

## **NORTH STRATEGIC NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM**

**22 March 2022**

**Commenced:** 6.30 pm

**Terminated:** 7.55 pm

**Present:** Councillors Bowerman (Chair), Choksi (Vice-Chair), Bray, Carthey, Costello, Drennan, Fairfoull, Glover, McNally and Patel

**In Attendance:** Emma Varnam Assistant Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods  
Melissa Hopwood Integrated Youth Manager

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Huntbach

### **8. MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED**

**The Minutes of the meeting of the North Strategic Neighbourhood Forum held on 18 January 2022 were approved as a correct record.**

### **9. UPDATE FROM GMP**

The Chair welcomed Chief Inspector Claire Galt and Inspector Lisa Halsall, Greater Manchester Police, who had attended the Forum to deliver an update on Neighbourhood Policing.

Chief Inspector Galt began by providing details of a public consultation on Neighbourhood Policing to be held at Dukinfield Town Hall on Thursday 14 April 2022. A member of the Chief Officer Team would attend the event where the public would be given the opportunity to ask questions, voice their concerns and complete a survey, which would help shape local policing in the area. Members were encouraged to attend the event and to make their constituents aware.

Inspector Halsall delivered a presentation on Neighbourhood Policing in the North area and stated that with the lifting of covid restrictions there had been increased engagement and the return of monthly surgeries, which had been positively received. There had been a team collecting donations for Ukraine at the surgeries, which had been passed onto the local Ukrainian Association in Ashton. Officers had attended Holden Clough Primary School to provide an informative talk to the children on the work of the Neighbourhood team. The children had the opportunity to ask questions, examine equipment and sit in a patrol vehicle. Due to the success of the event, officers would look into visiting other schools in the future. It was reported that the Hurst Neighbourhood Team, with the help of local intelligence, had executed two warrants relating to drug cultivation in the Hurst area. In addition, a cannabis farm had been located in an abandoned shoe store in Ashton town centre.

Inspector Halsall provided an update from Operation AVRO, a multi-agency operation between Greater Manchester Police, the Council and the Fire Service. The Operation targeted crimes that members of the public in the district had reported as giving them the most concern, such as anti-social behaviour, road safety and youth violence. There had been 200 Officers involved in the Operation and a timeline of the day was outlined alongside the results, as follows:-

- 30 arrests made
- 10 search warrants undertaken
- 26 traffic offences
- 82 speed offences
- 5 vehicles seized

An update was also provided in relation to Operation Sycamore, an ongoing operation focusing on the issues in Ashton town centre. Neighbourhood officers undertook a number of different tactics as part of this operation such as visible deterrence patrolling, community engagement in hotspots, targeting known criminals in hotspots and weapon sweeps. In addition, regular searches were conducted through Ashton town centre and Ashton Moss for any signs of large groups of youths gathering. Results from this activity throughout this quarter were:-

- 4 arrests made
- 5 Stop Searches
- 1 weapon found
- 2 youth interventions

There had been a decreasing trend of Violence With and Without Injury crimes compared to data from January, where there were 50 incidents, and February, with 44 incidents. There had been 11 recorded incidents to date for March.

With regards to Operation Safer Tameside, the next multi-agency day of action would take place on Friday 25 March 2022 with a focus on road safety and vehicle crime.

The Chair thanked Chief Inspector Claire Galt and Inspector Lisa Halsall for delivering an informative presentation and requested that details of the upcoming police surgeries and PACT meetings be forwarded to Members of the Forum. Members suggested that it would be beneficial if an officer from the Neighbourhood Policing team attended the monthly Councillor surgeries.

Members of the Forum voiced their concerns over the issues concerning Ashton town centre and stressed the importance of regular and accurate communication between elected Members and the Neighbourhood Policing team. Chief Inspector Galt advised that there was a permanent Police post based within the Market Hall in Ashton town centre and they had recently recruited a beat officer who patrolled the town centre on a daily basis. In order to address the anti-social behaviour and street drinking that was occurring in Ashton town centre, the Police were working with the Council to get a Public Protection Order in place.

## **RESOVLED**

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

## **10. UPDATE FROM THE YOUTH SERVICE**

The Chair welcomed Melissa Hopwood, Integrated Youth Manager, who attended the Forum to deliver an update on the work of the Tameside Youth Service. She began by introducing the service that operated from seven locations throughout Tameside as follows:-

- Copley Youth Base
- Bennett Street Youth Club
- Blocksages Youth Club
- Mossley Youth Base
- Cyclops Adventure
- Cedar Park Youth Club
- Denton Festival Hall

She explained that the team consisted of 8 full time members of staff and 12 part time members of staff who focused on a three-pronged approach to service delivery that consisted of Targeted Youth Work, Open Access Youth Work and Community Support.

With regards to Targeted Youth Work, there was a focus on cycling, music, a Youth Council, girls work, disability and LGBT+. The importance of the Youth Council was emphasised as it gave young

people a voice and an opportunity to help shape and improve services for young people. There was an established bike project, which gave access to safe bikes, allowed independence and was a fun way for young people to keep active and healthy. Music was known to help with mental health and there were opportunities to play an instrument, write lyrics and have access to digital music. The disability work empowered young people to make their own informed decisions and there was a supportive and safe space for LGBT+ young people to seek advice and support for issues they encountered. The service had identified a growing trend of young women engaging in anti-social behaviour and steps had been introduced to challenge that behaviour and support them to make better choices.

Open Access Youth Work was available at Blocksages Youth Club, Bennett Street Youth Club, Copley Youth Base, Cedar Park Youth Club and Mossley Youth Base. It offered a safe space for children and young people to build trusted relationships with youth workers, who supported them through key transitions to adulthood, empowering them to make informed decisions, build resilience and learn transferable life skills. It was hoped as the locations were based within communities it would encourage young people to become a positive influence in their communities. There were many activities for young people to engage in, including a 'tea time club', which provided a meal.

With regards to Community Support, there was an emphasis on detached youth work, which comprised of working on the streets or a space of the young person's choosing. It began with a low-level issue and a solution was found through negotiation. Pop up events were held and support was offered to all educational establishments that ranged from training in Restorative Approaches to Fresher's stalls and problem solving in the countryside. The service supported a successful food bank and food pantry and delivered Solihul parental training.

The Integrated Youth Manager informed the Forum that service delivery had continued throughout the pandemic as youth workers had been allocated essential service status by the Government. Guidance had been followed from the Governing Body and National Youth Agency and the service had remained fully covid compliant with no covid outbreaks. It was reported that over the past 12 months the team had delivered 1,751 sessions with 20,334 contacts.

Further information was provided on the work that was carried out in the locations situated within the North area - Cedar Park Youth Club, Cyclops Adventure and the food pantry. It was confirmed that the food pantry could operate in the same space as the youth club due to easily manoeuvrable storage and racking, enabling a multi-use space.

The Chair thanked the Integrated Youth Manager for her presentation and, on behalf of the Forum, asked for their thanks to be extended to the team for the commendable work they had carried out throughout the pandemic. Members of the Forum expressed their views on the service and were proud that Tameside had retained an excellent Youth Service. Prevention was key and the ongoing work with Tameside's young people was essential.

Members of the Forum enquired how they could influence hotspot areas and request pop-up events. The Integrated Youth Manager explained that Police officers and colleagues from the Community Safety team informed them of hotspot areas but they also welcomed information from elected Members and any requests for an event were also welcomed.

In response to queries, it was confirmed that the service linked in with other youth offerings and a flexible approach was adopted to the age brackets of the different groups in order to encourage inclusivity.

## **RESOLVED**

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

**11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED**

**That the provisional date of the next meeting of the North Strategic Neighbourhood Forum scheduled for 28 June 2022 be noted.**

**CHAIR**