

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 20 June 2017
Subject: Delivering the Our Manchester Strategy
Report of: Executive Member for Children's Services

Summary

This report provides an overview of work undertaken and progress towards the delivery of the Council's priorities as set out in the Our Manchester strategy for those areas within the portfolio of the Executive Member for Children's Services.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note and comment on the report.

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1. Introduction

The Our Manchester Strategy was formally adopted by the Council in January 2016 and sets the ambitions for the city for the next ten years, to 2025, for Manchester to be:

- Thriving – creating great jobs and healthy businesses
- Filled with talent – both home-grown talent and attracting the best in the world
- Fair – with equal chances for all to unlock their potential
- A great place to live – with lots of things to do
- Buzzing with connections – including world-class transport and broadband

Executive Members are collectively and individually responsible for supporting the delivery of the Our Manchester Strategy and for providing political oversight and direction to officers for the better outcomes for Manchester residents. In October, the Executive also published its collective political priorities and those of individual Executive Members, all of which are aligned to the Our Manchester Strategy.

This report sets out how I as the Executive Member for Children's Services have sought to deliver these priorities over the past six months and is the second of twice yearly reports to this Committee, with reports being submitted to Scrutiny Committees at their May and November meetings from now on.

2. Executive Member for Children's Services - Portfolio

As Executive Member for Children's Services, my areas of responsibility are Children's Social Care, Early Years and Schools until May 2017.

In addition, key initiatives or current pieces of work include:-

- Attend Children's Board to oversee all matters relating to children in Manchester. and helped draft the Children and Young People's Plan, Our Manchester, Our Children – building a safe, healthy, happy and successful future for our children and young people.
- This plan has been approved by the Executive and Scrutiny Committees, Health and Well Being Board and discussed with children and young people. The plan and 'plan on a page' version are now printed and being distributed amongst partners and frontline staff.

The main focus is on the 4 passions (1) Ensuring all children live in a safe, secure home. (2) Safely reducing the number of children in care. (3) Ensuring all children get the best start in life and are school ready. (4) All children should attend a Good School, and fulfill their potential

3. Progress and Outcomes November 2016 – June 2017

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

Manchester Children's Social Care is currently rated Inadequate by OFSTED and is on an improvement journey. I work with officers, front line staff, partners and members to improve services for children in Manchester. Children's Services must ensure that children in Manchester are protected from abuse and neglect, get the best start in life and fulfil their potential,

In order to achieve this I undertake the following actions:-

- Meet weekly with the Director of Children's Services and other senior officers as appropriate, to discuss and robustly challenge all aspects of the service, including referrals, Early Help, MASH, frontline social work, caseloads, audits, fostering and adoption, LAC numbers and outcomes, workforce issues and budgets.

Monthly analysis of the scorecard to check progress on key indicators and challenge where progress is not being made swiftly enough. Ensure that remedial action is being taken.

- Attend monthly Improvement Board meetings with officers from Children's Services and other partners. Meet regularly with the Chair to discuss areas of concern.
- Attend bi-monthly meeting of the Manchester Safeguarding Children's Board. Meet with the Chair regularly and discuss issues of concern such as Child Sexual Exploitation, neglect and Missing from Home. The Board has to ensure that all partners are fulfilling their role in these areas. Recently attended meetings to discuss two Serious Case Reviews and the learning gained from these and how it will be distributed throughout services.
- £10million investment in Children's Services has been used to recruit 84 social workers and 14 managers.

This is reducing caseloads and improving the quality of social work. Caseloads are now at an average of 19 for social workers and 17 for newly qualified social workers.

The investment was predicated on more effective management oversight of cases, regular supervision for all staff and better outcome in audits.

- Chair Corporate Parenting Panel which is a multi agency meeting that oversees outcomes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

Moved the meetings to monthly and focused on the LAC Strategy.

Increased attendance of members and officers.

Panel meeting with and listening to Looked After Children and care leavers.

Focused on Increasing the number of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for Looked After Children.

Ensured that post 16s LAC now have PEPs including those Not in Education, Employment or Training.

Subgroups set up for each of the six areas of the LAC strategy including health, education and accommodation.

Last year saw significant improvement in the number of LAC attaining 5 A*-Cs in their GCSES including English and maths. Aim to build on this and increase the number of LACs achieving in line with their peers.

- Arranged training for members on corporate parenting and complex safeguarding.
- Visited Children's Services offices to get the views of frontline staff and discussed caseloads, supervision and the implementation of Signs of Safety and how the strength based approach can support families more effectively.
- Attended staff briefings with the Director and spoke to staff about Our Manchester, Signs of Safety, caseloads and budgets.
- Attended Regional and Greater Manchester events for lead Members. We are collaborating with other authorities in Greater Manchester on a number of workstreams including reducing LAC by 20%, schools, youth justice and complex safeguarding issues.
- Feedback from OFSTED monitoring visits show improvement in our fostering and adoption services. Adoption rates have improved with over 80 children adopted this year.
- Number of Looked After Children has safely reduced to 1,136 (as of 2nd June) compared to 1,165 at end of last year.
- Last year saw an increase in the number of LAC attaining 5A*-Cs in their GCSEs including English and maths. The aim is to improve attainment this year and see LAC attaining more in line with their peers.

SCHOOLS (Responsibility now with Councillor Rosa Battle)

Aims:- As part of Our Manchester strategy, to ensure that all children get the best start in life and are school ready. Every child should attend a good school, enjoy their learning and fulfil their potential.

- Meet regularly with Director of Education and senior officers to receive reports on OFSTED outcomes and any schools causing concern. Ensuring that appropriate action is taken to support schools. Wherever possible support is given by a school working in Manchester.
- Challenge on sufficiency of school places. Receive regular updates on school places and children without a school place.
Agree plans to expand schools as necessary. Review place plans for future school places. In the next few years, many new secondary school places will be required. Expanding existing schools will not be sufficient to meet need. Work with officers on plans for free schools, particularly schools that are being funded by our Basic Need fund. Examples of this are Dean Trust Ardwick and

MEA Central. Discussions are ongoing about new secondary free schools in Gorton and Moss Side. The Government has agreed new free secondary schools in West Didsbury and Chorlton.

- Supported schools in lobbying Government over the challenge to school funding. Manchester schools are already feeling financial pressure as increases in national insurance, pensions and inflation mean that school budgets are 8% less than needed. Changes to a National School Funding Formula will hit Manchester very hard and after 2020 could see most Manchester schools losing another 15% of their budgets.
- Attended a National Association of Head Teachers meeting to speak on this and supported the Schools Funding Forum lobbying government. The response to the consultation is postponed until after the election.
- Follow up cases referred to me by members concerning school places. Main aim is to ensure that every child has a school place. Receive reports on children missing education. Ensure that lessons are learnt from casework.
- Supporting Read Manchester, a year long campaign to get residents reading. Making reading exciting, so that more people will enjoy reading, literacy levels and school results will improve.
- Currently 93% of our primary schools are rated Good or Outstanding by OFSTED.
- 64% of our secondary schools were rated Good or Outstanding by OFSTED (this is below the national average) and remains a challenge.
- KS2 results remain in line with the national average and have been so over the last 3 years. KS4 results have improved and are reducing the gap with national results.

EARLY YEARS

- In Early Years ensuring there are sufficient nursery and early years settings, so that all three and four year olds have access to good quality places for at least 15 hours and more vulnerable children can access 30 hours of provision.
- Vulnerable 2 year olds can access 15 hours of provision. From September 2018. we need enough places, so that all three and four year olds, with working parents, can access 30 hours free early education.
- Supporting the Early Years New Delivery Model which ensures that all new born babies are visited and support provided as necessary. Eight assessments will be undertaken by health visitors until the child starts school.
- Visiting schools and nursery settings as regularly as possible.

Although I take the political lead in all these areas, all achievements are a result of collective efforts. It would not be possible to improve the lives of children and young

people in Manchester without the work and commitment of staff, members, parents, foster carers and volunteers. Together we can create a great future for children and young people in Manchester. Thank you for your contribution.