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PLACE AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS SCRUTINY PANEL

Day: Tuesday
Date: 2 November 2021
Time: 6.00 pm
Place: Guardsman Tony Downes House, Manchester Road, Droylsden, M43 6SF

Item No.	AGENDA	Page No
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2.	MINUTES To approve as a correct record, the Minutes of the proceedings of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel held on 7 September 2021.	1-4
3.	HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING The Panel to meet Councillor Ged Cooney, Executive Member, Housing, Planning and Employment; Ian Saxon, Director of Place; Gregg Stott, Assistant Director, Investment, Development and Housing; and John Gregory, Head of Community Safety and Homelessness, to receive an update in response to the Scrutiny desktop review of homelessness and housing, to inform future activity.	5-24
4.	RESPONSE TO MID-YEAR BUDGET UPDATE To receive for information, a letter from Scrutiny Chairs to Councillor Oliver Ryan, Executive Member, Finance and Economic Growth, in response to the mid-year budget update.	25-28
5.	GREATER MANCHESTER SCRUTINY The Chair to discuss priorities and recent activity of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Scrutiny Committees.	
6.	CHAIR'S UPDATE The Chair to provide a verbal update on recent activity and future priorities for the Panel.	
7.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING To note that the next meeting of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel will take place on Tuesday 11 January 2022.	

From: Democratic Services Unit – any further information may be obtained from the reporting officer or from Paul Radcliffe, Policy and Strategy lead, to whom any apologies for absence should be notified.

8. URGENT ITEMS

To consider any additional items the Chair is of the opinion shall be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel 7 September 2021

Commenced: 6.00pm

Terminated: 7.55pm

Present: Councillors Glover (Chair), Mills (Deputy Chair), Billington, Bowerman, Chadwick, Choksi, J Fitzpatrick, A Holland, Jones, Lewis, Patel.

Apologies: Councillors Cartey, Gosling, North, Robinson, T Sharif.

13. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel held on 27 July 2021 were approved as a correct record.

14. TAMESIDE CULTURAL OFFER AND STRATEGY

The Panel welcomed Councillor Leanne Feeley, Executive Member, Lifelong Learning, Equalities, Culture and Heritage; Emma Varnam, Assistant Director, Operations and Neighbourhoods; and Marie Holland, Arts and Engagement Manager, to receive an update regarding the Council's cultural offer and strategy.

Members received an overview of a broad range of cultural events and activities that took place pre-covid, with detail of participation and engagement with residents and communities across the borough. This included:

- Whit Friday Brass Band Contest
- Tameside Armed Forces Day
- Tameside Remembrance Services and Parades
- Lantern Parade
- Christmas Events

The Panel heard that Covid-19 and subsequent lockdowns has required Cultural Services to plan and work differently, this includes the ongoing need to harness and embrace technology, to explore new opportunities and ensure the local offer remains attractive and accessible. The service has set itself ambitious targets to continue delivering a broad programme of work that has primarily involved new virtual events and self-led activities. Examples such as the online themed 'Culturecrafts' and family theatre online show success in generating interest and reach across Tameside.

A breakdown was provided on the range and scale of cultural grants received during recent years. Grants can be specific to a project or initiative, which highlights the importance of external funding opportunities. It is also important for the local strategy to align with regional priorities.

Tameside will aim to support and build upon the known and emerging cultural clusters. The next step is to start building a cultural framework through research and conversations. Initial findings are to be drawn up by the end of February 2022 and the final proposal will be completed by the end of March 2022 to coincide with the Arts Council England funding deadline.

Councillor Feeley and officers responded to a number of questions from the Panel on:

- The cultural framework, strategic priorities, planned consultation and timescales.
- Future delivery of cultural services, including a hybrid model and continued use of technology

- to support suitable projects.
- Key developments and priorities for 2022.
 - How the cultural offer can connect with ambitions of the Council specific to that of economic recovery and town centres.
 - Community engagement to inform the programme of work.
 - The importance and accessibility of grants and external funding within the new framework.

Resolved: That Councillor Feeley and officers be thanked for attending the meeting.

15. BUDGET UPDATE

The Panel welcomed Councillor Oliver Ryan, Executive Member, Finance and Economic Growth; and Caroline Barlow, Assistant Director of Finance, to receive an update on the 2021/22 budget and looking ahead.

Members received a comprehensive in-year budget appraisal that included an overview of financial impacts and projections related to Covid-19 as well as current financial pressures placed on a range of statutory services.

Members agreed with the key risk factors and emerging pressures. In response to the update, a letter of the Scrutiny Chairs will be sent to Councillor Ryan to take account of discussions captured at the meetings and subsequent feedback received.

Resolved: That Councillor Ryan and Ms Barlow be thanked for attending the meeting.

16. PERFORMANCE SCORECARD

The Panel received the Corporate Plan Scorecard for information.

17. GREATER MANCHESTER SCRUTINY

The Chair provided a verbal update on activity of the GM Housing, Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

18. CHAIRS UPDATE

The Chair informed panel members of a working group meeting that will take place on 18 October 2021 to review the Council's Asset Management Framework and Policy.

Scrutiny training is available for members that are new to the panel since 2018. The session will take place on 4 October 2021 and delivered by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS). Content will focus primarily of key principles, impacts and supporting members to gain specific skills in aspects such as effective preparation and questioning.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the next meeting of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel will take place on Tuesday 2 November 2021.

20. URGENT ITEMS

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

CHAIR

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REPORT ON TAMESIDE COUNCIL'S STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY HOMELESSNESS SERVICES AND EMERGING PRESSURES

NARRATIVE

Introduction

Tameside Council's homelessness function sits within the Community Safety and Homelessness Service.

This report provides details about Tameside Council's Statutory Homelessness Service, Tameside Housing Advice (THA) Service and the Emergency Non-Statutory Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI) Service.

This report outlines the emerging pressures that Tameside Council's Statutory and Non-Statutory Homelessness Services currently face and describes the measures being taken to address these. It also provides details of projects, which the RSI Service is undertaking and gives examples of collaborative initiatives, which they are engaged in with the Third Sector.

Tameside Council's Ambitions

Tameside Council's ambitions are:

- to prevent homelessness where possible by using a range of early interventions.
- where a person does become homeless, to aim to work with them to secure suitable alternative accommodation.
- to achieve a reduction in single homelessness.
- to end rough sleeping in Tameside.

The Council's target is that no-one should be rough sleeping in Tameside in this or subsequent years. This is a published commitment from our Chief Executive and Leader of the Council and everyone at the Council who has any part to play in the delivery of our RSI Service shares this commitment. In the last two years, there have been periods when the objective of zero rough sleeping in Tameside has been met.

The Service

Tameside Council's Statutory Advice Service- THA

Tameside Council's statutory Housing Advice Service is delivered, under a contract, by Jigsaw Homes. This service is based in Ashton-Under-Lyne.

It provides advice and information about:

- Homelessness
- The prevention of homelessness
- The rights of homeless people and those at risk of homelessness

Under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, this service is required to undertake statutory assessments for all eligible applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days. This assessment identifies:

- the cause of homelessness or threat of homelessness.
- the housing needs of the applicant.
- any support needed by the applicant to be able to secure and retain accommodation.

Working together, the applicant and their caseworker develop a personalised housing plan. This includes agreed steps, to be taken by the applicant and their caseworker to try to prevent and resolve the applicant's homelessness.

If there is reason to believe that an application may be homeless or threatened with homelessness the service undertakes inquiries. This is to identify whether a duty is owed to the applicant. While undertaking these inquiries the applicant may be placed in temporary statutory accommodation.

The Homelessness Code of Guidance states "An applicant is to be considered homeless if they do not have accommodation that they have a legal right to occupy, which is accessible and physically available to them (and their household) and which it would be reasonable for them to continue to live in."

Under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the following duties may be owed to an applicant:

- Prevention Duty
- Relief Duty
- Main Housing Duty

Prevention Duty

This is a duty to help the applicant to stay in their current accommodation, or help them to find alternative accommodation before they become homeless. This duty lasts for 56 days but can be ended if accommodation has been secured, or if the applicant does become homeless.

Relief Duty

This duty relates to applicants who are already homeless or become homeless when they were under the Prevention Duty.

If THA has reason to believe that, the application is eligible for assistance and has a priority need they may be provided with interim accommodation.

This relief duty lasts for 56 days unless ended in another way.

Main Housing Duty

An applicant is owed the main housing duty to applicants if they are eligible, have a priority need for accommodation and are not homeless intentionally.

Those who have a priority need include pregnant women, families with children, and those who are homeless because of being a victim of domestic abuse or due to an emergency such as a fire or flood.

Other groups may be assessed as having priority need because they are vulnerable because of old age, mental ill health, physical disability, having been in prison or care or because of becoming homeless due to violence.

Under the main housing duty, THA is required to make available suitable accommodation to the applicant and their household until the duty is brought to an end.

This duty usually ends when the application is offered permanent accommodation.

The Emerging Pressures Faced By the Statutory Homelessness Service

The emerging pressures faced by the Service include:

- the increasing numbers of people presenting as homeless in Tameside.
- the lack of availability of suitable move-on accommodation to discharge the main housing duty. This has resulted in more people staying in interim accommodation for a longer period of time.
- the lack of supported accommodation.
- the demand for properties for interim accommodation.
- priority vulnerable groups competing for the same accommodation.
- the reduced level of nominations being put forward by Registered Providers.
- the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requirements.
- increased service demands arising from the influx of refugees from Afghanistan.

A range of measures are being taken to address these. A key pressure is the demand for move on properties. We are increasing access to move on properties which meet suitability standards by:

- working with the Registered Housing Providers to review the Nominations Agreement and to agree a higher % of nominations put forward.
- reviewing the Allocations Scheme and procedures.
- developing links with a wider range of PRS landlords to expand the available stock for move on.
- supporting PRS landlords to follow best practice and provide accommodation, which complies with the suitability requirements.
- amending local procedures and policies to enable Tameside Housing Advice to also use Private Rented Accommodation to discharge the main duty where appropriate.
- providing incentives for prospective landlords including the Help2Rent insurance scheme, rent in advance and deposit arrangements, and providing resettlement and support packages.

Over the coming months, we will be working with colleagues at THA to review the objectives and targets of the THA Service to meet the emerging pressures discussed. A wide range of options will be under consideration and updates will be provided.

The Emergency Non-Statutory, Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI) Service

Tameside Council has established an effective Emergency Non-Statutory Service, which is delivered by a proactive and innovative team of staff, who have demonstrated outstanding progress in reducing rough sleeping in Tameside. Our team includes some individuals who have lived experience of rough sleeping and the issues faced by this group of people including substance misuse, a history of offending and experiences of violence and trauma. In November 2017, our annual Rough Sleepers Snapshot Estimate was 43 and in November 2020, our annual Rough Sleepers Snapshot Estimate/Count had fallen to 3.

The RSI Service is tailored to the needs of local people. This is achieved by proactively listening to and learning from those who have lived experience of rough sleeping.

The RSI Service works with the most vulnerable individuals in the community, those who have found themselves homeless or rough sleeping.

Individuals are referred to the RSI Service by the THA Service. Referrals are made if the individuals are assessed as not being owed a statutory duty and are at risk of rough sleeping. Some individuals who were assessed as having a duty, may lose this duty for various reasons and they also will be referred to the RSI Service.

At the height of the COVID pandemic, there were 90 people accommodated by the RSI Service. In adherence to COVID guidance, a maximum of 8 individuals were placed in the Town House (the overnight hostel based on Burlington Street in Ashton-Under-Lyne) and the remaining individuals were in dispersed properties located throughout Tameside.

The RSI team has worked tirelessly during the pandemic to help move people on into permanent accommodation. From January 2021 to 21 October 2021, 158 people have been moved on into permanent accommodation.

Over the last 3 months, the RSI Service has averaged 50 people in service at any one time, a reduction of 45%. Currently the Service is accommodating 40 individuals.

Many of the individuals referred into the RSI Service come with a range of additional needs arising from complex mental health issues, drug and alcohol issues and an offending history.

When supporting individuals to move on into permanent accommodation, the RSI staff have to consider the affordability of accommodation since many homeless people are on low benefits. This means that a Household of Multiple Occupation (HMO) may be the most affordable option available to them until their financial circumstances change.

Individuals on low benefits find it very difficult to secure property in the Private Rented Sector (PRS). To overcome this, the RSI Service has introduced the Help2Rent Scheme, which offers landlords an insurance policy. This is an incentive to encourage them to rent their properties to homeless people.

The most complex individuals accessing the RSI Service may find it difficult to access services such as Adult Social Care, Mental Health Services or Drug and Alcohol Services. Every effort is made by the RSI staff to keep all service users safe. Each individual is allocated a Key Worker within the RSI Service to assess their needs and to support them to access services and to attend appointments. Some individuals however choose not to engage with services or do not consistently stay in the RSI Service. In some cases, service users are reluctant to take the relevant action needed to access services. This has an impact on how quickly support is provided.

The Emerging Pressures Faced on Tameside Council's Non-Statutory Homelessness Service

There are increasing pressures on these services and these include:

- the complexity of needs amongst the service users.
- the difficulty of accessing mental health and adult care services to obtain assessments for clients.
- the need for suitable move on accommodation.
- the increase in referrals to the RSI Service.
- drug and alcohol misuse.

- offending.
- increasing numbers of clients with complex needs and early years trauma.
- the lack of affordable social housing.

A range of measures are being taken to address these such as:

- Key Workers providing outreach support to all service users, identifying needs and highlighting any complex cases that need additional high-level support.
- continued multi-agency meetings to identify risk and support needs for our more complex service users, who may also have early years trauma.
- further developing working relationships and best practice with Adult/Social and children's services (under 25 years old has continuing Child Service or Leaving Care Support).
- working closely with local Drug and Alcohol Services to facilitate access to drug and alcohol support for service users.
- developing strong links with the PRS landlords to move individuals on to suitable and affordable accommodation.
- supporting service users to receive welfare rights/ benefit checks to ensure that they are on the right benefits. Also ensuring that service users have support to make additional claims if needed.
- creating 6 additional Supported Accommodated Units under the Next Steps Accommodation Programme to provide permanent homes individuals who have a long/repeat history of rough sleeping.

Further details are provided in Appendix B.

Tameside Council's Emergency RSI Service's Focus for the Year 2021-22

For the year 2021-22, Tameside Council's RSI Service are focusing on prevention, resettlement and sustainment to ensure people do not return to rough sleeping.

To prevent rough sleeping, the RSI Service's staffing capacity has been built up to deliver the service across normal working hours, night-time and at weekends.

This will enable the RSI Service to:

- provide a rapid response to any new incidences of street homelessness/rough sleeping and achieve zero rough sleeping in Tameside.
- continue to effectively co-ordinate activity to prevent rough sleeping and promote resettlement.

During 2021/22, the Community Safety and Homelessness Service will use the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) funding to increase preventative action to reduce single homelessness and rough sleeping and to reduce the number of people new to the streets. The Service is:

-continuing to develop and sustain effective partnership working with key services such as Mental Health Services, Adult Social Care and Children's Services to ensure the needs of vulnerable groups are met. Multi-agency meetings and planning is core to our service.

-continuing to build on our strong working relations across services in Tameside including Youth Justice, Welfare Rights, prisons, Youth Services and local employment services.

-ensuring that there is a comprehensive range of emergency and move on accommodation options linked to appropriate support. This includes dispersed Rough Sleeper units in the community, Housing First supported accommodation, access to complex needs provision via our partnership with a local charity ANEW, access to detox and rehabilitation facilities, referrals to social/ supported housing and access to PRS accommodation. We are continually working to develop options with existing and new partners and are currently working with a Registered Provider new to our service to open a 12-bed move on unit.

-putting in place a range of initiatives to help survivors of Domestic Abuse to secure and maintain tenancies.

-recruiting a Domestic Abuse Perpetrator's Co-ordinator and Key Worker who will work alongside staff on the Your Move Project (Offenders) to provide a one-stop shop with other key agencies working with Domestic Abuse Perpetrators to secure appropriate accommodation and engagement activities to minimise risk of re-offending.

-continuing to work across the sub-region as part of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to prevent rough sleeping. Current work programmes includes CAS3 the provision of a community accommodation service providing temporary accommodation for individuals released from prison who are homeless, a GM pilot for young people and access to Help 2 Rent for people entering PRS accommodation.

Intervention

The RSI Service is proactively identifying new ways of reaching out to support rough sleepers who would not normally access our services. The RSI Key Workers have started holding weekly support sessions for rough sleepers at the Station Pub. This is a location where many homeless people receive free, daily food packages. Through these sessions, we are referring entrenched rough sleepers into services.

Recovery

The RSI Service is focussing our efforts on supporting people who have previously slept rough so they do not return to the streets. By adopting a person centred approach and relationship based practice we will work with each individual to ensure that they are supported to recover. We commit to working with individuals as long as it takes and that includes continuing to work with them when things do not go to plan or they experience setbacks. The key to the progress made by each of these individuals, is the relationships that have been forged with Key Workers.

Our actions include:

- assessing each client to identify their housing and support needs.
- assigning a Key Worker to each client who will support them to access the key services that they need.
- identifying the most appropriate and sustainable move on option for each client.
- ensuring continuity of care from community services when clients transition from emergency housing to their own tenancy.

We are continuing to build relationships with the Adults Service, Children's Services, Health, Police, Prison Services, Domestic Violence support, Probation and our Armed Forces community to ensure that a multidisciplinary approach is taken in respect of those service

users who may have multiple needs. Our support extends to mediation where required to encourage progress.

We are supporting clients to access employment and training opportunities through building strong relationships with local employers and training providers.

Examples of Projects

YOUR MOVE PROJECT (OFFENDERS)

It was identified that a portion of the RSI service users, were prison leavers. At the end of August, out of the 50 Service Users, 22% were prison leavers who were not owed a statutory duty when they left prison.

With limited incomes, many prison leavers cannot afford PRS accommodation and their accommodation options are limited to HMOs. People with an offending history face barriers. With the number of people currently looking for PRS accommodation, anyone with a criminal conviction or a poor credit rating is put to the bottom of the waiting list.

Landlords stipulate requirements such as:

- a clean credit rating
- working/benefits
- a guarantor

The RSI Non-Statutory Service made an application to the MHCLG (now known as DLUHC) for grant funding, this was successful. The Service has been given the finding to support 50 prison leavers to move into their own 1 bed self-contained properties on 12 months assured short hold tenancies with a third party property agent.

By working with these individuals prior to their release, the RSI Service will build up trusted relationships and engagement. This will allow the RSI Service to assess them and their needs and to provide the following support where required:

- Mental health assessment prior to leaving prison
- Wrap around drug, alcohol and mental health support
- Help2Rent insurance policies on all properties
- The payment of the first month's rent and deposit
- Assistance with benefit claims and welfare rights checks

By closely working with GMP, SOMU, Probation and third party support agencies the RSI Service can provide the right support for each individual and their specific needs. This will help them to feel a valued member of the community, and feel motivated to engage and move forward. It will also help to reduce re-offending.

EVICTON BAN LIFTING

After being notified about the lift of the eviction ban the RSI Service created physical and digital posters to raise the public's awareness of all the agencies that can be contacted if someone is facing eviction. The aim is to promote early interventions to prevent eviction.

These posters were distributed electronically to all the local GP practices.

Physical copies of posters and leaflets were distributed to all of the local housing associations for their tenants to see.

Posters and leaflets were also sent out to all local pharmacies in Tameside.

The RSI Service are also distributing the leaflets to the jobcentres in the area and DWP offices in Tameside.

Third Sector Support

Tameside Council is working collaboratively with the Third Sector to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping and to provide for the needs of the homeless. Some examples of joint initiatives include:



STRONGER TOGETHER TAMESIDE

Stronger Together Tameside allows us to have support from third parties in the community including services and internal teams.

The RSI Service receives food and furniture donations that are stored at the Town House (Homelessness Shelter). From these donations, the RSI Service can give the furniture to people who are leaving the service and moving into their own accommodation. The RSI Service can also create food parcels that are given to people when they move out, and when they move into RSI dispersed properties. Food parcels are also provided to people who are isolating due to Covid -19



TAMESIDE RESETTLEMENT SCHEME

Since setting up donations via Stronger Together Tameside, the RSI Service has had a decrease in the number of applications for a TRS Pack for people leaving the RSI service.

From 2020 to 2021, the scheme had a decrease of 69% for people leaving ABEN who accessed a TRS package when moving on into permanent accommodation.

This has led to a reduction in the annual spend on this scheme.



THE VETERANS FOOD COMPANY

This service allows the RSI Service to provide hot meals once a day to RSI service users. These meals are prepared and cooked by trained chefs. The dishes are created to enrich the service users' nutrient intake.

By having these meals, it allows the RSI Service to give service users a higher level of support. The RSI Service are also working towards upscaling the skills of service users. For example by providing service users with training and experience in catering to improve their employability.



THE TOWN HOUSE FACILITY

The Town House provides a place to store donations including furniture gifted by the wider community. Because the RSI Service is storing furniture in the Townhouse, client move ons to permanent accommodation are quicker. This is because the RSI Service can take the items straight from the Town House and move them into the client's new accommodation. This is instead of going down the TRS route, which includes more steps such as liaising with the

furniture company to arrange a furniture delivery. This could involve a waiting time of up to three weeks.

The Town House Facility also enables the RSI Service to provide support to other internal teams and partners including food banks or housing partners.

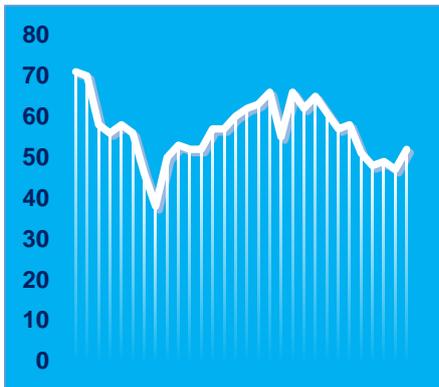
Conclusion

This report has provided details about Tameside Council's Statutory and Non-Statutory Homelessness Services. It has also outlined the emerging pressures that these Services currently face and describes the measures being taken to address these. Details of projects which the RSI Service is undertaking and examples of collaborative initiatives which they are engaged in with the Third Sector have also been provided.

Appendix A

STATISTICS

Covering 30 weeks up until the 10 September 2021



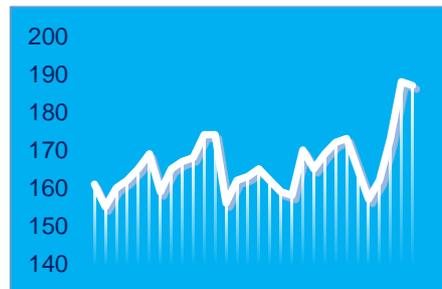
This graph (left) demonstrates the number of individuals attending the Emergency Non-Statutory Service, currently located at The Town House in Ashton-Under-Lyne.

This graph shows the previous 30 weeks up until 10th September 2021. The figures are captured at the end of the working week as a snapshot.

Historically, we do see a lower figure of those accessing the service in the summer. However, Homelessness Prevention has reduced this figure lower than anticipated.

This graph (right) demonstrates the number of cases accessing the Temporary Accommodation provision in Tameside on a weekly basis.

Each case denotes one individual or one family.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-existing medical conditions and ill health 		<p>years old has continuing Child Service or Leaving Care Support)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare rights/ benefit checks to ensure individuals are on the right benefits. Ensuring they have support to make additional claims if needed • First month's rent and deposit funded by RSI team • Introduction of the Help2Rent scheme, this is an insurance policy similar to a guarantor and has been a great tool in on boarding and establishing relationships with PRS landlords • All service users are assisted to sign up to a local GP
Page 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay in payments of Housing Benefit (HB), Enhanced Housing Benefit (EHB) and Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) causing rent arrears • Not having a consistent contact • Lotus housing payments have not been made since we started to partner with them in 2020. 200 bed spaces had been promised but due to lack of payment this has not come to fruition 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional funds have been paid to landlords to prevent and clear rent arrears, which has transpired due to the delay in claims being processed. This additional payment is to ensure the tenancy does not fail whilst the HB/EHB or DHP is being processed • Key Workers being proactive and persistent in assisting with getting payments set up • We have escalated the need for a consistent contact within the department and a senior member of the team is currently working to establish this • A third party housing partner provide supported accommodation. Due to are established relationship with them and regular contact they have continued to take individuals whilst we assist them in getting the EHB processed and the backlogs paid.
Housing First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Jigsaw properties and length of time identified property comes online • Length of time for referrals and assessments • Engagement of service users 	<p>5 individuals in current cohort</p> <p>10 individuals were put forward for the year</p> <p>50% moved on and 50% awaiting move</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have previously identified and supported the move of Housing First individuals into PRS with the Housing First wrap around support • Key workers proactively working with Housing First to plan in appointments and facilitate meetings • Key workers are motivating service users to interact and engage with Housing First • Regular multi-agency meetings to discuss the progress of individuals referred into and pre-referral into Housing First to discuss individual complexity and need for each person
Proactive support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals who are currently sofa surfing or at risk of eviction 	17 individuals currently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early intervention to help provide solutions to tenancy issues. This is provided though a key worker with one of our third party charity partners

Appendix A

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenancy issues/late rent payments/Landlord selling property • Suitability of accommodation, such as overcrowding and living conditions • Contacting THA and not having a statutory duty based on current criteria • People's increased demand for affordable social housing • Risk of homelessness and rough sleeping • Mental health/drug & alcohol support services 	accessing out-of-service support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively working with individuals to prevent them being evicted or finding suitable and affordable move on accommodation prior to them being evicted and becoming homeless/rough sleeping • Realistic conversations about our service, what they afford and what they can expect should they come into service. Inclusive of lack of social housing stock and how we can support through the private rent sector • Sign posting to support services such as CGL and mental health support, where the individual has more complex needs the key worker has supported them with making initial contact
The increasing numbers of people presenting as Homeless in Tameside.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff unable to cope with the increasing demands arising from higher case loads • Residents and Partner Organisations waiting longer for their calls to be answered due to all 8 staff on the telephones responding to clients. 	619 open homelessness cases - 189 households in statutory temporary accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of ancillary staff needed to enable Prevention Officers to cope with higher case loads • Dedicated staff member to respond to calls and to triage these.
Lack of Supported Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of referral options for clients with high support needs. • Clients staying in statutory temporary accommodation for longer duration 		
The demand for move on properties to discharge the main duty Priority vulnerable groups competing for the same accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service unable to discharge main duty due to lack of suitable properties • A bottleneck in statutory temporary accommodation • Inability to place new clients into temporary accommodation due to the absence of available temporary accommodation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendment of local procedures and policies to enable Tameside Housing Advice to also use Private Rented Accommodation to discharge the main duty where appropriate. • Developing links with a wider range of PRS landlords to expand the available stock for move on. • Supporting PRS landlords to follow best practice and provide accommodation which complies with the suitability requirements
The reduced level of nominations being put forward by Registered Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of affordable accommodation available to those registered on the Tameside Housing Register • Tameside Housing Advice Service unable to discharge main housing duty 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the Registered Housing Providers to review the Nominations Agreement and to agree a higher % of nominations put forward • Reviewing the Allocations Scheme and procedures

Implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current staffing unable to cope with the increased workload • The needs of Domestic Abuse Victims and Perpetrators not being met appropriately 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Abuse Work Post established in the Tameside Housing Advice Service to take the Domestic Abuse Cases and complete the referrals to Domestic Abuse Services. This post would also support the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Business Improvement Plan actions relating to the Tameside Housing Advice Service.
Increased service demands arising from the influx of refugees from Afghanistan			
Availability of suitable move-on accommodation	<p>Limited move on opportunity through both the private rented sector and registered providers creating a bottle-neck for homelessness services and potential increase in length of stay in emergency housing provision/temporary accommodation. Contributing factors as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of supported housing provision in general in the local area • Increases in the numbers being referred in to and using our Rough Sleeper service • Shortages of social housing supply locally • Blockages to accessing the private rented sector • Complexity of needs of people presenting as rough sleeping 	<p>139 individual move-ons to private sector, supported housing and registered providers year to date 2021</p> <p>ANEW Complex needs currently housing 27 previous clients</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build strong relationships with new and existing private Landlords leading to increased/sustained tenancy offers • Benefits package for prospective Landlords including Help2Rent insurance scheme, rent in advance and deposit arrangements, resettlement and support packages creates an attractive offer which in turn leads to real homes • Creation of 6 Additional Supported Accommodated Units under the Next Steps Accommodation Programme to provide permanent homes individuals who have a long/repeat history of rough sleeping • Working closely with Tameside Housing Advice and local registered providers to establish a nominations process which is considerate of those either sleeping rough in Tameside or accessing the support of the RSI service • Continue to build networks with supported housing providers locally to open up opportunities for those considered too complex for generic housing pathways.
Complexity of needs amongst RSI cohort	<p>Referrals and ongoing outreach/in-reach work has indicated an increase in the numbers of those either rough sleeping or presenting to the service with multiple/complex support needs. Particular concerns encountered in relation to those presenting in poor mental health, offending history, social care needs, substance abuse and/or dependency or any combination of the above. Though we have</p>	<p>At year-end 2020, of those in service*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 9% long-term rough sleepers - 26% with multiple, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tameside offers a dedicated and growing team of specialist Keyworkers and additional supporting staff who perform a fundamental role in the evolving identification and assessment of support needs for existing service users. • Frontline staff have lived/learned experience of homelessness and specialisms in arising key themes, including; addiction support, prison leavers, non-UK Nationals and Domestic Violence.

	<p>seen a significant increase in partnership working with other statutory services, there is still much work to do; evidenced by a number of RSI clients and those rough sleeping in the borough who are currently 'falling through the cracks' and failing to hit the thresholds for services and intervention</p>	<p>repeated instances of rough sleeping (3+ occasions)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 65% record substance misuse (drugs, alcohol or both). <p>37% of service users engaging with Change, Live, Grow (CGL) for specialised addiction support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 25% considered to have multiple/complex needs - 41% living with Mental Health Diagnosis - 15% living with life impacting physical health condition - 21% non-UK Nationals, of which 8% have no recourse to public funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Team have a strong presence across Tameside and are recognised for their consistent and collaborative work with the third sector and other statutory services. This puts Tameside in a unique position in terms of the gathering of intelligence and the delivery of early outreach/intervention in order to engage and build trust relationships with those who sleep rough in the borough. • Multidisciplinary meetings held regularly for more complex individuals to establish support needs and pathways. • Ensure that rough sleepers are equipped with the means to maintain contact (mobile phones) where there is no immediate engagement and we are persistent in our approach. • There is a tri-layer approach to assessment of needs. Homeless applications are received at which point appropriate referrals are made in to the provision; service requirements are indicated as part of this process. Following arrival a brief assessment is completed to ascertain risk and immediate support needs. A further assessment is completed by an allocated Keyworker within 24 hours of arrival, during which time any additional support needs are identified and relevant referrals made. • All Keyworkers and staff at Tameside Housing Advice have access and training for Locata case management system to ensure there is consistency in the recording and management of support needs. • There is an established overlap between homelessness, rough sleeping and more complex and/or multiple support needs. Including: substance misuse, street begging/activity, experience of institutional care, Veteran support and poor physical/mental health and domestic abuse. • Continue to build relationships with Adults Social Care, Children's Services, Health, Police, Prison Services, Domestic Violence support, Probation and our Armed Forces community to ensure that a multidisciplinary approach is taken.
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing our understanding of adverse childhood experiences as a contributing factor in service user behaviour and support needs.
Service Capacity	Despite an increase in the number of referrals in to the RSI service in 2021 Vs 2020 an increase in move-on productivity has meant that numbers in service at any one time have reduced from approx. 90 at the height of the pandemic (2020) to a more consistent 40-50 per month	387 referrals January – August 2020 441 referrals January – August 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tameside RSI Service have been able to support all appropriate referrals in to service during the pandemic with no waitlist, restrictive entry criteria. Despite a reduction in capacity at our central overnight shelter as a result of Covid, the increased need was met through the taking on of additional dispersed properties (supported predominantly by grant funding). Post pandemic, we are now in a position to start and continue hand-back of dispersed properties in order to shift focus and support back to The Town House where the majority of our service users will be accommodated
Evictions	Eviction Ban lift and expected increase in evictions and demand on the Statutory and Non-Statutory service.	Unprecedented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We created physical and digital posters that included information on all the agencies needed if someone was facing eviction These posters were distributed electronically to all the different local GP websites via the NHS We distributed copies to all of the local housing associations, Job Centres and DWP offices We sent bundles to all the local pharmacies in Tameside, which allowed people who were privately renting properties to access this information if they were facing eviction Having these posters allows us to predict the number of people that will possibly be accessing our service. Having these figures beforehand lets us plan out numbers; for the Townhouse and Temporary accommodation.
Legal Experience		2 members of our team with legal backgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have members in our team that have experience with housing reviews and creating Service Level Agreements. Having this experience on the team allows us to take new contracts and projects with a structured and professional SLA, with these in place to protect us if things go wrong.
No Recourse to Public Funds		1 member of our team that has a background in No Recourse to Public Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When we have a new client; that comes into our service without access to public funds, it is beneficial to have a key worker with the knowledge of the process.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This keyworker allows for a quicker route through the process because they already understand what we need to get people set up ready for accessing public funds.
Probation and Prison Services		1 member of our team with a background in prisons and probation services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our service does have ex-offenders that appear, that are on licensing or have recently finished their sentence. • Having a person on the team with experience in these fields allows us to navigate these clients safely and effectively. We work alongside their probation officer to ensure they are moved into a suitable property and access the service within their licencing conditions.
Adults Services		1 member of our team with a background in prisons and probation services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a person on our team that is versed in the process and the way the service runs. This person allows us to provide the best support to our clients that fall under both services.

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Chairs of the Scrutiny Panels

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Date	20 October 2021

Councillor Oliver Ryan
Executive Member
Finance and Economic Growth

Caroline Barlow
Assistant Director of Finance

Dear Councillor Ryan,

Scrutiny mid-year Budget update 2021/22

We write in response to the mid-year budget update presented to Scrutiny Panels on 7 and 9 September 2021. 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 and the current financial pressures placed on a range of statutory services.

The budget monitoring information continues to inform future work priorities for the Scrutiny Panels. Regular updates also enable members to seek assurances on the Council'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.

Scrutiny forms part of the Council's governance and decision-making process, underpinned by principles that aim to provide constructive 'critical friend' challenge, to amplify the voice and concerns of residents, and to drive improvement in public services. Scrutiny activity remains aligned with the Council's Corporate Plan priorities and relies on insight of the Council's budget and medium-term financial plan.

This letter provides an account of discussions captured from the meetings and subsequent feedback received. It is hoped that the collective points can assist with planning for 2022 and beyond. Please pass our thanks to the Director of Finance and we will ensure the Council's Overview Panel receive a suitable update on this activity at the next meeting on 8 November 2021.

Scrutiny Panels have continued to review the ability of services to improve outcomes for residents while at the same time deliver value for money. What appear as significant and relentless budget savings are further exacerbated by limited options available to the Council to increase income and revenue, outside of a rise to Council Tax.

Having reviewed the data presented on budget savings, service overspend to-date and financial sustainability, members are keen to ensure the budget, in the simplest of terms, remains firmly aligned to priorities set within the Council's Corporate Plan. This could have been clearer in the update.

Members agree with the key risk factors identified, with the budget appearing fragile in places and the heightened level of risk and emerging pressures. It is appreciated that a single year financial

settlement does create a level of uncertainty. It was pleasing to hear of the commitment to achieve a balanced budget going forward without the use of reserves. There appears a need to assess and communicate how the past use of reserves has helped to underpin financial sustainability rather than this having been one off transfers with limited long-term gain.

Future challenges 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, homelessness, housing, education and access to a range of health services. Members are conscious of the need to effectively plan for challenges that residents are likely to face going forward, and the impact this will have on the demand for services and budgets.

It does feel as though the Council could be looking at a wider range of options and solutions. Panel members do not want services to be left behind and would recommend that a local appraisal is undertaken to measure the level of support, advice and funding available in order to find practical alternatives and enabling services to adapt and innovate. This may be something that can align with invest to save initiatives and cost benefit analysis.

Members are keen to ensure the Council is making the best use of existing partnerships, links within Greater Manchester and beyond. This could be to ensure all available data and intelligence is used effectively in order to benchmark the authority against others. With a possibility to review best practice, key developments, service spend and unit costs.

The process in which directorates identify achievable savings was unclear in parts. This includes a need for clarity as to how the financial efficiency of a service is assessed prior to decisions being made. For example, members feel that a service judged as less financially efficient may have more ability to find achievable savings. This includes a further point to reflect on how comprehensive the current financial planning model is to ensure the right services are contributing the right savings, without jeopardising service quality and to mitigate risk and under-delivery of agreed targets.

Panel members are pleased to see the creation of a transformation team and the range of work planned. There was a level of concern as to the reliance and dependency on such a team to deliver outcomes that have not yet been achieved by the Council despite work undertaken to date. It was discussed that additional spend on external support or consultancy must only be made where the achievable savings largely outweigh the expenditure.

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.

It is felt that the strategic direction for growth and investment has an important role to play going forward. This may include the Council's ability to bid for and access key funding pots available at a regional and national level. Points were raised on resources that could be made available to support the bidding for external funding sources and to coordinate a programme of work to maximise such opportunities.

The Executive has remained engaged and supportive of Scrutiny activity and reporting methods. 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 confidently plan past 2022, scrutiny members welcome and encourage transparency in budget conversations and request that bi-annual engagement with Scrutiny Panels remain in place going forward.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor M Glover – Chair to Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel

Councillor T Smith - Chair to Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel

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