

## WEST STRATEGIC NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

23 March 2023

Commenced: 6.30pm

Terminated: 7.30pm

**Present:** Councillors Quinn (Chair), L Boyle, Cooney, Gwynne, A Holland, B Holland, Jones, Martin, Mills, Reid, Ricci, M Smith, T Smith, Ward and Warrington

**In Attendance:** Simon Brunet                      Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence  
James Mallion                      Assistant Director of Population Health  
Emma Lewis                      Service Manager, Early Help  
Chief Superintendent              Greater Manchester Police  
Phil Davies

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillors Naylor, Newton and Ryan

### 24. MINUTES

#### RESOLVED

The minutes of the meeting of the West Strategic Neighbourhood Forum held on 26 January 2023 were approved as a correct record.

### 25. GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE – NEIGHBOURHOOD MODEL

Chief Superintendent Phil Davies presented before Members and gave an update in respect of the Neighbourhood Policing model, a copy of which was circulated with the agenda.

Chief Superintendent Davies explained that the new GMP model would deliver a focus on the basics of neighbourhood policing. 35 neighbourhood areas, serviced by 89 dedicated teams, across a 3-week shift pattern, providing coverage 7 days a week across the neighbourhood area would deliver the following model.

*“In Greater Manchester Police, neighbourhood policing provides communities with dedicated named teams of local police officers, together with police community support officers.*

*These officers are visible and can be contacted by local communities. They listen to issues that concern communities and work with the public, community groups, businesses and other organisations like the NHS and the local council to reduce crime, protect vulnerable people and improve community safety.*

*They take a problem-solving approach to focus on the root causes of the problems that matter most to communities, and they feedback on action that has been taken”.*

Once the model was fully staffed, there would be 1,148 officers and staff working in neighbourhood policing.

He outlined the key features of the Neighbourhood Policing model as follows:

- Strong leadership and accountability for a clearly defined geographical area – 1 Inspector covering 3 teams. Dedicated named teams of local police officers working together with police community support officers, recognising that an effective model required a heavier weighting of police officers – giving teams the powers to deal with the issues the communities were identifying.

- Aligned to partner boundaries / service delivery footprints to support partnership problem solving and place-based working.
- Resourcing formula applied to determine resourcing levels based on demand / need: neighbourhood teams need more people with policing powers.
- Revised shift patterns to supply better coverage and increased visibility. A new three-week shift pattern already in use by other forces provided full seven-day cover in each NH footprint ensuring weekends – which were often uncovered – had the same focus for NHP.
- Teams were visible and could be contacted by local communities. They listened to issues that concern communities and work with public and partners. Provide feedback on action that had been taken.
- Engagement plans included new information on the website for every team – photos, contacts, dates of meetings, feedback on activity and priorities. A new community alerts system called ‘Bee in the Loop’ where people could sign up to receive dynamic information from their neighbourhood team and use it to communicate two-ways.
- Neighbourhood teams would also benefit from the restoration of support functions which include a dedicated Neighbourhood Prevention Hub consisting of an inspector and specialist neighbourhood officers working with partners in every district.
- The Hubs had already been set up and would help drive prevention and problem solving with communities and partners by supporting neighbourhood teams to plan their interventions and would lead on force wide reduction of repeat demand which reduced pressure on neighbourhood policing to focus on identified problems. Neighbourhood Prevention Hubs were further supported by a Prevention Hub working at HQ with partners to support local initiatives and develop Greater Manchester wide prevention plans.
- A new Neighbourhood Crime Team would be created in every district to lead the delivery of force operations targeting neighbourhood crimes such as burglary, car crime and theft. This specialist capability would provide neighbourhood policing teams with the resources needed to effectively connect intelligence to target offenders in the district and conduct high profile action to help the neighbourhood policing teams drive down crimes and formed a key part of the delivery strategy for neighbourhood crime.
- There will be closer management of abstractions and, whilst it could not always be guaranteed, the policy of non-abstraction would be re-emphasised and more closely monitored as part of a new neighbourhood policing performance management regime.
- The need for neighbourhood beat officers to perform response duties would also be reduced through investments being made in other parts of the force which were driving down demand: a new grading policy, investment in response policing and the investment into desk-based investigators would all come together to reduce the potential for neighbourhood policing abstraction.
- Improved training: Accredited Neighbourhood Management Training began in October 2022, to skill up officers and professionalise neighbourhood policing. To date, 324 officers had been trained up and were putting their skills into practice.

Chief Superintendent Davies further acknowledged the tremendous hard work of PCSO's. He added that PCSO's would continue to form a valued and essential part of Neighbourhood Teams, particularly focusing on community visibility and engagement. However, to be able to deal more effectively with the issues that communities wanted GMP to prioritise, neighbourhood teams needed more people with policing powers. As a result:

- PCSOs would reduce – through natural attrition - by 333 from 518 currently filled posts to 215;
- Every ward will have one named PCSO;
- Savings made by reducing PCSO numbers would be invested in a further 264 warranted neighbourhood policing police officers; and
- No jobs would be lost, and any PCSO who wanted to transfer to becoming a police officer or taking up another role in the force, would be supported.

Discussion ensued in respect of the presentation and the content of the Neighbourhood Policing model. Members sought clarity in respect of Neighbourhood Beat Officers; the role of PCSO's and GMP ongoing attendance at PACT meetings.

It was also requested that shift pattern information be provided to Members going forward, to aid communication with the neighbourhood policing teams.

The Chair thanked Chief Superintendent Davies for a very interesting presentation and it was:

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the presentation and the Neighbourhood Policing model, be noted.**

## **26. EQUALITY STRATEGY**

The Chair welcomed Simon Brunet, Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence, who gave a presentation in respect of the Equality Strategy 2023-27, a copy of which was circulated with the agenda.

Mr Brunet explained that, Under the Equality Act 2010 the Local Authority had a duty to publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives, and subsequently at intervals of no more than four years.

The strategy had been developed using a Local Government Association self-assessment tool, advice from an independent review of the approach to equalities in Tameside Council, engagement with the Partnership Engagement Network, reports delivered through the Inequalities Reference Group and a review of equalities data.

Members were advised that, in identifying the objectives for the next five years, a variety of public engagement, consultation, and self-assessment methodologies had been undertaken. This had helped the authority to understand where the priorities were, the gaps in work with more diverse communities, and what must be done to address this.

From the engagement, consultation, and self assessments, six Equality Objectives had been identified:

1. Continuous Effective Monitoring: Improve our approach to monitoring performance in terms of equalities to enable transparency, accountability, and rigour;
2. Embedding Equalities in Service Change: Embed equalities in service changes, strategy and policy development, and decision-making processes across the organisation through robust and rigorous Equality Analysis and Impact Assessments;
3. Cultivate Seldom Heard Voices in Engagement: Expand and adapt our engagement and consultation approaches to increase the involvement of "seldom-heard groups" and ensure that their perspectives are central to strategy, policy, and service development;
4. Addressing Barriers to Information and Services: Address and alleviate barriers to accessing Council information and services that protected groups encountered;
5. An Accepting Organisational Culture: Instil an organisational culture and practice of acceptance of different staff needs and requirements to ensure that all staff, particularly those from protected groups, were valued; and
6. Celebrating Diversity: Promote and celebrate the value of diversity in Tameside, so that as an anchor institution, the Council could be a positive exemplar to the broader community.

Through those objectives, it was aimed to embed an approach and ethos throughout the organisation that would centralise equality, ensuring that equalities concerns would orient and permeate through all strategies, policies, and services. Under each of the Equality Objectives defined, a series of actions had been identified that would enable the organisation to achieve each objective, details of which were set out in the Strategy.

The Chair thanked Mr Brunet for an interesting presentation.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the presentation and the Equality Strategy, be noted.**

### **27. ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY**

James Mallion, Assistant Director, Population Health presented before Members providing an overview of the new borough-wide strategy to tackle poverty in Tameside.

Mr Mallion explained that, last week, the new 'Building Resilience, Tackling Poverty' strategy was launched and published. It was launched at the Health & Wellbeing Board with commitment from all partners, not just the council, to take action to tackle poverty over the next 5 years across Tameside.

The strategy presented some of the context of what poverty looked like in Tameside and contained a lot of data and information which set out the challenge that communities faced both in the longer term challenges around poverty, as well as the more recent and immediate challenges in light of the current cost of living crisis.

Key statistics from the strategy were displayed, which articulated some of the impact of poverty in Tameside with high rates of debt and insolvency; high rates of food insecurity; lots of people qualifying for council tax support and free school meals; and relatively lower numbers of jobs paying the living wage in Tameside. The measures all indicated that there were particular challenges around poverty in the borough.

It was further explained that, at the end of February 2023, Greater Manchester Poverty Action (GMPA) published their report 'Local anti-poverty strategies – Good practice and effective approaches'. GMPA made twelve advisory recommendations for those areas embarking on the development of an anti-poverty strategy.

Current work put Tameside in a strong position against GMPA's recommendations. Examples of work that met the recommendations included:

- Poverty Needs Assessment;
- Programme of engagement and lived experience listening;
- Poverty Truth Commission;
- Adoption of the socio-economic duty in 2022;
- Partnership approach through the Health and Wellbeing Board;
- Clear leadership with named Executive Member (Cllr Wills);
- Development of a detailed and tracked action plan (in development now);
- Poverty dashboard (in development now building on the needs assessment); and
- Pilot and implementation of Money Advice Referral Tool.

To showcase some of the existing good work in the borough, a range of case studies had also been included in the strategy of work already happening. Mr Mallion gave details of two, one of which highlighted the success of the 'Tameside In Work' programme, which had supported many people into better paid work by developing new skills and increasing confidence. The other case study showed the work that was happening across partners such as Onward Homes, who held a 'Helping Hands Winter Warmer' event to provide support and advice for residents.

He further referenced the 'Helping Hands' campaign from the Council, which was another example of the approach taken to try to bring services and support to residents to better enable them to access the information, help and support that was available to them and in many cases, increasing the uptake of many of the entitlements that people should receive that they may not be claiming.

The strategy identified 10 key priorities that required action, in order to tackle poverty and build resilience across the borough, as follows:

- Raising incomes – supporting residents to maximise income and access all benefits they are entitled to;
- Making Tameside work for everyone – securing high quality and high-wage employment for all residents;
- Poverty was everybody’s business – supporting residents, communities and partners to identify signs of poverty and sign post to support;
- Climbing out of the debt trap – understanding why Tameside residents had relatively high levels of debt, high insolvencies and poor access to good credit to help alleviate the issue;
- Breaking the cycle – specific focus on providing the best start in childhood and education;
- Laying the foundations – ensuring residents had access to what they needed in order to live in comfort and dignity and support those in poverty;
- Putting people first – making sure that working practices (both customer facing and internal) were best placed to identify and support those in poverty;
- One size doesn’t fit all – additional support for residents identified as being at particular risk of poverty;
- Advocating for change – highlighting the need for action on poverty-related issues where responsibility was with national government.

Members were advised that a dedicated working group had been established to ensure progress was made, and a draft action plan for delivery of the 10 key priorities was already in development.

The Chair thanked Mr Mallion for a very informative presentation and requested that link to the Strategy, as published on Tameside’s website, be circulated to Members after the meeting.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the presentation and the Anti-Poverty Strategy, be noted.**

## **28. EARLY HELP STRATEGY**

Emma Lewis, Service Manager, Early Help, delivered a presentation in respect of the updated Early Help Strategy, a copy of which was circulated with the agenda.

Ms Lewis explained that Early Help meant providing extra support to families to prevent problems from occurring or getting worse. These may include:

- Young people struggling at school, nursery or education setting;
- Mental health problems within the family;
- A young person or child missing healthcare appointments or leading an unhealthy lifestyle;
- A young person, parents or their family members using drugs or alcohol;
- A young person, parents or their family members getting involved with crime; or
- Parents struggling financially.

In Tameside, this support came from practitioners, usually in nurseries, schools or health settings. Early Help Advisers from the Local Authority were there to help support practitioners to coordinate this help, which included the earliest possible intervention for those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Key principles of the Strategy, including Tameside’s approach, were outlined as follows:

- Supporting and helping children and families at the earliest opportunity - the right help, at the right time, from the right place;
- Actively listening to the voices of children and families in line with the [Listening Framework](#);
- Holistic support was provided with families, bespoke to their needs;
- Proactively utilising Signs of Safety to help assess risks, concerns and identify solutions in partnership with children and families;

- Support and help was delivered with children and families, building on their strengths and supporting them to come up with solutions with the help of their network;
- Understanding that safeguarding was everyone's business. Everyone working with children, young people and their families understood that they were responsible for keeping children safe and promoting the welfare of children;
- Acknowledging that many situations needed a multiagency, trauma informed response, all agencies would work collaboratively to offer a coordinated response and avoid duplication;
- Everybody was confident with data protection principles and would proactively share information to help recognise, assess and act to provide a coordinated response to the needs of the child and the family; and
- No one should assume that someone else would pass on information which may be vital to keeping a child or young person safe.

To create the initial draft of the strategy, two interactive workshops were held with representatives from VCSFE sector, Health, the Council and Police. These established what participants felt was working well and what needed improvement within the borough and led to the creation of the priorities of the strategy.

Members were advised that, following the end of the online consultation and the governance procedure through to Executive Cabinet, the new Strategy would be launched in July 2023.

Discussion ensued and Members sought further clarity in respect of the location of the family hubs and the communication of the content of the Strategy.

The Chair thanked Ms Lewis for the thought provoking presentation.

**RESOLVED**

**That the content of the presentation and the Early Help Strategy, be noted.**

**29. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED**

**That the next meeting of the West Strategic Neighbourhood Forum is scheduled to take place on 22 June 2023, be noted.**

**CHAIR**