

SOUTH STRATEGIC NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

22 March 2021

Commenced: 18:30

Terminated: 19:17

Present: Councillors P Fitzpatrick (Chair), Robinson (Vice-Chair), Affleck, Bowden, Chadwick, Cooper, J Fitzpatrick, Kitchen and Owen

In Attendance: John Gregory Head of Safety and Homelessness
Simon Brunet Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Welsh and Alam

1 MINUTES

RESOLVED

The Minutes of the meeting of the South Strategic Neighbourhood Forum held on 25 January 2021 were approved as a correct record.

2 BIG CONVERSATION

Consideration was given to a presentation of the Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence, which provided details of ongoing consultations and engagement exercises. The ongoing consultations and engagement exercises were available on the Council's website under "Big Conversation", as follows:-

- Active Tameside
- Covid Test and Trace
- Electoral Ward Boundaries and Names
- Godley Green Garden Village
- Mental Health Act Reform
- Health Improvement Service
- Dementia Call for Evidence: Black, Caribbean and African Communities in Greater Manchester.

Members of the Forum were presented with an update on the Census 2021, following a previous presentation at the 19 January 2021 meeting. The Census had taken place on 21 March 2021 but residents had until the end of April 2021 to complete the Census if they had not already done so. Assistance was available via Census Support Centres throughout the Borough and a slot could be booked by telephoning 0161 342 2031. Although it was a digital first Census, paper copies were available by contacting the National Helpline on 0800 141 2021. Large print, text relay, braille, British Sign Language, audio and video tools were also available and details of a language helpline was provided: 0800 587 2021.

The importance of maximising the response to the Census was emphasised, as it had an influence on funding that the Council would receive for the next ten years.

Members enquired if there were any statistics available on the Census. The Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence responded that it was anticipated data for Tameside would be available in the coming week, which would be used to identify any gaps in the community in order for further targeted work to be undertaken.

In response to questions from Members the Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence advised that it was likely we would start to receive the headline results from the census at the start of 2022.

RESOVLED

That the content of the presentation, including ongoing consultations and engagement exercises, be noted.

3. COMMUNITY SAFETY NEIGHBOURHOOD STRATEGY

The Head of Community Safety and Homelessness delivered a presentation that provided details of ongoing work to identify and address community safety issues in Tameside and the development of the Community Safety Strategy.

It was reported that community safety covered a wide range of issues, including:-

- Crime
- Anti-social behaviour
- Domestic abuse
- Child exploitation
- Community Cohesion
- Violence
- Terrorism / extremism
- Road safety
- Mental health
- Homelessness and rough sleeping
- Social isolation
- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Modern slavery
- People trafficking
- Organised crime
- Online safety
- Fire safety
- Neighbourhood Watch

Members were advised that the Community Safety Strategy would incorporate the themes of the Greater Manchester Police and Crime Plan, set priorities around the local needs of the community and address any emerging issues. The overarching objective of the Community Safety Strategy was 'Building Stronger Communities' to make Tameside a safer place to live, study, work and visit. To achieve this objective the Local Authority and Greater Manchester Police would work in partnership through a joint Neighbourhood Strategy focussing on local needs and priorities.

The five key priorities of the Community Safety Strategy were detailed as follows:-

- Building stronger communities;
- Preventing and reducing violent crime, knife crime & domestic abuse;
- Preventing and reducing crime & anti-social behaviour;
- Preventing and reducing the harm caused by drugs & alcohol; and
- Protecting vulnerable people and those at risk of exploitation.

Information was provided in respect of Independent Advisory Groups (IAG), developed nationally by police forces and police authorities to provide independent advice in understanding the role and impact of the police in diverse communities. In Tameside, this was being done in a more co-operative way in order to establish an IAG for the Community Safety Partnership as a whole. Members were advised that the Tameside IAG was formed in February 2020, just before the Covid-

19 pandemic restrictions began. The group was diverse in its membership with members from all faith groups, the voluntary sector, community groups and charitable organisations. The group had been meeting online each week and senior police officers had attended each meeting along with guest speakers.

Members were advised that there had been an increase in anti-social behaviour complaints since the pandemic began, in particular neighbour disputes. A proactive approach had been adopted in order to deal with serious anti-social behaviour issues. The Council had received 321 complaints since 23 March 2020 and had recently obtained injunctions against two individuals and a Closure Order for an Air BnB premises in Droylsden that had been the source of anti-social behaviour and Covid-related breaches.

In respect of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme, it was reported that there were currently 53 registered schemes within Tameside and there had been growing interest during the pandemic as communities pulled together to support one another, which fitted in to the key priorities of the Community Safety Strategy.

With regard to the Youth Service, Members were advised that, despite the closure of youth centres due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the service had remained operational throughout the various lockdowns. The Youth Service were dynamic in their approach when responding to the pandemic and had moved to street-based and outreach delivery of their service, where they were able to continue to engage, support and reassure young people in Tameside communities. The outreach work was continuous from March 2020 – November 2020, a feat matched by only one other borough in the Greater Manchester region. As restrictions eased, four of the eight youth clubs in Tameside had re-opened, while outreach work continued.

It was reported that the Youth Service had supported many young people who had experienced loss and grief and young people who had struggled with their mental health and well-being throughout the pandemic. Parents had advised that the service had been invaluable to not only the young person but also to the family unit as a whole. It was further reported that as schools had re-opened the delivery of 'Safe Squad' had re-commenced, which was aimed at year 6 pupils in 31 primary schools across the borough, where young people participated in workshops themed around anti-social behaviour, online safety, fire safety in the home and first aid.

A discussion ensued on the possibility of opening a Covid vaccination centre in a mosque, the Head of Safety and Homelessness advised that talks were continuing but it was hoped the talks would be concluded as soon as possible due to concerns over the low take up of vaccines in certain areas and groups. Further Members of the Forum discussed and raised concern over anti-social behaviour at a vaccination site, in response to this the Head of Safety and Homelessness stated that arrangements would be made for youth workers to go to the site to engage with the young people.

In response to questions on the prevalence of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Tameside, the Head of Safety and Homelessness stated that CSE is a problem in every borough, but there was no evidence at this moment to suggest that there were large gangs operating and exploiting children in the borough. Members were assured there was important messaging taking place to children at a primary school age to help keep children safe online. Further, there were important services in place to support and prevent CSE and there were operations taking place to covertly tackle CSE.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

CHAIR