

## OVERVIEW PANEL

**9 September 2019**

**Commenced:** 2.00 pm

**Terminated:** 2.37 pm

**Present:** Councillors Ricci (Chair), Cartey (Vice-Chair), Cooper, Fairfoull, Glover, Homer, Ryan, Warrington and Welsh

<b>In Attendance:</b>	Steven Pleasant Sandra Stewart Julie Speakman Simon Brunet Mike Pavasovic	Chief Executive Director of Governance and Pensions Head of Executive Support Business Management Policy Manager Communications Officer
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### **6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **7. MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED**

**That the minutes of the Overview Panel held on 29 July 2019 be approved as a correct record.**

### **8. SCRUTINY UPDATE**

The Assistant Director of Policy, Performance and Communications submitted a report, which updated the panel on the scrutiny activity undertaken by the Council's two Scrutiny Panels for July to September 2019.

The meeting of the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Panel on the 25 July 2019 received a report from the Director of Children's Services on the Children's Services improvement and outcomes from the recent Ofsted inspection. Consideration was given to the overview of current arrangements for the recruitment and retention of foster carers in Tameside, to inform future activity. It was reported that the Panel established a Working Group to progress activity on foster carer recruitment and retention. During this meeting the Panel reviewed options to submit a formal response to the national consultation currently open on domestic abuse services to be submitted by the 2 August 2019.

The meeting of the Place and External Relations Panel on the 30 July 2019 received a report from the Interim Head of Development and Investment and the Housing Growth Lead who presented an update on the Housing Strategy and Improving quality and standards within the private rented sector and empty properties to inform future activity. A Working Group was established to progress activity on Improving Quality and Standards in the Private Rented Sector, to include empty properties. At the last meeting of the Panel, Members reviewed a formal response to the national consultation on a New Rent Standard from 2020.

It was planned that at the next meeting of the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Panel and Place and External Relations, Members would receive a report on the Urgent Treatment Centre, Corporate Plan and the Agreed Scorecard, budget update and information on the arrangement for Tameside to become a Co-operative Council.

It was reported that all Scrutiny Panel members continue to receive a monthly emails raising the awareness to a variety of materials to support their role, provide access to scrutiny resources and provide the ongoing opportunity for councillors to contribute and share any open consultations and engagement exercises.

**RESOLVED**

**That the content of the report by noted.**

**9. LGO OVERVIEW REPORT**

Consideration was given a report of the Head of Executive Support, which sought to inform Members on the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman complaints received by them about Tameside MBC.

It was explained that information on complaints can be valuable in assessing the Council's performance in handling complaints. Every July the ombudsman publishes information on complaints and enquiries received about individual local authorities and the decisions made during the financial year.

The Panel were given a breakdown of the key points from the report. During the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 the authority received 83 enquiries from the LGSCO which has shown a slight increase on the previous years. The number of complaints received for the reporting period was made up across a number of service areas. It was reported that from the 83 enquires, 21 were closed after initial enquiry, 1 received advice, 5 were incomplete or invalid, 8 were not upheld, 37 were referred back for local resolution and 11 enquiries were upheld.

There were 11 upheld decisions based on a total of 19 investigations during the reporting period which equated to 58% compared to an average of 61% in similar authorities. The Panel were informed that in relation to compliance the LGSCO was satisfied the council had successfully implemented the reported recommendations in 100% of case, this compares to an average of 99% in similar authorities.

The Head of Executive Support informed Members of the Panel that the LGSCO made recommendations for service improvements on 5 complaints during this reportable period.

Member of the Panel enquired on the possibility of receiving more frequent and detailed analysis of the enquiries for scrutiny and how an increase in enquiries to a specific service would be responded to. The Monitoring Officer suggested that the Focus reports published by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman could be reviewed at the scrutiny panels.

The Head of Executive Support explained to Members that a new Complaints Management System was being put in place which would manage all complaints at a corporate level across the authority. This would allow for the detailed analysis of complaints and provide the information that is needed. The volume of complaints received does not necessarily indicate the quality of a council's performance. High volumes of complaints could be a sign of an open, learning organisation, as well as sometimes being an early warning of wider problems. Low complaint volumes could be an indicator that the authority is not alert to user feedback and that service users do not believe that complaining would have an effect.

A detailed discussion took place about how this information could be used by Scrutiny going forward to improve performance and customer experience accepting that complaints will always be made to the LGSCO because they are viewed as ultimate independent arbitrator.

**RESOLVED**

**That the information provided be noted.**

**10. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

**CHAIR**