

NORTH STRATEGIC NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

14 January 2020

Commenced: 6.30 pm

Terminated: 7.40 pm

Present: Councillors Sidebottom (In the Chair), Bray, Fairfoull, Glover, Lewis and McNally

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Bowerman, Cartey, Choksi, Drennan and Hollinshead

8. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED

In the absence of the Chair, Councillor Bowerman, it was agreed that Councillor Sidebottom be appointed as Chair for the meeting.

9. MINUTES

RESOLVED

The minutes of the meeting of the North Strategic Neighbourhood Forum held on 15 October 2019 be approved as a correct record.

10. CHILDREN'S SERVICES - CURRENT POSITION AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT FOR 2020

A presentation was delivered by the Director of Children's Services providing details of the three week program of inspection of Local Authority Children's Services in May 2019.

Members were informed of the improvements and areas of focus over the past 12 months. It was explained that the system was now more stable but 2020 would see a continued focus on areas already targeted in 2019 as well as additional specific focus on:-

- Work force development
- Consistency in quality
- Complex safeguarding
- Children in need
- Children at the 'cusp of care'
- Looked After Children – including fostering, placement sufficiency and permanency

The Director explained that a multi-faceted and co-ordinated approach was needed to safely and appropriately reduce the need for Local Authority Care. It was explained that the objectives of the approach were to stabilise the current cohort, progress children through to permanency more effectively, step children down where appropriate and provide a range of placements to best meet children's assessed needs. Seven projects were outlined in order to meet these objectives:-

- 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

- Placements Review and Sufficiency

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

11. TACKLING POVERTY IN TAMESIDE

The Director of Population Health submitted a presentation outlining the Council's approach to tackling poverty and the causes of poverty across the Borough.

It was explained that the Council was engaging with residents and partners to understand the nature of poverty experienced in Tameside and the impact on people's lives as well as how best to support residents experiencing poverty to move out of poverty.

A number of statistics were highlighted as part of the presentation, with the four Ashton wards of Hurst, St Michaels, St Peter's and Waterloo experiencing the highest levels of child poverty in Tameside. It was estimated that between 39 and 52% of children in these wards lived in poverty.

The causes of poverty were outlined and often included:-

- Low wages, insecure jobs and unemployment
- Lack of skills
- An ineffective benefits system
- High costs, including housing
- Family problems

A discussion ensued in relation to poor quality housing within the private rented sector and the impact this could have upon people's health. The issue of high rents was also raised and the link this had to increased homelessness. Members raised the possibility of introducing a regulatory system for landlords within the private rented sector to ensure that housing was of a sufficient standard.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.