

Cabinet 29 November 2023	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Lisa Fraser, Acting Corporate Director, Children's Services	Classification: Unrestricted
Accelerate! The Tower Hamlets Children and Families Partnership Strategy, 2024 - 2029	

Lead Member	Councillor Maium Talukdar, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning (Statutory Deputy Mayor)
Originating Officer(s)	Layla Richards, Head of Strategy and Commissioning
Wards affected	All
Key Decision?	No
Reason for Key Decision	N/A
Forward Plan Notice Published	15 August 2023
Exempt information	None
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	1. Tackling the cost-of-living crisis 3. Accelerating education 5. Investing in public services 6. Empowering communities and fighting crime 8. A council that listens and works for everyone

Executive Summary

The new Children and Families Partnership Strategy – ‘Accelerate!’ sets 8 agreed priorities for the partnership for 2024 to 2029. Cabinet are asked to note the report.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the strategic priorities set out for the Tower Hamlets’ Children and Families Partnership in the Accelerate! Children and Families Partnership strategy.
2. Note that the priorities identified in Accelerate! are reflected in the Tower Hamlets Partnership Plan.
3. Note the Equalities Impact Assessment set out in paragraph 4.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

1.1 This is a noting report.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

2.1 The Council could choose not to endorse the Children and Families Strategy; however as one of the largest partners on the Children and Families Partnership Board this would undermine the work and direction agreed by the Partnership for the next five years.

2.2 The strategy provides a framework for delivering on joint priorities for children and families in the borough. Without this strategy it would be difficult to map a clear, coherent direction towards important outcomes for children, young people and families in Tower Hamlets.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

3.1 Tower Hamlets' Children and Families partnership brings together organisations from public services (including the council, different NHS organisations, police, and probation) and the voluntary and community sector to work together for better lives for young people in Tower Hamlets. Children, young people and their families are at the heart of our partnership and represented on many of the partnership groups. Our Every Chance for Every Child Forum provides strategic oversight of the partnership and reports into the borough's Partnership Executive Group. It is co-chaired by the Cabinet Member and a representative from the Young Mayor's team.

3.2 The partnership's current strategy Every Chance for Every Child comes to an end in 2024. A refreshed agenda is required in response to a new context: a new elected Mayor with an ambitious agenda for children and young people, changing national policy on children's services, SEND and health and social care integration, tackling the housing and cost of living crises that affect so many families, and the lasting impact of the pandemic on children's lives.

3.3 The new strategy is called Accelerate! It draws on extensive engagement with children, families and professionals carried out for recent partnership strategies in early help, safeguarding and the wider Tower Hamlets Partnership Plan. Development was led by the Every Chance for Every Child Forum and built on young people's presentations to the forum about their priorities in early 2023. Two workshops with forum members generated high level priorities. Priorities were tested with families attending In the Neighbourhood and a Family Fun Day in summer 2023, and the Children and Families Executive.

3.4 The strategy consists of a vision, eight priorities and a set of shared partnership values. Alignment to the Tower Hamlets Partnership Plan for 2023 to 2028 will support delivery and accountability.

- 3.5 The vision is *A child-friendly borough where children and young people from all backgrounds thrive, achieve their best, have opportunities, and are listened to.*
- 3.6 The eight priorities are for every child and young person to have a great start in life; enjoy the best possible health; get support for good mental health and wellbeing when they need it; get the right support at the right time if they have special educational needs or a disability; feel safe and secure; achieve their best in education and have opportunities to develop a career. The partnership will also work together to support families to be resilient in the cost of living and child poverty crisis and address the impact of overcrowding and poor housing conditions on families; and to champion co-production, equality and anti-racism.
- 3.7 Implementation will begin in April 2024, and will be preceded by a period of delivery planning. The strategy itself does not have earmarked costs: the council and partner organisations will contribute through their own programmes and planning cycles.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is attached. Ensuring that all children and young people can thrive in Tower Hamlets is a priority for every partner and the strategy includes a specific commitment to promote equality and tackle discrimination and racism.
- 4.2 The development of each priority will be informed by equality analysis, considering issues of intersectionality.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:
- Best Value Implications,
 - Consultations,
 - Environmental (including air quality),
 - Risk Management,
 - Crime Reduction,
 - Safeguarding.
 - Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.
- 5.2 Effective partnership working and community engagement is an important way for councils to deliver their best value duty. Draft guidance on best value standards is clear that “Authorities should have a clear understanding of and focus on the benefits that can be gained by effective collaborative working with local partners and community engagement in order to achieve its strategic objectives and key outcomes for local people”. This strategy

supports the delivery of the Best Value duty for partnership work with children and families.

- 5.3 The strategy also incorporates the priorities of the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership as developed with statutory partners, wider stakeholders and children and young people.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no direct Finance implications to this report. Any strategies that developed from this report with financial implications would be presented for separate decision.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 Sections 17-19 of the Children Act 1989, and Schedule 2 Part I of the same Act, place wide-ranging duties on local authorities to support children living with their families and to provide appropriate services.
- 7.2 This report demonstrates the Council's work to comply with these duties.
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Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

None

Appendices

- Appendix A: Accelerate! The Tower Hamlets Children and Families Partnership Strategy 2024 to 2029
- Appendix B: Equality Impact Assessment

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- None.

Officer contact details for documents:

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