

## WEST STRATEGIC NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

20 January 2022

Commenced: 6.30pm

Terminated: 7.15 pm

**Present:** Councillors Ward (Chair), Boyle, Cooney, A Holland (Vice-Chair), Jones, Mills, Naylor, Newton, Quinn, Reid, Ricci, M Smith, T Smith and Warrington

**Apologies for absence:** Councillors Gwynne, B Holland, Martin and Ryan

### 5. MINUTES

#### RESOLVED

The Minutes of the meeting of the West Strategic Neighbourhood Forum held on 28 October 2021 be approved as a correct record.

### 6. NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING UPDATE – SAFER TAMESIDE

Chief Inspector Galt, Greater Manchester Police began by providing information in respect of two new Teams; the Serious Aquisitive Crime (SAC) Team and the Domestic Abuse Team (DAT).

The Chief Inspector explained that the SAC Team dealt exclusively with volume crime: burglary/robbery/vehicle crime and she was very pleased to report that the district team currently had the best detection rate for burglary in the Greater Manchester area, with 10.2%.

She further explained that the DAT Team, a Unit dedicated to dealing with Domestic Abuse offenders was still in its infancy and therefore, there were no statistics available.

Inspector Knight, Greater Manchester Police, then delivered a presentation updating the Forum in respect of recent initiatives and current priorities in the area.

Inspector Knight began by giving details of Operation AVRO, a force-wide initiative that delivered a surge of extra resources and specialist officers to a different district within Greater Manchester each month. The operation targeted crimes that members of the public in the district had reported as giving them the most concern.

Members of the press and key partners, including local representatives, were invited to attend Operation AVRO deployments to see results first-hand and conduct important multi-agency work, such as welfare visits.

Further information was provided in respect of Operation Safer Tameside, which had taken place on 16 December 2021. Details were given of a number of actions from the day, including:

- 1 Vehicle seized due to driver having no insurance and MOT;
- 4 Drivers breathalysed;
- 6 Stopped for faulty lighting;
- 2 Stopped for illegal tinted windows;
- 1 Stopped for illegal number plates;
- 9 Stopped for exceeding the speed limit;
- 4 Delivery vehicles stopped for failing to wear a seatbelt;
- 2 Stopped for driving whilst using mobile device;
- 3 Warnings for anti-social driving;

- 1 Obstruction on public highway; and
- 1 Driver contravening stop sign.

Intelligence was also gathered with regard to a number of issues, which the Neighbourhood Policing Team would be looking into. It was reported that the next Operation Safer Tameside was scheduled to take place on 25 January 2022 focusing on violent crime towards women and girls.

Current priorities for the area were also outlined, including:

- Anti-social behaviour at the Snipe Retail Park and Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw;
- Drug dealing, anti-social behaviour and off-road bikes in Droylsden West,
- Anti-social behaviour in Victoria Park and shop lifting at Crown Point North, Denton North East and burglary across the ward in general;
- Burglary, theft from motor vehicle and shoplifting in Denton West;
- Anti-social behaviour and drug cultivating/dealing in Denton South; and
- Shoplifting and anti-social behaviour and drug dealing in Droylsden East.

With regard to burglary, Inspector Knight advised that two priority offenders had been arrested and remanded and one was on bail. As a result of the arrests, burglary figures had dropped significantly in the area. He added that four individuals had been arrested in connection with a burglary at Greswell Primary School.

Officers had also distributed Christmas hampers to vulnerable people in Tameside West during the festive period.

Members thanked the Police for their hard work across the West neighbourhood and for their attendance at neighbourhood watch meetings, which was much appreciated. Members further highlighted the importance of neighbourhood watch in assisting with crime prevention.

Reference was made to the work of the Tameside Youth Service with regard to anti-social behaviour and it was agreed that an update be provided to a future meeting of the Forum

Information was sought in respect of Newsletters from GMP, which had included in the past, useful statistics on reporting of crime in the area, but had not been in circulation recently. Members further requested that they be emailed to them, if possible. Inspector Knight confirmed that the Newsletters were still being produced and that he would pass on Members comments/requests regarding these to Inspector Hussain, who was the Inspector for the West area, however, was unable to attend the meeting that evening.

The Chair thanked Chief Inspector Galt and Inspector Knight for their attendance and for a very interesting presentation.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the presentation be noted.**

## **7. COVID UPDATE**

The Forum received a presentation from the Assistant Interim Director of Population Health, who gave an update in respect of the current position with regard to Covid-19.

Trends in new cases of the virus in Tameside as of 14 January 2022 were displayed and it was reported that the current rate of new cases in the last seven days per 100,000 people was 1,122.3/100,000 (2,549 cases). The rate had increased rapidly in recent weeks, however this was now declining again. The highest numbers of new cases were in younger working age adults (20-40), but still increasing in children. The number of people in hospital with Covid-19 in GM and Tameside had increased in recent weeks, however overall, increases in intensive care usage for Covid patients in GM or Tameside had not been seen, but this continued to be monitored.

Members were advised that:

- Tameside had a similar rate of Covid to the rest of GM;
- The rate of new cases had started to reduce but this should be treated with caution due to testing patterns and access;
- The positivity rate was extremely high with almost 1 in 2 tests coming back positive (45%);
- Numbers in children were still increasing and this may continue;
- Guidance changes around testing;
- Seeing high numbers of outbreaks and some large outbreaks – Care Homes;
- Hospital activity had increased and there were indirect impacts in the health system and other public services due to staff absences and disruption to routine activity; and
- Ongoing pressure on all Council front line services and on direct Covid response within Public Health; Adult Social Care; Public Protection; Education; Communications.

Current drivers of the current situation in Tameside were outlined, including:

- The new Omicron variant of Covid-19 was discovered in late November and had spread rapidly across the globe since then, driving a huge spike in infections;
- The Omicron variant was extremely infectious and was spreading more quickly and more easily than previous variants, such as Alpha and Delta;
- Omicron was now completely dominant across the country and in Tameside last week 100% of cases were Omicron;
- This had come at a time heading into winter when seasonal viruses spread easily and there were relatively few measures and restrictions in place to limit transmission;
- Outbreaks were widespread across settings in the borough, some of which were particularly high risk such as care homes. The further spread added to the overall numbers of infections; and
- Spread of infection linked to confined, crowded indoor spaces with inadequate ventilation.

Basic measures to prevent transmission were emphasised:

- Regular, thorough handwashing with soap and running water;
- Wear a face mask/covering when in certain places;
- Social distancing from others of at least 2 metres;
- Following the current relevant guidance/advice; and
- Vaccination.

Details were given of the current rules in respect of PCR testing, regular testing and contact tracing. Information was also provided in respect of testing sites in the Borough and their opening times.

Recent changes to testing and isolation advice was highlighted, including the importance of registering test results online for data collection and in order that they could be followed up.

The presentation summarised how people were being encouraged and supported to 'Tackle Covid in Tameside', as follows:

- Ongoing messaging – testing / vaccination;
- Engaging with communities to provide information and listen to concerns;
- Community Champions programme;
- Supporting people and services to follow guidelines and reduce spread;
- The vaccination programme was vital and was tackling inequalities and supporting access;
- Support to isolate – there were still support payments available for those needing to isolate and help via the council call centre (0161 342 8355).

The Chair thanked the Interim Assistant Director for a very informative presentation.

**CHAIR**