

SOUTH STRATEGIC NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

30 January 2023

Commenced: 18:30

Terminated: 19:25

Present: Councillors Affleck (Chair), Robinson (Vice-Chair), Bowden, Cooper, Colborne, Kitchen, North, Owen and Roderick

In Attendance: James Mallion Assistant Director of Population Health
Debbie Duddridge Head of Service — Safeguarding and Quality Assurance,

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Alam, Chadwick and Welsh

20 MINUTES

The minutes of the South Strategic Neighbourhood Forum meeting on the 20 January 2023 were approved as a correct record.

21 CORPORATE PARENTING

The Forum received a presentation from the Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance in respect of the Council's responsibilities as a Corporate Parent.

It was explained that being a Corporate Parent was the collective responsibility of the whole Council, elected Members, employees, and partner agencies to ensure the best possible care and safeguarding was provided for children in care and care leavers. A child in the care of the Council looked to the Council to be the best parent it could be. Every Member and employee of the Council had the statutory responsibility to act for that child in the same way that a good parent would act for his or her own child. As corporate parents, there was a need to understand information and data relating to children and young people and provide challenge in those areas where better outcomes needed to be achieved.

Statistics in relation to children in care in Tameside were highlighted as follows:

- There were 656 Children in Care to Tameside (53 per cent male and 46 per cent female).
- Foster care was the largest placement resource for children in care (63 per cent). There was continuous work to recruit and retain Tameside Foster Carers to keep young people linked to their community.
- Sixty-eight children were placed in residential children's homes; the number had reduced, as work was ongoing to ensure that children had the right to family life.
- Ninety per cent of children had been subjected to a review health assessment.
- Sixty per cent of children in care had received a dental check.
- There were 517 care leavers.
- Positively, contact was maintained with 97 per cent of 19-21 year olds, relationships were key in ensuring young people felt supported and knew who to go to when they needed extra support.
- Ninety-five per cent of care leavers in Tameside were deemed to be in suitable accommodation.
- Education, employment and training (EET) rates were an area of concern with 51 per cent for 19-21 year olds and 50 per cent for 17-18 year olds. Work to develop a clear EET strategy across the Council was ongoing, to increase access to work placements and apprenticeships.

Members were advised that the Children and Social Work Act 2017 set out seven corporate parenting principles that local authorities must have regard to when exercising their functions in

relation to cared for children and care leavers. The Corporate Parenting Board had responsibility to ensure that the Council fulfilled its Corporate Parenting duties in partnership with other statutory and partner agencies. The Board ensured that the strategic corporate parenting objectives were delivered and that the Pledges and the Care Leaver Local Offer was adhered to.

The presentation concluded that corporate parenting was a whole Council and partner endeavour and not the sole responsibility of Children's Social Care. It required services across the entire Council including health, schools and partner agencies to achieve the best outcomes for cared for children and care leavers. The role of a corporate parent was not a passive one. Tameside's corporate parents worked closely with their partners to ensure that the needs of children were clearly identified and met at every level. This encompassed the strategic planning, commissioning and integrated delivery of services.

Members welcomed the development of a strategy to address issues in relation to Education, Employment and Training. The Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance explained that work was ongoing to address this issue with better access to colleges, job fairs and drop-in sessions. Members discussed the flexibility of the service in meetings children's needs and the participation app 'my view'.

RESOLVED

That the presentation be noted.

22 DOMESTIC ABUSE & WHITE RIBBON ACCREDITATION

The Assistant Director of Population Health delivered a presentation in respect of domestic abuse and the White Ribbon Accreditation. The role of Strategic Domestic Abuse Manager had existed for two years with the aim of reducing incidences of domestic violence in the borough and raising awareness of the support available.

An outline of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 was provided, which introduced a new definition of Domestic Abuse. It was explained that domestic abuse was a gender-based issue; ONS data (2020) identified that 82 per cent of victims were female compared to 18 per cent of males. Ninety-two per cent of those using harmful behaviours were male.

Greater Manchester had developed a Gender-Based Violence Strategy and a link to this was provided for Members, officers and residents.

Two high profile cases of femicide in the UK in 2021 were highlighted. It was stated that the focus continued to be on women to keep themselves safe, which ignored the responsibility of those using harmful behaviours and the wider societal gender imbalances which perpetuated a culture of misogyny. There were also more recent news items in respect of another serving Metropolitan Police officer admitting to dozens of rapes and sexual offences against 12 women.

In relation to the White Ribbon Accreditation, Members were advised that this was a nationally recognised programme for organisations who were committed to improving their workplace culture, progress gender equality and ending violence against women and girls. The accreditation was divided into four key areas, which supported the organisation to assess capabilities and current practice, enabling the identification of appropriate actions:

- Strategic Leadership;
- Engaging Men and Boys;
- Changing Culture; and
- Raising Awareness.

White Ribbon Ambassadors and Champions were key to the delivery of the White Ribbon Action Plan. Ambassadors were men within the organisation who acted as formal representatives of White

Ribbon. They were positive role models who took a stand against male violence against women and girls and encouraged other men and boys to do the same. Champions could be both males and females, but tended to be primarily females who supported the White Ribbon work and the Ambassadors within their organisation.

Members were informed that the Domestic Abuse Strategy aimed to address domestic abuse across seven key priority areas as follows:

- Making domestic abuse everybody's business;
- Creating safe spaces for disclosure;
- Meeting the needs of victims through local services;
- Helping victim-survivors stay safe in their homes;
- Better outcomes for children impacted by domestic abuse;
- Identifying problem behaviours early; and
- Holding perpetrators accountable.

Key to the delivery of the ambitions was a collective commitment to achieving them. The local offer was available to anyone affected by domestic abuse irrelevant of gender, age, sexuality, religion or disability.

Contact details for the Bridges helpline were provided and Members would be asked to attend domestic abuse awareness training.

Members queried how engagement was taking place and awareness was being raised. It was explained that there was engagement through schools when targeting boys, work was also underway through Talk Listen and Change (TLC). In regards to older men, work was underway to target work places to bring in the messaging and communication needed. Discussion ensued on how accreditation of White Ribbon Ambassadors and Champions took place.

RESOLVED

That the presentations be noted.

CHAIR