

WEST STRATEGIC NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

16 January 2020

Commenced: 6.30pm

Terminated: 7.50pm

Present: Councillors Ward (Chair), Cooney, Gwynne, A Holland (Vice-Chair), B Holland, Jones, Naylor, Newton, M Smith, Reid, Ricci, Ryan, and Warrington

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Boyle, Martin, Mills, Quinn and T Smith

9 MINUTES

RESOLVED

The minutes of the meeting of the West Strategic Neighbourhood Forum held on 17 October 2019 be approved as a correct record.

The Director of Population Health submitted a presentation providing information with regard to tackling poverty in Tameside.

It was explained that the Council and partners were rethinking the approach to tackling poverty and the causes of poverty. To do this, engagement was taking place with residents and partners to understand the nature of poverty experienced in Tameside, how it impacted on people's lives and how best to support residents experiencing poverty to move out of poverty.

The presentation provided statistical information in respect of poverty levels in England, including child poverty, with the highest levels of child poverty in Tameside occurring in Ashton and Hyde Godley.

The main causes of poverty were outlined and potential levels of intervention were explored.

Discussion ensued with regard to the content of the presentation and how best to support residents in crisis. Members raised concerns with regard to the levels of poverty both locally and nationally and commented, in particular, on the need for affordable social housing and the link between poor quality private rented housing and health and social care and homelessness and poverty was explored.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

11 CHILDREN'S SERVICES – CURRENT POSITION AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT FOR 2020

The Director of Children's Services presented before Members and began by giving details of the three week program of inspection of Local Authority Children's Services in May 2019.

Improvements and areas of focus over the past 12 months were outlined.

In terms of areas of focus for 2020, it was explained that the system was now more stable, but 2020 would see a continued focus on areas already targeted in 2019 and additionally a specific focus on areas including:

- Work Force Development;
- Consistency in quality;
- Complex Safeguarding;
- Children in Needs;
- Children at the 'cusp of care; and
- Looked after Children – including Fostering, placement sufficiency and permanency.

The Director concluded by explaining that a multi-faceted and co-ordinated approach was required, in order to safely and appropriately reduce the need for Local Authority Care, to stabilise the current cohort, progress children through to permanency more effectively, step children down where appropriate and provide for a range of placements to best meet children's assessed needs. The 7 projects to support these objectives were detailed as follows:

- Early Help and Prevention at a Neighbourhood Level;
- Family Intervention Service;
- Team around the School Plus;
- Duty/Locality Restructure;
- Positive Futures (Respite/Assessment);
- Fostering Service Improvement; and
- Placements Review and Sufficiency.

Members thanked the Director for a very informative and thorough presentation and made particular reference to Child Sexual Exploitation and the recent review announced by the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, into historic cases of abuse in the Greater Manchester area.

The Director gave assurances that the complex Safeguarding Team was being expanded and that lessons would be learned from historic events.

CHAIR