

**THIFF Forum Meeting Summary: Safer Communities**

**Monday 31 January 2023, 6-8pm at THCVS offices, Bethnal Green**

**Councillor Ohid Ahmed, London Borough of Tower Hamlets**

* Crime levels in the borough are high, and one of the worst in England; it is improving but there isa long way to go.
* Solutions need to be found and this is a huge priority for the council
* The borough now has some hi tech CCTV
* Tackling crime require a huge commitment and everyone plays a vital role, and he is grateful for the partnership working
* THIFF play a big role in bringing people together and community cohesion

**THIFF Steering Group member, Leon Silver, East London Central Synagogue**

* THIFF is a different inter faith forum – rather than focusing on religious dialogue, it is a united platform for everyone in the borough
* People attending meetings are able to share news and spread it through the community
* THIFF is an important group in the borough

**Charles Griggs, Head of Community Safety at London Borough of Tower Hamlets**

Presented the Tower Hamlets Community Safety Plan (See presentation one)

The presentation focused on three priority areas: Substance Misuse & Criminal Justice, Community Safety and Safer Neighbourhood Operations.

Extracts from the presentation:

The community partnership plan has the following priorities:

1. Tackling neighbourhood crime and ASB

2. Tackling hate crime, community tensions, and extremism

3. Reducing reoffending and tackle the drivers of crime

4. Violence reduction: Safeguarding those at risk of violence and exploitation

* The council has made a big investment in the latest hi-tech CCTV cameras to help support the work of the police.
* The Hate Crime team at the council work in partnership with a number of agencies to tackle hate crime. There is also a Hate Incidence Panel and Tension Monitoring Group, of which THIFF is part of.
* There is a high level of domestic abuse. The commissioned partner for providing support is Solace, who have supported over 650 survivors of domestic abusers.
* Drugs fuel violent crime, and the council are participating in the ADDER programme, which focuses on ‘addiction, disruption, diversion, enforcement and recovery’. The police are also funded to tackle the sale and supply of drugs.

The council has key partnerships with the following organisations:

* + The multi-agency Community Safety Partnership (CSP)
	+ Tower Hamlets Community & Voluntary Sector ( THCVS)
	+ Safer Neighbourhood Board and ward based neighbourhood panels
	+ The Youth Justice Service Management Board
	+ Health & Wellbeing Board
	+ Safeguarding Adults Board
	+ Children’s Safeguarding Executive

Coming up: The council will have legislated a responsibility to reduce violence – ‘[Serious Violence Duty’](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-duty) and ‘[Martyn’s Law’](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/martyns-law-to-ensure-stronger-protections-against-terrorism-in-public-places) will oblige the council to consider safety in public places, putting a duty on venue owners.

**Superintendent Andy Port, Neighbourhood Policing Lead, Met Police – see Presentation 2**

Extracts from the presentation

* The police are pleased to have a fantastic relationship with the council and other partners including VCSE groups, to hold each other to account.
* The police have local crime priorities, but its important to note that people are encouraged to talk to their ward police to raise awareness of other problems such as bike theft or anti-social behaviour.
* Response times emergency calls are very good
* The police accept that stop and search must be used with sensitivity but it recovers a significant amount of knives and drugs.
* The police have an integrated gangs unit working with other partners.
* Although the rate of s serious crimes is high I the borough it is not the worst in London or the country.
* There is a reduction of all hate crimes since 2021. All hate crimes are taken seriously and handled by experienced officers. They are aware that these types of crime may be under reported.
* There has been an increase in shoplifting that may be linked to Cost of Living issues.

Trust in the police –the police are trialling a [survey tool enabling Londoners to provide anonymous, real-time feedback](https://www.met.police.uk/notices/met/online-survey-trial/) on their perception of policing, trust and safety in London

**Abidah Kamali, Senior Strategy and Policy Officer, Corporate Strategy and Improvement Service, Strategy, Improvement and Transformation Division Tower Hamlets Council** – **see presentation three.**

The new [Tower Hamlets Partnership Plan](https://talk.towerhamlets.gov.uk/new-tower-hamlets-partnership-plan#:~:text=Chaired%20by%20the%20Mayor%2C%20the,on%20complex%20cross%2Dcutting%20issues.) (2023-2028)

Extracts from the presentation

• A new shared vision and ambition for the borough

• Focused and cross-cutting priorities to add value

• Solutions to create changes in systems

• Building on lessons learned

• Launch summer 2023
The strategic framework is a collaboration across multi agency organisations in the borough. All partnerships are chaired by the Mayor and supported by partners including the VCSFE sector.

Attendees had the opportunity to feedback on the following questions to inform the new Partnership Plan:

1. What are your hopes for a safer TH in 10 years’

time?

2. What can we do together to get there?

3. What can voluntary and community sector

organisations do to support local residents?

4. Top three priorities of importance

**The next THIFF meeting takes place on Monday 20th March 2023 – more details soon.**