

# Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel

9 March 2021

**Commenced:** 6.00pm

**Terminated:** 7.20pm

**Present:** Councillors Glover (Chair), Mills (Deputy Chair), Billington, Bowden, Bowerman, Chadwick, Choksi, J Fitzpatrick, P Fitzpatrick, A Holland, Hollinshead, Jones, Naylor, Pearce, Sharif, Sweeton.

## 35. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel held on 26 January 2021 were approved as a correct record.

## 36. UPDATE OF HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY (HMIC) INSPECTION OF GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE (GMP)

The Panel welcomed Rachael Harrison, Chief Superintendent for Tameside and Oldham; Superintendent Rob Cousen, Divisional Commander for Tameside; Councillor Allison Gwynne, Executive Member, Neighbourhood Services; and Ian Saxon, Director of Neighbourhood Services, to receive an update and response to the HMIC inspection of GMP.

The inspection of Greater Manchester Police took place from April to June 2020, with a Victim Service Assessment (VSA) to review call responses, outcomes, crime recording, investigations, GMP leadership and governance. The aim of the inspection was to review the overall service provided to victims of crime in Greater Manchester.

Findings highlight a number of areas of concern with regard to non-emergency calls unanswered, crime recording and assessing the needs and vulnerability of victims. Mr Cousen advised members that GMP fully accept all findings identified in the HMIC report. With the report showing that one in five calls had gone unanswered, it is important to note that a proportion had redirected to the online reporting system.

There are areas the force has made improvements and in which it provides the service victims deserve and have a right to expect in areas such as:

- responding to calls for service by allocating the appropriate resource correctly
- making appropriate use of appointments to provide a service to victims
- sustained good crime recording standards for sexual offences

The Panel heard that the publicised figure of 80,000 missed crimes is from a specific area that includes domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, covering a significant number of crime types. GMP were seen to be dealing with vulnerability and safeguarding but not always recording the initial and associated crimes correctly. This can relate to additional reporting linked to a substantive crime and outcome. This includes missed opportunities to advise victims how to secure evidence at a scene.

Increased efforts continue to ensure GMP provides the best possible service to victims of crime, with additional resource in monitoring outcomes against the required standards. Think Victim is the new ethos driving improvement forward. Putting victims at the centre to ensure GMP are delivering the best service to the public. Training has accompanied this to provide staff with the knowledge and tools to undertake their role effectively. As a result the

number of crimes recorded each day has increased with a robust quality assurance framework in place.

Ms Harrison informed members that there is a clear action plan in place to address the range of improvement areas. At a district level, the improvement plan is monitored on a weekly basis. It is encouraging that excellent multi-agency partnerships are in place across Tameside and GMP welcome proposals put forward for a Tameside Neighbourhood Strategy that will aim to listen and engage directly with communities.

With a range of historic challenges associated with workforce pressures and culture, GMP is confident that a planned future audit will highlight some of the achievements to date and show a much better position.

Ms Harrison and Mr Cousen responded to a number of questions from the Panel on:

- Retaining staff at a local level.
- A need to ensure divisional and local priorities align to meet bespoke needs of communities in Tameside.
- A renewed focus on neighbourhood meetings to harness local intelligence and community partnerships to inform priorities.
- Greater partnership working and engagement to develop trust and confidence with communities.
- Methods to improve GMP communication within communities.
- Future pressures and sustainability of improvements.
- Data, systems and intelligence available to GMP aimed to inform future strategy and interventions.

**Resolved:** That Cllr Gwynne and officers be thanked for attending the meeting.

### **37. RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY CONSULTATION**

The Chair presented a formal response letter of the Panel, submitted to the Council's Community Safety Strategy consultation on 21 February 2021.

### **38. GREATER MANCHESTER SCRUTINY**

The Chair provided a verbal update on activity of the Housing, Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting that took place on 4 February 2021.

### **39. CHAIR'S UPDATE**

The Chair thanked all members for their participation and contribution for the 2020/21 municipal year. Scrutiny has adapted well, all meetings undertaken remotely with efforts made to ensure the work programme, activity and reporting has continued. Next step will be inform the work programme for June onwards to update priority issues and topics.

A report presented at the joint meeting of Cabinet and Overview Panel on 10 February included a summary of the Scrutiny Panel's activity during the year. Work undertaken on:

- Feedback and learning from communities on Covid-19
- Impact of Covid and lockdown on the local economy
- Response to Inclusive Growth Strategy consultation
- Walking and Cycling
- Response to Safe Streets consultation
- Community Safety Strategy

- Housing Strategy
- Ombudsman complaints monitoring
- Strategic Transport
- Budget updates

#### **40. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To note that the next meeting of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel will take place on 8 June 2021.

#### **41. URGENT ITEMS**

The Chair reported that there were no urgent items for consideration at this meeting.

**CHAIR**