraging the ageing population to full participate in society, the social issues we face in the region are felt as strongly with those aged 50 and over, as any other section of society. Clearly, these social issues will only be felt more keenly as the population ages.

Devolution in Greater Manchester gives us the opportunity to tackle ageing more readily than other city regions in the UK. In particular, the devolution of health and social care has meant we are in a position to shape how we provide for an ageing population. However, we understand that there is much more to ageing than primary care, and it is vital to Greater Manchester that we can deal with some of the social issues surrounding ageing, in addition to the health of residents. As our ageing agenda develops, we are fully prepared for ageing to be incorporated in to future devolution asks if it is felt that this will benefit ageing residents in Greater Manchester.

I hope you judge Greater Manchester to be a benefit to the global network of age-friendly cities and you too appreciate our potential to contribute to, and benefit from an international platform.

Thank you,



Andy Burnham  
**Mayor of Greater Manchester**