

OVERVIEW PANEL

Day: Monday
Date: 23 November 2020
Time: 2.00 pm
Place: Zoom

Item No.	AGENDA	Page No
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE To receive any apologies for the meeting from Members of the Panel.	
2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest from Members of the Panel.	
3.	MINUTES The Minutes of the meeting of the Overview Panel held on 7 September 2020 to be signed by the Chair as a correct record.	1 - 2
4.	SCRUTINY UPDATE To consider a report of the Director of Governance and Pensions / Assistant Director for Policy, Performance and Communications.	3 - 12
5.	SCRUTINY MID-YEAR BUDGET UPDATE To consider a report of the Director of Governance and Pensions / Assistant Director of Policy, Performance and Communications.	13 - 18
6.	LGSCO COMPLAINTS ANALYSIS To consider a report of the Director of Governance and Pensions.	19 - 24
7.	URGENT ITEMS To consider any additional items the Chair is of the opinion shall be dealt with as a matter of urgency.	

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OVERVIEW PANEL 7 September 2020

Commenced: 14:00

Terminated: 14:31

Present: Councillors Ricci (Chair), Cartey, Cooper, Fairfoull, J Fitzpatrick, Glover, J Homer, Kitchen, Ryan and Warrington

In Attendance:

Sandra Stewart	Director of Governance and Pensions
Kathy Roe	Director of Finance
Julie Speakman	Head of Executive Support
Simon Brunet	Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence

Apologies for Absence: Councillors T Smith and R Welsh

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

26. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview Panel on the 27 July 2020 were approved as a correct record.

27. SCRUTINY UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Governance and Pensions / Assistant Director for Policy, Performance and Communications, which provided a summary of the work undertaken by the Council's two Scrutiny Panels for July to September 2020.

It was reported that the on the 28 July 2020 Place and External Relations Panel meet with the Executive Member of Finance and Economic Growth, Executive Member of Housing, Planning and Employment and the Director of Growth to receive an overview of the impact of Covid-19. Further, the Panel received a formal response to the Council's safe Streets consultation.

At the upcoming meeting of the Place and External Relations Panel on the 15 September 2020, the Panel would meet with representatives of Transport for Greater Manchester to receive information specific to current measures, challenges and plans for public transport and the transition from crisis management to recovery.

The Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence stated that on the 30 July 2020 the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Panel met with the Chief Executive of Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care and NHS Foundation Trust to receive an overview of the hospitals response to Covid-19 and plans to bring routine services back.

On the 10 September 2020 the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Panel would meet with Population Health to receive an update on responding to Covid-19, with particular interest in the implementation, management and effectiveness of Test and trace in Tameside.

RESOLVED

That the Overview Panel note the content of the report and summary of scrutiny activity.

28. LOCAL GOVERNMENT & SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member of Finance and Economic Growth / Director of Governance and Pensions / Head of Executive Support. The report provided a summary of Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) complaints received by them about Tameside MBC.

The Head of Executive Support reported that during the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 the authority received 70 enquiries from the LGSCO, which had shown a slight decrease on the previous years, the lowest since 2016. The number of complaints received for the reporting period were made up across a number of service areas.

It was explained that there were 7 upheld decisions based on a total of 15 detailed investigations during the reporting period, which equated to 47% compared to an average of 67% in similar authorities. With regards to compliance the LGSCO was satisfied the Council had successfully implemented the reported recommendations in 100% of the cases. In 29% (2 cases out of 15) the LGSCO found that the Council had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the ombudsman, this compared to an average of 11% in similar authorities.

LGSCO made recommendations for service improvements on 5 complaints during the last reportable period of April 2018 to March 2019 as reported to Overview September 2019. When the LGSCO find fault they carefully look at the root cause and propose recommendations for improvements to systems and processes so that the issues do not reoccur. It is pleasing to note that there have been no new service improvement recommendations during the most recent reportable period of April 2019 – March 2020.

It was explained that the Council recognised the importance of dealing with complaints in a timely and effective manner. To support officers in the organisation to do this the LGSCO continued to be engaged to support the organisation with the delivery of their Effective Complaint Handling training course. During Summer 2019 this course was delivered over three themes, Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care and General complaints.

It was reported that nearly 40 key line managers that attended the training for their specialist areas. The feedback from the training during 2019 was positive. Elements of this training and learning had also been built into the Council's own organisational and development training and a refreshed programme was due to be launched.

The Head of Executive Support informed the Panel that a new corporate complaints case management was also implemented on 15 June 2020 across the whole of the Council and was a repository for all complaints, information and data requests (eg Freedom of Information, Subject Access). This system would give the authority a holistic view of how the organisation and its services were performing in addition to what information was of importance/interest to customers whilst also ensuring that the learning was used to inform improved service delivery and enhance the customer journey experience.

Members of the Overview Panel were advised of the Focussed Reports that had been published during the reportable period. Members advised that they found the information very useful and if they could have further detail as to how the Council compared with GM authorities.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

29. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

CHAIR

Agenda Item 4.

Report To:	OVERVIEW PANEL
Date:	23 November 2020
Reporting Officer:	Sandra Stewart, Director – Governance and Pensions Sarah Dobson, Assistant Director – Policy, Performance and Communications
Subject:	SCRUTINY UPDATE
Report Summary:	To receive for information, a summary of the work undertaken by the Council’s two Scrutiny Panels for September to November 2020.
Recommendations:	That Overview Panel is asked to note the content of the report and summary of scrutiny activity. All related documents can be viewed within the appendices.
Links to Corporate Plan:	Scrutiny work programmes are linked to the Council’s corporate priorities. Scrutiny activity seeks to support effective decision making and priorities across Tameside.
Policy Implications:	The work programmes comprise activity that seeks to check the effective implementation of the Strategic Commission’s policies and if appropriate make recommendations to the Executive with regards to development, performance monitoring, outcomes and value for money.
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)	There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report. Any costs incurred by the Scrutiny Panels must be met from existing budgets.
Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)	<p>The role that overview and scrutiny can play in holding an authority’s decision-makers to account makes it fundamentally important to the successful functioning of local democracy. Effective scrutiny helps secure the efficient delivery of public services and drives improvements within the authority itself.</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Committees were introduced in 2000 as part of new executive governance arrangements to ensure that members of an authority who were not part of the executive could hold the executive to account for the decisions and actions that affect their communities.</p> <p>Overview and scrutiny committees have statutory powers (Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000; paragraph 1 of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009) to scrutinise decisions the executive is planning to take, those it plans to implement, and those that have already been taken/implemented. Recommendations following scrutiny enable improvements to be made to policies and how they are implemented. Overview and scrutiny committees can also play a valuable role in developing policy.</p> <p>Effective overview and scrutiny should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide constructive ‘critical friend’ challenge;• Amplify the voices and concerns of the public; <p>Be led by those independent of the decision makers who</p>

take responsibility for their role; and
Drive improvement in public services.

Risk Management:

Regular updates to Overview Panel provide assurance that scrutiny is progressing with an effective work programme, supporting good decision making and service improvement.

Access to Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Paul Radcliffe, Policy and Strategy Lead by:



Telephone: 0161 342 2199



e-mail: paul.radcliffe@tameside.gov.uk

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Update provides a platform for appropriate insight, activity, outcomes and proposals to be relayed. This method of reporting supports the improved responsiveness of scrutiny work and also prevents any delay in the communication of key messages.
- 1.2 The report, by nature, aims to provide members with a general summary of scrutiny activity and proposals. It remains that all reports produced by Scrutiny Panels as a result of in-depth review will be tabled separately at the earliest opportunity.

2. SCRUTINY ACTIVITY

- 2.1 Scrutiny in practice remains mindful of the suitability and appropriateness of timings with regards to the impact and value of planned activity. This includes the selection and order of topics and updates to be received during the year. The annual work programmes and priorities were agreed at the June meetings and this coincides with consultation activity for which a valued response and input can be achieved. The tables below provide a summary and chronology of scrutiny activity.

Figure 1: Breakdown of activity at the formal Scrutiny Panel meetings

PLACE AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS	
15 September 2020	10 November 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met Cllr Warren Bray, Executive Member, Strategic Development and Transport; Lee Holland, Head of Engineering Services to receive information on consultation and project developments for walking and cycling schemes in Tameside. The Panel received for information, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report, as tabled at the meeting of Overview Panel on 7 September 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met with Cllr Allison Gwynne, Executive Member, Neighbourhood services; and John Gregory, Head of Community Safety and Homelessness to receive an update on service developments and strategy consultation. To Panel received a letter of the Scrutiny Chairs to Councillor Oliver Ryan, Executive Member, Finance and Economic Growth, in response to the mid-year budget update meetings held on 22 September 2020.
INTEGRATED CARE AND WELLBEING	
10 September 2020	5 November 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met Cllr Eleanor Wills, Executive Member, Health, Social Care and Population Health; and Jessica Williams, Director of Commissioning, to receive a service response to findings from Tameside & Glossop GP Patient Survey 2020. The Panel met Cllr Eleanor Wills, Executive Member, Health, Social Care and Population Health; and Jeanelle De Gruchy, Director of Population Health, to receive an overview of the local public health response, the transition from crisis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met Cllr Bill Fairfoull, Deputy Executive Leader (Children and Families); and Richard Hancock, Director of Children's Services to receive an update on services specific to Children's Social Care improvements. To Panel received a letter of the Scrutiny Chairs to Councillor Oliver Ryan, Executive Member, Finance and Economic Growth, in response to the mid-year budget update meetings held on 22 September 2020.

management to recovery and the implementation, management and effectiveness of Test and Trace in Tameside.	
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- The Panel received for information, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report, as tabled at the meeting of Overview Panel on 7 September 2020.

Review Activity

- 2.2 At a meeting of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel on 28 July 2020, members received information specific to economic growth and recovery, including the impacts of Covid-19. The Chair has since established a working group to progress oversight and activity in this area.
- 2.3 The group consists of eight members from the main panel and to-date has met virtually on 4 and 9 November 2020. Initial focus has been placed on recent developments and upcoming consultation related to delivering an Inclusive Growth Strategy for Tameside. Findings and recommendations from the activity will be shared in a timely and suitable manner with the Executive Member for Finance and Economic Growth.

Children's Working Group

- 2.4 A meeting of the fixed working group took place on 12 November 2020. Members met Tracy Watkin, Assistant Director of Children's Services; and Glen Perryman, Fostering Service Unit Manager, to receive a progress update on past activity and recommendations specific to the Recruitment and Retention of Foster Carers in Tameside.
- 2.5 The follow-up actions relate directly to the past report and Executive Response tabled at a meeting of Overview Panel on 12 February 2020, which concluded research and insight undertaken during the final quarter of 2019.

Mid-year Budget Update

- 2.6 All members of the Council's Scrutiny Panels received an invitation to attend one of two sessions held on 22 September 2020, as the mid-year budget update. The independence of scrutiny enables members to seek assurances on the Council's current financial position and looking forward to budget planning, process and priorities for 2021/22.
- 2.7 Additional attention was placed on budget impacts and recovery related to Covid-19. Where appropriate, priorities will continue to inform future scrutiny activity and work programmes. A response letter of the Scrutiny Chairs has been sent to Councillor Oliver Ryan, Executive Member, Finance and Economic Growth, with a summary of discussion points. A summary of this activity is to be tabled as a separate item to Overview Panel on 23 November 2020.
- 2.8 A future budget session with scrutiny members will take place on 18 January 2021, forming part of the formal budget procedures for 2021/22.

Consultation and Engagement

- 2.9 Scrutiny will remain suitably informed of engagement activity and open consultations at a local, regional and national level. Recent examples include review and feedback based on the:
- NHS GP Patient Survey
 - Walking and Cycling (Safer Streets)
 - Community Safety Strategy

- Inclusive Growth Strategy

Keeping Scrutiny Members Informed

- 2.10 All Scrutiny Panel members receive a monthly update email, with the purpose of raising awareness to a variety of materials to support their role, provide access to scrutiny resources and the ongoing opportunity for councillors to contribute and share any open consultations and engagement exercises. This will continue to include a wide variety of topic areas for consideration.
- 2.11 The update email also includes links to Greater Manchester Priorities and the work of the Combined Authority Scrutiny Panels. This email provides a further opportunity to inform members how the work of scrutiny is shared and reported within the Council. The most recent update was sent in September 2020, **APPENDIX 1**.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 As set out on the front of the report.

September 2020

Welcome to the September 2020 Scrutiny Update.

The regular updates aim to keep you informed of upcoming activity, including engagement and consultation with regards to local, regional and national decision making. All of the open consultations listed below are available for you to access and complete, with the opportunity to raise greater community awareness and participation where possible. For further information and to have your say please follow the relevant links below.

I hope this is something you will continue to find useful and please let me know if you require any further information.

Guidance and Resources on COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

- [Covid-19 advice on working safely for employees, employers and businesses](#)
- [Updated figures on the number of Coronavirus cases and risk in the UK](#)
- [How to protect yourself or check if you need medical help](#)
- Guidance on [staying alert and safe \(social distancing\)](#) and for [self-isolation](#)

There is also guidance available on local websites as detailed below:

Tameside Council at <https://www.tameside.gov.uk/coronavirus> - includes links to service change information, how to volunteer, support for businesses, council tax recovery, mental health support, wellbeing, how to contact the Council for support and more.

NHS Tameside & Glossop CCG at <https://www.tamesideandglossopccg.org/> link on homepage.

Tameside & Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust at <https://www.tamesidehospital.nhs.uk/> information on homepage

Other things to be aware of include:

- **Community Champions** – Tameside Council are looking for residents and staff to become Tameside Community Champions as we all continue to work together in the response to COVID-19. Armed with the latest advice and guidance, the champions can help family, friends and other Tameside community members to understand the latest facts about the virus and what we can all do in order to protect ourselves, each other, and prevent the spread of the virus. You might be the person that everyone knows and trusts. You might be someone who just wants to help in whatever way you can. You can support the community as much or as little as you like in a variety of ways, from simply passing on information to having conversations or volunteering your time. If you're interested in becoming a Community Champion you can [find out more about the role, and how to register on the website here](#).
- **Membership of Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust** – As part of the Tameside and Glossop community, the Trust seeks to engage with people from all walks of life who use our services. One way in which we can do this is through the membership we have as a Foundation Trust, and we are currently seeking to bring this opportunity to the attention of

our residents. Membership of the Trust is free, carries no obligation, and enables individuals to participate in both our governance and development; and to do so at a level at which they are comfortable.

In particular, all members have the opportunity to participate in or offer their service through elections to the Council of Governors. The Council is a key part of our governance, charged with bringing the interests of the community into the Trust and holding the Board to account on their behalf. Membership also gives additional information of the work of the Trust, through a regular twice-yearly membership magazine: together with the provision of information related to our wider public engagement work, undertaken through the Tameside & Glossop Public Engagement Network and other routes. We want to ensure that our local communities are aware of the opportunity to join the Trust as members; and then to participate in or seek election as a Governor. Click [here](#) for more information or to apply to become a member of the Trust.

- **Virtual recycling education** – The Education Team at Recycle for Greater Manchester are now offering one hour virtual sessions to schools, community groups and residents to help people understand what rubbish should be recycled and in which bin, how the waste is separated and why we should recycle. The sessions are interactive and include films, activities and a question and answer session with one of their experienced Education Officers.

The virtual sessions are being offered in place of visits to their Education Centres, which cannot be conducted at the moment because of coronavirus restrictions. To find out more or to book a session contact: education@recycleforgreatermanchester.com. A new Facebook group has also been launched called “Recycle for Greater Manchester Learning and activities” that features information for residents, teachers and parents about how to recycle right, reduce waste and learn more about reuse in Greater Manchester www.facebook.com/groups/recycle4gm.activities.

- A new dedicated webpage on useful contacts for people who find themselves in need of advice or support in light of the Covid-19 outbreak has been set up on the Tameside & Glossop CCG website [here](#), and the Council website [here](#).

Grant Funding for VCSE Organisations

There are a number of ways VCSE organisations in Greater Manchester can apply for funding during the Covid-19 outbreak. 10GM, a partnership of local support and development agencies in Greater Manchester, have come together to produce a bulletin providing all the information on funding opportunities available for VCF organisations in Greater Manchester, including how to apply. You can find the latest bulletin here <https://www.gmcvo.org.uk/news/10gm-funding-bulletin-may-2020>.

Update on various funding pots available

- **Lloyds Foundation Grant Opportunity** – A funding opportunity has come up via the [Lloyds Foundation](#) for projects focused on learning how people interact with welfare and benefits. Action Together are interested in working with local partners who would want to apply, particularly around issues of No Recourse to Public Funds. This group face huge barriers accessing any welfare support, with legal obstacles, access to immigration advice and lack of trust being major challenges amongst other areas. This is a great opportunity to capture their experience and imagine how it could be different, but there is a deadline of 30th September to submit an Expression of Interest so we need to act quick! If you would like to work with us on these issues or others related to the welfare system, please contact Robbie.cowbury@actiontogether.org.uk.
- **[Covid-19 Community-led Organisations Recovery Scheme](#)** – This funding is designed to support organisations that work with those communities which have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, as well as social enterprises and community businesses.

- [GM Mental Wellbeing Grants](#) – GMCVO, working in partnership with 10GM, have launched a grants programme to support adults from communities of identity or experience, based in Greater Manchester; that may struggle to achieve higher levels of mental wellbeing.
- [Emergency grants for GM BAME Communities](#) – Between July and December 2020, grants will be available for GM BAME led VCSE organisations, with an annual income of under £10,000, to focus on emergency needs within BAME communities. The grants will fund new activities and services as well as the additional costs of adapting existing services due to COVID-19. The grants will also help counter the loss of fundraising income directly caused by the pandemic.
- [Social Enterprise Support Fund](#) – provides grants to support social enterprises during Covid-19. It is particularly focussed on smaller social enterprises with an annual income of between £25,000 and £1.5m before COVID. The funding is specifically for social enterprises that support people who are at high risk from COVID-19, or those that support people most likely to face increased demand and challenges as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

Covid-19 opinion and behaviour insight

The following are some key statistics taken from different pieces of national and regional research indicating what the impact of covid-19 has been for people including businesses. Understanding the impact of covid-19 will be crucial to our recovery locally and how we plan to build back better.

- Less than half think guidance on who and how many people you can meet with is clear (44%), and just 34% think that others are following it well
- Young people's biggest concerns about the return to school are struggling to keep up (68%), the social distancing rules (50%) and catching Coronavirus (47%)
- 46% say they always maintained social distancing when meeting up with others (45% two weeks ago) - 8% said they rarely or never maintained social distancing (5% two weeks ago)
- Most bosses believe staff could/work effectively from home (74%), however, one in five are sceptical staff are being productive (19%)
- Most people feel safe and confident when attending hospital for specific procedures; attending hospital for essential surgery was considered most safe (78%), and attending A&E was considered least safe (50%)
- Mental health: 64% are worried about the effect that Covid-19 is having on their life right now
- Renters are more likely to be furloughed, unable to work or made redundant than home-owners
- An increasing proportion of people have few concerns about using public transport (43% compared to 38% last week)

Open Consultations

[SEND Service Questionnaire](#) - In Tameside, we are looking to further develop how we deliver support for children and young people with special educational needs and /or disabilities (SEND) for 0-25 years in the future. We want to make sure that families get the best possible outcomes for children, that you need only tell their story once and that the support you need happens in the right place, at the right time. Therefore, we would like to hear all about your lived experience of support for your child or young person's special educational needs and disabilities, the level of support you have received and what is important for you and your family for the future. If you would like someone to help you complete the survey, then please contact local.offer@tameside.gov.uk.
Deadline: **9 October 2020**.

[Review of Draft 2020 Statement of Community Involvement](#) – The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how Tameside Council will involve the local community, stakeholders and other organisations in preparing and revising local planning documents and making decisions on planning applications. The current SCI was adopted in 2016 and needs to be updated to reflect changes to planning legislations, policy and guidance, in addition to measures implemented to combat Covid-19. An updated SCI has been drafted and the Council is seeking feedback on this document. Deadline: **1 October 2020**.

[COVID-19 survey](#) – Due to the outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19), we have all been asked to ‘Stay at Home, Protect the NHS, and Save Lives’. This short survey from Healthwatch Tameside will help them to understand and gather information about what you think could make the situation easier to live with. They want you to say what is working well, as well as what could be improved. Paper copies of this consultation will be made available in due course, and questions can be talked through over the phone to support as many responses as possible. Deadline: **ongoing**.

[Healthwatch Tameside General Survey 2020](#) – Healthwatch Tameside is asking local people about their experiences of health and care services. The questionnaire will ask what services respondents have used in the past year, as well as what was good and what could be improved about these services. They will then combine the results from this survey with other information on how well local services are performing to produce a report on the subject. Deadline: **Ongoing**.

[Healthwatch Tameside young people’s health & care survey 2020](#) - Healthwatch Tameside want to find out what young people think about health and care services they have used during the past 12 months. The questionnaire will ask about which services respondents used in the past year, their views on service quality, and what changes could be made. They will then combine the results from this survey with other information on how well local services are performing to produce a report on the subject. Deadline: **Ongoing**

[Greater Manchester’s Big Mental Wellbeing Conversation](#) – People in Greater Manchester are being asked to join a conversation about their mental wellbeing, to discover how they feel, what worries them, and what they think can be done to make a positive difference to where they live. Greater Manchester’s Big Mental Wellbeing Conversation is being run by the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership and the Independent Mental Health Network. The Independent Mental Health Network is a membership-led organisation that represents a diverse community of past, current and future users of mental health services, as well as those with lived experience of mental health problems. Deadline: **19 October 2020**.

[City Centre Transport Strategy Consultation](#) - Since 2018 there have been many discussions with city centre residents, commuters, businesses and interest groups to learn how they want to travel into and around the centre of Greater Manchester, and how they would shape the next phase of improvements to roads, rail, tram, bus, bike, pedestrian and public spaces.

The proposed strategy reflects the strongest calls from these discussions, including those for more space for pedestrians and bikes, and cleaner, greener more sustainable travel options. This final consultation is to make sure that their ambitions for city centre travel are right for you. Deadline: **4 November 2020**

National Engagement and Consultations

There are currently a number of pieces of work being led by government departments and agencies that you may wish to take part in. For further information and to have your say please follow the relevant links below:

[Fire safety](#) – The Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government are seeking views on proposals to strengthen the Fire Safety Order, implement Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommendations and strengthen the regulatory framework for how building control bodies consult with Fire and Rescue Authorities. Deadline: **12 October 2020**.

[Planning for the future](#) – The Planning for the future consultation proposes reforms of the planning system to streamline and modernise the planning process, bring a new focus to design and sustainability, improve the system of developer contributions to infrastructure, and ensure more land is available for development where it is needed. Deadline: **29 October 2020**.

[Managing Pavement Parking](#) – Consultation asking whether a change of existing pavement parking legislation should occur. The Department for Transport are proposing 3 options: Improving

the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process, under which local authorities can already prohibit pavement parking; a legislative change to allow local authorities with civil parking enforcement powers to enforce against 'unnecessary obstruction of the pavement'; and a legislative change to introduce a London-style pavement parking prohibition throughout England. Deadline: **22 November 2020**.

[Raising accessibility standards for new homes](#) – This consultation considers how to raise accessibility standards, recognising the importance of suitable homes for older and disabled people. In particular, it considers how the existing optional accessible and adaptable standard for homes and the wheelchair user standard are used and whether government should mandate a higher standard or reconsider the way the existing optional standards are used. Deadline: **1 December 2020**.

[LGBT Sport & Physical Activity Group Coronavirus Impact Survey](#) – With this survey Pride Sports would like to get an idea of how the coronavirus lockdown has affected LGBT+ sports clubs, not just in terms of providing sports and physical activity, but also other aspects such as social events and the governance of clubs. Deadline: **ongoing**.

All live and past consultations are available for viewing at the [Big Conversation](#) pages on the Council's website.

Regional Scrutiny

The Council appoints representatives to each of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Scrutiny Panels and also scrutiny arrangements for Pennine Care. The links below provide you with access to the most recent meeting papers for each of the panels.

[Corporate Issues & Reform Overview & Scrutiny](#)

[Economy, Business Growth & Skills Overview & Scrutiny](#)

[Housing, Planning & Environment Overview & Scrutiny](#)

Scrutiny Resources

In addition to the past training events, I will look to share any available material with you. This will include any material to support you in your role during the course of the year.

Recent publications:

- [CFPS - Local government living with the pandemic and looking ahead](#)
- [CFPS – Revisiting the four principles of good scrutiny](#)
- [LGA – Coronavirus: Information for Councils](#)

Agenda Item 5.

Report To:	OVERVIEW PANEL
Date:	23 November 2020
Reporting Officer:	Sandra Stewart, Director – Governance and Pensions Sarah Dobson, Assistant Director – Policy, Performance and Communications
Subject:	SCRUTINY MID-YEAR BUDGET UPDATE
Report Summary:	To receive a summary and feedback based on recent scrutiny engagement on the 2020/21 budget and impacts of Covid-19.
Recommendations:	That Overview Panel is asked to note the content of the report and appendices.
Links to Corporate Plan:	Scrutiny work programmes are linked to the Council's corporate priorities. Scrutiny activity seeks to support effective decision making and priorities across Tameside.
Policy Implications:	The work programmes comprise activity that seeks to check the effective implementation of the Strategic Commission's policies and if appropriate make recommendations to the Executive with regards to development, performance monitoring, outcomes and value for money.
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)	<p>There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report. Any costs incurred by the Scrutiny Panels must be met from existing budgets.</p> <p>The Council is required by law to set a balanced budget for the upcoming financial year. This balanced budget must be based on sound and sustainable assumptions about income and expenditure, the delivery of savings and use of reserves.</p>
Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)	<p>Legislation is clear that every councillor is responsible for the financial control and decision making at their council. The Local Government Act 1972 (Sec 151) states that "<i>every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs...</i>" and the Local Government Act 2000 requires Full Council to approve the council's budget and council tax demand.</p> <p>Every council requires money to finance the resources it needs to provide local public services. Therefore, every councillor is required to take an interest in the way their council is funded and the financial decisions that the council takes.</p> <p>A sound budget is essential to ensure effective financial control in any organisation and the preparation of the annual budget is a key activity at every council. Budgets and financial plans will be considered more fully later in the workbook, but the central financial issue at most councils is that there are limits and constraints on most of the sources of funding open to local councils. This makes finance the key constraint on the council's ability to provide more and better services.</p> <p>Every council must have a balanced and robust budget for the forthcoming financial year and also a 'medium term financial</p>

strategy (MTFS)' which is also known as a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). This projects forward likely income and expenditure over at least three years. The MTFS ought to be consistent with the council's work plans and strategies, particularly the corporate plan. Due to income constraints and the pressure on service expenditure through increased demand and inflation, many councils find that their MTFS estimates that projected expenditure will be higher than projected income. This is known as a budget gap.

Whilst such budget gaps are common in years two-three of the MTFS, the requirement to approve a balanced and robust budget for the immediate forthcoming year means that efforts need to be made to ensure that any such budget gap is closed. This is achieved by making attempts to reduce expenditure and/or increase income. Clearly councillors will be concerned with any potential effect that these financial decisions have on service delivery.

The detailed finance rules and regulations for local councils are complex and ever-changing. However, over the past few years, there has been a significant change in the overall approach to local government funding.

Since 2010 – Government has sought to make the local government funding system more locally based, phasing out general government grant altogether. One of the key implications of this change in government policy is that local decisions affecting the local economy now have important implications on council income. Therefore, the policy objectives and decision making of the local council plays a far more significant role in the council's ability to raise income than before.

The councillor's role put simply, it is to consider the council's finance and funding as a central part of all decision making and to ensure that the council provides value for money, or best value, in all of its services.

There is unlikely to be sufficient money to do everything the council would wish to provide due to its budget gap. Therefore, councillors need to consider their priorities and objectives and ensure that these drive the budget process. In addition, it is essential that councils consider how efficient it is in providing services and obtaining the appropriate service outcome for all its services.

A budget is a financial plan and like all plans it can go wrong. Councils therefore need to consider the financial impact of risk and they also need to think about their future needs. Accounting rules and regulations require all organisations to act prudently in setting aside funding where there is an expectation of the need to spend in the future. Accordingly, local councils will set aside funding over three broad areas: Councils create reserves as a means of building up funds to meet known future liabilities. These are sometimes reported in a series of locally agreed specific or earmarked reserves and may include sums to cover potential damage to council assets (sometimes known as self-insurance), un-spent budgets carried forward by the service or reserves to enable the council to accumulate funding for large projects in the

future, for example a transformation reserve. Each reserve comes with a different level of risk. It is important to understand risk and risk appetite before spending. These reserves are restricted by local agreement to fund certain types of expenditure but can be reconsidered or released if the council's future plans and priorities change. However, every council will also wish to ensure that it has a 'working balance' to act as a final contingency for unanticipated fluctuations in their spending and income. The Local Government Act 2003 requires a council to ensure that it has a minimum level of reserves and balances and requires that the Section 151 officer reports that they are satisfied that the annual budget about to be agreed does indeed leave the council with at least the agreed minimum reserve. Legislation does not define how much this minimum level should be, instead, the Section 151 officer will estimate the elements of risk in the council's finances and then recommend a minimum level of reserves to council as part of the annual budget setting process.

There are no legal or best practice guidelines on how much councils should hold in reserves and will depend on the local circumstances of the individual council. The only legal requirement is that the council must define and attempt to ensure that it holds an agreed minimum level of reserves as discussed above. When added together, most councils have total reserves in excess of the agreed minimum level.

In times of austerity, it is tempting for a council to run down its reserves to maintain day-to-day spending. However, this is, at best, short sighted and, at worst, disastrous! Reserves can only be spent once and so can never be the answer to long-term funding problems. However, reserves can be used to buy the council time to consider how best to make efficiency savings and can also be used to 'smooth' any uneven pattern in the need to make savings.

Risk Management:

Regular updates to Overview Panel provide assurance that scrutiny is progressing with an effective work programme, supporting good decision making and service improvement.

Access to Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Paul Radcliffe, Policy and Strategy Lead by:



Telephone: 0161 342 2199



e-mail: paul.radcliffe@tameside.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council is required by law to set a balanced budget for the upcoming financial year. It is important to base proposals on a range of sound and sustainable assumptions about income and expenditure. There is an additional need to assess, project and monitor a range of known and unknown external pressures.
- 1.2 The authority also has a statutory duty to consult with businesses and other representatives of non-domestic ratepayers on its annual spending proposals. Tameside and Glossop Strategic Commission instruct and deliver a timetable of engagement activity in order to seek and understand the priorities of individual services, residents, patients, service users and businesses alike.
- 1.3 The budget plan and timetable incorporates a sufficient level of benchmarking and transparency. Where possible, budget proposals seek to minimise costs and maximise efficiencies, whilst protecting public services. Proposals are drafted in advance of a meeting of Cabinet, prior to approval being sought at a meeting of Full Council in February. The planning and engagement process for this will commence as early as September each year.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 It is a requirement that Scrutiny Panels be consulted as part of planned budget conversations and engagement. Such arrangements have been in place in Tameside since Scrutiny Panels were established in 2000. The independence of scrutiny enables members to seek assurances on budget planning, process and priorities.
- 2.2 All scrutiny members are cordially invited to attend an annual budget consultation session in January each year, at which final budget proposals are presented in detail. The session provides a suitable opportunity for scrutiny members to provide feedback, raise questions and concerns. Feedback predominantly concentrates on areas included within the approved annual work programmes and findings from recent activity and review.
- 2.3 Scrutiny Chairs provide timely feedback to the Executive Member with responsibility for finance. Discussion points and findings are summarised in a formal letter, in support of the final budget report and that an opportunity be taken to table the letter at the February meeting of Cabinet.
- 2.4 More recently, 2019 onwards, Scrutiny Panels have received a mid-year budget update. This provides a further level of engagement to inform proposals and can be used to support the development of future work priorities for each panel.
- 2.5 All Scrutiny Panel members were provided with an opportunity to attend one of two mid-year budget update sessions held on 22 September 2020. The update has enabled members to seek assurances on the Strategic Commission's approach to managing and mitigating both the direct and indirect impacts that Covid-19 will continue to have on residents, communities and the local economy. A response letter of the Scrutiny Chairs to the Executive Member for Finance and Economic Growth can be viewed in **APPENDIX 1**.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 As set out on the front of the report.

Chairs of the Scrutiny Panels

Councillors Teresa Smith and Mike Glover

Tameside One
Market Place
Ashton-under-Lyne
OL6 6BH

email: paul.radcliffe@tameside.gov.uk
Ask for Paul Radcliffe
Direct Line 0161 342 2199
Date 16 October 2020

Councillor Oliver Ryan
Executive Member
Finance and Economic Growth

Tom Wilkinson
Assistant Director of Finance

Dear Councillor Ryan and Mr Wilkinson,

Scrutiny mid-year Budget update 2020/21

We write in response to the mid-year budget update meetings held on 22 September 2020. Thank you for the time taken to provide all scrutiny members with the opportunity to receive a comprehensive appraisal, which included an overview of financial impacts and projections related to Covid-19.

The budget monitoring information continues to inform future work priorities for the Scrutiny Panels. The regular updates also enable members to seek assurances on the Strategic Commission's approach to managing and mitigating both the direct and indirect impacts that Covid-19 will continue to have on residents, communities and the local economy.

This letter provides an account of discussions captured from the meetings and it is hoped that the collective points will support the wider Budget Conversation for 2021/22. Please pass our thanks to the Director of Finance and we will ensure that the Council's Overview Panel receive a suitable update on this activity at the next meeting on 23 November 2020.

Uncertainty associated with a single year financial settlement for 2020/21 has unfortunately coincided with the emergence of a global pandemic. The circumstance of which has resulted in an unprecedented and unforeseen level of external pressure on national, regional and local budgets. Members appreciate that the current financial impacts are difficult to measure, given the complexities and unknowns that such a public health emergency will continue to have on Tameside.

The strength of local partnerships and cooperative working has allowed the authority to draw on a wealth of information that will ultimately inform a local financial and economic recovery plan. Tameside continues to face significant challenges related to health outcomes, skill levels and employment, with Covid-19 presenting an unparalleled level of pressure on front line services. Our communities continue to show a level of compassion and determination needed to ensure we can get through this together.

The local transformation and integration programme between the Council and health services has resulted in a number of gains, which have enabled the local response to be focused, fast and flexible. An example of this being the Humanitarian Hub. The progress made in this area has benefited Tameside and the collaboration between health and social care has allowed resources to be both targeted and shared.

Future challenges remain and they are likely to be profound and far-reaching on the resilience of households and communities. This includes factors such as the uncertainty of future employment,

housing, education and timely access to healthcare and support. Members are conscious of the need to effectively plan for challenges that residents are likely to face going forward, and the impact that will have on the demand for services and budgets.

Additional concerns include the delayed and long-term impacts of Covid-19, with reference made to the viability of local businesses and future employment levels in the borough. Imminent changes to the furlough scheme are likely to present a number of risks and uncertainties, with the addition of a tiered approach that may result in significant curtailments for Greater Manchester if we are to be placed into Tier 3.

It was reassuring to hear that a number of financial monitoring mechanisms are in place to identify, separate and closely monitor covid and non-covid impacts to the budget. It was reported that to date a sufficient level of funding and support has been received to address in-year financial pressures. Members agree with the key risk factors identified and continued pressures placed on statutory services.

While non-discriminatory, the virus has unfortunately had a disproportionate impact on certain sectors of the local economy and their ability to function under current restrictions. There has also been a notable reduction in projected income for the Council and upcoming challenges associated with a second wave.

It was reported that the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates is below expected levels, which in itself reflects the hardship faced and is a reflection of the tough decisions that households and businesses face. Should tighter restrictions come into force, this may require a review of the Council's collection strategy in the short-term to address the range of issues associated with such arrears.

The Scrutiny Panels have continued to review the ability of services to improve outcomes for residents while at the same time deliver value for money. The Council continues to face high levels of demand on statutory services and members are supportive of a short-term need to allocate additional financial resource to Children's Services. However, concerns were raised on the Council's ability to sustain budget increases of this nature in future years. Improving outcomes for children and vulnerable residents remains a pressure and Scrutiny will continue to work with services to review the impact of sustainability projects.

Members felt that the strategic direction for economic growth and recovery has an important role to play going forward. Mr Wilkinson advised that the Growth directorate has received additional investment to progress strategic priorities. The development of separate housing and estate strategies is welcomed and it was viewed that work in related areas needs to deliver inclusive growth across all communities.

The Executive has remained supportive of Scrutiny reporting methods which ensure findings and recommendations are shared in a timely manner and to prevent delay. Scrutiny will continue to seek assurances and identify suitable opportunities to inform local, regional and national decision making.

The Council will undoubtedly achieve a greater level of confidence and assurance if a long-term funding package is to be granted. With a need to plan past 2021, scrutiny members welcome and encourage transparency in budget conversations and request that bi-annual engagement with Scrutiny Panels remain in place going forward. We confirmed that a future budget session with scrutiny members is planned for 18 January 2021, to form part of formal budget procedures for 2021/22.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor T Smith - Chair to Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel
Councillor M Glover – Chair to Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Item 6.

Report to:	OVERVIEW PANEL
Date:	23 November 2020
Reporting Officer:	Sandra Stewart – Director of Governance & Pensions
Subject:	LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN (LGSCO) COMPLAINTS ANALYSIS
Report Summary:	This report provides a summary and comparison of complaints made to the LGSCO with the council and its neighbouring authorities.
Recommendations:	The Panel is asked to note the content of the update
Corporate Plan:	Putting people at the forefront of services is a key element of the Council's Corporate Plan. An effective and robust complaints handling procedure is a necessary step to achieving this.
Policy Implications:	An effective complaint function means that residents who do not receive the best quality service can notify the Council for the purposes of redress and the improvement of services in the future. It is important for the Council to take notice of findings and guidance on complaint handling to aid best practice. As a leader for the Customer Service Excellence standard it is also important to use this as an improvement tool to inform our custom and practice for service delivery.
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer & Chief Finance Officer)	There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report however dealing with service failure has a financial impact both in terms of the consequences of the complaint and the significant resource required to respond to the complaint process.
Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)	<p>The Ombudsman's jurisdiction is covered by the Local Government Act 1974 which defines the main statutory functions for the Ombudsman as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to investigate complaints against councils and some other authorities• to investigate complaints about adult social care providers from people who arrange or fund their adult social care (Health Act 2009). <p>The Ombudsmen's jurisdiction under Part III of the Act covers all local authorities (excluding town and parish councils); police and crime bodies; and school admission appeal panels.</p> <p>The LGO corporate strategy is based upon twin pillars of remedying injustice and improving local public services.</p> <p>The Ombudsman is confident that the continued publication of decisions, focus reports on key themes and the data in the annual review letter is helping the sector to learn from its mistakes and support better services for citizens. Recently, Councils have been urged to scrutinise data on complaints to improve services.</p> <p>It is important that the Council takes even greater measures to ensure that it is able to evidence that it learns from complaints and</p>


uses this learning to improve and maintain the quality of the services it commissions and provides

Risk Management:

Failure to understand complaints received by the Council and analyse volumes and themes overall will lead to a risk of poor service delivery.

Access to Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer Julie Speakman Head of Executive Support.

 Telephone:0161 342 2142

 email: julie.speakman@tameside.gov.uk

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) is the final stage for complaints about councils and some other authorities and organisations, including education admissions appeal panels and adult social care providers (such as care homes and home care providers).
- 1.2 Every July the Ombudsman publishes information on the complaints and enquiries received by individual local authorities and the decisions made during that financial year as part of an Annual Letter. This information can be valuable in helping local authorities assess their performance in handling complaints. Intrinsic to the learning from this process the annual report is reported to Overview/Scrutiny to provide further challenge and inform learning of systems and process for improved outcomes for service delivery and customer experience from these.
- 1.3 The Annual Letter for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 the authority was reported to Overview on 7 September 2020. At this meeting, members of the panel were interested to understand in more detail how the council was comparing with other local authorities in relation to number of cases, type and learning for example and this report outlines this additional information.

2. COMPARTIVE FINDINGS

- 2.1 The reportable period for the annual report and the comparative data contained in this report is 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020. As part of the annual report local authorities receive data in relation to the service areas, the complaints received by the LGSCO relate. **Table 1** below shows the breakdown of complaints received by local authorities by service theme in addition to the overall total number of complaints received. For the reportable period, the LGSCO received a total of 70 complaints for Tameside across the service themes below. This is compared to Manchester at the higher end with 157 and Rochdale at the lower end with 51 complaints.
- 2.2 The highest service theme of complaints for Tameside was in the Education and Children's Services with 20 complaints and 19 for Adult Social Care. Housing with 2 and Other with 1 at the lower end. This is comparable for higher end complaints being received in the themes of Education and Children's Services and Adults Social Care for the majority of GM local authorities. In relation to the overall number of complaints received Tameside are not out of kilter with 50% of other GM authorities.

Table 1 Authority Name	Adult Social Care	Benefits and Tax	Corporate and Other Services	Education and Children's Services	Environmental Services, Public Protection & Regulation	Highways and Transport	Housing	Planning & Development	Other	Total
Bolton	11	12	7	12	7	2	2	7	0	60
Bury	12	2	7	25	11	8	6	2	0	73
Manchester	13	27	9	28	17	35	17	8	3	157
Oldham	11	7	3	18	5	8	4	19	0	75
Rochdale	12	8	7	9	3	3	1	7	1	51
Salford City Council	8	30	1	11	8	2	5	6	2	73
Stockport	18	6	2	16	11	6	1	1	2	63
Tameside	18	8	3	20	6	3	2	9	1	70
Trafford	19	14	4	13	31	10	2	6	2	101
Wigan	15	13	5	11	10	5	9	8	3	79

2.3 Table 2 below outlines the number of detail investigations carried out by the LGSCO across GM local authorities. Manchester received the highest number of investigations with 29 of which 17 were upheld, compared to Bolton with 7 investigations and 3 upheld. Tameside were middle with 15 detailed investigations with 7 being upheld. As you can see Tameside is in line with 6 of the 10 local authorities in relation to number of investigations and number upheld. All local authorities achieved 100% compliance with the LGSCO recommendations.

Table 2

Local Authority	Number of detailed investigations	Number upheld	% Upheld	% Compliance with LGO recommendations
Bolton MBC	7	3	43% (67%)	100%
Bury MBC	15	6	40% (67%)	100%
Manchester CC	29	17	59% (67%)	100%
Oldham MBC	13	7	54% (67%)	100%
Rochdale MBC	15	7	47% (67%)	100%
Salford CC	17	12	71% (67%)	100%
Stockport MBC	17	10	59% (67%)	100%
Tameside MBC	15	7 details can be found here:	47% (67%)	100%
Trafford	27	19	70% (67%)	100%
Wigan MBC	14	4	29% (67%)	100%

2.4 In relation to satisfactory remedies - the authority upheld the complaint and we agreed with how it offered to put things right. The Ombudsman wants to encourage the early resolution of complaints and to credit authorities that have a positive and open approach to resolving complaints. The Ombudsman recognise cases where an authority has taken steps to put things right before the complaint was reported to them. The authority upheld the complaint and the ombudsman agreed with how the authority offered to put things right. Table 3 shows the Number of Satisfactory remedies provided by each local authority prior to the LGSCO involvement. Tameside again is in the middle of the pack in this field.

Table 3

Local Authority	Number of Satisfactory remedies provided by council prior to LGSCO involvement	% Satisfactory remedies provided by council prior to LGSCO involvement
Bolton MBC	0	0% (11%)
Bury MBC	0	0% (11%)
Manchester CC	2	12% (11%)
Oldham MBC	2	29% (11%)
Rochdale MBC	0	0% (11%)
Salford CC	4	33% (11%)
Stockport MBC	0	0% (11%)
Tameside MBC	2	29% (11%) details can be found here:
Trafford	4	21% (11%)
Wigan MBC	0	0% (11%)

2.5 As an open and accountable ombudsman service the LGSCO are committed to having transparent decision making processes. The LGSCO publish all of their decisions. Real names are not used. In certain cases, where it is not in the complainant's interest or anonymity may be compromised, they can decide not to publish a decision. Decisions are

published three months after the date of completion. Table 4 outlines the number of Public reports published by the LGSCO in the last 5 years. The three noted below for Tameside were related to Adult Social Care 2, and encouragement of public scrutiny of complaints 1.

Table 4

Local Authority	Public Reports Published by LGO in last 5 Years
Bolton MBC	2
Bury MBC	1
Manchester CC	0
Oldham MBC	0
Rochdale MBC	1
Salford CC	1
Stockport MBC	1
Tameside MBC	3 details can be found here:
Trafford	1
Wigan MBC	0

- 2.7 Where the LGSCO find fault they carefully look at the root cause and propose recommendations to the local authority for improvements to systems and processes so that the issues do not reoccur. Table 5 outlines the number of service improvements agreed by the each authority with the LGSCO. Tameside fairs well in this area. Complaints should be seen as a tool for improvement and any external validation/recommendation in this area is greatly welcomed.

Table 5

Local Authority	Number of service improvements agreed by Council
Bolton MBC	15
Bury MBC	6
Manchester CC	12
Oldham MBC	5
Rochdale MBC	5
Salford CC	4
Stockport MBC	12
Tameside MBC	7 details can be found here:
Trafford	13
Wigan MBC	4

- 2.8 For the 7 received for Tameside, these covered areas relating to Adult Social Care 4, Education 2 and 1 Children’s Social Care. For other local authorities, the areas of service improvements are not too dissimilar and including other areas like Planning, Benefits and Highway matters.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 From reviewing the comparative data across the ten GM authorities, the performance of Tameside MBC is not too dissimilar to our nearest neighbours. Similar themes of complaints in relation to service, type, volume are also comforting to see.

- 3.2 The Council will always strive to ensure that complaints are resolved through its two stage complaints process, however recognise that in not all cases it will be subject to complaints being escalated to the LGSCO. In doing so the Council will continue to use this external review and validation of its systems and processes to ensure that ongoing development and learning can take place.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 As set out at the front of the report.