

## Briefing for Scrutiny Lead Member

Directorate Portfolio	<b>Children, Schools and Families</b>
Scrutiny Lead	<b>Cllr Denise Jones</b>

*This briefing note is intended to provide the Scrutiny lead member with an overview of their portfolio. It will be used to inform the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme for the municipal year 2014/15. The issues highlighted in the note will be further discussed in a meeting between the Scrutiny lead member and Corporate Director.*

### **Section One: Overview of areas covered within the portfolio**

The Education, Social Care and Wellbeing (ESCW) directorate is committed to further improving outcomes for vulnerable adults, children and young people in Tower Hamlets. The directorate controls a General Fund budget of approximately £188m (this does not include the dedicated schools grant). This briefing (in conjunction with the Adults, Health and Wellbeing briefing) provides an overview of the directorate, key national legislative and policy developments and identifies a number of challenges and opportunities for 2014/15.

The Children, Schools and Families element of the directorate covers a broad range of services, and can be categorised by the following service areas; Learning and Achievement, Children's Social Care and Resources (although this service supports the Adults, Health and Wellbeing element of the ESCW Directorate as well). The transfer of Public Health functions to the local authority has provided opportunities to develop new approaches to deliver Public Health initiatives to children and young people.

The Learning and Achievement service of the directorate provides services for children and families from birth, through their early years and to the end of secondary education, and is focused on raising the educational standard of all pupils and helping children and young people reach their full potential. The service consists of various universal and targeted services, including an Educational Psychological Service, Parent and Family Support Services and Special Educational Needs. Officers also work with schools to develop strategies to encourage more inclusive provision.

School improvement continues in Tower Hamlets with all of our secondary schools judged to be either good or outstanding. We have seen continued improvement at GCSE for all pupils: Tower Hamlets' pupils now out-perform the national average. A recent independent report, 'Transforming Education for All: the Tower Hamlets Story' concluded that schools in Tower Hamlets are among the best in the world, and cited the success to the borough-wide approach to improving education for all pupils. According to the 2012/13 report released by Ofsted, eighty seven per cent of children in Tower Hamlets attend a 'good' or 'outstanding' primary school, an increase by 14% from the year before.

Children's Social Care provides social work support to children and young people of the borough, which includes support for looked after children, children leaving care, children and young people with disabilities and support around mental health and adolescence. The service works closely with partner agencies in statutory services and the third sector. The remit of the service also extends to child protection, assessment and early intervention, family support and protection, family intervention, adoption, private fostering, attendance and welfare, youth offending and children's resources. There have been a number of recent successful Ofsted inspections of the service such as the inspection of safeguarding and looked after children (SLAC), carried out in June 2012. Ofsted rated 9 out of the 22 judgements outstanding and 13 good. This is one of the best overall ratings of services in London for the most vulnerable children in the borough. Another service to receive a similarly positive Ofsted judgement this year was the Fostering Service, which was deemed to be good. Children were considered to be making outstanding progress particularly in relation to their educational attainment, emotional well-being, social and independent living skills.

The Resources service provides support services to the directorate and schools in the borough, covering building development (management of assets and facilities), children's information systems, PA and executive support, strategy, policy and performance, programme management, Social Care IT, contract services responsible for catering and cleaning services, finance management of the entire directorate and the management of the Professional Development Centre.

Public Health moved into the Council in April 2013 and has an annual budget of approximately 15.85% of the ESCW directorate budget (equivalent to approximately £28.5m). The aim of the Public Health Team is to help the Council put health and wellbeing at the heart of everything they do. Public Health staff work on a diverse range of projects and work programmes that includes surveillance of the health of the population and commissioning health services for the local population.

## Section Two: Key national legislative and policy developments

The DfE has published the revised statutory guidance *Working together to safeguard children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*. The revised guidance provides a clear legal framework and sets out the expectations on different professionals'. The main changes are:

- A greater emphasis on the needs of individual children being at the centre of all local safeguarding systems
- Removal of the distinction between initial and core assessment and the 10 working day timescale for completion of the initial assessment, but retention for the time being of the current 45 working days national maximum timescale for completion of an assessment
- Some clarification of specific responsibilities either of individual organisations (eg. health services) or in specific areas of practice (eg. information sharing or dealing with allegations)
- The guidance on Local Safeguarding Children Boards is now rather more explicit, with stronger accountability arrangements for their Chairs
- Guidance on learning from Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) does not specify the learning model to be used
- A new national panel of independent experts is to be established to provide advice to LSCBs about the application of SCR criteria and the requirement to publish reports, to which LSCBs should have regard when making decisions about SCRs.

The local Family Wellbeing Model was recently amended to include revised thresholds as a response to Working Together. The model also places a greater focus on neglect. Our aim is that it is used as a framework for everyone who works with children, young people and parents/carers in Tower Hamlets to help them work together to provide the most effective support for children and their families. A key feature of the model is that it sets out how we work to respond to different levels of need in Tower Hamlets.

The Children and Families Bill became law after receiving Royal Assent on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2014. The Act takes forward the Coalition Government's commitments to improve services for vulnerable children and support strong families. It underpins a wide range of reforms including the reform of the systems for adoption, looked after children, family justice and special educational needs. It will encourage growth in the childcare sector, introduce a new system of shared parental leave and ensure children in England have a strong advocate for their rights.

## Section Three: Key local challenges and opportunities

### Challenges

1. The Census 2011 data shows that the demographics for Tower Hamlets to be changing, with a very young population alongside a growing older population. The borough has seen a significant increase in the number of young children since 2001, with a 19.8% increase in the number of residents aged under 10 from 28,542 in 2001 to 34,200 in 2011 (an increase of 5,658 children). The challenge is to ensure that we are meeting all needs while dealing with budgetary constraints.
2. Whilst there have been very few academy conversions in the borough, the educational landscape in the borough is changing with a number of free schools being set up. Government consultation suggested local authority performance should be judged by all schools within its locality despite the fact that academies and free schools are independent of any Council oversight.
3. The government's welfare reform changes will have significant impact on children and families within the borough due to the local area having one of the highest rates of child poverty nationally. Data that is currently available (2010), shows 27,915 children living in poverty and represents 49%

of all children.

### Opportunities

1. Tower Hamlets completed the first phase of the local Child Rights pilot as part of a partnership with UNICEF and five other local authorities. The pilot involved re-commissioning the substance misuse treatment service for young people using a child rights based approach by testing the Joint Commissioning Framework which now embeds child rights. A Charter of Child Rights was launched to take forward this agenda. Phase 2 of the pilot will include workforce development and developing a rights based approach to all aspects of the commissioning cycle from the needs analysis to the delivery and evaluation of service.
2. Despite the challenging budgetary environment, we are continuing to develop and expand our traded offer to schools in order to sustain our education services. This includes trading with academies/ free schools and schools in other boroughs.
3. We are liaising with the Prince's Trust to identify gaps in service provision for young people so that the Trust is able to deliver a service to young people based on the unmet need in the borough and offer a service that adds value to the current existing partnership. The Trust will be opening a delivery centre in St Paul's Way from September 2014, funded by Morgan Stanley, and operate their services to young people from there. The service has the potential to support 250 young people annually.
4. The Council now has an opportunity to use phase two of the Troubled Families Programme to consolidate the work undertaken during phase one, which placed a focus on early detection and intervention and diversion away from anti-social behaviour, truancy and worklessness.
5. Tower Hamlets' Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) aims to bring together local agencies involved in child protection into a single integrated team operating under one roof, so they can share intelligence and work in partnership to inform better decision making in responding to risk and the needs of vulnerable children and families. This will allow opportunities to review and develop existing operations system and facilitate the development of further partnerships.

## Section Four: Progress against key performance indicators

2013/14 Strategic Measures	Quarter 3 2013/14 Outturn (October to December)* and RAG Status (Green – better than target, Amber at or better minimum standard, and Red – below minimum standard)	Direction of travel from previous year	Comparative Data	Commentary
<b>A Level Average Points Score per student in Tower Hamlets.</b>	The final A-Level Average Point Score per learner was 628 for the academic year 2012/13 (financial year 2013/14). RED	Performance is deteriorating compared to last year	The borough is still below the national average of 724. Although we saw a marginal improvement in A-Level in 2012, this was not the case for 2013 where we see downward trend. The gap between Tower Hamlets and national attainment average remains a concern.	
<b>Achievement of 5 or more A*- C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths.</b>	65.1% of KS4 students achieved 5+ A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent), including English and Maths GCSEs.  GREEN	Increase in the number of pupils achieving this measure	Tower Hamlets performs above the national average of 61.3% and ranks 16th amongst London Boroughs.	
<b>Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above in reading (test) writing (TA) and Maths(test) at Key Stage 2</b>	78%  AMBER	No change	The results compare favourably with the National figure of 75%.	This measure replaced the old measure for Key Stage 2 in 2012, and so comparative data only covers two years.
<b>Good level of development at Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	45.9%	No comparison to previous year	None available currently.	The measure replaces the previous measure: achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage
<b>16 to 19 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) (%)</b>	4.56 %  AMBER	Slight increase of young people who are NEET compared to last year		The methodology for this measure has changed. Previously it was young people between the ages of 16-18 years old. Now it

				is year 12/13 and 14 which includes 16 - 19 year olds.
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## Section Five: Customer perception and satisfaction

The table below details residents and service users' perception of, and satisfaction with, services. The information is taken from the Annual Residents Survey. The latest available data is for 2012/13. 2013/14 data will be available in August 2014.

Annual Residents Survey Measure	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11	Comparison with London 2012/13
% satisfied with primary education (service users)*	74	70	71	+4
% satisfied with nursery education (service users)*	72	79	74	-5
% satisfied with Children's Centres (service users)*	77	64	72	N/A
% satisfied with secondary education (service users)*	69	64	55	+6

\* The sample size for these measures is small, less than 25 per cent of the sample population use these services.

## Section Six: Cabinet Forward Plan items

Cabinet Meeting Date	Item
25 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	Education, Social Care and Wellbeing Capital Programme 2014/15
25 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	Review of the Council's Discretionary Awards Determination for the 2014/15 financial year and discretionary award policies
23 <sup>rd</sup> July 2014	Tackling the School Places Gap: pupil place planning and the impact of academies and free schools - scrutiny challenge session
3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2014	Planning for School Places- 2014/15 Review
1 <sup>st</sup> October 2014	LSCB Annual Report

## Section Seven: Suggested topics for O&S reviews

Council's corporate parenting responsibilities - how they are met and what else might be done to improve services

Review of Tower Hamlets Arts and Music Education Service