

# Public Document Pack

**THE CIVIC MAYOR, CHAIR OF  
COUNCIL BUSINESS AND ALL  
MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

Sandra Stewart, Director of Governance  
and Pensions  
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Our Ref	r/Council
Ask for	Robert Landon
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Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to attend an **ORDINARY MEETING** of the Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council to be held on **Tuesday, 14th June, 2022 at 5.00 pm** in the **Jubilee Hall - Dukinfield Town Hall** when the undermentioned business is to be transacted.

Yours faithfully,



**Sandra Stewart**  
**Director of Governance and Pensions**

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From: Democratic Services Unit – any further information may be obtained from the reporting officer or from Robert Landon, Head of Democratic Services, to whom any apologies for absence should be notified.

Item No.	AGENDA	Page No
1.	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
2.	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest from Members of the Council.	
3.	<b>PUBLICATION OF OFSTED FOCUSSED VISIT &amp; TAMESIDE RESPONSE</b> To consider the attached report of the Deputy Executive Leader (Children's & Families) and the Director of Children's.	1 - 28
4.	<b>REPORT UNDER SECTION 5 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING ACT 1989</b> To consider the attached report of the Monitoring Officer.	29 - 30
5.	<b>URGENT ITEMS</b> To consider any other items which the Chair of Council Business (or other person presiding) is of the opinion shall be dealt with as a matter of urgency.	

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From: Democratic Services Unit – any further information may be obtained from the reporting officer or from Robert Landon, Head of Democratic Services, to whom any apologies for absence should be notified.

# Agenda Item 3

**Report To:** COUNCIL

**Date:** 14 June 2022

**Cabinet Lead** Cllr Bill Fairfoull - Deputy Leader & Lead Member for Children

**Reporting Officer:** Ali Stathers-Tracey - Director Children's Services

**Subject:** **PUBLICATION OF OFSTED FOCUSSED VISIT & TAMESIDE RESPONSE**

**Report Summary:** This report sets out the letter published on 6 June 2022 (**Appendix A**) from the Ofsted Focussed Visit.

This report **sets out our response and immediate action** to swiftly address the priority actions issued to Tameside Council and our statutory partners GMP and NHS providers.

## **Background**

The previous inspection of Children's Services was an assurance visit in May 2021. Tameside was last formally rated as requiring improvement to be good in 2019.

Ofsted notified the Council on 19 April 2022 that it was coming to undertake a focussed visit of our integrated front door arrangements for children under the statutory ILACS framework.

Following an intensive week of preparation and two days on site, the Inspectors gave us feedback to say that, although children are safe and some aspects of services have improved; since their previous assurance visit in May 21. that they found that the pace of implementing the required improvements has been too slow meaning that some children were living with risk longer than they should.

These findings have resulted in the Council and our partners being issued with two priority actions for improvement, they are:

- (i) Political and corporate leaders' understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement and for this to be underpinned by a well-informed self-assessment and improvement plan that will drive and monitor practice improvement effectively.
- (ii) Timely interventions to assess and reduce risk to children, including multi-agency strategy meetings and the allocation of a social worker to see children.

In addition to being required to respond to the urgent and immediate recommendations from Ofsted, the DFE advise us that they are considering issuing Tameside with a formal Improvement Notice to be in place for 12 months. This notice brings additional support and advice from an appointed improvement adviser who will work with us to offer assurance to Ministers that we are on track to deliver our agreed improvement action plan.

**Recommendations:** The Council accepts all of the recommendations and findings of the Inspectors and moves swiftly to put in to place and implement a plan to address areas that require a new focus based on an honest, detailed self-assessment, detailed action plan and revised improvement board that is chaired by an independent children's expert:

1. The Council acknowledges the challenges of delivering at

pace to improve services for children under previous leadership arrangements, including the impact of changes in Senior Officers for Children's Social Care during 2021-22.

2. The Director of Children's drive forward the recruitment and refined structures of a completely refreshed Leadership team for the social care system already initiated under the new Director of Children's Services.
3. The Council and its statutory partners commission a peer review of the effectiveness of Children's Safeguarding Partnership arrangements working with Stockport as our partner in practice. The review findings to report to the Children and Families scrutiny committee by autumn 2022.
4. The Council tasks the newly created Children and Families scrutiny committee to hold the Lead member for Children and DCS to account for progress of the improvement plan and improvement board on a quarterly basis.
5. The Council & Children and Families scrutiny committee to receive assurance from the Corporate Parenting Board that the whole Council and all partners work relentlessly to maximise opportunities for children and young people, including care leavers accommodation choice, work opportunities and inclusive education and training opportunities.
6. The Council endorses the draft transformational plan to move Children's delivery teams in to revised office accommodation in the four localities that better meets the needs of the children and families that we support and directly supports front line workers and managers.
7. The Council endorses the working draft response to Ofsted as set out in this report and the Improvement Plan attached at **Appendix B**), which is draft as it requires consultation with all partner agencies and stakeholders including Scrutiny and approval by Ofsted.

**Corporate Plan:**

To achieve our priorities:

- Very best start in life where children are ready to learn and encouraged to thrive and develop
- Aspiration and hope through learning and moving with confidence from childhood to adulthood
- Resilient families and supportive networks to protect and grow our young people

**Policy Implications:**

In line with policy and intended to strengthen approach and ensure robust challenge and holding to account of all stakeholders.

**Financial Implications:**

**(Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

In recognition of the priority that the Council has placed on achieving improvements in Children's Services, significant additional resources have been allocated to the Directorate over the last few years.

More recently, in response to the Ofsted Focussed Visit in May 2021, additional non-recurrent funding of £966K was approved from the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Reserve. This additional two year investment was provided to increase capacity to deliver service improvements.

In March 2022 additional non-recurrent funding of £250K was approved from the Council's MTFS Reserve to appoint a team of managed Social Workers for six months.

This report does not detail any additional expenditure and resources that are required to implement improvements and address the priority actions. If additional resources are to be required a further report will be brought to members detailing the request for decision making. Any request for non-recurrent funding will need to be approved from one-off reserves. Any request for recurrent funding will need to be financed from within the Council's approved budget. In order to ensure that the Council continues to set a legal budget and a financially sustainable Medium Term Financial Plan, any additional investment will need to be financed from an increase in savings and efficiencies elsewhere.

**Legal Implications:**  
**(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)**

Organisations that have good governance use clear decision-making processes, behave openly by reporting on their activities, actively engage with their stakeholders, effectively manage the risks they face, and take responsibility for controlling and protecting their assets, including their reputation. Each of these areas of governance activity contributes to an organisations success. This reports sets out how that is intended to be achieved with the clear aim of improving Children's outcomes foremost; noting that the Council has had to face unprecedented demand and costs particularly over covid reflecting that our communities are struggling. The experiences of children and families most in contact with our services are heavily shaped by family poverty, housing & energy cost stress as well as poor access to early support from all partner agencies be it police, health, council etc. arising from years of public service austerity. The children's social care system is hugely underfunded. Energy & food poverty are a key issue for families in need at the moment, worsened by Covid together with the increasing cost of living generally with inflation at nearly 10%. The impact of this is wide reaching, from affecting children's health and education, to undermining their confidence to build and sustain relationships. The unprecedented demand and costs we are facing is reflected in a number of national reports including [Independent review of children's social care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/108122/independent-review-of-childrens-social-care-2022.pdf) published on the 23 May 2022, which Government responded to on the same day.

**Risk Management:**

A full assessment of risks associated with the improvement plan for children will be developed and presented to the improvement board including a refreshed self-assessment of the quality of provision.

**Access to Information:**

<b>Appendix A</b>	Ofsted letter published on 6 June 2022
<b>Appendix B</b>	Working draft response to Ofsted

Further information can be obtained by contacting Ali Stathers-Tracey, Director of Children's Services

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6 June 2022

Ali Stathers-Tracey  
Director of Children's Services  
Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council  
Market Street  
Hyde  
Tameside  
SK14 1AL

Dear Ms Stathers-Tracey

### **Focused visit to Tameside children's services**

This letter summarises the findings of the focused visit to Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council children's services on 27 and 28 April 2022. Her Majesty's Inspectors for this visit were Mandy Nightingale and Jo Warburton.

Inspectors looked at the local authority's arrangements for the 'front door'.

This visit was carried out in line with the inspection of local authority children's services (ILACS) framework.

### **Headline findings**

During the previous focused visit, in May 2021, council leaders agreed to provide immediate additional investment to address a lack of capacity across several parts of the service which was causing delay for children in having risks identified and their needs met. However, this has not been implemented at pace.

Since that time, the local authority has continued to experience capacity issues across all levels of the service, and the response to some children at immediate risk of harm has deteriorated. Too many children experience delay in having their needs for help and protection promptly assessed and met. There is a systemic delay in the convening of strategy discussions, which means that risk for most children is not promptly considered in a multi-agency forum, leaving children in circumstances of unassessed risk for too long.

The local authority's self-assessment of the front door does not demonstrate sufficient insight into the areas requiring improvement and the service improvement plan is not focused on the right areas to improve outcomes for children. The pace of change has only very recently increased following the appointment of a new director

of children's services (DCS) 10 weeks ago. Many of the changes made are too recent to demonstrate sustainable impact.

### **Areas for priority action**

- Political and corporate leaders' understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement and for this to be underpinned by a well-informed self-assessment and improvement plan that will drive and monitor practice improvement effectively.
- Timely interventions to assess and reduce risk to children, including multi-agency strategy meetings and the allocation of a social worker to see children.

### **What needs to improve in this area of social work practice?**

- The quality and timeliness of child and family assessments to inform next steps planning.
- The effectiveness of management oversight, including the frequency and quality of supervision and the challenge of poor social work practice that causes drift and delay.
- The strategic and operational relationship with Greater Manchester police, to ensure timely engagement in child protection assessment and planning.

### **Main findings**

At the previous focused visit, in May 2021, political and corporate leaders agreed an increased level of financial support to address capacity issues in the workforce. However, this has not been implemented at pace. An additional social work team was not established until 10 months later. This is now contributing to some early improvements. However, at the time of this visit, the impact on improving children's lives is not evident. Within the last 10 weeks, the new DCS has secured additional funding to increase capacity in the leadership team, and recruitment was progressing at the time of the visit.

The new DCS has very recently made some positive changes to support improvements in social work practice, staff morale and partnership working. Improvements include the move of the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) to new premises, which has enabled the co-location of early help and MASH, the development of neighbourhood teams and the reintroduction of duty and assessment teams. Early help assessments that are completed by partner agencies have increased and schools are supported to work more closely with social workers.

Tameside has continued to experience high rates of COVID-19 infections. Staff continued to mostly work from home until the week before this focused visit. The DCS reported that staff sickness and absence levels have not, however, increased due to COVID-19. Through a refreshed recruitment and retention strategy, the local authority has already seen an increase in the number of experienced social workers

returning to work for Tameside. While this has had a small impact on social work caseloads, too many social workers have high numbers of children on their caseloads, and this leads to delay in timely interventions in children's lives.

Despite these recent changes, political, corporate and operational leaders do not know their services and the impact for children well enough. A recently refreshed self-assessment of the front door services demonstrates what has changed in this area of service and the main challenges. However, before this visit, leaders were not fully aware of the extent and impact of repeated contacts about children, the systemic delay in convening multi-agency strategy meetings and in allocating a social worker to assess risks and needs in a timely way.

Before this visit, the new DCS had identified that the current improvement plan is not fit for purpose and does not sufficiently address the practice improvements needed to improve children's lived experiences or hold individuals to account for their role in bringing about these changes. She has commissioned an independent review across services to better inform ongoing service planning.

When children are at risk of significant harm, there is a systemic delay in the process for convening strategy meetings. For too many children, the risk of harm is not being considered quickly enough to agree actions and put in place safety plans to reduce risk. Greater Manchester police are not always available to attend strategy meetings promptly and this delays the date of these meetings, adding to the risk that children experience. When multi-agency child protection strategy meetings are held, they are attended by the relevant professionals involved in the child's life. They share relevant information, assess risk and identify appropriate actions to reduce risk, to safeguard the child.

Too many children experience unnecessary delay in having their needs assessed and met. In most of the cases that inspectors reviewed, children were not allocated a social worker from the duty and assessment team in a timely way. Children are not always being seen by social workers promptly and this is potentially placing them at risk of ongoing harm.

Children's needs for early help and support are identified promptly in MASH. Swift allocation to appropriately skilled and experienced early help workers means that children and families are offered a wide range of effective support. The flexibility of the early help offer means that families are well supported, including in the evenings and at weekends.

Effective use of parenting support programmes and targeted early help has supported some families to change and improve children's daily lived experiences and prevent escalation to statutory services.

Most partner agencies provide sufficiently detailed information when raising concerns for children and this supports the MASH managers to make decisions about next steps. Managers in the MASH engage with professionals when concerns are not sufficiently detailed to support decision-making. Concerns for children's welfare are promptly responded to in the MASH. Parental consent to gather and share information is appropriately sought and when necessary is overridden to permit multi-agency enquiries. The co-location of early help staff and several other professional agencies means that information is gathered quickly to support timely decisions about what happens next.

Decision-making in the MASH mostly considers the child and family's history and the impact on the child of the presenting issue. The voice of the child is captured at this early stage by the people who best know the child, and this contributes to an understanding of the child's lived experience. However, the application of threshold is not always consistently applied at the front door. For some children, decisions are not made in the child's best interests at the first stage of raising concerns and this means they experience repeated contacts over a short period of time. For children, this results in different professionals intervening in their lives and them having to repeat their stories. For some children, the decision to progress with further enquiries as a single agency does not result in risks being considered through a strategy meeting, resulting in delay in having their needs fully assessed and risks identified.

Children experiencing domestic abuse in their lives are swiftly referred to the MASH by the police. The quality of most domestic abuse referrals is sufficient to enable MASH managers to make a decision for next steps. Decision-making about what happens next is not consistent and some children's cases are closed too quickly, without a comprehensive child and family assessment to fully understand their lived experiences and the potential risk they face.

Children and family assessments are limited in their effectiveness to create an informed plan for families and professionals to work to and reduce risk for children and improve their lived experience. Assessments are not always timely. They lack a robust analysis, do not consider all information about families or do not always include relevant adults, including fathers and wider family members. Some children's assessments of need do not focus on the impact on the child and are too adult/parent-focused. For too many children, the delayed allocation of a social worker and frequent changes of social worker contribute to the weaker assessments. Children are not always able to build trusting relationships with their social worker and this impacts on their ability to share their experiences to inform what happens next.

Once allocated a social worker, most children are seen regularly. However, not all are engaged in purposeful direct work that helps to start building a trusting relationship with the social worker that will provide them with the opportunity to share their views and contribute to future decision-making.

Children who require support out of office hours receive an effective and consistent service from a stable and experienced team of social workers. Social workers in the out-of-hours service have effective relationships with a range of agencies to work together and provide immediate protection for children. Succinct and timely recording on children's records provides an up-to-date narrative of what actions have been taken to inform the day services.

Exploitation risks are promptly recognised and passed to workers in the complex safeguarding team. Comprehensive assessments result in effective multi-agency planning and clear written plans. Children are encouraged to engage in activities to reduce their levels of risk. Children benefit from purposeful and effective direct work with skilled workers and for some children this means that wider push and pull factors are better understood and risks are reduced.

When the risk of exploitation increases, timely risk management meetings, attended by the relevant agencies, make appropriate decisions to safeguard children.

Supervision for social workers in the duty and assessment teams is not always held regularly and it is not effective enough to improve children's circumstances. Records of supervision do not include reflection, review previous actions or have new actions for the social worker, although staff reported that they feel supported by managers. Staff also reported that they have very recently seen a positive change in the culture and ways of working in Tameside, with clearer expectations being provided, which is better supporting them in their work.

Ofsted will take the findings from this focused visit into account when planning the next inspection or visit.

We have notified the Department for Education of the areas for priority action. You should submit an action plan that responds to these areas within 70 working days of receiving this letter. It would be very helpful if you can share an early draft of the action plan with us within 20 working days of receiving this letter.

Yours sincerely

Mandy Nightingale  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

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## Tameside Childrens Social Care Improvement Plan June 2022-June 2023

**Vision Statement – That we fulfil all focussed actions across partner agencies and can see measured improvements in the outcomes for Children and their families and demonstrate we have good, safe and consistent practice across all Childrens service teams**

### Background

Tameside Childrens Social Care services was rated as Requiring Improvement to be good in the last full OFSTED Inspection in 2019. In May 2021 Tameside underwent a Covid assurance inspection where it was discovered that service standards and quality had deteriorated since the 2019 Inspection. During this assurance visit, Inspectors were given assurances that investment to create more capacity in SW Teams specifically. In April 2022, Ofsted undertook a Focussed Visit of the Front Door in Tameside. Despite very recent improvements reported by Inspectors, overall they feel that services for children have deteriorated further despite an additional injection of £1.5M Council funding to increase Social Worker capacity. As a result, Inspectors have indicated that we could be issued with (Pending final letter 6<sup>th</sup> June) two priority actions to the Council and our partners including the requirement to produce and monitor this improvement plan and report routine progress in to a **more focussed improvement board**.

This action plan and improvement progress will be reported quarterly to Children & Families Scrutiny Committee but also the Senior Leadership Team of the Local Place Board to ensure transparency of service status and underperformance to address directly action that cannot be resolved by the new Improvement Board.

**This Improvement Plan focusses on 7 priorities** to ensure that we do the things that will make the greatest difference for Children, Young People and Families in Tameside.

- 1. A new Improvement Board accountability framework and plan to measure and challenge improvement**
- 2. A refreshed workforce recruitment & retention plan of action**
- 3. A grip and transparent challenge of the effectiveness of changed systems across partners to keep children safe**
- 4. Deliver improvement in the consistency and quality of assessments, plans through a refreshed Quality Assurance Framework**
- 5. Deliver an integrated family offer in the 4 locality areas of Tameside**
- 6. Continue to Safely reduce the numbers of Children who need our care and improve outcomes for those we care for and care leavers**
- 7. Assure that Social Work and Early Help Practice is consistently high quality, responds directly to the voice of the child and /or young person and demonstrates positive impact and change to children's lives**

Item	Action	Lead/ Timeframe	Progress/ Comments	RAG
<b>1. Create a new Improvement Board accountability framework and revise the Tameside Safeguarding Partnership delivery arrangements</b>				
Page 12 Improve Governance and Corporate Leadership	Improvement Board Development session to be run to sign off and agree the Improvement plan, named accountable officers – including Corporate Leaders of the LA, timescales for delivery and measures of impact are clear and well evidenced	20th June 2022	Improvement Board review day planned 20 <sup>th</sup> June  New Improvement Plan to be refreshed and signed off by agencies by end June 2022	
	Revised Board members are clear around their accountability and responsibilities for improved services and evidence impact for children by independent board survey undertaken September 2022			
	Council CEX and Deputy Leader agreed as key members of the improvement board and are held to account for corporate action taken to improve the impact and outcomes of Childrens services			
Agree Leadership and chairing/deputy arrangements for the new Improvement Board	To agree with key Partners future Improvement Board chairing arrangements to demonstrate external challenge based upon current expertise in improving Childrens Services	By June 2022 DCS and All Partners		
Improve Board Attendance and Accountability	All Board members are to identify a deputy and provide contact details for them  Agency attendance log, updates and evidence presented against key actions to be updated at every meeting in order to	By June 2022 All Partners  Named Lead by Agency		

	measure progress and improvements against agreed actions			
Refresh Terms of Reference for the Tameside Safeguarding Childrens Partnership	Review existing Safeguarding Partnership arrangements in respect of Working Together post pandemic and agree new Chairing and accountability structures that will ensure detailed understanding of the system weaknesses and address these through careful challenge and support	DCS, GMP CCG Accountable Officer/CEX		
New Council Leader and Cabinet appointed also new dedicated scrutiny panel established for Childrens services - May 22	<p>Minutes and actions of the Safeguarding partnership to be reported to the new Childrens scrutiny panel on a 6 monthly basis in a chairs report.</p> <p>Evidence of improved pace and change of corporate service support for children's services accommodation, ICT, and support for recruitment and retention reported by front line workforce and managers via staff survey reported in to improvement board by December 2022</p>	<p>Lead Member Children/ CEX/ DCS June 22</p> <p>CEX/Lead member Children ongoing each meeting review by December 22</p>		
Improvement Board to drive the effectiveness and impact of the Self-Assessment Framework (SEF) to evidence that we truly understand the	<p>Revised SEF to be presented to Improvement Board and Childrens scrutiny committee by September 22 and on an exceptions basis quarterly.</p> <p>Board to be assured that the evaluation directly speaks to the CHAT Data and</p>	<p>DCS/ADs/ Sept 22</p> <p>Board Chair/DCS Feb 23</p>		

strengths and weaknesses of services for children	presenting Annex A evidence from feedback from our annual Peer Review with NWest ADCS report			
<b>2. Demonstrate improved workforce recruitment and retention strategy for Childrens Social Work Teams to secure a stable, permanent well supported team structure including new Heads of Service for Social Care Teams</b>				
<p>Drive forward the recruitment process for three Permanent HoS for CIN/CP, Cared for Children and Care Leavers and Head of Quality Assurance and Safeguarding</p> <p>Page 14</p>	<p>Adverts and search started week commencing 30 May</p> <p>Regular briefings and conversations for staff in CSC and wider workforce demonstrates positive feedback from updates on progress around recruitment</p> <p>Induction planned and delivered successfully for new permanent HoS appointments</p> <p>360 degree review undertaken by all new Directors and HoS to learn and reflect on their effectiveness and impact of delivery in first 6 months and 12 months</p>	<p>DCS/AD CSC/AD EHP and HR By July 2022 DCS/ADCSC/All Managers in CSC</p> <p>AD CSC &amp; HR July 2022</p> <p>September 2022</p> <p>April 2023</p>		
New permanent CSC Leadership Team to be in Place delivering improvements for children by October 2022	All temporary and interim leadership vacancies filled successfully with a strong, experienced focus on stability and improved performance outcomes for Children, Young People and their families	AD CSC, HR & All HOS and Managers by October 2022		
Workforce recruitment and retention plan refreshed and demonstrating an	Monthly recruitment and retention report reviewed and challenged by the board with a measured improvement towards target of	Tameside HR and AD CSC		

<p>improved position for permanent workers in CSC Teams</p>	<p>75% permanent staffing by December 2022 and 85% by March 2023.</p> <p>Tameside Recruitment &amp; Retention strategy presented to Board by September 22 including benchmarking of current T&amp;C's and offer demonstrating our competitive edge in GM and the region.</p> <p>Plan revisited and any risks or changes reported back to Improvement Board to be addressed through direct action before formal reports by HR in December 22 and March 23</p> <p>Impact of the Managed SW Service introduced in April 22 to be measured and reported for review by October 22</p> <p>Expansion of Managed SW service report considered and approved in support in to new ASYE cohort of employed SW's by August 22</p>	<p>Tameside HR, Principle SW, AD CSC</p> <p>AD CSC by October 2022</p> <p>AD CSC by October 22</p> <p>DCS by August 22</p>		
<p>Workforce survey across CSC and EH Teams reports an improvement in workloads, caseload and partner agency swift input to help children</p>	<p>Workforce survey undertaken in <i>December 22 and repeated March 23</i> to demonstrate to the board the impact of the workforce plan including new Leadership arrangements compared to current independent review findings from May 2022</p>	<p>DCS/AD CSC AD EH&amp;P March 23</p> <p>AD CSC/HoS QA report January 2023</p>		

	<p>Review of the impact of new Supervision procedures and processes for staff by 6 months at November 22.</p> <p>An understanding of the impact of multi-agency Group Supervision effectiveness from dip sample reports and reviews from staff feedback in report to the Board by March 23</p> <p>Permanent and stable workforce reflected by the reported experience of children and families evidencing the reduction in changes of worker captured by C&amp;F survey findings bi-annually in to board</p>	<p>AD CSC/AD EH&amp;P by March 23</p> <p>AD EH&amp;P/Principal SW By December 22 and June 23</p>		
<p>Improve communications, recognition and pride in work to build and strengthen services for children in Tameside</p>	<p>Partner agencies to agree a shared communication brand and strategy for work to make a difference for children to ensure that every child achieves their best</p> <p>Board to host multi agency staff awards celebration event to promote work with children and young people by Feb 23</p> <p>Planning group for awards, including children and parents, to be put together, date, venue and programme to be agreed and implemented by February 2023</p> <p>Review impact of the awards and plan for future celebration and recognition of key</p>	<p>Agency Comms Leads/CICC/Youth Council</p> <p>DCS/ CICC/AD EH&amp;P by Feb 2023</p> <p>DCS/Board/All Board Members April 2023</p>		

	improvements seen for children & Young People			
<b>3. A grip and transparent challenge of the effectiveness of changed systems across partners to keep children safe</b>				
GMP to put in place a new system and rota for attendance at strategy meetings to ensure 100% compliance and effectiveness	GMP to report the progress on revising their internal protocols, processes and timeliness targets for attending strategy meetings but also as this extends to CP conferences and high risk Team Around meetings at each meeting	Rob Cousins June 2022		
Finalise a new contract for the 0-19 service to measure and demonstrate accountability for the recruitment of Health Visitors and School Nurses including requirement to directly improve the quality of assessments and reduce risk for children in respect of health outcomes	<p>New contract to be in place and Improvement Board members to contribute to the effectiveness of the recruitment plan for nurses with provider providing detailed update reports and held to account and recorded at each meeting.</p> <p>New contract and suite of PIs in place, agreed and reviewed by the partners by July 2022 and in April 2023.</p> <p>Partners are ensured that there is sufficient capacity and skills to deliver measurable improvements for the health needs of children including Health checks, dental checks , SALT and other therapeutic support including timely, integrated access to mental health support</p>	<p>Director of PH, NHS Provider by end June 2022</p> <p>Director of PH, NHS Provider April 2023</p> <p>Director of PH, NHS Provider by end June 2022</p>		

<p>Revised compliance report for Strategy meeting response &amp; attendance to be built in to the revised TCSP terms of reference and performance framework</p>	<p>First report to be modelled and system built to extract data by agency. Tracked timescales from request for Strategy meetings to be reported and substandard responses addressed directly by the Safeguarding Partnership revised performance management system</p>	<p>July 2022 All Board Members Tameside Performance Team</p>		
<p>TSCP fully understands the nature of contacts and referrals coming in to the MASH and identifies the impact of repeat contacts for children across agencies</p>	<p>Routine reports on contacts and referrals including repeat children and families is reviewed by the Board and data is understood and challenged to reduce duplicate agencies input for the child young person or carers</p>	<p>DCS/AD EH&amp;P All Board members by July 2022</p>		
<p>Complete integration review of MASH arrangements, procedures and impact measures across Early Help and Statutory Services</p>	<p>The MASH Team in T1 is fully integrated including procedures and processes to reduce any delay or information collection for Children with final agency GMP to complete the integration of MASH in T1 by July 22</p> <p>Re-establish MA Operational steering group for MASH reporting in quarterly to TSCP quarterly beginning July 22</p> <p>Assurance report received by TSCP in September 22 to confirm improved quality of information gathering that informs Duty &amp; Assessment or Early Help Teams to improve the process for Children and</p>	<p>AD EH&amp;P / Rob Cousins/ AD CSC/ September 2022 Board Meeting</p> <p>AD EH&amp;P July 22</p> <p>AD CSC/AD EH&amp;P/HoS QA Sept 22</p>		

	Families but also our Workers in locality teams.			
Improvement Board receives assurance reports from TSCP on the agencies referring cases in to MASH – including high volume schools referring agencies, to improve the TAS offer and training in respect of Early Intervention they could deliver in line with advice and guidance	<p>TSCP scrutinises regular report on the top ten referring agencies and commissions a review in to the early help awareness, capability and capacity within each agency to improve direct service support earlier in the child or young person’s journey by August 22</p> <p>TSCP delivers evidence of a review of the effectiveness of the EH training offer from feedback from partner agencies, reviews changes in performance data and understand the feedback of quality of support offered by partners from hearing the voice of children and reviewing case studies routinely</p>	<p>AD EH&amp;P Tameside Performance Team by August 2022</p> <p>Board Chair – AD EH &amp; P By April 2023</p>		
<b>4. Demonstrate evidence of an improvement in the consistency and quality of assessments, plans through a refreshed Quality Assurance Framework and fully embedding Signs of Safety practice across Early Help and Statutory Case work.</b>				
Improvement Board is clearly sighted on the current quality and consistency of Assessments and Plans from the last 12 months	<p>All Board members, including corporate and political leaders, fully understand the quality of practice and the improvement challenge for Tameside Children &amp; Families.</p> <p>All Board members can evidence their understanding and commitment to drive up consistency and quality of practice that impacts on children’s lives by reviewing the QA section of our SEF by July 2022 and revisiting in September 2022</p>	All Board Members & AD CSC by July 2022 and September 2022		

<p>Improvement Board agrees a target to improve the number of audited cases that are assessed as Good and Outstanding by 20% each quarter</p>	<p>Drive forward the intensive Signs of Safety Training model and reviews by September 2022- Board receives update from AD CSC</p> <p>Target to see a shift to most audited cases assessed as Good or Outstanding by June 2023</p> <p>Board to receive external assurance of moderation process of the quality of case work by commissioning external scrutineer to start in Summer 22</p> <p>Appoint to the Permanent Head of QA &amp; Safeguarding to drive up and improve the consistency of plans</p> <p>Oversee the identification of sharing best practice cases and showcase and celebrate excellent cases at each meeting</p> <p>Deliver targeted programme to front line SW Managers to enable them to confidently challenge poor practice and focus on impact for children and reduce risk caused by drift and delay. Measure of success will be captured in staff survey and engagement sessions with TM champions to bring evidence to the improvement board by Feb 23.</p>	<p>AD CSC/All Board Members September 2022</p> <p>DCS/AD CSC March 2023</p> <p>DCS/AD CSC August 22</p> <p>ADCSC Tameside HR by September 2022</p> <p>Board Chair, All Board members – routine aspect of Agenda settings for each meeting</p> <p>Principle SW</p>		
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<p>Improved joint impact between the DA Strategic Partnership and the Improvement Board with shared vision to improve children and families experience of those experiencing and causing DA.</p>	<p>Appoint to the Domestic Abuse Coordinator role and revise the DA specialist support contract to be tailored to have a child focussed offer by September 22 with revised impact measures demonstrating improved outcomes for children by April 23</p>	<p>DPH/ADEH&amp;P by Sept 22</p>		
<p><b>5. Deliver an integrated family offer in the 4 locality areas of Tameside by building neighbourhood services that align with joined up needs of children, young people and families</b></p>				
<p>Board to oversee the physical location of the 4 areas locality structures/teams and services within each community</p>	<p>Tameside MBC to identify appropriate buildings to accommodate Childrens delivery teams and enable better joint working across EH and CSC initially by July 22</p> <p>Board to oversee the release of Capital funds to enable the configuration of the estate to enable transformation and relocation of Teams to set new delivery standards and expectations by July 2022</p> <p>Board to receive updates from Tameside MBC Estates team on schedule of works and staff moves by September 2022</p> <p>Board members to support sharing of venues and resources to better meet the needs of our most vulnerable children including networks with Early Years settings,</p>	<p>Leader/Lead member Children/CEX/Tameside MBC Estates by July 2022</p> <p>Leader/ CEX/Lead Member Children by July 2022</p> <p>Board Chair Tameside MBC Estates</p> <p>All Board Members – Chair- by March 23</p>		

	<p>schools and post 16 provision to build our Family Hub offer. To be held to account for integrated delivery.</p> <p>Refresh of the SW Team composition and skill mix to enable effective and efficient support directly as it is needed by children to reduce any delay or unnecessary repetition of needing to repeat their story to multiple agencies</p> <p>DCS to be accountable for commissioning workforce development sessions across each area to build relationships, enhance skill sharing and facilitate improved processes and procedures to better meet the needs of families.</p> <p>Board to review the model for locality delivery in respect of the mix of workers skills and service offer to ensure that we reduce the number of onward referrals for our children and keep them safe with their families in line with our ambitions for family hubs.</p>	<p>Tameside MBCHR, ADs/All agencies by December 22</p> <p>DCS by January 22</p> <p>Board Chair – All Board Members March 2023</p>		
<p><b>6. Continue to Safely reduce the numbers of Children who we need to bring in to our care, improve the experience and outcomes of those care experienced children, young adults and their wider family network.</b></p>				
Effectiveness of the impact of our Early Help Partnership and Delivery plan to be	Quarterly update on the number and quality of agencies who hold EH Assessment and Plans that result in a direct reduction in the CIN populations as children are de-escalated	AD EH&P /AD CSC by September 22, December 22 and March 23		

clearly understood and Board understands the shift to more agencies supporting children and families at early help level and intervening earlier	safely to achieve positive outcomes to reduce statutory intervention and bring Tameside in line with our benchmark neighbours in respect of cases per 1000 population report			
Improvement Board to receive assurance report on the effectiveness and impact of the edge of care service	Edge of Care service structure, position and function to be brought to the board with analysis of the effectiveness of the service to date and issues/barriers as it relates to delivery and impact for our Children and Young People.	AD EH&P/AD CSC by September 2022		
Board to continue to monitor the options of high quality care placements to ensure children and young adults are safe, loved and supported to achieve their maximum potential	Partners to support the promotion of Foster Carers recruitment campaign and measure the success on a quarterly basis by seeing an increase in the number of initial enquires, our response timeliness and carers successfully progressing to full assessment process.	All Board Members/AD CSC Sept 22		
Board can evidence action and responsibility to unblock practical resource issues that cannot be resolved by the corporate parenting committee	<p>Corporate Parenting Committee Chair and AD CSC to present a quarterly issues and actions required to be addressed for children in our care that cannot be resolved by the Corporate Parenting committee at every other Board meeting</p> <p>Escalation of major barriers across agencies to be clearly actioned and resolved with very clear actions followed up and tracked by the board chair</p>	<p>Lead Member Children/AD CSC August 22</p> <p>Improvement Board Chair on a monthly basis</p>		

<p>Board to demonstrate good control of the safety and effectiveness of our in house residential homes</p>	<p>Board members to take shared responsibility and accountability (including shared costs) for complex and hard to place children particularly those with difficult challenging high risk behaviours including potential dual diagnosis.</p> <p>Improvement Board to review the recommendations from DFE Mark Riddell review in respect of our Care Leavers and support the work of Corporate Parenting Board, structure, agency, Councillors and Business Champions and be responsible for an improved local offer by December 22</p>	<p>Improvement Board, Lead Member for Children, DCS by December 22</p> <p>Improvement Board Chair, DCS, AD CSC, Lead Member Children by December 22</p>		
	<p>Receive an assurance report on the in-house offer, capacity and regulatory status of our in house provision by July 22 to ensure that they are operating safely with any outstanding registration factors to be addressed</p> <p>Children placed in our internal homes report that they feel safe, that they have positive, trusting relationships with residential staff and know their SW and their care plan well.</p> <p>Assessment of workforce needs to be clearly articulated and fed in to improvement action plans for each home included within assurance report for Board by July 22 then updates by exception at monthly meetings</p>	<p>AD CSC July 22</p> <p>AD CSC July 22/Participation Lead</p> <p>HoS QA &amp; safeguarding July 22</p>		

<p>Corporate Parenting Board to provide quarterly updates on progress on key actions as it relates to the CP Action plan</p>	<p>Quarterly reports to demonstrate improved assurance around sufficiency and choice of accommodation for care leavers including quality, location near to home and high standard of maintenance and repairs completed. First report by Sept 22</p> <p>Assurance around earlier transition planning for reaching adulthood across the SW cared for, CIN teams and adult services for those children when appropriate.</p> <p>Board can evidence maximising opportunities for care leavers career choices at an early stage and utilising resources across all agencies represented at the board measured by a reduced NEET rate for 17-25 year olds by 20% from 55% to 35% by March 23</p>	<p>TMBC CEX, Registered provider reps Sep 22</p> <p>AD CSC/AD Adult Services</p>		
<p><b>8. Assure that Social Work and Early Help Practice is consistently high quality, responds directly to the voice of the child and /or young person and demonstrates positive impact and change to children’s lives</b></p>				
<p>Board assured of the implementation of Signs of Safety practice model</p>	<p>Update on recruitment of SoS Training Team and planned programme of multi-agency delivery plan reported</p> <p>Independent assurance report commissioned and reviewed by the Board and validated externally in respect of the effectiveness of the Signs of Safety Practice model by January 23</p> <p>Voice of the Child clearly evident in all plans with external assurance providing examples</p>	<p>AD CSC/AD EH&amp;P July 22</p> <p>DCS /AD CSC/HoS QA by January 23</p>		

	of excellent practice that has directly impacted to improve children's lived experience in case examples shared by July 22 and ongoing	DCS /AD CSC/HoS QA by July 22 and reviewed by January 23		
Revised Quality Assurance and Practice week Improvements experienced and visible in case studies and through external validation of practice and moderation reports	<p>Quality of outcomes record an improvement experienced through Practice week with majority of Board Members and Senior Leaders directly engaging and reporting the experience of children supported by front line workers. All Board members to feed in to Practice week report by September 22</p> <p>External moderation of Quality Assurance via audit moderation delivers confidence to Board that the quality of plans are consistently improving</p>	<p>DCS /AD CSC/HoS QA and all Board members by Sept 22</p> <p>AD CSC/HoS QA by October 22</p>		
Improvement Board receive assurance of the improvements in terms of integration between SEND support and EH/CSC plans and assessments through the QA role of the new DSCO role	<p>DSCO role appointed and is embedded within the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service by Sept 22.</p> <p>Feedback from staff survey demonstrates improved confidence and knowledge of staff recording SEND needs within assessments and plans</p> <p>Reported improvements in respect of children and families experience of service support when a child has additional needs or disabilities measured by complaints and</p>	AD Education & Send by Sep 22		

	compliments in to the LA system and parent carer feedback via OKE			
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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Date:</b>	14 June 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Statutory Report of Monitoring Officer
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>REPORT UNDER SECTION 5 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING ACT 1989</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	Breach of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and section 2 of Local Government Act 1986 - Prohibition of political publicity together with the statutory Code of recommended practice on local authority publicity triggers a report to Council.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	To note with no further action required.
<b>Financial Implications:</b> <b>(Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)</b>	There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.
<b>Legal Implications:</b> <b>(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	Section 5 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 requires the Council to appoint an Officer to act as the Council's Monitoring Officer. The Act provides that it is the personal duty of the Monitoring Officer to report formally to the Council on any proposal, decision or omission by the Council, which has given rise to, or is likely to, or would, give rise to, the contravention of any enactment, rule of law or statutory code of practice. In preparing a Statutory Report the Monitoring Officer must formally consult with the Chief Executive, as Head of the Paid Service, and the Finance Director. As soon as practicable after completion of the report a copy must be sent to each Member of the Council. Members are required by the Act to formally consider the report at a meeting of the Full Council, which must be held not more than 21 days after copies of the report have been first sent to them. Both the breach of the law and the contravention of the Code by an officer trigger the MO's duty to make a Report under Section 5 of LGHA 1989. No further or other action on her part is required, at any rate at this stage, but a factual Report to the Council is required.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	Organisations that have good governance use clear decision-making processes, behave openly by reporting on their activities, actively engage with their stakeholders, effectively manage the risks they face, and take responsibility for controlling and protecting their assets, including their reputation. The Council provides annual advice to senior officers including on the 28 February 2022 together with a link to <a href="#">A short guide to publicity during the pre-election period   Local Government Association</a>
<b>Access to Information:</b>	Further information can be obtained by contacting Sandra Stewart, Director of Governance & Pensions (Monitoring Officer)  Telephone: 0161 342 3028  e-mail: <a href="mailto:sandra.stewart@tameside.gov.uk">sandra.stewart@tameside.gov.uk</a>

## The Background

On Friday evening of the 25 March 2022, the Chief Executive, used his official chief executive social media Twitter account to respond to comments made by a Conservative voter on BBC's Question Time to a clip from the TV programme showed an audience member who voted for the Tories telling minister Damian Hinds his government is a 'disappointment'. In a post that he subsequently deleted shortly after posting, the Chief Executive replied on Twitter saying: "*She was good. Tory voter with compassion and empathy for others. Who knew !!*"

Later that same evening at 20.25hrs, a complaint was received by the Council from a Conservative Councillor followed by concerns and complaints from all of the Conservative Opposition Group. On Monday the 28 March 2022, the Chief Executive responded with an apology to the Leader of the Opposition Group, which was accepted.

The matter has been published by various press and media.

## The Breach

The Chief Executive is dual hatted with the following roles:

- (i) The Head of its Paid Service, to whom Section 4 of Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Standing Orders Regulations are applicable; and
- (ii) It's Returning Officer pursuant to the Council's statutory Constitution.

The starting point is that the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, occupies a politically restricted post under Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government Officers (Political Restrictions) Regulations 1990, S.I. 1990/85. In Part 2 of the Schedule to the Regulations paragraphs 6-8 inclusive are directly in point:

*6. The appointee shall not speak to the public at large or to a section of the public with the apparent intention of affecting public support for a political party.*

*7.—(1) The appointee shall not—*

- (a) publish any written or artistic work of which he is the author (or one of the authors) or any written work or collection of artistic works in relation to which he has acted in an editorial capacity; or*
- (b) cause, authorise or permit any other person to publish such a work or collection, if the work appears to be intended to affect public support for a political party.*

*8. Nothing in paragraph 6 or 7 shall be construed as precluding the appointee from engaging in the activities there mentioned to such extent as is necessary for the proper performance of his official duties.*

A politically restricted officer, such as pre-eminently a statutory officer, must not express themselves publicly in a way that appears to have the intention of affecting public support for a political party.

In addition, there has been a breach of section 2 of Local Government Act 1986 - Prohibition of political publicity:

*(1) A local authority shall not publish, or arrange for the publication of, any material which, in whole or in part, appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party.*

*(2) In determining whether material falls within the prohibition regard shall be had to the content and style of the material, the time and other circumstances of publication and the likely effect on those to whom it is directed and, in particular, to the following matters—*

*(a) whether the material refers to a political party or to persons identified with a political party or promotes or opposes a point of view on a question of political controversy which is identifiable as the view of one political party and not of another;*

*(b) where the material is part of a campaign, the effect which the campaign appears to be designed to achieve.*

and the statutory Code of recommended practice on local authority publicity. This was aggravated by the proximity of the breach to the elections.

The Chief Executive was the Returning Officer for the Local Elections 2022, which took place on the 5 May 2022. Sections 35 and 48 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 and the decision of the Court of Appeal in R (Begum) v Tower Hamlets LBC, (2006) EWCA Civ 733, (2006) LGR 674, especially at paragraphs 13 and 21/22 make it clear that a breach of duty, including a breach of the duty of political impartiality, could not be dealt with during the elections nor at the Annual Council meeting, and hence the timing of this report.