

Report to:	STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING BOARD
Date:	30 September 2020
Executive Member/Reporting Officer:	Councillor Bill Fairfoull – Deputy Executive Leader (Children and Families) Richard Hancock, Director of Children’s Services Debbie Watson, Assistant Director – Population Health
Subject:	REFRESH OF EARLY HELP STRATEGY
Report Summary:	The report summarises the work completed in refreshing the 2017 Early Help Strategy and outlines the content of the refreshed strategy.
Recommendations:	That the Early Help Strategy appended to this report be recommended to Strategic Commissioning Board for approval.
Links to Corporate Plan:	The Early Help Strategy 2020-2022 is interlinked with the following sections of the Corporate Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 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. • Opportunities for people to fulfil their potential through work, skills and enterprise. • Nurturing our communities and having pride in our people, our place and our shared heritage. • Longer and healthier lives with good mental health through better choices and reducing inequalities.
Policy Implications:	The Early Help Strategy 2020-2022 straddles the work programmes that fall under the Starting Well Partnership, including maternity, early years, mental health and SEND. Early Help Strategy 2020-2022 is accountable to the Early Help Strategic Group and the Starting Well Partnership.
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer & Chief Finance Officer)	Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, Members should note that at 31 July 2020, the Children’s Social Care 2020/21 revenue budget has a forecast year end adverse variance of £2.3 million, which predominantly relates to placement costs of looked after children. The early help strategy plays a key role in reducing these ongoing and prevention of future placement and related intervention costs, whilst also improving outcomes for children and young people by enabling them to remain in supportive and resilient families where it is deemed appropriate.
Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)	The strategy is critical to support the council in delivering its statutory duties to children’s and families by highlighting the crucial role of working together with partners to deliver effective early help. As this is an integrated strategy, the Strategic Commissioning Board

is the appropriate decision maker, after the report has been considered at Board

Risk Management:

There are no risks to manage

Background Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Lorraine Hopkins, Head of Early Years, Early Help and Neighbourhood, or Charlotte Lee, Population Health Programme Manager:



Telephone: 0161 342 5353/ 0161 342 4136

 e-mail: lorraine.hopkins@tameside.gov.uk

 e-mail: charlotte.lee@tameside.gov.uk

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Over recent years, Tameside Council and its partners have worked collaboratively to improve service delivery and practice to improve the outcomes for children, young people and families in Tameside.
- 1.2. Following an 'inadequate' Ofsted inspection within Children's Services in 2016, Tameside Council and partners have developed new ways of working, including the development of an early help strategy and offer, which was consequently highlighted as an effective area, in the Ofsted Inspection report in July 2019.
- 1.3. The Early Help Strategy written in this time (2017) reflected a much needed approach to work in partnership as well as focus on prevention and early intervention. In the present the early help approach and offer has grown significantly, and therefore warranted a refresh of the strategy to welcome the next phase of the early help approach in Tameside. This report therefore sets out content of the refreshed Early Help Strategy (2020), with the full proposed strategy, which can be found in **Appendix A**.

2. OVERVIEW OF EARLY HELP STRATEGY 2020 – SMARTER, STRONGER, SOONER AND SAFER

- 2.1. The Early Help Strategy (2020) have been refreshed in partnership with multiple partner agencies who form part of the Early Help Strategic Group, as well as informed by a wider partner consultation exercise.
- 2.2. The strategy provides an understanding to the early help approach and offer in Tameside, in line with the Tameside Children's Safeguarding Thresholds. As well as includes updated principles, aligning to the Tameside Corporate Plan and the Cooperative Principles, such as placed based working, and 'nothing about me, without me'.
- 2.3. The strategy continues to emphasise the importance of prevention and early interventions, and acknowledges the need to 'Build Back Better' from COVID-19, by having a flexible and live implementation plan.
- 2.4. The strategy seeks to work along existing strategies, such as the Early Years Strategy, the Domestic Abuse Strategy and the Neglect Strategy, rather than duplicate.
- 2.5. Moreover, the strategy outlines headlines successes since the launch of the 2017 strategy, including the development of neighbourhood learning circles, the Team Around approach, the Early Help Assessment Point and the roll out of the 'Signs of Safety' Training.
- 2.6. The strategy remains to be clear on its priorities which are:
 - The early help approach will be **Smarter** in the way we do things.
 - We will be **Stronger** because we know we are making the right impact and improving outcomes for children and young people.
 - Children, young people and families will get what they need **Sooner**, making sure the right help is available to the right people in the right place at the right time.
 - We will ensure children live in strong protective communities and families where they are **Safer**.
- 2.7. The strategy sets out a clear governance structure and clearly illustrates the outcomes it sets out to achieve, and how these will be monitored.

3. STRATEGY FIT

3.1. The Early Help Strategy (2020) aligns and supports the work programme of the Starting Well Partnership, the SEND Improvement Board and Children's Improvement Board.

3.2. Centrally the Early Help Strategy (2020) aligns to the Tameside and Glossop Corporate Plan with particular reference to the following priorities:

- (1) **Very best start in life** where children are ready to learn and encouraged to thrive and develop.
- (2) **Aspiration and hope** through learning and moving with confidence from childhood to adulthood.
- (3) **Resilient families and supportive networks** to protect and grow our young people.
- (4) **Opportunities for people to fulfil their potential** through work, skills and enterprise.
- (6) **Nurturing our communities** and having pride in our people, our place and our shared heritage.
- (7) **Longer and healthier lives** with good mental health through better choices and reducing inequalities.

3.3. Moreover, the Strategy strongly supports Public Reform Principles and delivers:

- A **new relationship** between public services and citizens, communities and businesses that enables shared decision making, democratic accountability and voice, genuine co-production and joint delivery of services. Do with, not to.
- An **asset based approach** that recognises and builds on the strengths of individuals, families and our communities rather than focusing on the deficits.
- A stronger prioritisation of **wellbeing, prevention and early intervention**.
- An **evidence led** understanding of risk and impact to ensure the right intervention at the right time.

4. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

4.1. Running alongside the Early Help Strategy (2020) is a refresh of the implementation plan. Some of the key actions that fall out of the strategy include strengthening the partnership with primary care, implementation of the Early Help Module, implementation of the enhanced Family Intervention service and the ambition towards co-location of services within each neighbourhood, but acknowledges the flexibility to include actions to 'build back better', as a result of learning from responding and living with Covid-19.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. As set out at the front of the report.