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**TAMESIDE
CHILDREN'S
SERVICES
IMPROVEMENT
PLAN**

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1 - FOREWORD

There is no greater responsibility for public services than making sure that vulnerable children and young people are happy, safe and confident in their future. This improvement plan sets out how Tameside Council and partners intend to achieve this, acting on our self assessment, information from partners and the recommendations made by Ofsted to deliver rapid, comprehensive and sustainable improvement to services which help, protect and safeguard children and young people in Tameside.

We are committed to fundamentally changing how our services are received by residents, including supporting families to become resilient, independent and self-reliant, and reducing dependency on public services. We will work closely with our partners so that services meet the needs of people and are not delivered in silos and we will support children and their families to be successful.

We are committed to working together to support sustainability, reducing dependency and levels of need in our communities, and making best use of shared resources.

We have acted quickly following the Ofsted inspection to strengthen our approach and have established an Improvement Board, with an independent chair, to provide direction and challenge to our Improvement Plan. Our Improvement Board brings together decades of experience from the public, community and voluntary sectors.

Our Improvement Plan has been informed by the views of Tameside's young people and the experience of frontline staff both in the Council but also in our partner agencies. Since the inspection Tameside Council and partners have taken action on priority areas highlighted by Ofsted to ensure children's safety. The ambition must now build on this early good work, creating the conditions in which children and young people will be able to thrive. This plan sets out the work we will undertake to improve our services and the outcomes for children. During our improvement journey we will have an open and positive dialogue with our children and young people, our partners and our frontline staff in order to make the improvements needed.

Supporting vulnerable children and helping families turn their lives around are not just the responsibilities of one organisation so a partnership approach is essential. We have a track record in Tameside of working together with the local community and partners to solve a variety of problems. This challenge is no different. We have sought advice from the Local Government Association and other councils to develop a coordinated and thorough response based on experience, best practice and learning from others.

We have one simple aim; get Tameside to where we need to be to support our children and young people. And we have one simple ambition; children in Tameside are safe, healthy and happy and are positive about their future.

Councillor Kieran Quinn – Executive Leader, Tameside Council.

Councillor Peter Robinson – Executive Member for Children's Services, Tameside Council.

David Niven – Chair, Tameside Safeguarding Children Board.

Steven Pleasant – Chief Executive, Tameside Council and Accountable Officer, NHS Tameside and Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group.

Stephanie Butterworth – Director of Children's Services, Tameside Council.

Children's Services Vision

'Our vision is for a profession that has fully confident and highly capable workers, who have been properly trained in the right way with the right knowledge and skills. They must have the opportunity to work in supportive environments, that facilitate critical thinking and enable them to make the best decisions for children and families'

- By working as a cohesive partnership across Tameside, we will provide consistent, high quality, support and care for children and their families.
- Our staff will be given every opportunity to grow and learn in an organisation which is outward looking, constantly developing and keen to embrace new ideas.

Partner organisations that will work together to deliver the Tameside Children's Services Improvement Plan:

- Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
- NHS Tameside & Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group
- Tameside & Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust (Tameside Hospital)
- Tameside Safeguarding Children Board.
- Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust
- 2 Be Us (the Tameside Children in Care Council)
- New Charter Housing and other registered social landlords
- Tameside primary and secondary schools, and the 'virtual school'
- Tameside College
- Greater Manchester Police
- Other GM partners/Councils
- NHS England
- Local Government Association
- Active Tameside
- Action Together, on behalf of the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector

We will publish quarterly reports updating you on progress on the delivery of the Tameside Children's Services Improvement Plan.

2 - BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In September and October 2016 Ofsted carried out an inspection of the effectiveness of our Children's Services. Ofsted also carried out a review of the effectiveness of Tameside Safeguarding Children's Board. Ofsted published the report into its findings on 9 December 2016 rating the overall effectiveness of Children's Services as 'inadequate' and the Tameside Safeguarding Children Board as 'requiring improvement'. The overall judgement is broken down into categories as follows:

Judgement	Score
Overall Effectiveness	Inadequate
Children who need help and protection	Inadequate
Children looked after and achieving permanence	Requires Improvement
<i>Adoption</i>	<i>Good</i>
<i>Experiences and progress of care leavers</i>	<i>Requires Improvement</i>
Leadership, management and governance	Inadequate
Local safeguarding children board	Requires Improvement

- 2.2 Like other Local Authorities in the UK, Tameside has undergone the challenge of remaining resilient in the provision of frontline services while working with reduced funding from central government. However Tameside has seen a sizable increase in demand in recent years, placing pressure on the service. For example between December 2015 and December 2016 there was a 65% increase in the number of Children in Need and a 73.7% increase in the number of children subject to a child protection plan. In conjunction with this, the service's ability to cope has been hindered by significant rates of staff turnover and the struggle to recruit and retain experienced staff. This has invariably led to the loss of skills and knowledge, and the resources for staff to carry out good social work practices with their cases. While this is no excuse for inadequate practice, it lays out the circumstances we currently stand in, and the challenges that the improvement process must address in order to succeed.
- 2.3 We have already taken some preliminary steps to begin to turn around the recent judgement. The Tameside Children's Services Improvement Board was set up in January 2017, and appointed Jane Booth as the Independent Chair to deliver the improvement programme. External support has been added to the Board, with LGA and NHS England representation, while further advice from Greater Manchester has been sought. A Practitioner Improvement Group has begun to hold regular meetings with a view to share ideas from representatives from across the service as to what improvement should look like.
- 2.4 The plan will take the form of a 'bottom up' approach that will be built on the views and needs of frontline practitioners, managers and the voice of children looked after by the authority. It will focus on ensuring that there we focus on prevention strategies by developing the Early Help service, so that we pave the way for a sustainable service that helps children to remain with their families and achieve the best possible outcomes for children.

- 2.5 The Tameside Children's Service Improvement Board was established in January 2017 to deliver an improvement programme. The objective of the improvement programme is for partners including the Council and Tameside Safeguarding Children Board, to achieve sustainable improvement across the full range of services for children and young people in Tameside.
- 2.6 Tameside Safeguarding Children's Board is the partnership responsible for making sure that children and young people are kept safe in Tameside. As such the Safeguarding Board form an intrinsic part of the improvement process in Tameside. The Safeguarding Board has produced an Improvement Plan setting out the steps it will take to secure improvement. Progress towards this plan will be reported to Tameside Children's Services Improvement Board in order to ensure that improvement activity is co-ordinated across Tameside and there is a clear read across between improvement plans.
- 2.7 The Children's Services Improvement Board will lead and guide this process through the implementation of Tameside Children's Services Improvement Plan alongside the Tameside Safeguarding Children Board Improvement Plan to address the areas of concern identified in the Ofsted report; other areas for improvement identified and develop a sustainable model for future years.
- 2.8 The Board will be led by an Independent Chair. The Independent Chair of the Board will oversee the effective functioning of the Board, providing appropriate external challenge and rigour. The Chair is not accountable for improvement; that responsibility lies with the Council and its partners. The Board will report on progress to Tameside Council, the local Health and Wellbeing Board and both Ofsted and the Department for Education.
- 2.9 The Board is responsible for strategic direction and oversight of the improvement programme. It will provide challenge and rigour to the process whilst collaborating to achieve and sustain continuous improvement in Children's Services and across the wider partnership in Tameside.
- 2.10 Delivery of the Improvement Plan will come from the bottom up; the practical ideas and projects that will deliver the board's vision and the plans objectives are best developed by practitioners and shaped by the children and young people they support.
- 2.11 Achieving sustainable improvement will require new ways of working including careful analysis and tracking of performance to demonstrate effective improvement and tangible impact on outcomes for children and families.
- 2.12 Extensive work has been undertaken to identify the root causes of the problems identified by Ofsted and will continue until as a part of ongoing improvement activity. The findings of this work have informed the development of the Improvement Plan.
- 2.13 This document will be underpinned by a detailed action plan and performance scorecard which will provide a framework through which the improvement process will be monitored and delivered in Tameside.
- 2.14 A financial plan has been developed to enable the delivery of improvement activity, address increased demand and invest in the development of service and initiatives that reduce long term demand.
- 2.15 In order to ensure the Children's Services Improvement Plan is implemented effectively we are committed to transparency and accountability. Progress towards meeting the Improvement Plan will be reported to Tameside Children's Improvement Board meeting monthly and quarterly

updates on progress will be published on Tameside Council's website following the publication of the Improvement Plan.

- 2.16 Underpinning these arrangements are a number of organisational and partnership structures that will be essential to securing effective improvement. The Board will work with in partnerships in order to ensure that whole system change is achieved. Key groups and decision making bodies include:
- Executive Cabinet of Tameside Council
 - Tameside Health and Well Being Board
 - Ofsted's Regional Director and Senior HM Inspector
 - Department for Education Inspections and Interventions Team
 - Tameside Safeguarding Children Board
 - Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel
- 2.17 Effective partnership working is essential to maintaining the long term sustainability of services in Tameside through reducing duplication, increasing the flexibility and responsiveness of services and developing a holistic understanding of the needs of vulnerable children in Tameside.
- 2.18 For children and young people to receive the right help at the right time it is essential that those who play a role in supporting them work together effectively. To support and improve the achievement of high quality outcomes we will work to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of different partnership groups such as the Tameside and Glossop Single Commissioning Function.
- 2.19 The Single Commissioning function brings together NHS Tameside and Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group, Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust, and Tameside Council to deliver significant improvements in health and care for people in Tameside and Glossop. As such it is responsible the majority of health and social care services and will be a crucial partner in ensure that outcomes are achieved to the delivery of support to children, young people and their families in Tameside.
- 2.20 At a practitioner level strong partnership working will support robust decision making by developing mechanisms through which partners are able develop a shared understanding of decision making thresholds and have the opportunity to provide constructive challenge when it is appropriate to do so.
- 2.21 Transparency will also underpin our approach to service redesign. In particular using peer review and challenge and strong internal and external scrutiny arrangements to ensure Tameside Council and its partners are progressing towards strong and sustainable services that are meeting the needs of children and young people in Tameside.

3 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NOTE: To be completed once the rest of the content is finalised and agreed

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4 – CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN TAMESIDE

Tameside: total population = 221,692

- 0-17 years = 48,985 (22.1%), higher than the England average (21.3%)
- 0-21 years = 58,621 (26.4%)
- 0-25 years = 69,864 (31.5%)
- 18-64 years = 134,364 (60.6%)
- 65+ years = 38,343 (17.3%)

(ONS: mid-year population estimates 2015)

Population Projections

Between 2017 and 2022 Tameside’s younger population is set to grow by:

- 0-17 years (1,987)
- 0-21 years (1,120)
- 0-25 years (39)

	Tameside	England	Tameside	England
	% population growth 2017-22		% population growth 2017-27	
0-17 years	4.0	5.1	4.5	7.3
0-21 years	1.9	3.0	4.3	7.1
0-25 years	0.1	1.7	1.3	4.5

- Between 2017 and 2022 the 0-17 population in Tameside is projected to grow by 4% compared to a decline in population for those classed as working age (18-64); a reduction of 0.6%. Population growth is slightly slower in Tameside than England overall.

(ONS: sub-national population projections 2014)

Deprivation

- In 2015 Tameside was ranked 41st most deprived area out of 326 local authorities.
- Tameside has 8 LSOAs in the worst 5% nationally for deprivation.
- Tameside has 7 LSOAs in the worst 5% nationally for income deprivation affecting children. This increased from 2 LSOAs in 2010.

(DCLG – Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015)

- Eligibility for free school meals also provides an indication of the percentage of children living in low income households. In 2016, 18.7% of secondary school pupils were eligible and claimed a free school meal, higher than England, NW and statistical neighbours (18.7%, 15.2%, 17.51% and 13.2%).

- In 2014, 23.7% of under 16 olds lived in low income families higher than both England and the NW averages (20.1% and 22.8% respectively).

Vulnerable Children

As at January 2017:

- 1425 in need of help (up from 702 in January 2016); an increase of 103%
- 351 child protection (up from 206 in January 2016); an increase of 70.4%
- 495 looked after (up from 424 in January 2016); an increase of 16.7%

(Tameside Children's Services)

Education

- 63% of five-year olds achieved a good level of development in the Foundation Stage Profile, an increase of 5 percentage points on 2015 (58%). Although school readiness remains below the England average, the gap is closing and reduced from 8% points in 2015 to 6% points in 2016.
- 55% of pupils achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at key stage 2, slightly higher than the England average at 53% and stat neighbours (53.5%).
- 58% of Tameside's pupils achieved 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths, higher than the England average at 52.8% with the gap widening over the last three years from 0.3% points in 2014 to 4.5% points in 2016.
- In 2015 22.2% of looked after children achieved 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths compared to 57.3% of overall Tameside pupils.
- 93.4% of primary school pupils attend a good or outstanding school compared to 90.2% nationally. The rate is much lower for Tameside secondary school pupils with 59% attending a good or outstanding school compared to 81.9% nationally.
- Local monitoring data shows that 3.8% of 16-18 years are not in education, employment or training at Q3 in 2016/17. This was an increase of 0.2% points on the same quarter in 2015/16.
- In 2016, 45% of care leavers aged 19-21 were in education, employment or training and increase of 9% points on the previous year, however Tameside still remains below the England and Statistical neighbours average (49% and 49.4% respectively).

Health

- In 2014, 3.68% of births are classified as low birth weight, this is higher than the England average (2.68%) and is the highest rate for 5 years.
- In 2016, at reception, 23.55% of pupils are overweight or obese, slightly higher than the England average (22.14%) but lower than the statistical neighbours average (25.09%). By Year 6, a third of pupils are considered to be overweight or obese in Tameside (33.97%), however this is lower than both the England and statistical neighbours average (34.17% and 37.24% respectively)
- The rate for under 18 hospital admission due to alcohol was 67.84 per 100,000 population in 2012/13-2014/15, this is almost double the England average (36.61 per 100,000).
- Teenage pregnancy - Teenage conception rate has fallen consistently over the last 7 years from 59.8 per 1,000 population for the year to March 2008 to 24.4 for the year to March 2015.

Children's Services

- In 2015, 10% of looked after children have had 3 or more placement during the year, this equates to the England national average but is slightly higher than the NW (9%) and statistical neighbours averages (9.44%).
- 72% of looked after children have been in the same placement for at least 2 years or placed for adoption; higher than the England average (68%).
- In 2014-15, 26% of looked after children returned home after a period of being looked after, this reduced from 38% the previous year and is significantly lower than the England average of 34%.
- In 2016, Tameside's children in need rate per 10,000 population was 274.60 significantly below the statistical neighbours average (429.42) and the England and NW averages (337.70 and 380.10 respectively). However the percentage of children in need for 2 or more years stood at 41.8% in 2016, significantly higher than the England, NW and Statistical neighbours averages (30.9%, 31.3% and 29.41% respectively).
- In 2016 the rate of referrals to Children's Social care was 300.3 per 10,000 population, almost half the referral rate of the statistical neighbours (597.54) and lower than both England and NW averages (532.20 and 583.60 respectively). Between August 2016 and January 2017 the rate of referrals has risen to 579.11 closing the gap between Tameside and its statistical neighbours considerably.
- In 2016, 14% of looked after children were adopted, a fall of 3% points on the previous year and now below the national average of 15% and the statistical neighbour average of 21.2%.
- 53% of children wait less than 16 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family, higher than the England and statistical neighbours averages (47% and 50.9% respectively).
- Between December 2015 and December 2016 the percentage of re-referrals within 12 months of a previous referral was 15.5%. This is Below the national average of 24% and statistical neighbour average of 23%
- The proportion of Child Protection Conferences within 15 days between December 2015 and December 2016 was 79.3%. Slightly above the 2015 national average of 74.7% and in line with the north west average of 79.5% for the same period. Performance remains worse than the statistical neighbour average of 99.6%.
- In touch with 86% of care leavers
- 91% of care leavers in suitable accommodation – above national average (81%)
- 4 Residential Children's homes run by Tameside Council including: Boyds Walk – Outstanding. Clough Fold – Good, Chester Avenue Good
- 7 Children's Centres

5 – VOICE OF THE CHILD

- 5.1 We are committed to ensuring that the voice of the child is an essential part of service planning and that engagement with children and young people is meaningful. At every stage of the child protection process we will ensure that the child is listened to and kept informed of the decisions that are being taken around their care pathway to ensure they feel safe and able to voice their wishes and concerns. We will use a variety of techniques to engage with our young people including conversations, play and drawings to ensure that all children feel comfortable in providing their views. We will continue to review the findings from our engagement with our young people and combine the findings with our other engagement mechanisms such as 2BeUs.
- 5.2 We have supported 2BeUs – the Tameside Children in Care Council and listened to what they want from the service during their time growing up in care. We have collected these views and wishes and made them into a list of promises, the Tameside Pledge.
- 5.3 The Tameside Pledge includes promises to:
- Always involve children in the decisions that will affect them
 - Help children stay in touch with important people in their lives
 - Keep children safe, and help children to keep themselves safe
 - Help children achieve their potential
 - Help prepare children for independence and adult life
 - Listen to 2BeUs
- 5.4 The refreshed Tameside Pledge was presented to the meeting of Full Council on 29 November 2016 with a speech to the assembled group from the Chair of 2BeUs. The pledge was agreed by Full Council and all the councillors individually signed the pledge.
- 5.5 Improvement Plan engagement with 2 Be Us**
- 5.6 In February 2017 an engagement session took place with the members of 2BeUs to identify what they want to see in this Improvement Plan.
- 5.7 Children have told us that they want:
- They want more people to be available in the service, and they want them to be easy to get to know and get in touch with
 - Social workers who stay with them for longer
 - More Early Help services
 - To get the right service at the right time if something happens
 - Everyone to be aware of their own role in safeguarding children
 - Support from specialists when needed
 - Caring foster carers, who know their children and what they need
- 5.8 We recognise that regularly feeding back the ideas of children in care is crucial in order for us to be able to keep improvement not just on track, but on track with children's needs at the heart of the service. We will explore other opportunities and engagement mechanisms to capture the views of young people both in the care system and outside of it to understand how improvements in preventative work can be made to ensure better outcomes for young people and their families.

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6 – WHAT DOES/WILL GOOD LOOK LIKE

- 6.1 We want children and their families in Tameside to be successful. We will work to ensure that help is given at the earliest opportunity that enables children and their families to thrive wherever we can. In doing this we will seek to support families to break the cycle of reliance on services, and support children and young people to grow in a stable and settled environment. Children will have better experience of their time growing up and be supported to realise their aspirations.
- 6.2 Children and young people will be seen by a confident practitioner who is compliant with statutory guidance and applies the threshold of need accurately. This will ensure that children and young people are always given the best care possible and the most suitable placement.
- 6.3 Children and young people in care will be supported into stable placements where they are safe from harm and happy so that they are helped to live healthy lifestyles, and achieve at school. This will be possible because we see the voice of the child as a vital source of information that will direct future planning and implementation of the service.
- 6.4 Children, young people and their families will be actively involved in the plans that determine their care, both on an individual case level and a higher strategic level. Feedback from children and young people will be seen by elected members, senior leaders, managers and frontline practitioners, and will be used to draw up benchmarks of improvement so we know how well we are performing.
- 6.5 **We will seek to achieve the following outcomes:**
- Children and young people are supported to do well, be healthy both physically and emotionally, they feel safe from harm and their needs and wishes are listened to.
 - Children in need and their families receive good, multi-agency support based on their needs, so that children are helped to remain with their families where it is safe and appropriate to do so.
 - Children live healthy lifestyles and are enabled to do so by all professionals who know them
 - Children looked after are equipped to manage their emotional and mental health, and professionals refer them to the right care at the right time when concerns are identified.
 - Children in need of help and support are supported to attend and achieve at school, and any concerns such as missing lessons are identified and addressed by school and social work staff
 - Children looked after will not be held back at school by their personal backgrounds, or special educational needs or disabilities.
 - Care leavers will be supported and encouraged to be in education, training or employment as adults
 - Overall our children will be safe, happy, healthy, well educated and prepared to make a positive contribution to society.
- 6.6 **How will this be achieved?**
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- 6.7 To achieve 'good', there will be a culture change that will allow for strong partnership among social work staff and across the partnership of the service and key partners such as Greater Manchester Police, schools, health and safeguarding bodies across Tameside. Social work teams will have appropriate caseloads, and cases assigned to them that are appropriate for their level of experience. Help and support will be provided holistically with no gap between agencies and organisations. Support provision will take account of a full range of needs including, health, emotional well-being, and education.
- 6.8 Elected members, strategic leaders, managers, frontline practitioners and all relevant partners will be aware of what good looks like and actively drive and support improvement. Feedback from children and young people and their families will inform care planning.
- 6.9 Team managers will carry out effective supervision which ensures they know their staff and their cases well and are able to support effective decision making. Reduction in caseloads to levels that are manageable and suited to the social worker's skills and experience will enable social workers to build positive relationships with children and see them regularly.
- 6.10 Assessments of children and young people will be carried out in a timely manner, capture their views and take into consideration a comprehensive view of their parents' capacity to look after them at home. Assessments will result in objective and tangible, positive outcomes for the safety and wellbeing of children. This will be measured by benchmarks drawn up from good quality and up to date performance management reporting.
- 6.11 How will we know when we are improving?**
- 6.12 We will evidence our improvement journey in a number of ways to provide assurance to children and families, the Improvement Board, Elected Members and wider stakeholders that we are improving our services and supporting children and young people to lead successful lives. The tools we are using will include:
- **Performance Scorecard** – a comprehensive performance scorecard will bring together the key indicators we will use to evidence improvement. A subset of these indicators will be reported as focus areas at each Improvement Board meeting.
 - **Team Plans** – Each team will produce a plan on a page which includes the improvement actions each team is taking and shows progress against indicators of success. Team managers will meet regularly at performance clinics to discuss their improvement journey, address challenges and highlight best practice.
 - **Quality Audit** – a rolling programme of quality auditing will support and challenge the application of thresholds and decision making. Involvement of partners from key agencies such as health, education and Greater Manchester Police will ensure that decision making remains consistent and robust.
 - **Monitoring and Accountability** – The improvement Board will form the central pillar of accountability and scrutiny of progress. Regular updates on progress will be provided to key decision making bodies such as the Single Commissioning Board, Tameside Councils

Executive Cabinet and the Health and Well Being Board and the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel.

- **Practitioner Improvement** – Practitioner groups will support improvement led by frontline staff bringing together best practice and providing evaluation of service delivery.
- **Peer Review and Challenge** – Improvement will be supported by a programme of peer review and challenge. This will be taken forward through work in collaboration with organisations such as the Local Government Association, the North West Employers Organisation and sector leaders across Greater Manchester and the North West.
- **External Support** – Commission external support and expertise to support the improvement process through the analysis of the effectiveness systems and processes. Followed by critical friend review and testing of redesign.
- **Communication and Engagement** – A communications and engagement plan will set out the mechanisms for communication with stakeholders including use of social media, websites, newsletters and briefings. This will support the understanding of progress made in the delivery of the Improvement Plan, support engagement and collaboration and raise wider awareness of the support and services available to children and their families.

7 – OUR RESPONSE AND APPROACH

- 7.1 We are committed to rapidly addressing the concerns raised by Ofsted in order to ensure services within Tameside provide the best possible support to Children and Young People. To ensure that our approach is sustainable in the long term we will support children and young people and their families to become independent and self-reliant, and reduce dependency on public services. We will work closely with our partners so that services that meet the needs of children and young people are not delivered in silos. We will work together to support sustainability, reducing dependency and levels of need in our communities, and making best use of shared resources. The improvements we will undertake fall into 6 main themes:
- Leadership and Strategy
 - Demand and Need
 - Resources and Capacity
 - Quality, Practice and Compliance
 - Outcomes for Children
 - Sustainability
- 7.2 One core principle that will underpin the above 6 themes will be the Voice of the Child. This will inform the actions taken towards improvement, given that the needs of children in our care are paramount in securing genuine and sustainable improvement.
- 7.3 **Leadership and Strategy** – improving the leadership of services and the quality of information used to inform decision making.
- 7.4 Our aim is to build the understanding of issues that impact on the lives of children and young people in Tameside and ensure that agencies across Tameside have the right information at the right time to make the effective protection and safeguarding decisions at the earliest possible opportunity. To achieve this we must ensure that they are fully involved decision making and that services are shaped by their experience and views.
- 7.5 Effective leadership equipped with the right range of decision making tools is essential to ensuring professionals are enabled to work together with children and young people to achieve positive outcomes.
- 7.6 Working with Tameside Safeguarding Children Board as a key partner we will ensure that performance management information provided to senior leaders and elected members is timely and high quality and an effective quality assurance framework is used to support improvement across all partners. Tameside Safeguarding Children Board will be a key partner providing support and challenge to the improvement process.
- 7.7 **Demand and Need** – understanding the demand on services and ensuring that services are equipped to respond rapidly and effectively to need.

- 7.8 Our approach is to use accurate and up to date performance information to ensure that there is an understanding of demands on services and use this information to inform delivery and development of services which take account of underlying need. We recognise that frontline staff are one of our most valuable assets and whilst immediate demand has been met by an increase in agency staffing we are taking steps to ensure that workforce stability is increased and caseloads are reduced to allow staff to respond to need effectively.
- 7.9 Understanding need is about more than understanding the presenting needs of children and young people at the point of contact, it is about developing a holistic understanding of the support that it is required and ensuring that services are in place that are resourced to meet need effectively.
- 7.10 As a part of understanding holistic need we are focused on effective integration of services with key partners to enable effective early intervention.
- 7.11 **Resources and Capacity** – equipping services across Tameside to respond appropriately and deliver effective services.
- 7.12 The delivery of effective services for children and young people is reliant on the committed and skilled workforces of agencies across Tameside. A balanced financial plan has been put in place to ensure that adequate resources are committed to enable services to address both existing and emergent demand.
- 7.13 We recognise that in addition to financial resources effective delivery of services is reliant on the capacity both in terms of individual and collective skills of staff members and staffing numbers. To be able to practice well practitioners who work with children and young people must work in an environment which supports their development as professionals.
- 7.14 We are committed to ensuring that staff delivering services in organisations across Tameside have a suitable level of qualification for their job role and that they are supported in their professional development through an effective workforce development programme.
- 7.15 **Quality, Practice and Compliance** – ensuring that practice based decisions are made using consistent thresholds which result in high quality outcomes for children and young people in Tameside.
- 7.16 Consistent decision making based on a thorough understanding of needs and viewpoints of children and young people is essential to delivering services that are fit for purpose. We are committed to bringing partners together to ensuring that assessments are informed by consideration of family history and parental capacity and reflect changes in the child's needs and circumstances.
- 7.17 We will use regular quality audits and reflective practice across all agencies in Tameside to check that decision making is consistent and effective, and to ensure that the right help is delivered at the right time to support children and young people.
- 7.18 We will work in partnership with Tameside Safeguarding Children Board to ensure frontline practice is effectively evaluated and that learning is shared and informs decision making.

- 7.19 **Outcomes for Children** – achieving the best possible outcomes for children by focusing improvement and development activity on understanding and meeting the needs of children and young people in Tameside.
- 7.20 We will work with partners to improve outcomes by ensuring that help and support is available at the earliest possible opportunity using effective early intervention to improve life chances.
- 7.21 We will work together with education, health and protection services in Tameside to ensure that young people who are vulnerable are supported by all services to realise their aspirations be that in relation to living independently, education, employment or other ambition. We will work with children and young people by listening to them and using their insight to shape services which meet their needs.
- 7.22 **Sustainability** – maintaining long term improvement by putting in place services and interventions which address systemic issues driving demand on services.
- 7.23 Most children who are at risk of abuse or neglect will have contact with professionals working in services such as health, social care and education throughout their lives. Early intervention work focusing on identifying risk to children at an early stage, will enable services to take the most appropriate action to support children and young people and start to break cycles of reoccurring need. We will work with partners such as schools to ensure that opportunities to support children and young people who are at risk are not missed. Our Integrated Neighbourhood Support service will be a key partner in the journey by being at the forefront of the prevention agenda.
- 7.25 We are committed to a sustainable approach to service improvement including investment in programmes of work designed to reduce long term need. This includes the creation of an Edge of Care Service focused on an intensive whole family response to children on the edge of care focused on supporting families to remain together where safe. Other projects aimed at increasing sustainability include:
- Investing in intervention models that enable extended family members to work together with services to identify family options that help to secure permanence for children where appropriate.
 - Adopting more effective transition planning model for looked after young people that equips them with skills to continue their journey into adulthood. Working with partners such as, Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust, Active Tameside and New Charter we will work creatively with young people to ensure that their needs are met and they are supported in respect of employability and life skills.
 - Working together with partners on these and other projects we will seek out additional opportunities to ensure that effective intervention leads to reduced demand for services and supports the long term sustainability of services to support children and young people across Tameside.
 - Work through the Tameside Single Commissioning Organisation to reduce duplication and increase sustainability in planning services to improve health outcomes which meet the needs of children and young people and their families.

8 – IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The section below outlines each of the 6 thematic improvement areas in more detail including key actions that will be taken and measures we will use to monitor progress.

Leadership and Strategy

- 8.1 Leadership and the management of performance at a strategic level were identified as a key area of concern by Ofsted. In particular, recommendations for improvement were made in relation to:
- The quality of performance reporting to senior leaders, Elected Members and the Tameside Safeguarding Children Board
 - The effectiveness of arrangements to scrutinise the performance of services
 - The quality of supervision and management oversight
 - The use of the Common Assessment Framework amongst partner organisations
 - Delivery of the Corporate Parenting Strategy

Initial Response

- 8.2 A range of activity has been carried out in immediate response to concerns regarding Leadership and Strategy within the service. These include:
- Regular governance visits scheduled throughout the year to increase the oversight and visibility of senior managers
 - Monthly whole workforce engagement sessions
 - Reviewed induction framework for staff developed and ready for implementation by March 2017
 - Weekly briefing email circulated to all staff by the Assistant Executive Director for Children's Services together with minutes of senior managers meetings to increase communications and increase the visibility of decision making processes
 - An updated, improved performance scorecard to better inform strategic managers
 - An updated and improved data booklet for frontline teams to enable them to address issues and celebrate positives at the earliest stage
 - Training opportunity via STRIVE for front line managers available immediately and well attended
 - Performance clinics monthly for all managers to be held to account and for them to be able to flag up danger areas or blockages to success

Key Actions

- 8.3 The following actions will underpin ongoing improvement in relation to the strategic leadership of services to safeguard vulnerable children and young people in Tameside:
- The introduction of a fully integrated performance framework underpinned by regular and timetabled reporting to key stakeholders, including partners, team leaders, senior managers, elected members and scrutiny panels.

- Implementation of programme of activity enabling reflective learning including, regular staff workshops, programme of governance visits, and effective staff supervision to ensure that the impact of changing demand on services is understood.
- Work with Tameside Safeguarding Children Board to ensure that the Common Assessment Framework and Graded Care Profile processes are embedded across services in Tameside.
- All members of the Tameside Council Children's Leadership team will undergo a 360 evaluation programme. Following this and working in partnership with North West Employers a development and improvement programme will be put in place to ensure that there is a clear performance management framework for senior leaders.

What Will Good Look Like?

- 8.4 Strong leadership and collaborative strategies between partners will be the crucial ingredient to improvement. The voice of Children, including those in our Care will be the fundamental driver of high-level strategic improvement of Children's Social Care. Senior and middle managers, leaders and elected members will frequently seek and use feedback from children and their families for service development.
- 8.5 The Tameside Safeguarding Children Board will have a reviewed business plan and structure and a refreshed outlook tailored to the insight from children and frontline practitioners' experience. Understanding of good safeguarding practice will scrutinise practice effectively and enforce timely application of thresholds. There will be strengthened reporting links between the Tameside Safeguarding Children Board and the Corporate Parenting Strategic Group and Family Justice Board, so that safeguarding children can be monitored effectively.
- 8.6 Senior and middle managers will have a strong grasp of the concerns of children at risk of sexual exploitation, and awareness of this will be the focal point of achieving good outcomes such as ensuring that children feel safe and protected from harm. Leaders will establish a collaborative approach by building relationships with key groups such as the Tameside Safeguarding Children Board and Corporate Parenting Strategic Group, so that all parties share an understanding of how well services are benefitting children and young people.
- 8.7 Leaders will regularly monitor performance data and feed this information back to workers and managers, so leaders, managers, frontline staff and key partners all have clear benchmarks upon which to measure the success of improvement.
- 8.8 **Key Indicators**
- Number of contacts at the service entry point
 - Referrals per 10,000 of the child population (projected rate)
 - Re-referrals received within 12 months of a previous referral
 - Timeliness of response to referrals
 - Timeliness of assessments, statutory visits, child protection conferences and child in care reviews
 - Percentage of children with up to date reviews and care leavers with pathway plans which are effective
 - Stability, experience and Caseloads of workers
 - Findings from Audit on the quality of work being undertaken
- All staff will receive high-quality supervision and managerial oversight as often as they need it, and fitting with their level of skills and experience
 - Reporting of performance management to senior leaders and elected members is timely and of a high calibre

- A refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy will be shared across the partnership, so that external bodies can support the improvement process
- There is an effective quality assurance framework in place that will monitor, improve and increase the use of Early Help services
- Safeguarding practice is well-informed and is kept up to date though regularly capturing information and evaluating the effectiveness of the current strategy

Demand and Need

8.9 During the Ofsted inspection concerns were raised regarding Tameside's ability to respond effectively to increased demand on services and understand the needs of vulnerable children in Tameside. Concerns were raised with regard to the following:

- Ensuring there were sufficient staff in key areas to deal with demand on services and that workloads are manageable.
- Ensuring that staff have suitable levels of qualification and experience for the role that are required to undertake.
- Ensuring that action is compliant with statutory guidance and that thresholds are applied appropriately at points of access to services.
- Tameside Safeguarding Children's Boards capacity to evaluate thresholds across the partnership effectively.

8.10 Initial Response

8.11 In response to concerns relating to management of and response to underlying demand and need for services the following actions were taken:

- Immediate increase in agency staffing to meet immediate needs and ensure that sufficient capacity is in place to meet the needs of vulnerable children and young people.
- Rolling programme of recruitment is underway to stabilise the workforce in the medium term.
- Commitment to ensuring there are sufficient resources in place to reduce caseloads to appropriate levels allowing social workers and other staff sufficient time to carry out assessments and deliver services that meet the needs of children and young people.
- Undertaken a staffing review to ensure that suitable staff are available, deployed effectively and in the right numbers to meet demands on the service provided.

8.12 Key Actions

8.13 The following actions will underpin the approach of Tameside Council and its partners in meeting the needs of children and young people in Tameside and in ensuring that services in place are able to meet current demand and respond effectively to changes demands on services in the coming years:

- Work will be undertaken in partnership with the Tameside Safeguarding Children Board to analyse underlying need across the Tameside including all critical points of access such as, schools, health, the police service, and children's social care.
- Development of a Tameside demand forecasting model to enable effective implementation of service development and early help methodology.

- Ongoing review of service entry points to ensure that a sustainable model is in place that is responsive to changing demand levels and enables effective delivery of services to children and young people.
- Support the development of Tameside Safeguarding Children Board multi-agency data set to enable the effective delivery of scrutiny, support and challenge across Tameside.
- Review of all contact points to ensure a sustainable model is in place that is flexible to demand and able to respond effectively.

8.14 What Will Good Look Like?

- 8.15 Leaders and senior managers across Tameside are aware of changing and emergent demand and have sufficient information to enable effective decision making which supports timely response by services.
- 8.16 Children and young people in need of help and support will be seen by social workers who have the right knowledge and experience to be able to address each child's unique needs and formulate a plan based on the best outcome for that child.
- 8.17 Practitioners will have their caseload tailored to their ability to fulfil to job they undertake, and will have more time to deal with complex and varying circumstances with careful consideration. Children and young people in need of help and protection will not be delayed in receiving the right intervention that is consistently compliant with statutory guidance across the service, no matter what walk of life or type of care the child needs.
- 8.18 Leaders, managers and workers will have strong self-awareness of how application of thresholds benefits children in need, and how they are performing in this area. This will be guaranteed through higher level evaluation of whether the application of social work thresholds is both consistent across the service, and effective in ensuring the best outcomes for vulnerable children and their families. As a result, as soon as a child is identified as being at risk of harm, they will receive the right intervention at the right time.

8.19 Key Indicators

- Number of referrals
 - Number of Children in Need
 - Number of Children on a Child Protection Plan
 - Number of Children on a Child Protection Plan for more than 18 months
 - Number of children in our care
 - The proportion of children who attend planning meeting
 - The proportion of children in care who report that they feel supported and listened to.
 - % contacts with a decision in 1 working day
 - 5 initial child protection conference within 15 working days
 - % child and family assessments completed within 45 working days
- All areas of service have a sufficient level of staff that are well-equipped for the role they are required to take.
 - Quality assurance of work by senior and middle managers considers the quality of managerial decision-making at all stages of a child's involvement with the local authority
 - The application of thresholds for support of children and young people is consistent across the service and results in appropriate, timely intervention for children.

Resources and Capacity

8.20 Several improvement areas have been identified relating to the allocation of resources to support children and young people and the capacity of organisations in Tameside to respond effectively to need. In particular the following areas have been highlighted as priorities for improvement:

- Ensuring that all services have sufficient staff levels to cope with demand
- Ensuring staff have suitable qualifications for the role they are required to do
- Ensuring that newly qualified social workers on an assessed and supported year in employment receive sufficient support and training.
- Equipping staff across services with the skills they need to improve the services they deliver

8.21 Initial Response

8.22 In response to concerns regarding the resources and capacity available to meet the needs of vulnerable children and young people the following actions were taken:

- Increased opportunities for staff to share ideas and concerns via scheduled staff engagement sessions including regular staff surveys, the set-up of an improvement inbox and working groups to address specific development areas.
- The decision making protocol has been reviewed to ensure that managers are supported to make decisions in a timely manner.
- All newly qualified social workers are enrolled on a university assisted Supported Year in Practice programme.
- Additional funding has been made on an ongoing basis to meet immediate demands on service together with specific funding to support the long term improvement programme.

8.23 Key Actions

8.24 The following actions will be undertaken to ensure that sufficient resources are available and that services have capacity to deliver support that meet the needs of children and young people in Tameside.

- Implementation of a revised workforce development model focused on developing a stable and skilled workforce including a full development programme for Newly Qualified Social Workers.
- Revision of existing salary and progression structure to ensure that Tameside remains a competitive employer and supports staff retention.
- Implementation of an appropriate caseloads approach setting out Tameside's approach to managing caseloads and providing team managers with an established framework to address caseload pressures.
- Implementation of multi-agency involvement at points of access to children's social care including clearer multi-agency arrangements for planning for vulnerable families.
- Development of a shared understanding of the roles of different agencies to increase coordination and reduce duplication in meeting the needs of children and young people.
- Development of referral pathways into services such as the Child and Adult Mental Health Service. This action includes a review of transition into key health services and consideration of a 'fast track' process where appropriate.

8.25 What Will Good Look Like?

8.26 Children looked after and children in need of help and protection from the authority will be seen by staff from a stable supported workforce. Children looked after and children in need of help and protection will consistently receive the level of service that they require, and decisions are made with careful consideration. The service overall will have a varied workforce with manageable caseloads. This means that social workers will have the time to visit children on their caseload and build positive relationships with families.

8.27 The authority is working towards a workforce made up of permanent staff and will reduce reliance on agency staff, so that children will be known well by their social worker, and will not have to repeat their story again and again. Newly Qualified Social Workers will be fully supported in their Assessed and Supported Year in Employment, guaranteeing that they are fully able to undertake their role and are supported in the decision-making process.

8.28 All social work staff will receive regular supervision and managerial oversight that reflects their level of experience, so children and their families can be sure that the right decision is being made about their future. Leaders and managers will be aware of and understand the volume of cases and the quality of care plans and decisions which will provide accountability for safe and effective social work practice. Supervision will boost confidence among teams and help to retain and develop staff for longer.

8.29 Key Indicators

- Average overall caseloads for social work staff
- Average caseload for none social work practitioners
- Average caseload of Newly Qualified Social Workers
- Number of permanent Social Work staff
- Looked after children and children on a child protection plan with 3 or more changes of social worker over the previous 12 months.
- Social work staff will have manageable caseloads that are appropriate for their skills and experience, so that they are guaranteed time with children and their families.
- All social work staff will receive regular supervision and managerial oversight that reflects their level of experience
- Staff on the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment will receive the appropriate level of management oversight according to their needs, and have access to external support

Quality, Practice and Compliance

8.30 A range of improvement areas has been highlighted regarding quality, practice and compliance with statutory requirements and guidance. These include:

- Ensuring that action taken is compliant with statutory guidance and that application of thresholds in casework with children and families is appropriate
- Effective consideration of history and parenting capacity that informs through analysis of risk
- Consistency of gathering, recording and use of children's views and wishes
- Ensuring assessments are updated regularly and reflect children's changing needs and circumstances

- Ineffective methods of ensuring the views of children and young people influence service planning
- The quality of managerial decision making and the application of thresholds and all stages of a child's involvement with the local authority
- Ensuring services promote the emotional health and well-being of children
- Effective scrutiny and evaluation of the quality of frontline practice and services provided to children
- Support 2BeUs to provide effective representation of the views of children of all ages and those placed at a distance from the local authority.

8.31 Initial Response

8.32 In response to concerns regarding quality, practice and compliance the following immediate steps have been taken:

- Practitioners group has been established to support high quality practice which feeds directly into team and service improvement plans.
- Performance clinics are held monthly and shared by the Assistant Executive Director, bringing increased focus on team level performance
- The use of online case management systems has been expanded to the Fostering service to increase consistency of practice and availability of information. Plans are in place to increase use of this system further.
- Voice and Experience of the Child working group has been established to support the development support and resources aimed at ensuring that the Voice of the Child is heard in all areas of service delivery, is evident in all areas of involvement with children and shapes care planning.
- The Tameside Pledge to Children in Care has been refreshed and approved at Full Council on 29 November 2016.

8.33 Key Actions

8.34 The section below outlines key actions that will be undertaken to ensure that quality and practice is sufficient to effectively meet the needs of children and young people in Tameside and that the authority complies with all statutory guidance and requirements in delivering these services:

- Review of Tameside's Quality Assurance Framework in order to ensure a consistent and rigorous approach to quality is the norm.
- Work with Tameside Safeguarding Children Board to embed effective application of thresholds across organisations working in Tameside including the review of existing thresholds where appropriate, overseen by a new sub group of the Strategic Board focusing on Threshold management.
- Review of the Child and Family Assessment to ensure there is adequate analysis of risk and consideration of the history and chronology of individuals.
- Review of operational and commissioning arrangements to ensure multi-agency care provision can be delivered effectively.

8.35 What Will Good Look Like?

8.36 Thresholds for social care intervention will be reviewed and updated to ensure they are effective, and will be applied rigorously and consistently across the service. Children and families can be sure they will be seen by a workforce that is clear on the criteria for intervention.

- 8.37 Practitioners will be thorough in assessments and care planning, ensuring that all issues with regard to the child's wellbeing is taken into account. For example, Child and Family Assessments will take full consideration of family history and parental capacity, with learning clearly articulated including from effective and up to date chronologies.
- 8.38 Assessments are regularly updated and shape care planning. When a child goes missing, a return home interview will always take place and information gathered will be used to safeguard the child, promote their emotional health and protect them from sexual exploitation.
- 8.39 The voice of children looked after will be heard and recorded through various channels. 2BeUS will be supported to represent children looked after, including those who have been placed away from the area. Data from groups such as this will inform planning at a strategic level, and the views of children and young people will be used to inform planning on an individual level.

8.40 Key Indicators

- % of Child protection reports, looked after children review reports and pathways plans completed within timescales and reviewed on a regular basis.
 - Number of care leavers in suitable accommodation
 - % of case file audits graded inadequate, Requires improvement, Good and outstanding respectively
 - % of case audits with evidence of Child's voice recorded
 - % Looked After Children attended by allocated social worker or team manager
 - Number of episodes of children missing from home
 - Number of return home interviews completed
- The views and wishes of children and young people of all ages are consistently recorded and taken into consideration when planning
 - Children and young people receive the right help and are seen at the right time so that their health and emotional wellbeing are always put first
 - Social work assessments are informed by careful consideration of family history and parental capacity, and will reflect children and young people's needs and changing circumstances.
 - A sufficient programme of both single and multi-agency audits provides effective scrutiny and evaluation of frontline practice.
 - The quality assurance of work by middle and senior managers considers the quality of managerial decision-making, and the application of thresholds at all stages of a child's involvement with the authority.
 - Care leavers are always placed in suitable accommodation arrangements that are conducive to leading independent lives.
 - Return home interviews are always conducted after a child or young person goes missing, and any information gathered is used for planning ahead and reducing future risk.

Outcomes for Children and Families

- 8.41 Ensuring that children and young people achieve the best possible outcomes is a central aim which underpins the delivery of services across Tameside. Ofsted's judgement of Tameside's Children's Services as inadequate and the Tameside Safeguarding Children Board as requiring

Improvement highlights that there are significant opportunities to improve outcomes for children and young people in Tameside across a range of services.

8.42 Tameside Council and its partners are committed to improving outcomes across the board with particular focus on the following areas:

- Timeliness of service delivered to support children and young people
- The use of single and multi-agency audits to evaluate the quality of practice and enable improvements to service delivery
- Ensuring that all children leaving care have access to suitable accommodation, including ceasing using bed and breakfast accommodation for care leavers aged 18-25.
- Supporting children and young people to shape decision making and have a say in service improvement.

8.43 Initial Response

8.44 The following actions have been taken to ensure that services across Tameside are focused on achieving the best possible outcomes for children and young people in Tameside.

- Review and relaunch of the Tameside Pledge to Children in Care setting out the how partners will work together to deliver services which will meet the needs identified by children and young people
- Development of an outcomes focused performance framework to support leader, manager and staff to understand progress towards improving outcomes for children and young people.
- Engagement with Tameside Safeguarding Children Board to develop joint approach to improving outcomes across Tameside in partnership with local agencies.
- Work with partners to ensure immediate improvement for children who are witnessing or suffering domestic abuse by eliminating delay
- Work with housing providers to ensure that our care leavers do not need to be placed in unsuitable accommodation
-

8.45 Key Actions

8.46 The second below contains the key actions that will support the achievement of positive outcomes for children and young people in Tameside.

- Development of 2BeUS to ensure that there is effective representation of children of all ages and from children who are placed at a distance from Tameside.
- Work with schools colleges and employers in Tameside to increase the support, help support networks, advice and guidance available to looked after children and young people who are moving towards independence.
- Engagement with health partners to ensure that the health needs of vulnerable children are addressed with particular regard to ensuring that mental health needs are considered and addressed at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Coordinate with partners in the voluntary sector to provide care leavers with life skills, volunteering & mentoring opportunities for young people.
- Development of engagement strategy with children and young people that ensures that the voice of the child is embedded within services that support vulnerable children and young people across the borough.

8.47 What Will Good Look Like?

- 8.48 The overall goal for children and young people in Tameside is that we want them to achieve the best possible outcomes and have a smooth transition to independence, where care leavers feel prepared to make the transition to adulthood.. Children in care should have the same achievements and happiness as their peers who haven't been in care.
- 8.49 Pathway plans for children and young people are rigorous, up to date and are produced in a timely manner so that plans are carefully thought out and are suited to the young person's needs. Young people remain 'in touch' with their worker, who support them according to their needs. All care leavers will have access to suitable accommodation.
- 8.50 Young people will feel emotionally resilient and will be able to take on education, training or employment in their adulthood. This will be supported through the development of invest to save initiatives, such as From Care to Success, which would address the current issues of young people leaving care ill-equipped, and to ease the transition from semi-independent accommodation to complete independent living.
- 8.51 Key Indicators**
- % of Personal Education Plans completed and reviewed
 - % Pathway plans completed and reviewed
 - School Readiness - % of pupils achieving a good level of development
 - % of Looked After Children achieving A*-C in GCSE English and Maths
 - % of Looked After Children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2
 - % of looked after young people aged 16-18 in Education Employment or Training.
- Support of the Children in Care Council enables representation of the views of children of all ages, included those placed at a distance from the local authority.
 - Children and young people are made aware of the pledge to children looked after and care leavers.

Sustainability

- 8.52 We believe that long term sustainability is key to maintaining services that meet the needs and demands of children and young people in Tameside. Building sustainability must underpin the long term approach to services.
- 8.53 We are committed to fundamentally changing how our services are received by residents. We will work closely with our partners so that service meet the needs of people and are not delivered in silos and we will support children and their families to be successful. We will working together to support sustainability, reduce dependency and levels of need in our communities, and make the best use of our shared resources.
- 8.54 Key areas for improvement that have been highlighted that relate to increasing sustainability include:
- The quality and completion of pathway plans with particular regard to ensuring that plans are up to date and reflect their current needs and circumstances.

- Ensuring that services are in place that meet the needs of children and young people in a timely fashion, including making sure that services meet emotional health and well-being needs
- Development of services that reduce long term and underlying demand and seek to break the cycle of dependency.

8.55 Initial Response

8.56 The following actions have been taken which are aimed at increasing the long term sustainability of services through reducing demand and increasing long term sustainability:

- Implementation of invest to save proposals in the following area:
 - Family Group Conferencing – Working with extended families to identify options to secure permanence for children.
 - Edge of Care Service – Investing in supporting families to remain together where it is safe to do so.
 - From Care to Success – Effective transition planning for young people preparing for independence.
- Implement schemes with partner agencies such as New Charter Housing that support care leavers to have a smooth transition to independent living.
- Wider investment plan in place to map out a financially sustainable route to increasing the sustainability.
- Rolling recruitment programme targeted at increasing workforce stability in the medium to long term with targeted development aimed at ensuring long term skill development helps to enable a responsive workforce.

8.57 Key Actions

8.58 The section below highlights the actions that will be undertaken to support the development of sustainable services in Tameside that are shaped by and meet the needs of vulnerable children and young people.

- Implementation of the revised quality assurance programme ensuring that action taken by social workers is always compliant with statutory guidance, that emotional health and wellbeing is always considered, the application of thresholds is appropriate, and interventions are timely so that the right help will support children and young people in the long run.
- Development of links between services that provide support and intervention relating to domestic abuse including development of a joined up approach to services provided to Adults and Children.
- Implementation of a revised early help model which builds on effective partnership working with education, and health partners and interventions with families to help ensure that support is delivered at the earliest point possible reducing long term need and demand.
- Integration of the Children's Hub service and Integrated Neighbourhood services teams to support demand reduction through an early help and prevention approach.
- Work through the Tameside Single Commissioning Organisation to reduce duplication and increase sustainability in planning services to improve health outcomes which meet the needs of children and young people and their families.

8.59 What Will Good Look Like?

8.60 The improvement process in Children's Services in Tameside must have sustainable outcomes if they are to be successful. Actions in the short term to medium term reduce demand in the long term, and help children and their families lead happier healthier lives.

8.61 Extensive research and evidence has shown that early intervention, specifically before the point of need, makes for a more long-term, sustainable alternative to children becoming looked after by the authority.

8.62 Children and Young People will be involved in co-designing of services and have a clear voice at all levels of decision making.

8.63 The emotional health and well-being of children and young people is always considered in the delivery of services, intervention and care planning.

8.64 Key Indicators

- Reduction in demand at all levels in the service
- Percentage of case audits with evidence of Child's voice recorded
- Reduction in rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan
- Implementation of Invest to Save Programmes. New models like Family Group Conferencing, Edge of Care Service and From Care to Success will create better, earlier support that reduces need for court intervention and allows families greater agency in care plans. It will also promote a smoother transition for care leavers into adulthood.
- Action taken by social workers is always compliant with statutory guidance, the application of thresholds appropriate, and interventions are timely so that the right help will support children in the long run.
- Stabilising the workforce – recruiting more agency social workers in the short term; rolling out the recruitment drive for permanent social workers will strengthen skilled workforce
- Good support/supervision/oversight of social work staff makes for happier workforce; increase staff satisfaction/retention in the long run.

9 – ACTION PLAN

9.1 Below is the strategic action plan we will be guided by in our work to improve children’s services and outcomes for vulnerable children in Tameside. The action plan will change and evolve as we work on our improvement areas and identify new and emerging ways of achieving positive change. We will regularly update the public on progress against our Improvement Plan and these underpinning actions.

Leadership & strategy

Ref	Action / project	By who?	By when?
A1	Work with partner and peer organisations to engage peer support within the improvement process.	AED Childrens Services Dominic Tumelty	
A2	Engagement of the Local Government Association to develop and support peer review arrangements.	DCS Stephanie Butterworth	
A3	Engagement of external Directors of Children’s Services challenge visits alongside the ongoing improvement process	DCS Stephanie Butterworth	
A4	Integrated programme of activity to enable reflective learning based on practitioner insight including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular all staff workshops - Regular all managers meetings - Staff surveys and consultation with partners to gauge progress - Scheduled governance visits to increase oversight by and visibility of senior managers. 	AED Childrens Services Dominic Tumelty	
A5	Review of the Looked After Children’s Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review to be carried out by Corporate Parenting Group Chaired by the Executive Member for Children and Families. 	Sheena Wooding reporting to the CPG	
A6	Promotion of the Corporate Parenting Role across Tameside Council including embedding understanding of the corporate parenting role across services.	DCS Stephanie Butterworth Councillor Robinson	
A7	Development of wider links to support the Voice of the Child including development of Tameside youth Council and wider networks such as Tameside Safeguarding Children Board Youth Forum and support for the development of the youth champions network.	Head of Service , Safeguarding and Review Ged	

		Sweeney	
A8	Work in partnership with Tameside Safeguarding Children Board to increase the effective use of the Common Assessment Framework and Graded Care Profile by organisations across Tameside.	Head of Service, Early help and YOT and Chair TSCB Sally Dickin / David Niven	
A9	<p>Introduction of a new performance framework involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Team self-assessment - Improvement planning process - Regular performance clinics (managers and staff) - Development of demand forecasting <p>The performance framework will be underpinned by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weekly caseload reporting focusing on key cohorts including Child in Need, Child Protection Plans and Looked After Children - Monthly reporting of baseline indicators and Children's Services Improvement Plan framework, including workforce statistics and investment decisions - Regular timetabled reports to key stakeholders including, senior manager, elected members, scrutiny panels, Tameside Safeguarding Children Board and key partner organisations. 	<p>AED Childrens Services Dominic Tumelty</p> <p>Head of performance Jane Barker</p>	

Demand and need

Ref	Action / project	By who?	By when?
B1	Maintain recruitment programme for agency staff to meet short term demand and develop approach to ensure that rapid recruitment options are available to manage short-term and unanticipated pressures on the workforce.	<p>AED Childrens Services Dominic Tumelty</p> <p>Head of HR Tracy Brennan</p>	
B2	Implement a rolling recruitment programme for permanent social work staff to increase workforce stability and reduce changes of social worker.	<p>AED Childrens Services Dominic Tumelty Head of HR Tracy Brennan</p>	

B3	<p>Identify causes and address issues within the Children's Hub following spike in unassigned contact ensure points of failure have been addressed and waiting times have been reduced.</p> <p>Performance will be monitored on an ongoing basis and reviewed as a part of the Continual Improvement process.</p>	Head of Service referral and assesment	
B4	<p>Review of all contact points to ensure a sustainable model is in place that is flexible to demand and able to respond effectively.</p> <p>Including increasing involvement from partner agencies including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Colocation of staff from the Greater Manchester Police Public Protection and Investigation Unit - i.e. LAC Health Teams and Safeguarding Provider Teams. <p>This model will be reviewed as a part of Continual Improvement processes, to ensure that it is working as effectively as possible.</p>	Head of Service Referral and Assessment	
B5	<p>Relaunch of the revised Children's Hub following review including engage of stakeholders in communicating revised points of access to ensure their role and function is understood and being used effectively.</p> <p>Including clearer multi-agency arrangements for planning for vulnerable families.</p>	Head of Service Referral and assessment	
B6	<p>Development of a financial plan which enables stabilisation of services and long term investment to reduce demand through invest in services that reduce long term demand through effective intervention at the earliest opportunity.</p>	DCS Stephanie Butterworth Finance Manager Stephen Wilde	
B7	<p>Carry out a review of data and information sharing approach to ensure interfaces between partners and agencies enable more effective and timely decision making. In particular relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children missing from home. - Looked After Children moving into Tameside from other local authority areas. - Safeguarding where family members attend different schools 	Head of Service, Conference and Review Ged Sweeney Head of performance Jane Barker	
B8	<p>Development of links between the Elective Home Education team and Children's Social Care to ensure that safeguarding is taken into consideration where home education is requested.</p>	Head of Service, Referral and Assessment	
B9	<p>Support the development of Tameside Safeguarding Children Board multi-agency dataset to enable the effective delivery of scrutiny,</p>	Head of Performance	

	support and challenge across Tameside.	Jane Barker Chair of TSCB David Niven	
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Resources and capacity

Ref	Action / project	By who?	By when?
C1	Refreshment and implementation of a workforce strategy to support skills development and recruitment, and build workforce stability.	AED Childrens Services Dominic Tumelty Workforce Development Brendan kennedy	
C2	Design and implementation of a revised induction process to ensure that new staff are provided with the effective information and support.	AED Childrens Services Dominic Tumelty Workforce Development Brendan kennedy	
C3	Establishment of appropriate caseload levels based on an assessment of skills and experience of staff members.	AED Childrens Services Dominic Tumelty	
C4	Bring forward proposals based on salary and progression structures form across the region to ensure the Tameside offer is competitive and helps support the staff retention.	Head of HR Tracy Brennand AED Childrens Services Dominic Tumelty	
C5	Development audit process to ensure that supervision processes are embedded and effective and used at all levels within the organisation.	Head of Service QA Katherine	

		MacKay	
C6	Undertake a programme of University supported training to support Newly Qualified social Workers.	AED Childrens Services Dominic Tumelty Workforce Development manager Brendan kennedy	
C7	Ensure that partners and safeguarding leads have are provided with sufficient information to support the understanding of processes for making referrals to Children's Social Care and that processes are fully understood.	Head of Service, Referral and Assessment	
C8	Ensure that staff and partners involved in making referrals to safeguard children and young people are able to challenge and discuss decision making where appropriate to ensure that there is mutual understanding of decision making and that the application of thresholds is effective and consistent.	Head of Service, Safeguarding and Review Ged Sweeney	
C9	Tameside Children's Services to engage with partners in Tameside Schools to develop a supportive approach to safeguarding decision making including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building relationships between agencies based on dialogue, mutual respect and shared understanding. - Effective and timely communication. - Decision making focused on the needs of the child. - Signposting to other agencies where appropriate. - Careful consideration of case closure. 	AED Education Bob Berry Head of Service Early Help and Intervention and Sally Dickin	
C10	Development of electronic referral processes to enable effective and accurate recording of referral information and reduce delay in response to requests for services.	AED Childrens Services Dominic Tumelty Head of Performance Jane Barker	
C11	Work with Tameside Safeguarding Children Board to develop the partnership wide training offer which offers a range of training opportunities to all agencies.	Head of Service , Safeguarding and Review	

C12	Development of referral pathways into services to support children and young people with mental health needs such as the Child and Adult Mental Health Service. This action includes a review of transition into key health services and consideration of a 'fast track' process where appropriate.		
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Quality, practice and compliance

Ref	Action / project	By who?	By when?
D1	In depth individual case audits to support learning and development together with wider case audits to quality assure decision making and practice.	Head of Service QA Katherine MacKay	
D2	Development of a programme of improvement activity to support good quality practice which complies with statutory requirements. Improvement activity to be led by the Consultant Social worker.	Head of Service QA Katherine Mackay Workforce Development manager Brendan Kennedy	
D3	Increasing development activity and support of Children In Care Council following refreshment and reorganisation in 2016.	Head of Service, LAC	
D4	Undertake a review of Tameside's Quality Assurance Framework overseen by the Head of Service in Charge of Quality Assurance in order to ensure consistent and rigorous Quality Assurance is embedded into service delivery at all levels.	Head of Service QA Katherine MacKay	
D5	Ensure that where appropriate existing thresholds are applied effectively and reviewed where thresholds are deemed to be inappropriate. The focus of this activity will be on ensuring that decisions taken are consistent and appropriate.	Head of service, safeguarding and review	
D6	Work with Tameside Safeguarding Children Board to embed thresholds with partner agencies and ensure that there is a clear understanding and application of thresholds across organisations working in Tameside.	Head of Service, Safeguarding and Review	
D7	Child In Need procedures have been reviewed including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Processes in place for when a Child in Need moves across Local Authority boundaries. - Clarification of step up and step down processes. Further work will be undertaken to ensure that process remains fit	Head of Service, Safeguarding and Review Ged Sweeney	

	for purpose and that data and information sharing takes place at appropriate points.		
D8	Review of the system of Domestic Abuse notifications in partnership with Greater Manchester Police to ensure a timely response to notifications.	Chair of Strategic Domestic Abuse Steering Group Stephanie Butterworth	
D9	Ensure that information regarding missing children is gathered and used effectively to inform planning and reduce future risk through: - Effective contract monitoring Missing children contract - Implementation of the recommendations of the review of the missing panel - Address gaps in performance information relating to children missing from home or care or those at risk of child sexual exploitation.	Head of Service, Safeguarding and Review Ged Sweeney	
D10	Prepare and bring forward a report on all assessments over 12 months old with further reviews to take place on practice and application of assessment processes. The report will include specific consideration of history and chronology of individuals as a part of the ongoing review and quality assurance programme.	Head of Service QA Katherine MacKay	
D11	Review the Child and Family assessment to ensure that adequate analysis of risk and consideration of the history and chronology of individuals as a part of the ongoing quality assurance and review process.	Head of Service QA Katherine MacKay	
D12	Increase the proportion of pathways plans completed within timescales. - Ensure that caseload levels are suitable and allow completion of pathway plans - Ensure consideration of entitlement is given in all pathway plans - Ongoing monitoring of pathways plans regular reporting of completion	Head of Service LAC Sheena Wooding	
D13	Ensure referral processes are clearly documented and available to those involved in safeguarding children. Including review of Common Assessment Framework processes to ensure that all partners understand how, why and when the Common Assessment Framework process is used and increases engagement from a range of agencies.	Head of Service, Early help Sally Dickin	
D14	Develop two-way communication process between key agencies that ensures: - Clear and timely feedback on decision making is provided where referrals do not meet threshold.	Head of Service Referral and Assessment	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Notifications take place when changes take place such as a change of social worker - Enables reflective learning processes 		
D15	Recruitment of Common Assessment Framework coordinators to promote use of the framework amongst universal services.	Head of Service, Early help Sally Dickin	
D16	Review of operational and commissioning arrangements to ensure multi-agency care provision can be delivered effectively		
D17	Engagement with external experts to support the improvement process through system analysis and redesign.	AED Childrens Services Dominic Tumelty	

Outcomes for children

Ref	Action / project	By who?	By when?
E1	Development and implementation of Children in Care Council 'Owl' campaign promoting designated safe places in Tameside. Full offer to be developed focusing initially on public buildings and those used by key partner organisations. work to be taken forward in partnership with the children in care Council	Head of Service LAC Sheena Wooding	
E2	<p>Work with partners to ensure that appropriate placements are available to ensure that Bed and Breakfast use is avoided. Work to include the agreement of processes with partners for ensuring bed and breakfast placements for Young People do not take place, even in extreme circumstances.</p> <p>Monitoring data to be included in key performance information to ensure that any cases where the use of bed and breakfast accommodation takes place are investigated thoroughly.</p>	DCS Stephanie Butterworth	
E3	Implement learning from complaints, children's and young people's participation, and peer reviews to inform strategic planning.	Head of Service, Conference and Review Ged Sweeney	
E4	Develop engagement of Children and young people at a strategic and operational level to ensure that the Voice of the child is embedded within all systems, and processes. Including participation in case planning including structured audit and review process and use of young people's views at a case level to inform the strategic planning process as well as the individual journey of young people.	AED Childrens Services Dominic Tumelty	

	<p>Engagement of wider agencies to broaden the mechanisms to seek and gather the views of children and young people.</p> <p>Engagement of children and young people inside and outside of the care system to support the improvement of preventative services.</p>		
E5	Development of 2BeUS to ensure that there is effective representation of children of all ages and from children who are placed at a distance from Tameside.	Head of Service LAC Sheena Wooding	
E6	Work with schools colleges and employers in Tameside to increase the support, help support networks, advice and guidance available to looked after children and young people who are moving towards independence.	AED education Bob Berry Head of Service LAC Sheena wooding	
E7	Engagement with health partners to ensure that the health needs of vulnerable children are addressed with particular regard to ensuring that mental health needs are considered and addressed at the earliest possible opportunity.	Hazel Chamberlain	
E8	Coordinate with partners in the voluntary sector to provide care leavers with life skills, volunteering & mentoring opportunities for young people and provide information to services that enables access to support available.	Head of Service LAC Sheena Wooding	

Sustainability

Ref	Action / project	By who?	By when?
F1	<p>Implementation of Family Group Conferencing Invest to Save Programme</p> <p>Increasing Family Group Conferencing in order to ensure that wherever possible Family Group Conferences are completed before the implementation of Care Proceedings.</p> <p>This approach will help to reduce delay and increase opportunities for alternatives to long term care that will provide the best care outcomes for children.</p>	Head of Service Conference and Review Ged Sweeney	
F2	<p>Implementation of Edge of Care Invest to Save Programme -</p> <p>Creation of an intensive, whole family response to children at the edge of care that will provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Out-reach - In-reach - Family sessions 	Head of Service Referral and Assessment	

	<p>- Short breaks residential provision where requested</p> <p>The aim of this service is to better support families to remain together where safe.</p>		
F3	<p>Implementation of from Care to Success transition programme for Care Leavers Invest to Save Programme</p> <p>Extending on the existing transition planning model for disabled children to all children in care. This approach will equip young people with the skills they need to enter adulthood through a person centred approach.</p>	<p>Head of Service LAC Sheena Wooding</p>	
F4	<p>Implementation of revised foster carer payments scheme aimed at supporting the development of foster carers including a payments structure focused on the needs of individual children and skills of foster carers.</p>	<p>Head of Service LAC Sheena Wooding</p>	
F5	<p>Investment in the development of residential care homes in Tameside to reduce reliance on external placements for children who are looked after in residential settings.</p>	<p>Head of Service LAC Sheena Wooding</p>	
F6	<p>Review and relaunch of Tameside Councils Early Help service to ensure that staff are partners are clear about the provision available and able to access services effectively.</p> <p>To include review of information provided to support access to services available through other channels such as the Voluntary and Community Sector.</p>	<p>Head of Service Early Help Sally Dickin</p>	
F7	<p>Development of links between services that provide support and intervention relating to domestic abuse including development of a joined up approach to services provided to Adults and Children across partner agencies.</p>	<p>DCS Stephanie Butterworth</p>	
F8	<p>Develop resources which highlight and champions best practice and facilitates two way discussion of practice between partners to support the continual improvement.</p>	<p>Head of Service QA and Consultant Social Worker Katherine MacKay</p>	
F9	<p>Increased integration of the Children's Hub and Integrated Neighbourhood services teams to support demand reduction through an early help and prevention approach.</p>	<p>Head of Service Referral and Assessment AED Stonger Communities Emma Varnam</p>	

F10	Implementation of the revised quality assurance programme ensuring that action taken by social workers is always compliant with statutory guidance, that emotional health and wellbeing is always considered, the application of thresholds is appropriate, and interventions are timely so that the right help will support children and young people in the long run.	Head of Service QA Katherine MacKay	
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10 – PERFORMANCE SCORECARD

- 10.1 Achievement of the aims of our Improvement Plan, and progress towards those aims, will be measured in a number of ways.
- 10.2 Our performance framework will enable a clear assessment of progress towards improved quality of life. The action plan within the Improvement Plan will have milestones that will measure and report progress towards implementation. But it is important to have the performance scorecard alongside this to assess achievement of tangible outcomes for children and families. The scorecard will not just be indicators it will include quantitative and qualitative information such as outcomes from critical friend reviews of practice, service user feedback etc. The service has developed a new performance framework, team self-assessment process and improvement planning approach which will be monitored through regular performance clinics (a two-way process between managers & staff).
- 10.3 Below are the headline performance indicators against which we will measure progress and success.

Contacts

Ref	Measure
1	Number of contacts received by Children's Services: a) Total number of contacts received by Children's Services b) Number of contacts received via the Children's Hub c) Number of contacts received from other teams
2	Number of contacts by outcome: a) Number of contacts referred into children's social care b) Number of contacts referred to early help c) Number of contacts where no further action is required d) Number of contacts where information/advise is provided e) Number of contacts referred to another agency
3	Percentage of contacts with a decision made within 1 working day: a) Percentage of contacts with a decision made within 1 working day for Children's Services b) Percentage of contacts with a decision made within 1 working day for the Childrens Hub c) Percentage of contacts with a decision made within 1 working day for other teams

Referrals

Ref	Measure
4	Total number of referrals received
5	Number and percentage of referrals where a decision was made within 24 hours
6	Number and percentage of re-referrals within 12 months of a previous referral

7	Number of referrals by source (top 5)
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Assessment

Ref	Measure
8	Number and percentage of Children and Families Assessments completed within 45 working days

Caseloads

Ref	Measure
9	Children's Services caseloads: a) Total number of open cases b) Number of looked after children c) Number of children who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan d) Number of children in need cases (excluding LAC and CP)
10	Number of children stepping up and stepping down from the service by: a) LAC b) CP c) Children in need

Child protection

Ref	Measure
11	Number of Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC)
12	Percentage of children whose ICPC was held within 15 working days of strategy discussion
13	Number of children who become the subject of a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time in the last two years
14	Total number of child protection reviews held
15	Percentage of conferences held within the timescale

Looked after children (LAC)

Ref	Measure
16	Percentage of looked after children aged between 3 and 15 with a current PEP
17	LAC reviews: a) Total number of reviews due b) Total number of reviews undertaken c) Number of reviews held with statutory timescale d) Percentage of review held within statutory timescale
18	Educational attainment of LAC: a) Percentage of LAC achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at KS2 b) Percentage of LAC achieving A*-C in English and Maths
19	Health of LAC:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Percentage of LAC with an annual health assessment completed b) Percentage of LAC with an annual dental check completed
20	<p>LAC Placements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Percentage of LAC with 3 or more placements during the year b) Percentage of have been in the same placement for at least 2 years or placed for adoption c) Percentage of children looked after who are placed for adoption within 12 months of the decision that the child should be placed for adoption

Care leavers

Ref	Measure
21	<p>In touch with care leavers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) % of care leavers the service is in touch with b) Number and percentage of care leavers who are NEET c) Number and percentage of care leavers who are in suitable accommodation
22	<p>Pathway Plan reviews for care leavers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Number of reviews held within timescale set on ICS b) Percentage of reviews held within timescale set on ICS
23	Percentage of young people participating at Pathway Plan review

Early help

Ref	Measure
24	School Readiness - % of pupils achieving a good level of development

Staff

Ref	Measure
25	Average social work caseload
26	Percentage of LAC or CP children with 3 or more changes of social workers in the previous 12 months
27	Average caseload for none social work practitioners
28	Average caseload of Newly Qualified Social Workers
29	Number of permanent Social Work staff

Voice of the child

Ref	Measure
30	The proportion of children in care who report that they feel supported and listened to.
31	% of case audits with evidence of Child's voice recorded
32	Number of return home interviews completed
33	Percentage of case audits with evidence of Child's voice recorded

Other

Ref	Measure
34	Number of episodes of children missing from home

11 – OFSTED RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 Ofsted made 20 recommendations in their inspection report published on 9 December 2016 which are list below. The full report can be found on the Ofsted website at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/tameside>
- 11.2 Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.

1	Ensure that all areas of service have sufficient staff of a suitable level of qualification and experience for the role that they are required to undertake and that their workloads are manageable.
2	Ensure that action taken by social workers is compliant with statutory guidance and that the application of thresholds in casework with children and families is appropriate.
3	Ensure that social work assessments include an effective consideration of history and parenting capacity that informs thorough analysis of risk and ensures that assessments are updated regularly to reflect children's changing needs and circumstances.
4	Ensure that the quality assurance of work by senior and middle managers routinely considers the quality of managerial decision making and the application of thresholds at all stages of a child's involvement with the local authority, including contacts within the Children's Hub.
5	Improve the quality of performance management reporting to senior leaders and elected members, so that they have sufficient information to benchmark improvement against clear, good practice standards.
6	Ensure that all staff receive high-quality supervision and managerial oversight at a frequency that reflects their skills and levels of experience and agree levels of external support for newly qualified staff on the assessed and supported year in employment programme.
7	Ensure that children's views and wishes are consistently gathered, recorded on files and used to inform planning.
8	Work with partners to ensure coordinated early help for a wider group of children through increased use of early help assessment and plans via the common assessment framework, and implement an effective quality assurance framework to monitor and improve the quality of work done in early help.
9	Ensure that children looked after are provided with timely services to make certain that their emotional health and well-being are promoted.

10	Ensure that when children go missing from home or care, the information gathered at return home interviews is used to inform planning effectively and reduce future risk.
11	Care Leavers - Ensure that all care leavers have an up-to-date and good-quality pathway plan that reflects their current needs and circumstances and that they have full information about their entitlements to support them into adult life.
12	Ensure that support to the Children in Care Council enables effective representation of the views of children of all ages and those placed at a distance from the local authority. This should include work to ensure that the pledge to children looked after and care leavers is refreshed and communicated effectively to all children and young people.
13	Ensure that the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for care leavers aged 18 to 25 ceases.
14	Review and update the corporate parenting strategy to give clarity to the work of the board and ensure that this is shared across the partnership, so that external scrutiny can support improvement in services for children looked after.

Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

15	Undertake an urgent review of Tameside Safeguarding Children Board (TSCB) priorities and update its business plan to include concerns about frontline practice and service delivery at all levels of need, and ensure that an evaluation of the impact of safeguarding practice upon children's well-being and safety is undertaken and included in the board's annual report.
16	Establish a programme of sufficient multi-agency and single-agency audits to enable effective scrutiny and evaluation of the quality of frontline practice and service provided to children.
17	Ensure that the board is able to evaluate whether the application of thresholds across the partnership is effective and is resulting in timely and appropriate intervention for children.
18	Improve understanding and informed challenge of safeguarding practice in Tameside by regular critical analysis of accurate and up-to-date performance information from all partners. This is to include the development of an integrated multi-agency data set concerning children at risk of child sexual exploitation, ensuring that the prevalence is accurately captured and enabling an evaluation of the effectiveness of the current strategy.
19	Re-establish effective methods of ensuring that the views of children and young people influence the service planning needed to deliver TSCB priorities and plans.
20	Establish effective links with the corporate parenting strategic group and family justice board to ensure that the TSCB has appropriate oversight of outcomes for children looked after and those who are the subject of care proceedings.

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12 – GLOSSARY

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13 – CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Concerned about a child?

Tameside Council

Tameside Council provide support to children and families. We always seek to offer preventative support to children and their families in partnership with parents to promote the child's welfare and ensure parents and where necessary the wider families, are able to meet their children's needs.

The Children Act 1989 lays a duty on the Local Authority to make enquiries into any allegations

We work together with children, young people and their families to ensure that we have a complete picture of the problem so that we can offer the right support. We aim to keep families together by providing back-up and support to prevent problems getting too big.

If you are concerned about the welfare of any child or young person please contact the Children's Hub on **0161 342 4101**.

The Children's Hub is open Monday to Wednesday 8.30am - 5.00pm, Thursday 8.30am - 4.30pm, Friday 8.30am - 4.00pm.

Outside of these hours please call Tameside Council Emergency control on **0161 342 2222**

If the situation is **immediately dangerous for the child** please call **999** and ask for the Police.

Tameside Safeguarding Children Board

Tameside Safeguarding Children board is the partnership responsible for making sure that children and young people are kept safe in Tameside. You can find further information about safeguarding children and young people in Tameside on the Boards website:

<https://www.tamesidesafeguardingchildren.org.uk>

If you require further information about Tameside Safeguarding Children Board please call **0161 342 4348**

Other Help and Support

The following organisations also provide support, advice and guidance in relation to safeguarding children and young people.

Childline - <https://www.childline.org.uk/> Phone – **0800 1111**

NSPCC - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/> Phone – **0808 800 5000**