

## OVERVIEW (AUDIT) PANEL

10 September 2018

**Commenced:** 2.00 pm

**Terminated:** 2.35 pm

**Present:** Councillors Ricci (Chair), Bell, Buglass, Fairfoull, Glover, Kitchen, Pearce, Peet and Warrington

**In Attendance:** Tom Wilkinson Assistant Director of Finance  
Simon Brunet Policy Manager

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillors Bailey, Homer and T Smith

### 13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 14. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Overview (Audit) Panel held on 30 July 2018 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

### 15. SCRUTINY UPDATE

The Assistant Director (Policy, Performance and Communications) submitted a report that summarised the work that had been undertaken by the Council's two Scrutiny Panels for the period June to September 2018.

It was reported that both the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel and the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel had held three formal meetings in June, July and September 2018. Work programmes had been developed and approved for the period 2018 to 2020 and panel members had identified a number of priorities for the first half of the municipal year.

The work that had been undertaken by the scrutiny panels was outlined as follows:-

- The Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel had considered the new NHS England guidance to reduce the future prescribing of over-the-counter medicines for minor and self-limiting conditions. They had also been consulted at a local level on the subject by Tameside and Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group as part of a 12 week period of engagement and a formal response to the consultation had been drafted for sign-off by the panel.
- The Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel had received a detailed overview of air quality impacts from a health and environmental perspective. Tameside was part of the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan and the panel had an ongoing role to input to the development and engagement of plans. A working group had been established to look at the complexity of issues and possible solutions to improving local and regional air quality.

The Panel were informed that North West Employers had held two 'Shaping Successful Scrutiny' training sessions that had been attended by 80% of panel members. The training was designed to deliver a refresh on scrutiny fundamentals, processes and councillors becoming effective

scrutineers. Feedback was very positive from both new and long standing members of the scrutiny panels.

Following discussion members of the Overview (Audit) Panel commented that it was imperative that all members of the scrutiny panels be trained and requested that arrangements be put in place for the 20% of members who had not attended the training sessions. In response to queries it was confirmed that scrutiny panel members received an introduction and background information to topics prior to commencing an in-depth review

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) **That the content of the report be noted; and**
- (ii) **That a standard agenda item named ‘Scrutiny Update’ be added to all future meetings of the Overview (Audit) Panel in order to receive timely reporting of scrutiny activity and outcomes for assurance.**

## **16. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LOCAL AUTHORITY COMPLAINT HANDLING**

The Assistant Director (Policy, Performance and Communications) submitted a report that provided a summary of the annual Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman report on complaints received about local authorities and other social care organisations.

It was reported that the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman was the final stage for complaints and information was published on complaints, enquiries and decisions that had been made on individual local authorities in July for the preceding financial year. It was important to note that high volumes of complaints did not necessarily indicate the quality of a council’s performance but instead could be a sign of an open, learning organisation.

The number of complaints about Tameside Council was in line with Greater Manchester and slightly lower than the national average. Complaints about Tameside Council had remained consistent over the past two years (78 in 2016-17 and 79 in 2017-18) with an increase of over a third from 57 complaints received in 2015-16. There was no clear driver for the increase however, complaints relating to Environmental Services increased significantly in 2017 before falling in 2018 and there had been a gradual increase in complaints relating to Planning and Development over a three year period. The percentage of Tameside Council complaints that had been upheld was lower than the Greater Manchester and national average.

The report outlined the four key national complaint themes, which were as follows, and a summary was provided on Tameside’s position against the themes:-

1. Mental Capacity and Deprivation of Liberty
2. Bin Complaints
3. Education, Health and Care Plans
4. Bed and Breakfast Accommodation

Members commented that scrutiny could assist with the four national themes and requested that an analysis of internal complaints be provided to give scrutiny panels an opportunity to examine areas of local concern.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the report be noted.**

## **17. APPROACH TO ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION**

The Assistant Director (Policy, Performance and Communications) submitted a report that detailed the approach to engagement and consultation for Tameside and Glossop Strategic Commission.

It was reported that when undertaking a change in service provision targeted work was required to ensure that the decision was supported by an evidence base that had regard to the law and impact on equalities, quality and the public, patients and service users. There were three strands to engagement and consultation all of which needed to be supported by an assessment of impact by protected characteristic group:-

1. Strategic Engagement
2. Thematic Engagement
3. Consultation

A Partnership Engagement Network was established in 2017 in order to deliver a strategic approach to engagement and consultation across Tameside and Glossop. It allowed for ongoing conversation with the public and stakeholders and created an opportunity for people and organisations to have their voices heard and to contribute to the development of public sector programmes and work. Three conferences had been held in October 2017, February 2018 and June 2018 that consisted of presentations and facilitated workshops, which were attended by over 300 participants. In addition, three forum meetings had been held in November 2017, February 2018 and May 2018.

A Tameside and Glossop Engagement Strategy had been created and was appended to the report and considered by the Panel. A table listing the 46 recent and upcoming engagement and consultation activities was detailed in the report. A monthly email containing information on upcoming consultations would be circulated to Members and shared at Strategic Neighbourhood Forum meetings.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (i) **That the content of the report be noted;**
- (ii) **That a monthly email containing information on live consultations be circulated to Members; and**
- (ii) **That details of live consultation activity be shared with the Strategic Neighbourhood Forums for consideration as potential agenda items.**

## **18. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

**CHAIR**