

## COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS SCRUTINY PANEL

15 March 2021

Meeting commenced: 2.00 p.m.  
“ ended: 3:25 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Burch - in the Chair

Councillors Barnes, Fletcher, Karen Garrido, Humphreys, McIntyre, Ryan, Turner, Joan Walsh and Wheeler.

Councillor Lancaster - Environment and Community Safety Lead  
Member

Councillor Sharmina August - Executive Support for Equalities,  
Communities and Social impact

OFFICERS: David Seager - Assistant Director, Operational and Commercial  
Services

Vincent Nash - Neighbourhood Manager (Little Hulton, Walkden,  
Boothstown, Ellenbrook and Worsley)

David Thomas - Neighbourhood Manager (Barton, Eccles, Winton, Irlam  
and Cadishead)

Steven Fry - Asst Director, Digital and Customer Services

Claire Fewings - Customer and Locality Services Manager

Mike Relph - Senior Democratic Services Adviser

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Warner and Boshell.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021, were approved as a correct record.

### 4. OPERATION OF COMMUNITY COMMITTEES AND RESILIENCE FORUMS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The Strategic Director for Place submitted a report which provided an overview of the operation of each of the eight Community Committees and Neighbourhood Resilience Forums (NRFs) in Salford during the Covid-19 Pandemic, which covered the following key areas/themes:

- Community safety and anti-social behaviour

- Covid-19 regulations compliance and enforcement
- Public health
- Health improvement
- CVS (Council for Voluntary Service) outreach and support
- Housing providers
- Youth engagement and providers
- Communications
- Environmental issues - fly-tipping etc
- Welfare and support for residents
- Standing Together Funding

Members raised issues, commented on, and noted them, as follows:

(a) It was agreed the NRFs had been highly effective forums for tackling issues at a local level, at was a very challenging time.

(b) There was now an opportunity to identify where and how NRFs had been effective and see if these could be used in developing a model for the future format of community committees.

(c) The virtual nature of NRFs and community committee meetings during the pandemic had resulted in higher levels of attendance. This had created initial difficulties, particularly for older members of the communities concerned, who were not always familiar with the practicalities of working in this, but appropriate support had been given to provide them with the necessary IT skills to enable them to overcome these.

(d) There should be a recognition that a “one size fits all” approach was not appropriate and how community committees operated should, as much as possible, reflect the individual needs of the areas concerned.

(e) Virtual “networking” events raising awareness of the activities of external agencies and in turn how these could support local communities, were of great value.

(f) Tribute was paid to the many volunteers form local communities who had assisted in tackling environmental issues during the pandemic and it was hoped this was something could be built on in the long term.

RESOLVED: THAT the presentation be noted

## 5. SALFORD CITY COUNCIL CALL CENTRE PERFORMANCE

The Strategic Director for Service Reform gave a presentation which provided an overview of the operation of Customer and Digital Services during the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly the activities of the call centre and the Spirit of Salford Helpline and which covered the following key areas/themes:

- Achievements
- Challenges

- Performance
  - Calls handled
  - Referrals
- Digital Inclusion - Salford Community Infrastructure
- Digital Everyone Website
- Digital Everyone Providers Network

Members raised issues, commented on, and noted them, as follows:

(a) What were the plans for customer and call centre service post pandemic? The pandemic had meant many planned changes to the operating structure had been introduced earlier than anticipated and it was now intended to build upon these and enhance the service provide in long term.

(b) While the benefits of online services were recognised, many older members of the community were more familiar and comfortable with a traditional “face to face” orientated service.

(c) Thanks were extended to all the staff who had been involved with the rapid and successful introduction of the new customer service operating model.

(d) How were those households and individuals engaged with who did not have the necessary IT equipment to access online services? This was an issue which was recognised and was continually being addressed through a variety of activities and initiatives, but any other suggestions as to how the challenges of ensuring inclusivity would be welcomed. It was commented that there were many barriers to social inclusion and these were not always due to individuals personal economic circumstances.

RESOLVED: THAT the presentation be noted.

## 6. WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

Members considered the Panel’s Work Programme for 2020/21.

RESOLVED: THAT the Panel’s Work Programme for 2020/21, be noted.

## 7. CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Tanya Burch announced that Councillors Charlie McIntyre, Brendan Ryan and Michael Wheeler would not be standing in the forthcoming local elections and this would be the last meeting they would be attending and thanked them for their services to the Panel and wished the best for the future.

Councillors McIntyre, Ryan and Wheeler responded by thanking both their political colleagues and officers for their support and assistance during their time as members of the Panel.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Panel would provisionally be held on Monday, 17 May 2021, commencing at 2.00 pm.