

SOUTH STRATEGIC NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

27 March 2023

Commenced: 6.30 pm

Terminated: 7.45 pm

Present: Councillors Affleck (Chair), Robinson (Vice-Chair), Cooper, Welsh, Owen, North, Colbourne and Roderick

In Attendance:

Ch Supt Phil Davies	Greater Manchester Police
Simon Brunet	Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence
Emma Lewis	Service Manager, Early Help
Ben Gudger	Head of Investment and Development

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Alam, Chadwick and Kitchen

15 MINUTES

The minutes of the South Strategic Neighbourhood Forum meeting held on 30 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 queried how residents would know who their ward officer was and it was explained that this information would be shared on the relevant Facebook pages and the GMP website.

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

RESOVLED

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

17 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 content of the presentation and the Equality Strategy be noted.

18 ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

The Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence, 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.

It was queried if a Member could be responsible for pushing the anti-poverty strategy forward and it was advised that this decision would be for the Executive Leader.

The Chair thanked the Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence for a very informative presentation and requested that the Strategy, as published on the Council's website, be circulated to Members after the meeting.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

19 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.

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 the Service Manager for the informative presentation.

RESOLVED

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

20 HYDE TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

The Forum received a presentation from Head of Investment and Development concerning the Masterplan for Hyde town centre. The intention of the Masterplan was that Hyde became a desirable place to live, shop and socialise, building on its heritage, community, culture and natural assets.

Members were informed that the Council had been working with consultants and stakeholders since autumn 2022 to develop the proposals. Over 1,500 had taken part in an initial fact-finding exercise with over 1,300 online questionnaire responses and 200 people attending in person events including the 'Pop Up Shop' event in the Clarendon Centre.

Key projects for the town centre core were highlighted to Members:

- Redevelopment of Market Square to create a high quality, flexible public realm for a varying programme of events and markets;
- Re-location of the current market offer into a prime location on Market Place in new, flexible facilities that could offer life to the street;
- Redevelopment of the Clarendon Centre into a retail focused mixed use offer with improved pedestrian permeability in a generous, high quality public realm;
- Consolidating town centre car parking, allowing for the re-development of Bayley Street car park, thus allowing the introduction of complimentary town centre uses; and
- The Town Hall could be re-purposed to be a vibrant cultural hub for Hyde and the wider borough. The newly pedestrianised areas around it creating a flexible space for its activities to spill out.

In addition to focussing on the town centre core, the Masterplan also outlined proposed improvements to the Northern Gateway, Station Quarter and Union Street. Improvements to the Northern Gateway would provide a welcoming safe gateway for public transport users, in particular the bus interchange.

Union Street, immediately south of the Clarendon Centre, also had the potential to be part of the wider redevelopment proposals. It was explained that the zone had key heritage assets including the former library building and the Conservative Club. Both of these buildings had the potential to be sensitively redeveloped for residential or other complimentary uses.

Members were advised that the Masterplan process was currently at stage 3/4 of the five stage process. A public consultation on the outlined proposals would commence in May 2023. The results from this consultation would allow the process to move onto stage 5 and complete the masterplan and delivery strategy.

A discussion ensued regarding the funding to undertake different elements of the proposals. The Head of Investment and Development explained that this would form part of the Development Strategy and it was hoped that this would be brought forward by the end of 2023. Regarding Hyde Library, the Council was looking for somebody to acquire the site and a number of bids had been received from interested parties.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the next meeting of the South Strategic Neighbourhood Forum would take place on 26 June 2023.

CHAIR