

NORTH STRATEGIC NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

17 October 2023

Commenced: 6.30 pm

Terminated: 7.55 pm

Present: Councillors Bowerman (Chair), Glover (Deputy Chair), Bray, Choksi, Costello, Drennan, Fairfoull, Karim, McLaren and McNally

In Attendance: Mike Robinson Regulatory Services Manager (Licensing and Waste Enforcement)
Emma Varnam Assistant Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods
Anne Whittington Consultant in Public Health

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Howarth and Patel

7. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting of the North Strategic Neighbourhood Forum held on 27 June 2023 were approved as a correct record.

8. VACCINATIONS

The Chair welcomed the Consultant in Public Health, who attended the Forum to deliver a presentation in relation to Flu and Covid-19 Vaccinations for Autumn-Winter 2023/24.

Members were informed that vaccination was a safe and effective way to help protect people from getting seriously ill with a disease, as well as providing individual protection, it also made it harder for viruses to spread between people, including vulnerable people and/or those unable to be vaccinated. A different flu vaccination was offered every Autumn-Winter to protect against the different types of flu virus likely to be circulating and Covid-19 booster vaccinations were being offered to eligible people to coincide with the flu vaccination programme.

The Forum was advised that NHS England set out the criteria for those who were eligible to be vaccinated and how the programme would work. The Population Health team at the Council then worked together to deliver the vaccines according to this.

A table detailing the seasonal flu vaccination uptake in 2022/23 was shared with the data broken down by individual towns within Tameside and varying age categories. It was highlighted that uptake had been low, and lower than the Greater Manchester average, in the under 65 age group, pregnant women and toddlers. It was explained that this was related to issues around access and a perception that the risk from flu was not as great among these groups.

A table detailing the uptake of Covid-19 booster vaccinations for Autumn-Winter 2022/23 was highlighted with numbers higher than the Greater Manchester average across all cohorts with especially high uptake in Care Homes in the borough.

The plans for Autumn-Winter 2023/24 were outlined and it was emphasised that vaccines would be available in all four neighbourhoods with Primary Care Networks leading on the delivery of the Covid-19 vaccine and the flu vaccine could be obtained from practices and community pharmacies. Co-delivery of both vaccines was available for eligible groups. Other initiatives included:

- GP Surgeries sending text messages to all those eligible inviting them to receive vaccination.

- Special sessions for 2-3 year olds including free soft play vouchers in some areas;
- Maternity services offering flu vaccinations in an antenatal clinic and providing flyers on Covid-19 vaccine availability.
- A schools programme was underway and a programme for TMBC staff programme was available.
- A Winter illnesses leaflet had been sent to parents via schools and early years settings, with translated versions available in Urdu and Polish.
- Communication campaigns were on social media and in local publications, with posters and banners up in key locations.

In response to questions, it was confirmed that children received their flu vaccination in school via the form of a nasal spray as part of the school vaccination programme and the majority of the eligible population had been offered a minimum three Covid-19 vaccination boosters.

The Consultant in Public Health was thanked for an informative presentation and Members were pleased to hear about the different campaigns and were especially keen that GPs communicated the availability of vaccines to their patients.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

9. JOINT HEALTH & WELLBEING STRATEGY AND LOCALITY PLAN

The Consultant in Public Health presented the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy and Locality Plan 2023-28, which set out how the Health and Wellbeing Board would support improving the health of the borough’s residents and tackle inequalities that some communities in the borough faced. It was highlighted that a combined document had been produced to reflect the integrated work in Tameside and the collective efforts to strive towards improving health across all communities.

An infographic was displayed demonstrating the Strategy alongside the overall shared vision of “Building Back Fairer, Stronger, Together”. Six areas of focus, as detailed below, had been identified for Tameside to strive towards achieving the ambitions – three focussed on the life course and three focussed on the wider determinants of health and were the broad areas the Health and Wellbeing Board were working to deliver on.

Life Course	Wider Determinants of Health
1. Give Tameside children the best start in life	4. Help people get into, and stay, in good work
2. Help people stay well across the life course and detect illness earlier	5. Strengthen our communities
3. Enable all Tameside residents to grow old with dignity and independence	6. Deliver healthy places with accessible and inclusive services

It was explained that a number of existing challenges in Tameside had provided the rationale to choosing the six areas of focus. These included a low healthy life expectancy compared to other areas; a high proportion of overweight children; high levels of air pollution; lower wages and high levels of poverty in Tameside. In addition, engagement with communities and insight from residents through direct conversations had helped to capture the Voice of Tameside Residents, which had been incorporated into the Strategy, and the six areas of focus reflected the issues and priorities that affected the population and were areas that they said were important to them.

It was emphasised that under each of the six areas of focus, the Strategy outlined where work was already happening and there was a link to other key strategies such as the Poverty Strategy, Inclusive Growth Strategy, the Children & Young People’s Plan and the Housing Strategy. There

were also specific objectives and actions that had been set under each area of focus to describe what it was that the Health and Care system and the Health and Wellbeing Board would deliver over the coming years to improve health in Tameside.

Members were told that there were two cross-cutting themes throughout the Strategy, which were all-age mental health and wellbeing and tackling inequalities in work; both of these were embedded in all of the approaches that would be taken and all of the objectives set across the six areas of focus.

It was explained that the Locality Plan would deliver health and care services across Tameside and would report to the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board. The Plan aligned to the priorities in the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership Strategy and Joint Forward Plan.

It was reported that a delivery plan would be developed to make sure actions were kept on track, with regular updates provided. The list of measures and outcomes contained in the Plan would be monitored via the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Strategic Partnership Board for the ICP in Tameside.

The Chair thanked the Consultant in Public Health for attending the Forum and delivering the presentation.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

10. ENFORCEMENT PANEL ACTIVITY

The Chair welcomed the Regulatory Services Manager (Licensing and Waste Enforcement) who attended the Forum to provide an update on enforcement activity across Tameside.

The functions undertaken by the Public Protection team were outlined and included:

- Food Safety and Food Standards
- Trading Standards
- Animal Health and Welfare
- Housing Enforcement
- Environment/Waste Enforcement
- Health and Safety
- Public Health
- Environmental Protection
- Licensing
- Parking Services

The Forum were notified that the Council was required to have a Corporate Enforcement Policy and a draft of this policy was currently being updated. The Policy outlined how the Council enforced a range of legislation in a fair, equitable and consistent manner. It was intended to protect the public, the environment, consumers, and workers within the borough to meet their legal obligations, and take firm action against those who flouted the law or acted irresponsibly.

It was highlighted that the Policy applied to all services with enforcement duties, although some services had specific legislative guidance and regulations that set out the enforcement requirements so therefore had specific service area policies in addition to the corporate one.

Members were advised that the Enforcement Panel met on a quarterly basis and the purpose of the Panel was to:

- Provide overview, assurance and scrutiny of the wide range of enforcement activity undertaken across the Council by receiving reports from service areas in scope.

- Promote the enforcement activities of the Council's enforcement services throughout the borough.
- Provide cohesion for the Council's enforcement bodies.
- Provide integrated service provision and joined up planning across a range of enforcement activities with wider service providers, such as Greater Manchester Police.
- Deliver on strategic priorities, including increasing enforcement across Tameside.

The enforcement activity undertaken during the quarter March to September 2023 was detailed across all enforcement areas and key investigations were highlighted, such as the environmental health prosecution at the Bake 'n' Butty Café, where the owner had illegally installed a petrol generator in the basement of the premises and Tameside Magistrates Court had imposed 100 hours of unpaid work, 20 rehabilitation days, £130 victim surcharge, £5,000 costs and an 18-week custodial sentence. There had also been a Trading Standards operation and an underage sales test purchase operation.

A number of Waste Enforcement Days of Action had been undertaken resulting in several Fixed Penalty Notices being issued including 25 across Ashton Wards. There had been two successful waste prosecutions, following incidents in Droylsden and Ashton-under-Lyne, with fines and costs being imposed on both perpetrators.

Members were informed that the Council's Licensing Panel had refused two applications for a taxi licence, as the applicants did not meet the standards of the Council's fit and proper person test. In relation to anti-social behaviour, it was reported that in-between January and August 2023, the Council had received 178 reports; 21 Public Space Protection Order tickets were issued, as well as four Community Protection Warnings and three Community Protection Notices.

Members asked for their thanks to be extended to the team for the important enforcement work that was carried out across the borough and stressed the ongoing issue of fly-tipping at several hotspots. The Regulatory Services Manager (Licensing and Waste Enforcement) advised that the Council had a strong, robust team to deal with incidents and the numbers of Fixed Penalty Notices that had been issued, demonstrated the hard work that was undertaken by the team in addition to the targeted Days of Action, which were held in hotspot areas. He encouraged both Members and residents to report any issues they encountered, which could be done anonymously, and emphasised the facilities across the borough to dispose of waste effectively, including the service where certain waste could be collected from addresses across Tameside.

Members commended the Days of Action carried out, which some had participated in, and they asked to be invited to future days of enforcement activity. Clarification was sought and provided on the course of action taken and any costs imposed on perpetrators of fly tipping. Members suggested there be more publicity around successful prosecutions and stressed the importance of education to prevent incidents from initially occurring.

Members voiced their concern around vermin levels following an increase in complaints from residents and requested that data be provided on pest control.

The Regulatory Services Manager (Licensing and Waste Enforcement) was thanked for attending the Forum and providing an update on enforcement activity.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

11. HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE

The Chair welcomed the Assistant Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods who attended the Forum to deliver a presentation in relation to highways maintenance in Tameside.

Members were informed that the Council was responsible for a variety of infrastructure on Tameside's highway network, which included 73km of principal roads, 70km of classified roads, 615km of unclassified roads and 1,155km of footways. In addition, the Council was responsible for 48,126 gullies, 25,341 street lighting columns, 4,000 signs, 159 bridges and 304 retaining walls/structures.

A map detailing Tameside's highway hierarchy was shown and it was explained that the hierarchy was important in terms of maintenance as it helped to establish where demand was and where resources could be best deployed.

It was highlighted that the highway network was the Council's largest single asset and a valuation of the network was conducted each year. This valuation determined whether the network had improved or deteriorated and where money should be spent. Members were advised that the Council's highway network was currently valued at £1.4 billion due to depreciation of assets. The importance of the efficient use of resources used on asset maintenance was emphasised, especially in light of the significant funding gap, which the Forum were notified of.

The Assistant Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods outlined the different highway asset groups, the investment in highway maintenance on an annual basis and explained how the Council determined the condition of the network around the borough through visual inspections, a scanner vehicle and a scrim survey. The condition of highway structures was regularly monitored and was rated by using a traffic light 'RAG' system with over 60% of structures rated as being in a fair/good/very good condition.

In relation to street lighting, it was explained that the Council held an inventory of all assets with an electrical supply. Members were informed that the age profile on columns dictated the strategy for maintenance and structural testing was undertaken on a percentage of columns. Visual inspections and electrical testing were also regularly carried out, which assisted with the efficient use of resources within Highways.

The winter maintenance plans were outlined and the Forum were advised that the winter programme had commenced. The Highway's team regularly monitored weather forecasts between October and April and there were two dedicated weather stations within Tameside, which provided real time weather information that the team used to determine the measures required. The team regularly carried out a gritting pre-treatment prior to the onset of inclement weather during the winter months on 350 kilometres of the network. This was based on a risk assessment that looked at the areas requiring treatment and it was emphasised that it was essential to keep major routes open to ensure that the infrastructure was operating smoothly.

In terms of risk management, it was explained that regular inspections of the network were carried out, the frequency of which was determined on a risk based approach. Members were advised that, 7,516 footway inspections and 7,118 carriageway inspections were undertaken last year.

An update was provided on potholes and the Forum were advised that over 7000 inspections were undertaken last year. It was imperative that accidents and injuries were mitigated and risk management was vital to ensure the borough's roads were as safe to use as possible.

A discussion ensued on road design and accident prevention and it was confirmed that collaborative work was undertaken with GMP to try, as far as possible, to prevent and mitigate serious accidents on the road and joint inspections were carried out in specific areas.

Members thanked the team for the work undertaken and commended them for the results of a pothole annual survey where Tameside was classed as the most effective service. They praised the reactivity of the service and reported a decrease in the number of potholes reported to them.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

12. ROCHDALE OLDHAM ASHTON BUS CORRIDOR

The Assistant Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods delivered a presentation, which updated the Forum on the progression and timings of the Rochdale/Oldham/Ashton Quality Bus Transit.

It was reported that there would be an introduction of franchised bus services and the existing network would transition to the new system as it currently stood with no significant changes to routes or timetables on day one.

The three phases of the project were outlined as follows:

1. 24 September 2023 – covering Bolton, Wigan, and parts of Salford and Bury.
2. 24 March 2024 – covering Oldham, Rochdale including the 409 service, and parts of Bury, Salford and north Manchester.
3. 5 January 2025 – covering Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, and the remaining parts of Manchester and Salford.

Members were informed that in order to grow passenger numbers, focus needed to be in the right area, targeting specific customer needs and delivering credible improvements in the ‘moments that matter’, as set out in the Bus Strategy. Reliability, frequency, safety, information and fares and ticketing were driving the customer experience and a range of improvements across these customer themes from September 23 onwards, provided opportunity to promote improvements and monitor impact.

The bus infrastructure programme and benefits of bus improvements were highlighted with focused investment, alongside bold decision-making, being essential and would allow demonstration of value in the longer term. In addition, investment would support the active travel programme, delivering walking and cycling infrastructure where possible, and seeking to align funding opportunities.

In relation to Tameside, it was reported that the orbital corridor would see improvements to existing bus priority, give buses running late priority at junctions, which would see shorter and more reliable journeys, improved cycling facilities into Ashton town centre, improved pedestrian facilities and streetscape to include planting and accessibility of bus stops and improved passenger facilities.

The Forum were notified that in order to align investment to deliver the Bee Network in Ashton, there would be two phases of the delivery programme.

The next steps were outlined and included further design development, presentation of findings to elected Members at each relevant Local Authority, engagement, results analysis by Transport for Greater Manchester, a statutory consultation with the proposed delivery of the programme commencing later in 2024 with an expected end date of 2026.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods for attending the Forum and delivering an interesting presentation.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED

That the date of the next meeting of the North Strategic Neighbourhood Forum, scheduled for 30 January 2024, be noted.

CHAIR