

MILNROW, NEWHEY AND FIRGROVE AREA FORUM

Thursday 27 September 2018
Milnrow Cricket Club, Harbour Lane,
Milnrow OL16 1HF

MINUTES

Present: Stephen Lowe (Chair), K. Hall, D. Greenhalgh, V. Bryant, S. Hancox, K. Baker, M. Thompson, C. Craven, J. Connor, M. Ahmed, J. Taylor, E. Carpenter, J. Ashley, E. Brookes, N. Cunliffe, D. Kendall, G. Hoyle, D. Jackson, C. Carrington, D. Cranny, G. Jones, C. Crombie, A. Daniels, I. Rigby, T. Rigby, M. Greenhalgh, P. Greenhalgh, B. Morris, J. Edge, J. Ross, D. Ross, H. Milne, T. Milne, V. Cordwell, N. Butterworth, J. Nelson, P. Daniels, C. Barber, L. Sutcliffe, A. Hunt, J. Evans, E. Mellor, D. Dawai, B. Greenwood, S. Healey, L. McFarlane, L. McFarlane, G. Lennon, J. Lennon, H. Cooke, A. Griffith and K. Griffith

Councillors: Bamford, Blundell, Davidson, Kelly and Mir

Officers: Tracey Knight (Township Management), PC Martin Adams (GMP) and H. Mellalieu (Youth Service)

Apologies: I. Bland and C. Houston

1. INTRODUCTIONS, APOLOGIES AND CODE OF CONDUCT

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and the code of conduct was referred to.

2. PACT - GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE

Crime Figures:

Milnrow & Newhey	Jul 2018	Aug 2018	Sept 2018
Residential burglary	4	3	2
Commercial burglary	0	4	3
Theft from motor vehicle	3	7 (3 x plates)	5 (3 x plates)
Theft of motor vehicle	7	2	1
Criminal damage	10	5	5
ASB incidents	12	7	2
Drugs	1 (Cocaine)	0	0
Drugs	3 (Cannabis)	0	0

Smallbridge & Firgrove	Jul 2018	Aug 2018	Sept 2018
Residential burglary	2	1	4
Commercial burglary	0	2	0
Theft from motor vehicle	1	0	1
Theft of motor vehicle	1	2	0
Criminal damage	5	10	3
ASB incidents	4	7	4
Drugs	0	0	0

Police updates

- There have been four reports of drug offences during the past three months, one for possession of cocaine and three for possession of cannabis.
- Due to the number of vehicle registration plate thefts, GMP are in the process of organising a safe plate scheme for residents. Details of the scheme will be advertised in due course.
- There has been a reduced number of PSCOs during the last twelve months, this is due to long term staff sickness and a vacant post which has recently been recruited to. A Neighbourhood Officer has also been recently recruited. A visual Police presence should increase.
- There will be a new shift pattern implemented at the end of October which should see an increase in Officers that are available to respond.
- GMP are aware of the speeding issues; it is a very emotive subject that is difficult to solve in the long term.
- GMP have Community Speed Watch equipment available for use by the community. The results are unable to be used as evidence, however, an evidential speed gun is on order for use locally in traffic operations by Officers.

Residents' concerns

- The 101 response times are far too high; callers can wait over one hour for the call to be answered.
- The 101 call handler doubts the validity of the issues being reported and on one occasion accused the resident of "over reacting" to the anti-social behaviour issues being reported.
- "Spice heads" loitering in a zombie state and sleeping at the Metrolink tram stop. They are a drain on resources; the ambulance frequently attends incidents when they fall over and hurt themselves. Why can't more be done to resolve this issue.
- Residents have provided drug dealers' addresses to the Police but no action has been taken. *GMP advised that intelligence is gathered sometimes over long periods of time especially when there are complex cases with linked criminality.*
- Residents are worried that their concerns are not being taken seriously and recorded properly. The crime stats don't reflect the number of calls made by some of the residents that were present at the meeting. *GMP advised people to also use the online chat via the GMP website and Crimestoppers. Some recent intelligence provided to Crimestoppers led to a good result in Littleborough.*
- Residents have repeatedly reported witnessing drug related activity happening on the streets. Drugs paraphernalia is highly visible at the scene yet there has been no patrols by the Police.
- A resident has been advised by a PCSO that crimes reported that relate to Newhey are not a priority and that "Newhey is at the bottom of the list".
- A recent matter was discussed regarding a resident reporting the strong smell of cannabis emanating from a nearby property and the length of time taken to investigate. Eighteen months later the property was raided and a number of cannabis plants were discovered. *GMP explained that a warrant is needed to enter a property and this can cause delays if the Magistrate deems that there is insufficient evidence.*
- A recent road traffic accident at the bottom of Huddersfield Road was attended by the Fire Service. GMP did not attend the scene. *GMP advised that this may be due to Force priorities; each report is triaged and responded to based on urgency and threat to life.*
- Off road bikes are a huge concern for residents; again there appears to be no action being taken by GMP. Residents reported that it is common place for these bikes to ride on pavements, on the wrong side of the road terrorising other motorists and pedestrians. *It is current GMP policy that Officers are not allowed to pursue off road bikers, in the event of an accident the liability would be GMP's. It is another difficult issue because it is hard to identify the offenders. Residents were encouraged to continue reporting incidents to the GMP.*
- A resident advised that London Police have changed their policy and they are now allowed to pursue off road bikes and asked why this can't be changed locally.

- Intelligence has been passed to PCSOs regarding the stripping down of suspected stolen motorcycles. GMP didn't take any action regarding this report. The evidence has since been removed and is now unavailable.
- A resident complained that she has reported a number of issues to GMP, some of which included drug use and ASB, all of which have received log numbers that she will pass on to PC Adams to follow up. Again, it appears that no action has been taken by GMP and the resident has heard nothing since.
- Residents were appalled that the recent incident involving a HGV and off road bikers took GMP three days to respond.
PC Adams explained that there may have been incidents that were higher priority. Each Police report received is triaged and prioritised using Threat; Harm; Risk criteria.
- There was a recent bag snatch that was reported to the Police; no response has been received by the victim.
- Councillor Blundell explained that the issues spoke about are not the fault of PC Adams' but are a direct result of force budget cuts. Officers are constantly firefighting due to lack of available resources. Residents were advised to direct their anger at the decision makers. Councillor Blundell agreed to write to the Greater Manchester Mayor and suggested that residents did too.

Action 1: Write to Greater Manchester Mayor to raise the communities' policing concerns (Councillor Blundell)

- There is legitimate concern regarding the 101 reporting method which will have an impact and distorts the crime figures.
This is a national issue that is being looked into.
- Residents expressed their frustration at not receiving replies from letters they have written to their MP.
- PC Adams acknowledged residents' frustrations and as a Neighbourhood Officer he wants to work effectively with the community to reduce crime; he wants to work together to improve relationships and improve two-way dialogue. He spoke of a local resident who is in contact with the Inspector who wants to set up a Residents Watch Group which will work in partnership with GMP. The idea is in its early stages and will no doubt need the input from other residents to make it a success. The resident concerned introduced himself to the forum and gave a brief overview of what he is trying to achieve which will be of benefit for the whole community. Volunteers will be needed; this will be communicated when necessary. The Township offered to assist with the initial set up of the group and can advise on governance.
- Another issue the Police face is the lack of witnesses that are prepared to testify in court.
Due to disruptive behaviour, the Chair reminded the attendees of the code of conduct and asked all attendees to abide by the forum's rules for the duration of the meeting.
- Councillor Kelly advised the forum that the Council can assist with the ASB issues. Youth Service are engaging with the local young people and Ward Councillors are hoping to support a funding request for additional Youth Bus visits. They have also spoken with Highways to look at how the roads can be made safer, greener and more efficient for motorists and pedestrians. Highways Officers are drawing up a Masterplan that will have a number of identified safety schemes that would be consulted on should funding become available.

Action 2: Report updates at future meetings on the Highway Masterplan (Councillor Kelly)

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record. It was noted that Mr Houston had submitted his apologies for the meeting but they were not recorded.

Action Updates

Ladybarn development

Response from Planning Officer sent to the resident - I contacted the agent at the time. The contractors were on site initially for a few days but there are no works currently taking place in association with the development of 37 apartments adjacent to the Ladybarn. There are conditions to be discharged before further works take place and this includes a condition relating to the management of the construction process. If any further complaints are received, they are unlikely to

relate to the contractors on this site as work has stopped but we will gladly look into them if residents contact us.

Potholes and residents' concerns

Response from Highways - It should be noted that there are two types of repair being undertaken, one is a temporary repair (ordered for completion within 24 hours of receipt of the order) that is used to make a dangerous pothole safe until a more permanent reinstatement can be undertaken (within 20 working days of receipt of the order). Any potholes that have been identified as being substandard are reported to Balfour Beatty who then is responsible for reinstating the repair at no cost to the Council. We do undertake random checks of the pothole repairs undertaken by Balfour Beatty. We undertake monthly random cores of their pothole repairs and we do investigate all service requests regarding potholes and possible poor workmanship. Any repairs that are identified as being substandard or having failed are reported to Balfour Beatty for reinstatement. The individual potholes, reported to Highways, are in the process of being dealt with, most of which are now complete.

4. OPEN FORUM

Back field at Severn Drive

A resident asked whether there were any development plans for this site. Councillors advised that there is a dispute regarding the land ownership; the fence that has been erected has been done so without permission and is in the process of being removed.

Fly tipping

When asked what steps the Council are taking to combat fly tipping, the forum were advised of the action taken by Enforcement Officers to identify those responsible; there has recently been five successful convictions across the Borough.

Newhey Lodge

Councillor Kelly advised that he is working with Planning Officers to challenge recent decisions. A planning application for the erection of a fence will be considered by the Planning Committee.

Village speed limits

A resident advised that the speed limit in Todmorden town centre is 20mph and asked if this can be introduced in Milnrow and Newhey. Councillor Kelly advised that ideas of this nature will be included in the Masterplan.

Damaged litter bin

During the recent road resurfacing of Sycamore Avenue and Laburnum Lane the litter bin was smashed and needs replacing.

Action 3: Report the damaged bin and request a replacement (Tracey Knight)

Huddersfield Road bollards request

A resident asked whether bollards could be installed outside the Londis, and other shops, on Huddersfield Road to prevent vehicles parking on the pavement making the area safer for pedestrians.

Action 4: Seek Highways advice regarding the installation of bollards (Tracey Knight)

Parking on double yellow lines

A resident advised that vehicles are often witnessed parked on the double yellow lines opposite Milnrow Post Office and on the zig zag lines of the nearby pedestrian crossing.

Action 5: Report to Highways and request enforcement (Tracey Knight)

5. EXTERNAL FUNDING UPDATE

Ellenroad

There has been a recent Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) meeting. A decision on their £90k grant application will be known in February 2019.

Milnrow Clock

Inspections are ongoing to establish the scale of work. A HLF funding bid can only be submitted once there is a scheme of work.

6. FUTURE MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

There was a brief discussion regarding the arrangements and purpose of future meetings and how to engage better with local communities. The meeting venue was discussed. Alternative venues have been considered due to the recent double bookings and the impact this situation has on the meetings. Butterworth Hall is unavailable, so alternative venues will be sought.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other items of business were raised.

8. FUTURE MEETING DATES

6 December 2018

Police contact details:

Rochdale East

Tel: 0161 856 8549

Email rochdaleeast@gmp.police.uk

Facebook GMPRochdaleEast

Twitter @gmprochdaleeast

Crimestoppers 0800 555 111 www.crimestoppers-uk.org

GMP Live Chat <https://goo.gl/KsUihd>

Police non-emergency calls 101

Emergency calls 999

PC Martin Adams' email: martin.adams@gmp.police.uk