

EAST STRATEGIC NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

22 March 2023

Commenced: 18:30

Terminated: 19:42

Present: Councillors Pearce (Chair), J Homer (Vice-Chair), Billington, Dickinson, Jackson, Lane, Patrick, N Sharif, T Sharif, Sweeton, Taylor and Wills

In Attendance: Julian Jackson Director of Place
Debbie Watson Director of Population Health
Simon Brunet Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence
Mike Reed Head of Major Programmes
Faye Edwards Service Unit Manager, Early Years, Early Help

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Feeley, Gosling, S Homer

15 MINUTES

The minutes of the East Strategic Neighbourhood Forum meeting held on 25 January 2023 were approved as a correct record.

16 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. Thirty-five neighbourhood areas, serviced by 89 dedicated teams, across a three-week shift pattern, providing coverage seven days a week across the neighbourhood area would deliver the model.

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 – one Inspector covering three 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 concerned communities and worked with public and partners. Provided 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 individuals 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 included 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 would 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 PCSOs. 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. Consequently:

- PCSOs would reduce – through natural attrition - by 333 from 518 currently filled posts to 215;
- Every ward would 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.

Members of the Forum enquired on the PCSO numbers that were being reduced, it was explained that the PCSO’s would be encouraged in the medium term to join the police as a police constable. Overtime the numbers would reduce through natural attrition such as retirement. Members also questioned the resources available for Stalybridge South, it was stated that the size of Stalybridge South was increasing and they felt there had been an increase in crime. Chief Superintendent Phil Davies explained that he would follow up over email on the spread of resources available to Stalybridge South and that he was happy to have a further conversation once the details had been shared. Members also raised the use of Dukinfield Town Hall as a post, Chief Superintendent explained that he was supportive of the use of any space that was available across the district for officers, however, stated that officers had to start their shift at Ashton so they could have a complete briefing.

RESOLVED

That the information provided be noted.

17 STALYBRIDGE LEVELLING UP BID

Consideration was given to a presentation of the Director of Place. Which detailed the proposals for the Stalybridge Capital Regeneration Funding.

Members were reminded that Stalybridge Town Centre was identified as a growth priority, supporting delivery of the Tameside Inclusive Growth Strategy 2021-26. Significant progress had been made in recent years delivering the Stalybridge Town Centre Challenge Action Plan which set out the aspirations for the town, Brown Homes Funding of £360,000 for the redevelopment of the former Stalybridge Police Station, the launch of Stalybridge Street Fest and securing GM Town of Culture Status for 2022. Despite this progress significant challenges remained with vacant sites poor public realm and walkability, and poor condition of the Civic Hall and Ashley Cheetham Library & Art Gallery.

It was stated that the Levelling Up Fund bid prepared for Stalybridge Town Centre was submitted to Round 2 in July 2022. On 19 January 2023 it was announced that the bid had been unsuccessful although the Council received positive feedback. On the 15 March 2023 it was announced the in 2023 UK Budget that Government had identified further funding to support strong LUF2 bids that were initially unsuccessful. Following an assessment process the Stalybridge bid was selected as one of 16 Capital Regeneration Projects to be funded and therefore the Council had been awarded £19.9m.

The Stalybridge Proposals focused on enabling infrastructure to bring forward vacant sites for redevelopment at Stalybridge West in parallel to the work underway to prepare a delivery strategy and procure a developer partner. This included Public realm and active travel works with improved access to public transport, delivery of the Stalybridge 'Cultural Quarter' at the Civic Hall and Ashley Cheetham Art Gallery. The proposals supported the positive changes in recent years including growth of independent businesses, events such as Street Fest and the role of Stalybridge Rail Station. These interventions would help the Town Centre to reach its full potential and deliver further comprehensive regeneration, attracting additional investment

In regards to the next steps there would be investment to deliver enabling infrastructure works across the sites identified within the Stalybridge West area to facilitate the viable delivery of new housing and commercial space in the Town Centre. A delivery strategy and development prospectus was being prepared for Stalybridge West to inform Soft Market Testing followed by procurement of a Preferred Partner. Delivery programme for Stalybridge West capital works including replacement car parking and a new footbridge across the River Tame.

Further, Heritage Walk improvements would complete by the end of 2023. Additional funding would now be utilised for the delivery of the public realm along the remainder of Market Street, Trinity Street and other areas of the Town Centre, subject to consultation and budget. This would be aligned with the ongoing work to identify improved integration of bus and rail and improved bus stop facilities at Armentieres Square. Listed Building Consent had been achieved for the main roof works at the Civic Hall and works could start later in 2023 subject to approval.

It was reported that the delivery programme for repair works and internal restoration at Astley Cheetham Art Gallery and Library were being prepared to enhance the provision and accessibility, including the installation of a new internal lift. Delivery of the interventions supported would be progressed as part of a wider Stalybridge Town Centre Regeneration Programme, involving consultation and collaboration with partners. The Council were awaiting further confirmation on timescales for spend and delivery.

Members discussed the Stalybridge West site and the land owned by the Greater Manchester Pension Fund. The Head of Mayor Programmes in response to questions on the deliverability of the project explained that they are mindful of the lessons learned over previous years; officers were ensuring all appropriate governance and delivery structures were in place. It was also explained that the old river walk was being looked at as part of this programme.

RESOLVED

That the presentation be noted.

18 EQUALITY STRATEGY

The Chair welcomed the 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.

The reporting officer 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 needed to be done to address this.

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

1. Continuous Effective Monitoring: Improving the Council's 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. Cultivating Seldom Heard Voices in Engagement: Expanding and adapting our engagement and consultation approaches to increase the involvement of "seldom-heard groups" and ensure that their perspectives were central to strategy, policy, and service development;
4. Addressing Barriers to Information and Services: Addressing and alleviating barriers to accessing Council information and services that protected groups encountered;
5. An Accepting Organisational Culture: Instilling 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: Promoting and celebrating 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 the Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence for an informative presentation.

RESOLVED

That the presentation be noted.

19 ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

The Director of Population Health delivered a presentation that provided an overview of the new borough-wide strategy to tackle poverty in Tameside. It introduced the key areas of priority for the whole system to tackle the challenges in the coming years.

The Forum were notified that the work undertaken had been informed by the strategy “Building Resilience: Tackling Poverty in Tameside 2023-27” in addition to the Poverty Needs Assessment, both of which were available on the Council’s website. Evidence was also provided via focus groups, client feedback, public surveys, the Partnership Engagement Network, Poverty Truth Commission, the Inequalities Reference Group and benchmarking.

It was reported that the “Building Resilience: Tackling Poverty in Tameside 2023-27” strategy had been recently launched, and subsequently published, at the Health and Wellbeing Board with commitment from all partners, not just the Council, to take action to tackle poverty over the next five years across Tameside.

The strategy set out some of the context of what poverty looked like in Tameside and contained data and information that set out the challenge that communities faced both in the longer term 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; high numbers 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 reported 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 had 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 (currently in development);
- Poverty dashboard (currently in development building on the needs assessment); and
- Pilot and implementation of Money Advice Referral Tool.

To highlight 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. Details were provided of two case studies, 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 demonstrated 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.

The reporting officer referenced the Council’s “Helping Hands” campaign, 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. In many cases, it helped to increase the uptake of many of the entitlements that people should receive but were not 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 were 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.

The next steps were outlined and Members were advised that a dedicated working group had been established to ensure progress was made, which would report to the Health and Wellbeing Board, and a draft action plan for delivery of the 10 key priorities was already in development.

RESOLVED

That the presentation be noted.

20 EARLY HELP STRATEGY

Consideration was given to a presentation of the Service Manager, Early Years, Early Help and Neighbourhoods in respect of the updated Early Help Strategy, a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda.

The reasons for updating the strategy were detailed and included:

- Alignment with the refreshed Threshold document [Tameside Framework for Help and Support](#) to clarify what type of support was available at each level of need.
- To incorporate the recommendations from recent Ofsted inspections and the change on Ofsted inspection criteria, McAlister Review and the latest national Children's Social Care [Strategy Stable Homes Built on Love](#).
- To respond to the launch of Family Hubs and Start for Life programme, recognising the enhanced opportunities for early intervention they offer.
- To acknowledge the impacts of recent national crisis such as the covid-19 pandemic and cost of living crisis on children and families and the need for multiagency, holistic support.

Members were informed that Early Help meant providing extra support to families to prevent problems from occurring or getting worse, which included:

- 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; and
- 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.

The 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.

Further feedback would be sought from a variety of groups including the Youth Council, Starting Well partnership, Children in Care Council, the Health and Wellbeing Board, Tameside Community Safety partnership, Tameside Provider partnership and Tameside Safeguarding Children partnership. An [online survey](#) was being promoted on social media and had been circulated within the Council and to partners, including schools and families.

Members were advised that, following the end of the online consultation in May 2023 and the governance procedure through to Executive Cabinet in June 2023, the new Strategy would be launched in July 2023 with work across the partnership to develop the implementation.

Members of the Forum enquired on the plans for Carbrook and enquired on the housing associations and partnerships with social landlords. It was explained as part of the hubs there was also home learning, there would be more outreach and detached work as well as the hubs. In regards to Housing Associations, Jigsaw were part of the launch and hubs but there was a need to bring more housing associations as part of the strategy.

The Chair thanked the Service Manager for the informative presentation.

RESOLVED

That the presentation be noted.

CHAIR