

## EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

14 June 2022

Commenced: 5.00pm

Terminated: 5.30pm

**Present:** Councillors Affleck, Alam, Billington, Bowden, Bowerman, Boyle, Bray, Chadwick, Choksi, Colbourne, Cooney, Costello, Dickinson, Drennan, Fairfoull, Feeley, Glover, Gosling, A Holland, B Holland, J Homer, S Homer, Huntbach, Jackson, Kitchen, Lane, McNally, Martin, Mills, Naylor, Newton, North, Owen, Patel, Patrick, Pearce, Quinn, Ricci, Robinson, N Sharif, T Sharif, Sweeton, Taylor, Turner, Ward, Warrington, R Welsh and Wills

**Apologies for  
Absence:** Councillors Cartey, Cooper, Gwynne, Jones, Reid, Roderick, Ryan, M Smith and T Smith

*Councillor Kitchen, Chair of Council Business, in the Chair*

### 21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 22. PUBLICATION OF OFSTED FOCUSED VISIT AND TAMESIDE RESPONSE

Consideration was given to a report of the Deputy Leader / Director of Children's Services, which set out the letter published on 6 June 2022 (Appendix A to the report) from the Ofsted Focused Visit.

The report further set out the Council's response and immediate action to swiftly address the priority actions issued to Tameside Council and its statutory partners, GMP and NHS providers.

It was explained that 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 focused visit of the 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 feedback to say that, although children were safe and some aspects of services had improved; since their previous assurance visit in May 21, they found that the pace of implementing the required improvements had been too slow meaning that some children were living with risk longer than they should.

The findings had resulted in the Council and partners being issued with two priority actions for improvement, as follows:

- (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; and
- (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 advised that they were considering issuing Tameside with a formal Improvement

Notice to be in place for 12 months. The notice brought additional support and advice from an appointed improvement adviser who would work with the Council to offer assurance to Ministers that it was on track to deliver the agreed improvement action plan.

It was moved by Councillor Fairfoull and seconded by Councillor Feeley and:

#### **RESOLVED**

**That 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:**

- (i) 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.**
- (ii) 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.**
- (iii) 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.**
- (iv) The Council tasks the newly created Children and Families Scrutiny Committee to hold the Lead member for Children and the Director of Children's Services to account for progress of the improvement plan and improvement board on a quarterly basis.**
- (v) 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.**
- (vi) 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.**
- (vii) The Council endorses the working draft response to Ofsted as set out in this report and the Improvement Plan attached at Appendix B to the report), which is draft as it requires consultation with all partner agencies and stakeholders including Scrutiny and approval by Ofsted.**

#### **23. REPORT UNDER SECTION 5 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING ACT 1989**

The Statutory Monitoring Officer submitted a report, which gave details of a breach of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and section 2 of Local Government Act 1986 - Prohibition of political publicity.

The Council was advised that the subject of the report, the former Chief Executive, had since left the employment of Tameside MBC.

Councillor Cooney paid tribute to the former Chief Executive and explained that he had been a great servant for Tameside Council and the local NHS over his 34 year employment, with 13 of those years served as Chief Executive including the last 6 years as the Accountable Officer of Tameside and Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group. His achievements had been significant and would have a long lasting effect on the Borough.

It was moved by Councillor Cooney and seconded by Councillor Fairfoull and:

**RESOLVED**

**That the content of the report be noted, with no further action required.**

**24. URGENT ITEM**

The Chair of Council Business announced an urgent item for consideration and explained that in light of the previous item (Minute 23 refers), a meeting of the Chief Executive Appointment Panel had taken place that afternoon.

He advised that he had agreed that the outcome of the Chief Executive Appointment Panel could be considered as an urgent item given that the previous Chief Executive had left with no notice and the importance of appointing an Interim Head of Paid Service.

At this juncture Sandra Stewart, Director of Governance and Pensions and Monitoring Officer, declared an interest and left the meeting.

The recommendations of the Panel were tabled.

It was moved by Councillor Cooney and seconded by Councillor Fairfoull and:

**RESOLVED**

**That the following recommendations of the Chief Executive Appointments Panel be agreed:**

- (i) That Sandra Stewart be appointed as Electoral Registration Officer for any constituency or part of a constituency coterminous with or contained in Tameside Metropolitan Borough and Returning Officer for Local, Parliamentary and other elections/referenda until further decision of Council is taken;**
- (ii) That it be noted that immediate arrangements for the Head of Paid Service are undertaken in line with the Council's constitution by Sandra Stewart as the Monitoring Officer;**
- (iii) That Sandra Stewart undertake the role of Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) for a period of 12 months and be paid at the relevant salary scale of £184,767, following which a permanent recruitment process will be undertaken; and**
- (iv) That interim arrangements for the statutory Monitoring Officer role be put in place with immediate effect to cover the 12 month period.**

**CHAIR**