

## PLACE AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS SCRUTINY PANEL

**Day:** Tuesday  
**Date:** 27 July 2021  
**Time:** 6.00 pm  
**Place:** Dukinfield Town Hall

Item No.	AGENDA	Page No
1.	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
2.	<b>MINUTES</b>  To approve as a correct record, the Minutes of the proceedings of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel held on 8 June 2021.	1 - 4
3.	<b>ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COVID-19</b>  The Panel to meet Councillor Oliver Ryan, Executive Member, Finance and Economic Growth; and Damien Cutting, Economic Growth Lead, to receive an update and overview of the economic impact of Covid-19, the response, recovery and future priorities.	5 - 14
4.	<b>FUTURE ACTIVITY AND REVIEWS</b>  The Chair to discuss and agree future work priorities, timescales and the planned approach to in-depth reviews.	
5.	<b>GREATER MANCHESTER SCRUTINY</b>  The Chair to discuss priorities and recent activity of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Scrutiny Committees.	
6.	<b>CHAIRS UPDATE</b>  The Chair to provide a verbal update on recent activity and future priorities for the Panel.	
7.	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>  To note that the next meeting of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel will take place on Tuesday 7 September 2021.	
8.	<b>URGENT ITEMS</b>  To consider any additional items the Chair is of the opinion shall be dealt with as a matter of urgency.	

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## Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel

8 June 2021

**Commenced:** 6.00pm

**Terminated:** 7.20pm

**Present:** Councillors Glover (Chair), Mills (Deputy Chair), Billington, Bowerman, Cartey, Chadwick, J Fitzpatrick, P Fitzpatrick, Gosling, A Holland, J Homer, Jones, Lewis, North, Patel, Robinson, T Sharif.

**Apologies:** Councillors Choksi, Naylor.

### 1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel held on 9 March 2021 were approved as a correct record.

### 2. CLIMATE CHANGE AND IMPROVING THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

The Panel welcomed Paul Smith, Assistant Director, Strategic Property; Alison Lloyd-Walsh, Head of Facilities, Climate and Energy Management; and Graham Hall, Climate and Energy Manager; to present an update and overview of the Council's future vision, strategic priorities and commitments to climate change and improving the local environment.

Members received an overview of local impacts and challenges related to climate change, the context of policy decisions and targets set at an international, national, regional and local level.

The Council's approach has been led by the Greater Manchester 5-Year Environment Plan, detailing actions that will have the most impact, to mobilise residents and businesses. The aims include:

- Mitigation of Climate Change – city region to become carbon neutral by 2038
- Air Quality – removing key air pollutants and to meet WHO guidelines on air quality by 2030
- Sustainable consumption and production
- Improving the natural environment
- Resilience and adaptation to climate change

There is a wider acknowledgement that no sector alone can combat climate change and this will require continued cooperation and partnership working. At a local and regional level the Council does have a leadership role in working closely with businesses and communities.

The Panel heard that in February 2020 Tameside Council declared a Climate Emergency, committing the Council to make its operations net-zero carbon in line with the GM commitment and to support and work with all relevant agencies towards making the area zero carbon within the same timescale. There is a carbon reduction pathway for Tameside, with reference made to the remit of the Council's Carbon and Waste Reduction Panel, whereby there is a local to drive and ambition in putting climate change at the heart of everything we do.

Resources have been committed to this agenda, which aim to enable the Council to deliver on a range on local projects, with a need for strategic direction, work is currently underway to develop a Tameside action plan. There will be an ongoing role for the Council's Carbon and Waste Reduction Panel to monitor progress and outcomes in this area.

Members received headline results from a recent consultation on climate change and there is a

further commitment to deliver training for member and officers on carbon literacy.

The officers responded to a number of questions from the Panel on:

- The use of existing energy and greener options going forward to reduce dependency on fossil fuels at a local, regional and national level.
- Existing policies and options going forward with regard to future housing development and the impact on congestion.
- Expected limitations at a local level when working to ensure all parts of the borough become greener, when considering the fixed housing stock, access to resources and options available to individuals and families to reduce carbon emissions.
- The Green City Region Board, including governance and decision-making arrangements.
- Regional policy and future planning controls regarding the environmental impacts of new properties.
- Energy efficiency of recent developments, including Denton Wellness Centre and Hyde Leisure Centre.

**Resolved:** That Mr Smith, Ms Lloyd-Walsh and Mr Hall be thanked for attending the meeting.

### 3. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME

Tameside Scrutiny Panels are required to publish an Annual Work Programme of planned activity. The programme of work will cover a two-year rolling period that is to be reviewed, updated and agreed on an annual basis.

The Chair presented a list of topics for the 2021/22 municipal year and beyond. Panel members agreed that Scrutiny must continue to adapt accordingly to consider appropriate matters with a keen eye on recovery, community and economic resilience.

The Chair noted comments from members to inform the final document. It was agreed that comprehensive scoping exercises will take place at the start of any in-depth review to determine the aim, objectives and requests for information. Next step is for Overview Panel to receive the Scrutiny Work Programmes on 26 July 2021.

Scrutiny activity will continue to adopt a combination of approaches to review service and performance updates, respond to formal consultations, focus reports of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and areas in need of more in-depth review. This includes a responsibility for:

- Research and insight on a particular issue, including in-depth and desktop reviews
- Review of decisions and recommendations
- Follow-up (from previous review / municipal year)
- Engagement and consultation – to provide responses to pre-decision activity
- Consideration of decisions and reports from the Ombudsman
- Receive updates on key issues as they arise
- Active monitoring of national and regional policy and substantive variation to service change

Scrutiny activity will continue to take place outside of the formal meetings, with all findings and recommendations presented to the full panel for comment and approval. This improved flexibility allows for speedier and timelier work to be undertaken, creating further opportunities to both influence and inform the impact of decisions made.

**Resolved:** That the annual work programme of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel be agreed.

#### **4. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To note that the next meeting of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel will take place on 27 July 2021.

#### **5. URGENT ITEMS**

The Chair reported that there were no urgent items for consideration at this meeting.

**CHAIR**

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# ECONOMIC IMPACT & RESPONSE

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Agenda Item 3

# Key Messages

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- Grant schemes have been administered by Tameside Council to support all businesses, large & small, commercial & domestically based in Tameside. These schemes closed in June 2021 with final Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) payments now made.
- Business support has naturally focused on administering and paying grants expediently and led to radically reshaped services.
- Furlough support is on a reduction path, ending in September 2021. The impact of the end of furlough is unknown.
- The under 35 age group has seen the highest impact (figures released 20/4/21 show this age group having the highest numbers coming off company payroll in the last year). This creates a highly competitive marketplace for young people entering the labour market for the first time.

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# Growth Company Situation Report & Business Survey

## Results for Tameside to May 2021

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- **Main impacts of current economic climate**
  - decreased sales 33% (GM: 48% vs 51% in previous period)
  - cashflow issues 27% (GM: 22% vs 24%)
  - business travel to visit clients 20% (GM: 32% vs 31%)
  - rising cost of raw materials 13% (GM: 10% vs 8%).
- 75% (GM: 60%) of firms report that they have cash reserves to last over 6 months.
- **Main challenges facing the businesses**
  - getting access to new domestic sales opportunities 40% (GM: 46% vs 48%)
  - developing new products/ services 27% (24% vs 25%)
  - managing overall finances 27% (GM: 32% vs 24%)
  - developing workforce and skills 27% (GM: 24% vs 23%).

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# COVID-19 Business Support

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## **Government Schemes.**

Covid Job Retention Scheme – Salary support scheme paying a percentage of the wages of furloughed staff.

Self Employment Income Support Scheme – Support for Self-employed, replacing lost income.

Covid Business Interruption Loan Scheme and Bounce Back Loan Scheme – Government backed, low interest loans, with capital repayment and interest holidays.

Kickstart Scheme – Supporting businesses to hire 16 – 24 year olds, by providing 100% National Minimum wage contribution for 25 hours a week over a 6 month period. (148 job starts in Tameside to date, with 480 current open opportunities)

HMRC payment holidays – Payment breaks on VAT bills.

## **Business Growth Hub & GMCA provision**

Dedicated COVID-19 support Hub – Webinars and guidance covering finance and HR matters, health and safety advice and handbooks etc.

Start Smart Scheme – Specialised advice on business planning, marketing, legal requirements etc. for businesses under 3 years old.

Enterprising You – an £80m pilot scheme providing business advice, coaching, mental and physical health support and training vouchers for people who have been self employed for over 3 years.

Skills Support for Growth – to develop skills and apprenticeships

Energy Efficiency advice – Support on reducing energy consumption to reduce business costs.

Sector Support Schemes – Dedicated support and advice for sectors including Engineering and Manufacturing, Digital and Creative Sector.

## **Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce**

Free access to their GM Business Community online networking tool, including virtual networking events, messaging tools and workforce planning tools.

# Business Communications

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We have implemented a multi-channel communication approach to ensure the maximum spread of information on the offer.

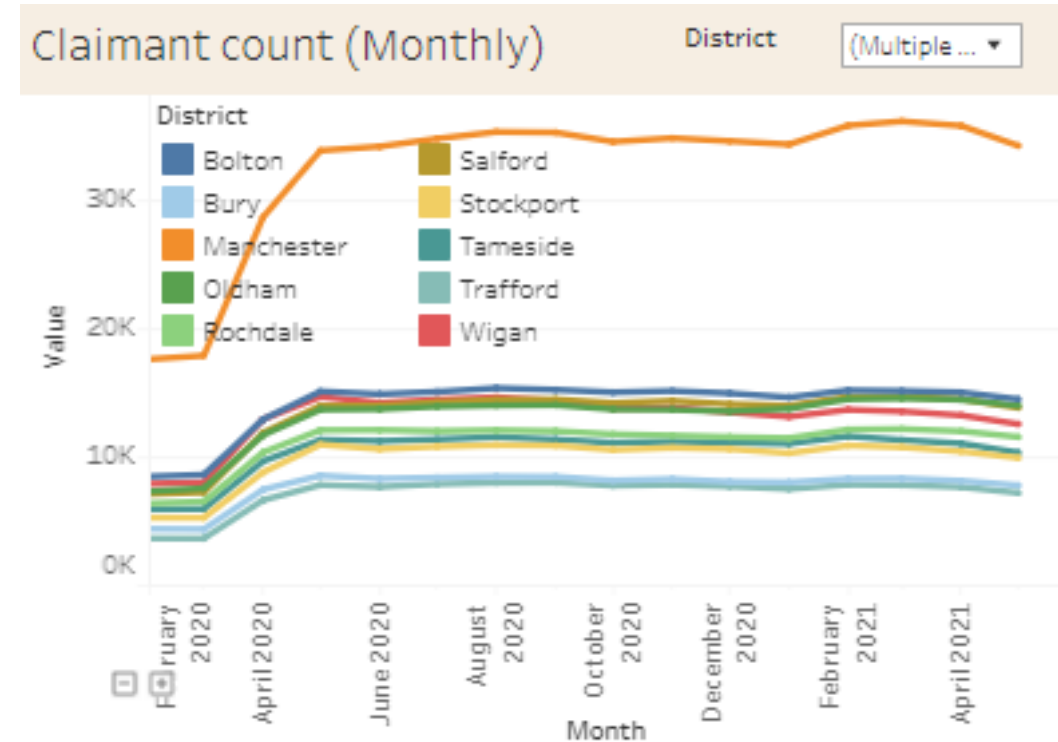
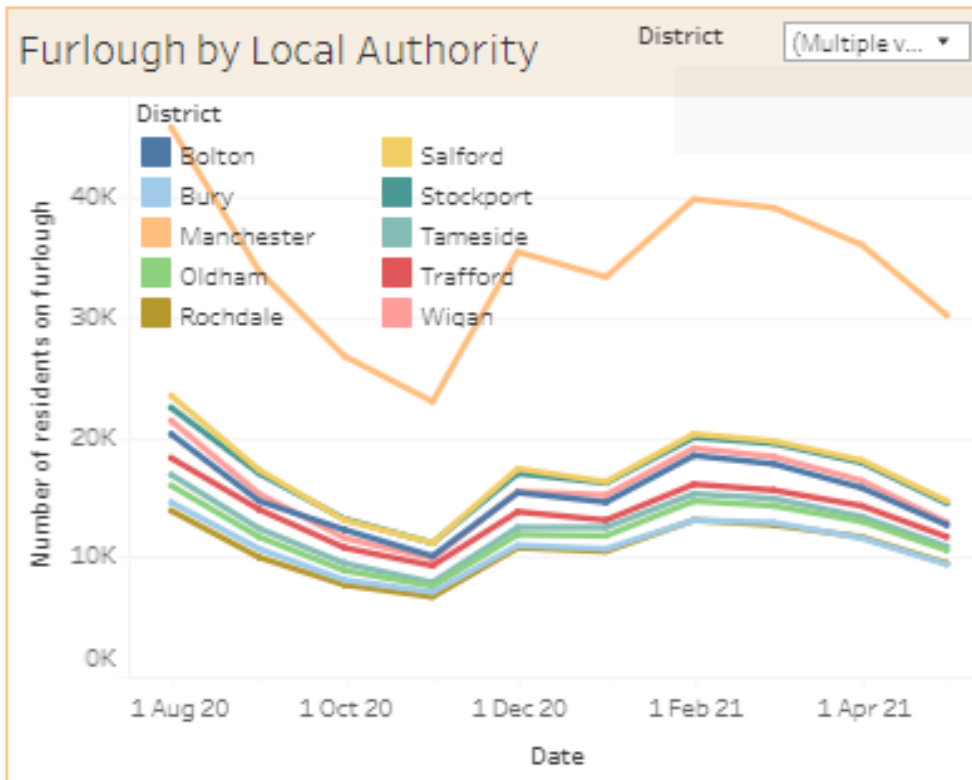
- Dedicated Business Support page on the Tameside.gov.uk (including health and wellbeing)
- Releases on grants and support offers to local newspapers
- Radio interviews by Cllrs to promote offer and activity
- Regular e-shot to @2,500 business emails.
- Social media channels including Twitter and targeted Facebook advertising
- Pro-active telephone contacts when resources have been available
- Targeted emails to identified businesses
- Inbound telephone support

This effort has been supported by partners at organisations such as the Business Growth Hub, Federation of Small Businesses and Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce.

# Employment Data

- 10,900 staff on furlough to 30 April 2021
- Universal Credit Claimant Count in Tameside increase from 5920 in March 20 to 10,305 May 21 (11,080 in Dec 20)

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# Support to retain or move back into employment

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- Provision for unemployed benefit claimants:
  - Working Well Work & Health
  - JETS
  - Restart (referrals begin July 2021 for 12-18 months unemployed with an expected intake of 86,200 residents across GM offering 12 months support)
    - All above programmes are delivered by Ingeus in Tameside
  - Skills Support for Employment
  - DWP increased capacity, including reopening of Old Street JCP in Ashton-under-Lyne
- Support for those in work
  - Working Well Early Help (for those unemployed with a fit note requiring support to return to work)
  - Skills training through AEB and Skills Support for the Workforce

# Tameside Council Support

## Tameside Business Resilience Clinic (BRC)

- Launched June 2020, The BRC introduces local SMEs to experienced business champions who are offering advice and guidance on a pro bono basis. A local business led initiative administrated by the Employment and Skills team. Support includes operational & strategic financial advice, social media marketing strategy development, Safe return to work / re-opening support, IT advice & support.

**60 micro and small businesses have registered with the Clinic since launch, successfully receiving 69 different strands of support.**

- *The BRC has been delivered without any budget and using the generous support of our business champions, a Community Renewal Fund bid has been submitted to fund this further and enable it to be developed.*

## Routes to Work

- Our bespoke supported employment service team were primarily redeployed to business grant administration due to the barriers of a digital provision to participants
- Face to face delivery to the caseload of 100 is restarting, working within restrictions, however a large waiting list for this support has been recognised and a growing number from referrals are in the under 24 age group.

## Operating safely

- Public Health, Environmental Health and Licensing & Tameside Council Markets team have been working with employers to support them operating in a COVID-19 Secure way.

## Tameside Employment Fund (TEF) from 2019 until March 2021

- TEF support three targeted grant schemes that have helped local businesses to hire young people. Since March 2020 we have awarded:  
**Youth Employment Scheme:** Six month wage subsidy for a businesses employing a 16 – 24 year old NEET Tameside Resident = **36 jobs £199,000 Grant committed.**  
**Business Grant:** A £1,500 grant to Tameside businesses to hire a 16-24 year old and enrol them on a accredited apprenticeship scheme = **14 grants £21,000**  
**Trade Grant:** Up to £750 towards tools for a 16 – 24 year old Tameside resident enrolled on a construction trade apprentice = **30 Grants worth £22,695**
- *A growing gap in support for 16-24 year olds ineligible for Kickstart is becoming more prevalent, and has been highlighted in the Ofsted report as a concern in Care Leaver support. The EES team are working with colleagues in Education & Children's Services to address this and work to avoid an increase in NEET rates.*

# Future Support Plan

- Furlough has kept the number of redundancies down, when the Job Retention Scheme comes to an end there may be a cliff edge effect on employment.
- The Council continues to co-ordinate efforts with work and skills partners such as the College, GMCA, Growth Company and Ingeus to develop and steward support for residents. The Work & Skills Integration Board meets monthly to bring all providers together to drive integration and reduce duplication.

## LOCAL PLAN

- **Deliver final ARG business grant payments** No further schemes are expected from Government at this stage.
- **Drive the use of work programmes** such as Kickstart, Restart, JETS & Working Well
- **Upskilling and Re-skilling** The Council will promote any national, regional and local schemes launched to help the workforce move to match the job market post COVID-19. Provision for skills gaps, such as hospitality, is being responded to by DWP Sector Based Work Academies, however there is an opportunity for this to be extended.
- **Digital Inclusion and Skills** The funding secured for a Digital Inclusion Officer and a Digital Support officer to help identify Digitally excluded residents and help them gain vital digital skills, will be scaled up further now face to face delivery can be planned working with Tameside ACE and a network of other partners.
- **Transition to Skills Worker** A dedicated transition worker to support young people aged 19+ to access skills and employment is in place and the outcomes of this role will be measured.
- **Delivery of Inclusive Growth Strategy and Growth priorities to pump spend into local economy**
  - The Inclusive Growth Board met for the first time in June 2021, after the strategy was revised to ensure it reflects the post pandemic position
  - The use of Social Value is being developed to ensure social value commitment procured contracts is realised to support local priorities

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