

WEST STRATEGIC NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

15 October 2020

Commenced: 6.30pm

Terminated: 7.30pm

Present: Councillors Ward (Chair), Boyle, Cooney, Gwynne, A Holland (Vice-Chair), B Holland, Jones, Martin, Mills, Naylor, Newton, Quinn, Reid, Ricci, Ryan, M Smith, T Smith and Warrington

1 MINUTES

RESOLVED

The minutes of the meeting of the West Strategic Neighbourhood Forum held on 16 January 2020 be approved as a correct record.

2. COVID 19 UPDATE

The Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods submitted a presentation updating Members in respect of the situation in Tameside in respect of Covid-19.

The Director began by reiterating the key messages as follows:

- Regularly wash your hands (20 seconds with soap and running water)
- Maintain social distancing (2m / or 1m with other precautions)
- Wear a face covering
- People with symptoms must isolate and stay at home for 10 days (and anyone in the house for 14 days)
- People with symptoms must get a test

The changes to restrictions locally were then outlined:

- Hospitality venues now closing from 10pm – 5am
- Increased fines for enforcement action £1000 first offence
- The number restrictions on weddings to 15 people and religious ceremonies/celebrations to 6
- Face coverings for all hospitality and retail workers
- Funerals 30 people limit
- Now illegal not to self-isolate when required to do so. (£200 fine)
- Introduction of the £500 test and trace support payment for those eligible from 12 October 2020

The Director made reference to the new 'Tier' system announced by the Government earlier in the week. He stated that Greater Manchester (including Tameside) was in Tier 2, which was the 'high' risk category (with Tier 1 being medium risk and Tier 3 very high risk). The same restrictions as above applied, including not mixing indoors unless people are in the same social bubble.

The Director explained that rates had increased in recent weeks across all boroughs of Greater Manchester, including Tameside. As of the previous week, there were 336 new cases with 309 the previous week, with predominantly young, white British, working age group being affected. There was also an increase in the BAME community (20% of new cases – particularly children). There have been further increases in older people with increased deaths and ICU admissions. The spread appeared to be across the Borough, with some spread linked to hospitality, workplaces, schools/education settings, care homes and hospital.

The importance of getting a test, should anyone show symptoms of the virus, was emphasised and details of the new local testing facility at Darnton Road, Ashton-under-Lyne were given. The facility was open 7 days a week, 8am – 8pm. Appointment was essential either by phone on 119 or online at: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronaviruscovid-19

Information was also given in respect of the NHS Covid-19 app, part of a large scale coronavirus testing and contact tracing programme in England and Wales. Used alongside Contact Tracing to notify users if they came in to contact with someone who had tested positive for coronavirus – including people they don't personally know. It also aided understanding if the virus was spreading in a particular area. Helping the Local Authority to respond quicker, stopping the spread and saving lives. The app protected user anonymity and nobody, including the government, would know who or where a user was.

Members sought clarity on a number of issues, including: the impact of the restrictions on the Licensed Taxi trade and local businesses. Members also raised concerns in respect of ensuring that everyone understood the level of restrictions, in light of the recent announcement of the Tier system and the impact on vulnerable residents and how best their needs could be met, going forward. The promotion of the NHS Covid-19 app was also highlighted.

It was explained that pressure on the NHS was increasing significantly, and there were concerns going into winter with the usual seasonal pressures. It was anticipated that the Nightingale Hospital in Manchester would be required in the coming weeks and months and was currently being prepared for use.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

3. MINIMUM LICENSING STANDARDS CONSULTATION

The Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods gave details of proposals put forward to introduce a Greater Manchester Minimum Licensing Standard for taxis to support the wider Clean Air Plan. The proposals focused on four areas:

- Drivers – common standards
- Vehicles – accessibility and emissions
- Operators - accountability
- Local authorities – licensing and enforcement

It was hoped that the proposals would achieve a single vision for licensed vehicles across the 10 local authority areas and lead to a zero emissions taxi fleet.

The Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods advised that the consultation was launched on 8 October 2020 for eight weeks.

The Director stated that the consultation would not only allow local people to give their views but also provide an opportunity to dispel a number of myths related to the proposals.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

4. CLEAN AIR PLAN CONSULTATION

The Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods informed the Forum of the implementation of the Greater Manchester Clean Air Zone. He explained that air pollution was linked to a range of serious health conditions and contributed to around 1,200 early deaths in Greater Manchester each year.

Forum Members were informed that local authorities across Greater Manchester had been mandated by central Government to bring nitrogen dioxide levels on local roads within legal limits as soon as possible. The 10 Greater Manchester local authorities had worked together to consider a wide range of measures to tackle air pollution, including a Clean Air Zone. A public consultation on the planned Clean Air Zone would be launched on 8 October 2020, to run alongside the consultation on Minimum Licensing Standard for taxi drivers. It would apply only to the most polluting commercial vehicles. The scheme would include financial assistance to help the city region's people and businesses to switch to cleaner vehicles and avoid the charge.

Feedback could be emailed to: cleanairgm@aecom.com

Further to a query from Members, the Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods clarified that private vehicles would not be included in the scheme.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

CHAIR