

Item No.4

Report to: Police and Crime Panel

Report of: Councillor Rishi Shori
Councillor Jean Stretton

Subject: Preventing Hateful Extremism and Promoting Social Cohesion Commission

Date: 12th December 2017

INTRODUCTION

This report is to update Members in relation to progress that has been made to establish the Greater Manchester Tackling Hateful Extremism and Promoting Social Cohesion Commission.

1.1 Background

Following the terrorist attack at the Manchester Evening News Arena on 22nd May 2017, the Greater Manchester Mayor announced his intention to establish a Commission to tackle hateful extremism and promote social cohesion, which would be led by Councillor Rishi Shori in his capacity as the Mayor's lead for social cohesion and young people.

1.2 Terms of Reference

The Commission's Terms of Reference have been developed with Greater Manchester partners and in dialogue with our communities, to ensure that the objectives of the Commission align to both existing local work programmes and community concerns.

The Commission has four distinct areas of focus which are;

- To consider how Prevent operates in Greater Manchester.
- To look at the broader determinants of social exclusion and how we can work collectively to address these.
- To engage in dialogue with our communities and the business sector to consider the development of a Greater Manchester Charter: a set of shared values and commitments which could be used as the foundations upon which the Greater Manchester Strategy work is built (not just principles that are called into action when something goes wrong).
- To develop a distinctive community led GM approach to challenging hateful radicalisation of all kinds and from wherever it comes.

1.3 Commission Membership

Membership of the Commission has been confirmed as follows:

- Nazir Afzal (Former Head of the CPS in the North West)
- Darra Singh (Ernst and Young, focus on working with small businesses)
- Saima Alvi (Co-chair of the British Muslim Heritage Centre)
- Nigel Bromage (Small Steps-Countering Far Right Extremism)
- Professor Hilary Pilkington-(Academic with an expertise in Radicalisation-University of Manchester)
- Shalni Arora-(Philanthropist-Savannah Wisdom)

1.4 Cost Implications

A provisional budget of £50,000 has been allocated by the Mayor, from the PCC budget, to support the work of the Commission.

This funding of this has been agreed with the Chief Finance Officer.

1.5 Officer Resources

A Chief Executive steering group has been nominated, with representation from GMCA, Oldham, Manchester and Stockport and this will be supported by a strategic officer group.

Key to the success of the Commission will be a collaborative approach. Partners from a number of organisations have been approached to participate and dedicated resources in some cases have been allocated.

A dedicated senior manager from the GMCA communications team will oversee communication, to ensure that appropriate liaison is made with partner organisations, in order that key messages are suitable and tailored, in terms of what will be a sensitive piece of work.

1.6 Governance Arrangements

The Commission will meet on a monthly basis and be chaired by Councillor Rishi Shori, with Councillor Jean Stretton taking the role of vice chair.

At this stage, it is envisaged that the Commission will be in a position to report to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in Spring 2018, after which there will be a report to the Combined Authority.

1.7 Progress to date

The first Commission meeting was held on 27th October, where Members were asked to consider the Terms of Reference and draft workplan and key areas of responsibility /oversight. A detailed presentation provided an overview of some of the work that is currently being undertaken within Greater Manchester in relation to Prevent, community cohesion, responding to hate crime and the Greater Manchester response to the Manchester Arena attack.

Following discussion, it was proposed that some key lines of enquiry be established, highlighting the points that commissioners had raised in relation to the above issues and that these form the main focus of the community engagement work.

Key to the community engagement work will be involvement from partners from each of the ten local authority areas with Greater Manchester. It is important that each area feels equally involved in the work of the Commission and that their views and those of their communities are adequately reflected within the final report. A community engagement framework is in the process of being developed and will be shared with partners as soon as is practicable. This will include key lines of enquiry.

At the meeting of the Police and Crime Steering Group held on 28th November, the ten Greater Manchester local authorities, GMP and GMFRS were asked to provide local community engagement plans, based on the Commission's engagement framework, by 18th December. This local engagement will complement other engagement activity that is being undertaken with other partners such as housing providers and mental health practitioners. There will also be an opportunity to feedback via an on-line facility.

In addition to the above engagement, there is significant progress being made to engage with local businesses.

CONCLUSION

Whilst this piece of work has emerged following a terrorist attack that shocked not only Greater Manchester but the world, it is clear following our dialogue with businesses, communities and partners who engage with those communities, that any piece of work that seeks to address and improve social cohesion needs to be much wider than an investigation into preventing violent extremism.

The intention for this Commission is to look more broadly at what excludes people, why people feel isolated and vulnerable and how the Greater Manchester approach can help to address these issues. Key to the success of the work will be engagement with local businesses, partners and communities.

Contact Officers:

Andrew Lightfoot
Deputy Chief Executive-GMCA
Andrew.lightfoot@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk
07736 028790

Laura Mercer
Principal-victims and vulnerability-GMCA
Laura.mercer@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk
07866 253070