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## OVERVIEW PANEL

**Day:** Monday  
**Date:** 21 November 2022  
**Time:** 2.00 pm  
**Place:** Committee Room 1 - Tameside One

Item No.	AGENDA	Page No
1.	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> To receive any apologies for the meeting from Members of the Panel.	
2.	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest from Members of the Panel.	
3.	<b>MINUTES</b> The minutes of the Overview Panel meeting on the 26 September 2022 to be approved as a correct record.	1 - 4
4.	<b>SCRUTINY UPDATE</b> To consider a report of the Chief Executive.	5 - 8
5.	<b>SCRUTINY MID-YEAR BUDGET UPDATE</b> To consider a report of the Chair of Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel / Chair of Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel / Chair of Children's Services Scrutiny Panel / Chief Executive.	9 - 14
6.	<b>SOCIOECONOMIC DUTY</b> To consider a report of the Executive Member for Education, Achievements and Equalities / Assistant Director of People and Workforce Development.	15 - 28
7.	<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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From: Democratic Services Unit – any further information may be obtained from the reporting officer or from Louis Garrick, Senior Democratic Services Officer, to whom any apologies for absence should be notified.

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## OVERVIEW PANEL

26 September 2022

**Commenced:**  
14:00hrs

**Terminated:** 14:50hrs

**Present:** Councillors M Smith, Cartey, N Sharif, Cooney, Fairfoull and North

**In Attendance:**

Sandra Stewart	Chief Executive
Paul Radcliffe	Policy and Strategy Lead
Julie Speakman	Head of Executive Support
Lorraine Kitching	Performance, Intelligence & Scrutiny Service Manager

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillors Naylor, T Sharif, Kitchen, Ryan and Billington

### 8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 9. MINUTES

The minutes of the Overview Panel meeting on the 25 July 2022 were approved as a correct record.

### 10. SCRUTINY UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive. The report provided a summary of the work undertaken by the Council's Scrutiny Panels for July to September 2022.

It was reported that on the 26 July 2022 the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel met with the Executive Member for Planning, Transport & Connectivity / Interim Director of Place / Head of Modelling and Analysis (TfGM) / Head of Policy (TfGM) to receive an update on the transport strategy and delivery plan. The Panel also agreed the Annual Work Programme and future work priorities and received the Corporate Performance Scorecard for information. On the 20 September 2022 the Panel met with the Executive Member for Town Centres, Communities, Corporate Land & Community Assets / Assistant Director of Place to receive a strategic overview and proposals on the next steps for Tameside town centres and regeneration.

Members were advised that on the 27 July 2022 the Children's Services Scrutiny Panel met with the Deputy Executive Leader (Children and Families) / Director of Children's Services for scene setting with regard to children's social care and to review the improvement plan. The Panel also agreed the Annual Work Programme and future work priorities and received the Corporate Performance Scorecard for information. On the 21 September 2022 the Panel also met with the Executive Member for Education and Achievement / Director of Education to receive a response to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Focus Report "Out of School, out of sight? Ensuring children out of school get a good education". Further, the Panel met with the Assistant Director of Children's Social Care to review the Children's Social Care self-evaluation.

On the 28 July 2022 the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel met with the Executive Member for Adult Services / Assistant Director of Adult Services to receive an update on the social care reform White Paper and its implications for Tameside. The Panel also received an Executive Response to the LGSCO learning report, "Unprecedented pressure: Learning from complaints about Council and care provider actions during the Covid-19 pandemic, specific to Adult Services. The Panel also agreed the Annual Work Programme and future work priorities and received the

Corporate Performance Scorecard for information. On the 22 September 2022 the Panel received an overview of strategic priorities for local health outcomes and inequalities, considering aspects of rising cost of living and poverty, future priorities and work streams.

It was stated that there was an ongoing commitment to ensure all scrutiny members receive a suitable level of training and guidance. The report set out training and development sessions delivered since the start of 2022/23 municipal year.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the report and summary of scrutiny activity be noted.**

### **11. CORPORATE PLAN SCORECARD**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive. The report summarised the Corporate Plan Outcomes Scorecard that was appended to the report at Appendix 1. The Corporate Plan Outcomes Scorecard, followed the structure of the Corporate Plan, and contained indicators focused on long-term outcomes across the plan's priorities.

The Performance, Intelligence and Scrutiny Service Manager highlighted areas within the Corporate Plan Scorecard. According to newly released economic figures, Tameside's regional gross value added, GVA, fell by nearly £200 per head year-on-year to 2020, down to £15,617.50 in current prices. The total rateable value of non-domestic properties in Tameside in June 2022 was £148,475,723, down almost £400,000 on the same month the previous year, a decrease of 0.25%.

The number of Tameside residents receiving universal credit in May was down 5.1 % on the same month last year, with 25,154 people receiving payments. However, the % of Universal Credit recipients getting payments while also in employment has increased from 37.0% in April 2021 to 40.4% in April this year. Tameside currently sat 0.7% points below the national average, which had also been increasing over time.

Starts and achievements of apprenticeships in 2021/2022 were both down significantly on the previous year, both in Tameside and England as a whole. In 2021/2022 there were 1,020 apprenticeships started, equivalent to 72.3 per 10,000 Tameside residents aged 16-64; while above the national average of 57.9, this was much lower than the 112.6 starts per 10,000 in 2020/2021 in Tameside and 91.2 across England. In 2021/2022 there were 230 apprenticeship achievements in Tameside, 16.3 per 10,000 16-64 year olds. In the previous year there were 850 achievements, equal to 60.2 per 10,000; across England, there were 44.4 achievements per 10,000 working age people in 2020/2021.

The latest release of Sport England's Active Lives Survey, which covered the period November 2020 to November 2021 showed that the proportion of Tameside's residents who were classified as inactive had risen from the same period 12 months prior by 1.9 percentage points, with 32.4% of Tameside's population doing less than 30 minutes of exercise each week compared to 27.2% of the population across England. This linked to the high proportion of adults in Tameside classified as overweight or obese, with 70.3% of residents aged 18+ falling into one of these categories in 2020/2021, down from 71.3% the year before but above the national average of 63.5%.

The rate of first time entrants into the youth justice system had risen from Quarter 4 2021/2022 to Quarter 1 2022/2023, which now sat at 36.76 per 100,000. The monthly rate of crimes committed in Tameside was 10.9 per 1,000 residents in May 2022, up slightly from 10.4 per 1,000 residents in May of 2021.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the report be noted.**

### **12. ASSURANCE REVIEW OF LGSCO FOCUS REPORT**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive. The report set out the Executive and service response to Scrutiny on shared learning detailed within the LGSCO focus report “*Out of school, out of sight? Ensuring children out of school get a good education*”.

The Children’s Services Scrutiny Panel made a formal request to the Executive Member for Education & Achievement, to review a newly published LGSCO Focus Report and to collate a service response to a number of questions aimed to improve local accountability.

Councils could make alternative arrangements for a child or young person who was not of compulsory school age, but they did not have a duty to do so. This report focuses on Council duties to children of compulsory school age. The Council should consider the individual circumstances of each child and take account of any medical evidence or advice when deciding what arrangements to make.

It was explained that in all cases, Councils should consider the individual circumstances of each particular child and be able to demonstrate how they made their decisions. They should take account of all available evidence, and record the reasons for decisions. They could need to make decisions in cases where they did not have all the evidence they would like.

The focus report includes case studies and the experiences to highlight the breadth of investigation and identified common issues and themes associated with the following areas:

- Taking responsibility for ensuring pupils receive suitable full-time education
- Making decisions based on the evidence available
- Providing suitable full-time education
- Reviewing plans and amending the approach
- Restricting alternative provision: the meaning of ‘otherwise’

It was further explained that focus reports promote local accountability and include a comprehensive set of questions for Scrutiny to seek assurance at a local level. The Children’s Services Scrutiny Panel received the response and update report at the panel meeting on 21 September 2022. This responded directly to the focus report and questions listed on page 11 of Appendix 3.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the report and ongoing activity of the Scrutiny Panels to review LGSCO decisions to inform and improve local service delivery be noted.**

### **13. UNDERSTANDING OUR CUSTOMER CONTACTS AND LEARNING FROM OUR COMPLAINTS**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive / Head of Executive Support. The report provided an update and strategic overview in relation to dealing with and responding to customer contacts. This report also provided a summary of complaints received by the organisation, those that escalated to a statutory panel and or Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. In addition the report provided a summary of how the review and management of these contacts could help drive system improvement.

In regards to complaints and customer care, for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, the organisation had received and processed a total of 1,188 complaints of which 946 were Stage 1 and 242 were Stage 2. It was explained that there were three distinct areas in terms of the Council’s complaints process that customers can access; these were the statutory processes for a) Children’s Social Care,(Stage 1, 2 and 3 process). Adults Social Care and the corporate complaints(Stage1 and 2 process) relating to issues regarding to any other Council wide service.

The report set out a breakdown of the complaints received at Stage 1 and Stage 2 together with the volume received per service directorate and whether they were fully responded to within the 20

working day timescale.

From the total complaints received during this reporting period, 78% of cases were responded to within the prescribed timescale compared with 57% from the previous reportable year for Stage 1 complaints. It was important to note that although there was 28% outside of the prescribed timescales there will be many reasons for this however active dialogue with customers will have taken place to keep them update on progress of when they would be likely to receive their responses. For Stage 2, 62% were responded to within the prescribed timescale and 38% outside of.

Members of the Panel were advised that 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). 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, a copy was attached to the report at Appendix B.

This information could be valuable in helping local authorities assess their performance in handling complaints. Intrinsic to the learning from this process the annual report was 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.

The Annual Letter for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 provided an update on the current performance and how this compared with other local authorities in relation to number of cases, type and learning for example and this report outlines this additional information. For the reportable period, the LGSCO received a total of 74 compared with 43 complaints for the previous year across the service themes below. The number of complaints escalated to the LGSCO was in line with what was expected and similar to those that would have been received pre Covid pandemic.

It was reported that the LGSCO uphold complaints when they find fault in an organisation's actions, including where the organisation accepted fault before they investigated. There was an upheld rate of 81% (based on 17 of 21 cases) detailed investigations compared with 56% (9 of 16 cases) the previous year. This compared less well to the average uphold rate of similar authorities of 68%.

In addition for some cases where the LGSCO upheld the complaint the service area would have been asked to remedy the situation and of the 74 cases received there were 12 requiring further action.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the Overview Panel:**


- (i) note the content of the update and strategic overview of complaint system/process**
- (ii) support the refreshed training offer being promoted across the organisations; and**
- (iii) receive further more detailed reports in relation to the top 5 key areas of complaints.**

## **14. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

**CHAIR**

# Agenda Item 4.

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>OVERVIEW PANEL</b>
<b>Date:</b>	21 November 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Sandra Stewart – Chief Executive
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY UPDATE</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	To receive for information, a summary of the work undertaken by the Council's Scrutiny Panels for September to November 2022.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	That Overview Panel is asked to note the content of the report and summary of scrutiny activity.
<b>Links to Corporate Plan:</b>	Scrutiny work programmes are linked to the Council's corporate priorities. Scrutiny activity seeks to support effective decision-making and priorities across Tameside.
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	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.
<b>Financial Implications: (Authorised by the Section 151 Officer)</b>	There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any policy changes or decisions taken as a result of the work of Scrutiny Panels will need to be subject to separate consideration and decision.
<b>Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	Regular updates to Overview Panel provide assurance that scrutiny is progressing with an effective work programme, supporting good decision making and service improvement.
<b>Access to Information:</b>	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: <a href="mailto:paul.radcliffe@tameside.gov.uk">paul.radcliffe@tameside.gov.uk</a>

## 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 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 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 tables below provide a summary and chronology of scrutiny activity.

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

<b>PLACE AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS SCRUTINY PANEL</b>	
<b>20 September 2022</b>	<b>1 November 2022</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Panel met Councillor Vimal Choksi, Executive Member (Town Centres, Communities, Corporate Land &amp; Community Assets); and Gregg Stott, Assistant Director, to receive a strategic overview and proposals on next steps for Tameside town centres and regeneration.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Panel met Councillor John Taylor, Executive Member (Adult Social Care, Homelessness and Inclusivity); and Emma Varnam, Assistant Director, to receive an update on past scrutiny activity and recommendations on Homelessness and Housing.</li> <li>Received for information, a letter of the Scrutiny Chairs to Councillor Jacqueline North, First Deputy (Finance, Resources and Transformation), in response to the mid-year budget update sessions held on 3 October 2022.</li> </ul>
<b>CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL</b>	
<b>21 September 2022</b>	<b>2 November 2022</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Panel met Councillor Leanne Feeley, Executive Member (Education &amp; Achievement); and Tim Bowman, Director of Education, to receive a response to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Focus Report – Out of School, out of sight? Ensuring children out of school get a good education, published July 2022.</li> <li>The Panel met Tony Decrop, Assistant Director of Children's Social Care, to review the Children's Social Care self-evaluation (SEF).</li> <li>Received the Children's Social Care Scorecard.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Panel met Tony Decrop, Assistant Director; Susan Harris, Head of Service; and Adrian Rocks, Head of Commissioning, to receive an update on placement strategy and capacity across in-house and external provision, including fostering recruitment.</li> <li>Received for information, a letter of the Scrutiny Chairs to Councillor Jacqueline North, First Deputy (Finance, Resources and Transformation), in response to the mid-year budget update sessions held on 3 October 2022.</li> </ul>



<b>HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY PANEL</b>	
<b>22 September 2022</b>	<b>3 November 2022</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Panel met with Population Health, to receive an overview of strategic priorities for local health outcomes and inequalities, considering aspects of rising cost of living and poverty, future priorities and work streams.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Panel met Karen James OBE, Chief Executive, Tameside &amp; Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust, to receive an update on health system recovery, winter pressures and locality plans, including the planning and delivery of neighbourhood and community health care.</li> <li>Received for information, a letter of the Scrutiny Chairs to Councillor Jacqueline North, First Deputy (Finance, Resources and Transformation), in response to the mid-year budget update sessions held on 3 October 2022.</li> </ul>

### **Response to mid-year budget update**

- 2.2 Mid-year budget update sessions for all Scrutiny members took place on 3 October 2022. The update was provided by Councillor Jacqueline North, First Deputy (Finance, Resources and Transformation); and Caroline Barlow, Assistant Director of Finance (Deputy Section 151 Officer).
- 2.3 The Executive has now received a formal response of the Scrutiny Chairs, capturing a range of points and highlighting any concerns and specific areas for consideration in supporting the Council's ongoing work in this area. The response letter is tabled in a separate report to Overview Panel on 21 November 2022.

### **Scrutiny activity and working groups**

- 2.4 Scrutiny is progressing review activity in the following areas.

#### **Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel**

- Town Centres – oversight and input to consultation and delivery phases for town centres. The first meeting to take place in line with formal consultation opening on 7 November on Phase 1 – Ashton public realm and market square.

#### **Children's Services Scrutiny Panel**

- Children's Workforce Strategy (Recruitment and Retention of Social Workers) – members met with Tracy Brennand, Assistant Director, People and Workforce Development, on 26 October 2022.

#### **Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel**

- Learning Disability Health Checks – members met with Lynzi Shepherd, Head of Mental Health and Learning Disabilities; and Dr Vinny Khunger, on 9 November 2022.

#### **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)**

- 2.5 Scrutiny Panels continue to review decisions and focus reports published by the ombudsman. Most recently, Scrutiny Chairs have ensured all panel members, the Council's Executive and leadership team receive associated annual reports of the ombudsman for 2021/22, along with the Council's annual review letter.

## **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

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# Agenda Item 5.

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>OVERVIEW PANEL</b>
<b>Date:</b>	21 November 2022
<b>Scrutiny Chair / Reporting Officer:</b>	Councillor Yvonne Cartey – Chair of Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel Councillor Naila Sharif – Chair of Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel Councillor Tafheen Sharif – Chair of Children’s Services Scrutiny Panel Sandra Stewart – Chief Executive
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY MID-YEAR BUDGET UPDATE</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	To receive a summary and feedback based on recent scrutiny engagement on the mid-year budget position for 2022/23 and future planning.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	That Overview Panel is asked to note the content of the report and appendices.
<b>Links to Corporate Plan:</b>	Scrutiny work programmes are linked to the Council’s corporate priorities. Scrutiny activity seeks to support effective decision-making and priorities across Tameside.
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	The work programmes comprise activity that seeks to check the effective implementation of council policies and if appropriate make recommendations to the Executive with regards to development, performance monitoring, outcomes and value for money.
<b>Financial Implications: (Authorised by the Section 151 Officer)</b>	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.  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
<b>Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	The function of Overview and Scrutiny Committees are to secure the efficient delivery of public services and drive improvement across the council.  They were introduced in 2000 and have the 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.

**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](mailto: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. The Council instructs and delivers a timetable of engagement activity in order to seek and understand the priorities of individual services, residents, patients, service users and businesses alike.

## **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. 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.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 All Scrutiny Panel members were provided with an opportunity to attend one of two mid-year budget update sessions delivered on 3 October 2022. This year the invitation included all non-executive members of Overview Panel. The sessions enable members to seek assurance on the Council's approach to managing and mitigating budget pressures, known risks and future uncertainty. A response letter of the Scrutiny Chairs to the First Deputy (Finance, Resources and Transformation), can be viewed in **APPENDIX 1**.

## **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

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## Chair of Overview Panel

## Chairs of Scrutiny Panels

**Councillor Jacqueline North**  
**First Deputy**  
**Finance, Resources & Transformation**

**Caroline Barlow**  
**Assistant Director of Finance**

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	19 October 2022

Dear Councillor North,

### **Scrutiny mid-year budget update 2022/23**

We write in response to the mid-year budget update presented on 3 October 2022. The sessions enable members to seek assurance on the Council's approach to managing and mitigating budget pressures, known risks and future uncertainty. The demand on statutory services and the sustainability of budgets beyond the short-term remains a concern for members, along with growing social and economic pressures associated with the rise in living costs and a need to support individuals and families in Tameside.

The Council has demonstrated an unwavering commitment and drive to meet all financial challenges to date. We now find ourselves in a position where further savings are required at a time when the demand on statutory services is at its greatest. It is also important to reflect on the strength and resilience of our workforce and communities during such challenging times that now extend to the aftermath and recovery of a global pandemic.

Members shared concerns on the challenges and uncertainty associated with a repeated one-year funding settlement. This can inhibit the Council's ability to set a more robust medium term financial plan and it is accepted that a greater level of confidence can be achieved should longer funding arrangements be granted by the government to local authorities beyond the next financial year.

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. 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 2023 and beyond.

In response to a previous request of scrutiny members, the update included a section on how the budget aligns with priorities set within the Corporate Plan. Members would have liked to hear more on the savings identification process, but please be assured that the content as a whole was detailed and well received.

Revenue monitoring information highlighted a significant in-year overspend across directorates. This is of concern and likely to have a cumulative impact on the budget, with areas showing a sizeable variance against the opening budget and savings position. This appears to place the authority in a precarious position with limited options to balance the budget for 2022/23. The Place directorate was most noticeable on the non-delivery of savings and income shortfall. It is felt that the strategic direction for growth and investment has an important role to play going forward.

A question that remains for Scrutiny is clarity on the existing financial planning model and processes by which directorates identify achievable savings. Further points include learning from previous years with regard to overly ambitious savings targets and members are keen to ensure future decisions are robustly costed and achievable, without jeopardising service quality or requiring late or unplanned financial adjustments.

With limited options available to the Council to increase income and revenue beyond a rise in Council Tax, the required budget savings are somewhat intensified. Members queried the assumption of a 97% collection rate for Council Tax, with reference to past learning from the pandemic and a pressing need to review the impact of significant rises to household budgets. This also included the assumptions for business rate income and collection given the current economic climate and the historic challenges to achieve growth in an area that has predominantly struggled in previous years.

The Council continues to face high levels of demand across statutory services with concerns on the ability to sustain budget increases in future years. This also includes the practicality and rationale of savings targets applied to such areas. Improving outcomes for children and vulnerable residents remains a pressure, which includes outcomes from past Ofsted inspections of Children's Social Care and SEND. It would be naïve of the Council not to acknowledge that growing economic and financial turmoil within society, most notably on household budgets, employment and housing, may result in added demand on statutory services.

A number of questions touched upon budget monitoring arrangements and existing methods to report and flag known risks and shortfalls in savings as they arise. It was reported that approximately half of savings targets have a projected shortfall, with limited information provided on what can be done to claw this back. Further points include:

- The realistic pace that savings can be made and understanding the opportunity cost of such decisions.
- The savings most at risk of not being met.
- The previous use and reliance of one-off monies, grants and reserves that are no longer accessible.
- Future viability and appraisal of non-statutory and discretionary services beyond 2023/24.
- Asset management strategy, streamlining process for energy savings and costs associated with staff returning to office work.
- Future opportunities to intensify corporate and elected member oversight to monitor agreed savings.

We are pleased to say that the Council's leadership and Executive remain fully engaged with all aspects of Scrutiny activity.

Yours sincerely,

**Councillor Jack Naylor – Chair of Overview Panel**



**Councillor Yvonne Cartey – Chair of Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel**

**Councillor Naila Sharif - Chair of Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel**

**Councillor Tafheen Sharif – Chair of Children's Services Scrutiny Panel**



# Agenda Item 6.

<b>Report to :</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE CABINET</b>
<b>Date :</b>	21 November 2022
<b>Executive Member:</b>	Councillor Leanne Feeley – Executive Member (Education, Achievement and Equalities)
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Tracy Brennand – Assistant Director (People and Workforce Development)
<b>Subject :</b>	<b>SOCIOECONOMIC DUTY</b>
<b>Report Summary :</b>	This report sets out the local and national context, policy recommendations, case studies, key terms and other considerations with a view to adopting the socioeconomic duty in Tameside, in line with work taking place in other local authorities in Greater Manchester and across England.
<b>Recommendations :</b>	That Overview Panel is asked to note the content of the report and appendices.
<b>Links to Corporate Plan:</b>	Achieving many of the objectives and priorities of the Corporate Plan is dependent on meeting the needs of local residents, including tackling inequality, increasing well-being and improving outcomes. Successful implementation of the socioeconomic duty will be critical to achieving these objectives.
<b>Policy Implications :</b>	There may be policy implications as this Plan will impact on service delivery and outcomes for residents and businesses. Where there are new impact reports these will be brought forward by the relevant lead service areas.
<b>Financial Implications:</b> <b>(Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer &amp; Chief Finance Officer)</b>	There are no direct financial implications in this report but there may be subsequent financial implications as a result of activity associated with the socioeconomic duty and principles contained within. Where this is the case, further reports will be brought forward for approval.
<b>Legal Implications :</b> <b>(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	The legal implications are set out in the main body of the report for consideration.
<b>Risk Management :</b>	Failure to address the inequalities of outcome which results from socioeconomic disadvantage, including long-term systemic issues of deprivation and short term issues of immediate financial crisis, have the potential to create significant wellbeing risks for individuals and families as well as organisational risks in terms of additional demands in other high cost specialist services.
<b>Access to Information :</b>	The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Tom Hoghton – Policy & Strategy Service Manager  Telephone:0161 342 3542  E-mail: <a href="mailto:tom.hoghton@tameside.gov.uk">tom.hoghton@tameside.gov.uk</a>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The “socioeconomic duty” is contained in Section 1 of the Equality Act 2010 and requires public bodies to, *“when making decisions of a strategic nature about how to exercise its functions, have due regards to the desirability of exercising them in a way that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socioeconomic disadvantage”*. (The key terms for this definition can be found in **Appendix 4**)
- 1.2 In practical terms, according to Greater Manchester Poverty Action, the socioeconomic duty “asks public bodies to consider how their decisions and policies could increase or decrease inequality that results from socio-economic disadvantage”.
- 1.3 Despite the Equality Act coming into force on 1 October 2010, successive governments have declined to implement the socioeconomic duty in England as a statutory requirement. However, the socioeconomic duty was introduced in Scotland in April 2018 as the “Fairer Scotland Duty” and in Wales in March 2021.
- 1.3 In recent years, Wigan, Trafford and Salford councils have joined a number of local authorities outside GM, including Newcastle City Council and the North of Tyne Combined Authority, in taking steps to introduce the socioeconomic duty in their areas.

## 2. LOCAL AND NATIONAL POVERTY STATISTICS

- 2.1 In recent years the rise of poverty has emerged as a major policy issue. This has made adopting the socioeconomic duty and other anti-poverty measures a matter of urgency. (**Appendix 2** contains a number of local and national statistics that highlight this). However, the key issues for consideration are:
- Tameside has the 5<sup>th</sup> best male Life Expectancy and Healthy Life Expectancy in Greater Manchester, but the 9<sup>th</sup> best female Life Expectancy and Healthy Life Expectancy. Life Expectancy (at birth) in Tameside is 77.57 years for men and 80.7 years for women, while Healthy Life Expectancy (at birth) is 61.9 years for men but only 58.3 years for women.
  - In the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation, Tameside is ranked as the 28<sup>th</sup> most deprived of 317 Local Authority districts in England, and the 5<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority in GM. Within Tameside, 11 of the borough’s 141 lower layer super output areas (LSOAs) are also within the most deprived 5% of such areas nationally.
  - The Trussell Trust end of year data for 1 April 2020 to March 31st 2021 shows that their foodbanks in Tameside have given out the 4<sup>th</sup> most parcels in GM. This equates to 11.1% of their total food parcels for Greater Manchester, 10.6% of their parcels for adults in GM, and 12% of their parcels for children in GM.
  - According to the Resolution Foundation, the real incomes of the poorest quarter of households nationally are set to drop by 6% in 2022/23, putting an extra 1.3 million people, including 500,000 children, into absolute poverty. This will be the first recorded incident of a rise in absolute poverty in Britain outside of a recession.

## 3. CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 While the precise details of implementation of the socioeconomic duty can vary, research by a number of organisations has identified key practical steps in all cases. (A complete breakdown of what each recommendation involved can be found in Appendix 1 and Appendix 3 contains a number of case studies of how other local authorities have implemented aspects of these in a real-world setting).

### **Short-Term Recommendations - Simple measures that can be implemented quickly.**

1. Identify Senior Members and Officers to take on the role of “Designated Leads” of the Socioeconomic Duty.

2. Integrate Socioeconomic Disadvantage into Equality Impact Assessments using appropriate proxy indicators and review processes
3. Consolidate existing poverty-related data held by the Council and partners

**Long-Term Recommendations – More involved measures that will require an element of discretion.**

4. Develop internal guidance and training for officers to consider how they can meet the Socioeconomic Duty at a service delivery level, on a day-to-day basis, outside of formal Equality Impact Assessments
5. Collaborate with residents, civil society and voluntary and community sector organisations to build awareness and understanding of the Socioeconomic Duty and people's lived experience of socioeconomic disadvantage
6. Embed accountability for the implementation of the Socioeconomic Duty through monitoring, evaluation, and sharing of best practice.
7. Deliver the Living Wage for all council staff and contracted employees, and introduce mechanisms to promote uptake of the Living Wage among other local employers

#### **4. BENEFITS OF ADOPTING AND IMPLEMENTING THE SOCIOECONOMIC DUTY**

- 4.1 Successfully implementing the socioeconomic duty in Tameside will deliver a number of benefits, including but not limited to:
- Reducing the inequalities of outcome which result from socioeconomic disadvantage.
  - Supporting coordination and partnership working, both within the Council between service areas and externally with partners in the public, private, community and voluntary sectors.
  - Raising awareness of existing socioeconomic inequalities in Tameside within the Council and among our partners.
  - Securing a widespread commitment from council services to consider their impact on local socioeconomic inequalities while carrying out their day-to-day functions.
  - Actively encouraging the participation of low-income residents in decisions that affect them, especially in the context of any proposed cuts or changes to services.
  - Achieving greater consistency in practice in both the short-term and in the long-term across political administrations and turnover of staff.
  - More rigorous and systematic approaches to Equality Impact Assessments and general assessments of policy and practice.
  - Strengthening data gathering and analysis practices, especially in the context of Equality Impact Assessments, thereby strengthening the council's evidence base and accountability to residents and partners.
  - Supporting the effective and efficient allocation of limited resources in medium and long-term planning.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

# APPENDIX 1

## **Recommendations for Implementing the Socioeconomic Duty in Tameside**

A number of organisations, including GMPA, Just Fair and the Equalities and Human Rights Commission, have conducted extensive research on the implementation of the socioeconomic duty in Scotland, Wales and parts of England. While the precise details of implementation can vary depending on the priorities and existing structures of individual local authorities, the following recommendations have been identified as key practical steps in all cases:

### **1. Identify Senior Members and Officers to take on the role of “Designated Leads” of the Socioeconomic Duty.**

Strong and visible leadership has been highlighted as vital to facilitating a broader cultural shift that embeds the priority to tackle socioeconomic disadvantage at all levels of decision-making within the organisation.

The nominated Designated Lead(s) should take responsibility for communicating, clearly, consistently and across all other briefs, why implementation of the Socioeconomic Duty is a priority. Consideration must also be given to preventing siloing and making sure that the Designated Leads provide a forum through which different parts of the council can engage with the Socioeconomic Duty.

In other councils that have successfully implemented the socioeconomic duty, the identity of the Designated Lead(s) varies depending on the council’s organisation and priorities. To give two examples, in Trafford Council the responsibility is assumed by the Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and Strategic Partnerships and the Assistant Director for Strategy and Resources. In Salford Council this is taken on by the Lead Member for Inclusive Economy, Anti-Poverty and Equalities, and officer actions around poverty and the socioeconomic duty are coordinated by a Principal Policy Officer (Poverty and Inequality) and allocated to the relevant Senior Officer as required.

The end goal should be to embed a commitment to the Socioeconomic Duty that can survive changes in political administration, council leadership, corporate strategy, and national policy agendas.

### **2. Integrate Socioeconomic Disadvantage into Equality Impact Assessments using appropriate proxy indicators and review processes**

At present Tameside Council uses “Low Income Households” as a category within Equality Impact Assessments. However, this could be strengthened by introducing a number of other proxy indicators to more accurately consider the impact on people vulnerable to socioeconomic disadvantage. These could include, but may not be limited to:

- People living in deprived areas.
- People in low paid employment or households of low income.
- People facing barriers to gaining employment, such as low levels of educational attainment.
- Looked after children.
- People facing multiple deprivation through a combination of circumstances such as poor health or poor housing/homelessness.

In order to accurately measure the impact of the project, policy or proposal on socioeconomic disadvantage within Tameside, further reassessment should take place at an agreed and appropriate future point. These reviews will be subject to a scrutiny process within the council and, where appropriate, may result in further mitigating action and consultation with residents.

### **3. Consolidate existing poverty-related data held by the Council and partners**

The use of quantitative data is essential to developing a clear success criteria and measures so that the impact of the socioeconomic duty on inequality of outcomes can be collected and monitored.

Given the range of data collected by councils and their partners (particularly the Department for Work and Pensions and housing associations), more could be done to identify residents vulnerable to socioeconomic disadvantage by consolidating existing poverty-related data. Appropriate datasets could include, but may not be limited to:

Possible Metric	Data Owner
Missed Council Tax payments in last 12 months	Local Authority
Late Council Tax payments in last 12 months	Local Authority
No. of historic applications to Local Welfare Assistance Scheme (regardless of success)	Local Authority
Income Level (if disclosed)	Local Authority/Housing Provider
Family size/status	Local Authority/Housing Provider
Housing status (social rented, private rented, owned)	Local Authority/Housing Provider
Known rent or mortgage arrears	Local Authority/Housing Provider
Energy rating of home	Local Authority/Housing Provider
Historic consultations with council's welfare rights team	Local Authority
Historic consultation with Housing Association money management team	Housing Provider
Historic applications for insolvency	Local Authority
Time on Universal Credit (if applicable)	Local Authority/Housing Provider
Frequency of changes to Universal Credit (if applicable)	Local Authority/Housing Provider
Food Referrals made	Local Authority/Housing Provider
Real Living Wage Accredited Employers	Local Authority
People Paid Below Real Living Wage	Local Authority
Credit Union Membership	Local Authority
Eligibility for Free School Meals	Local Authority
GP Records	GP/CCG

Since the Socioeconomic Duty is not a statutory obligation in England, many of the national-level levers to tackle poverty are not readily available. This makes it especially important to identify what can be measured and monitored locally to evidence progress being made in tackling socioeconomic disadvantage and reducing inequalities of outcome.

#### **4. Develop internal guidance and training for officers to consider how they can meet the Socioeconomic Duty at a service delivery level, on a day-to-day basis, outside of formal Equality Impact Assessments**

Along with leadership from senior members and officers, meeting the Socioeconomic Duty will also require a broader cultural shift within the organisation that will embed the priority of tackling socioeconomic disadvantage within individual services on a day-to-day basis. The intention is to foster collective responsibility for the Duty among all staff members, and promote greater focus on change to outcomes rather than the decision-making process.

This could be facilitated in the first instance by using internal communications such as the Chief Executive's Brief, staff portal and LiveWire to promote information and awareness raising on anti-poverty initiatives locally and nationally, make principled arguments about why implementing the Socioeconomic Duty is the right thing to do, and challenge unconscious bias, negative attitudes and stereotypes often aimed at people living in poverty.

On a longer time scale, collaboration with Workforce Development could lead to information about the Socioeconomic Duty being embedded into the council's staff induction and training processes. Individual departments could also be equipped with a set of bespoke questions to informally assist them in implementing the socioeconomic duty at service delivery level. This framework from Denbighshire County Council is a potential example of this approach:

- Stage 1 (Planning)
  - Is this decision a strategic decision?
- Stage 2 (Evidence)

- What evidence do we have about socioeconomic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in relation to this decision?
  - Have we engaged with those affected by the decision?
  - Have we considered communities and places of interest?
- Stage 3 (Assessment and Improvement)
  - What are the main impacts of the proposal?
  - How can the proposal be improved so it reduces inequalities of outcome as a result of socioeconomic disadvantage?
  - Have we considered communities and places of interest?
- Stage 4 (Strategic Decision Making)
  - This stage is for senior decision makers (For example: Cabinet, Senior Leadership Team, Members, board executives and committee members) to confirm that due regard has been given.
  - They must be satisfied that we have understood the evidence and the likely impact, and have considered whether the policy can be changed to reduce inequality of outcome as a result of socioeconomic disadvantage.
- Stage 5
  - This stage is how the process of evidencing and recording how “due regard” has been given. At this point changes to the decision should be made and recorded.

**5. Collaborate with residents, civil society and voluntary and community sector organisations to build awareness and understanding of the Socioeconomic Duty and people’s lived experience of socioeconomic disadvantage**

The Duty recognises that the best expertise and experience about how to tackle poverty and inequality is often held by those in our communities who live with the reality of socioeconomic disadvantage. Participative consultation and engagement allows officers and residents to find new and sustainable ways to develop strategies to tackle highlighted issues together by combining lived experience, statistical analysis and policy knowledge through collaboration and co-production.

It is essential that this collaboration involves a more in-depth approach than simply gathering as many stories or “case studies” as possible. Instead, meaningful involvement is delivered by understanding the collective experience of those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage and ensuring that it is accurately and truthfully represented. This will include involving people from the outset, committing to processes rather than one-off events, and exploring how diverse forms of expertise are best incorporated into policymaking.

In Tameside there are a number of organisations that could assist in facilitating this collaborative approach, including the Tameside Poverty Truth Commission, We Shall Overcome, Tameside Poverty Action Group, Citizens Advice Bureau, food banks and other religious or community groups. Efforts should be made to broaden and deepen our collaboration with these partners and stakeholders, particularly through existing forums such as the Partnership Engagement Network, Community Champions and Inequalities Reference Group, with a view to building understanding, awareness and engagement with the Socioeconomic Duty.

**6. Embed accountability for the implementation of the Socioeconomic Duty through monitoring, evaluation, and sharing of best practice.**

Successful implementation of the Socioeconomic Duty on an ongoing basis requires a robust monitoring and evaluation process, including explicitly identifying the tackling of socioeconomic disadvantage as a priority in all strategic plans, building transparent and accountable consideration of socioeconomic disadvantage into annual budget setting and all decision-making processes (including scrutiny arrangements), and a systematic assessment of impact using both quantitative and qualitative data with appropriate tracking and review. This should be supported by working internally and with partners to highlight best practice and areas where further improvement may be necessary.

Internally, it should be established at the earliest possible stage what changes the adoption of the

Duty should bring about in Tameside Council. This document could then be referred back to at regular intervals to assess whether these changes have happened and if they are being sustained. The initial suggestion would be every 6 months – with the possibility of scaling back once the Duty is appropriately embedded.

In addition, a number of local authorities who have either implemented the Socioeconomic Duty (Newcastle, Salford) or are interested in doing so (Stockport) have expressed a desire to meet to learn and share best practice. This could be facilitated through informal meetings between officers, or through existing structures such as the GM Local Authority Officers Forum.

The public must also be assured that implementation of the Socioeconomic Duty is not just a publicity activity, but has led to meaningful change and is being taken seriously. This could be achieved by an external communications campaign to raise awareness of the duty and what it means for residents, along with making our plan for implementation and any subsequent assessments as described above publically viewable.

Since the Socioeconomic Duty is not a statutory obligation in England, a new accountability mechanism should also be set up to allow local organisations and residents to challenge decisions that they believe fail to comply with the Duty, and provide access to justice and redress if this is proven to be the case.

#### **7. Deliver the Living Wage for all council staff and contracted employees, and introduce mechanisms to promote uptake of the Living Wage among other local employers**

Tameside Council has implemented the Living Wage for directly employed staff and is currently looking into seeking accreditation with the Living Wage Foundation, which also requires having a plan in place to pay all contracted staff a living wage.

There is an important connection between voluntary implementation of the Living Wage by local authorities and their commitment to the Socioeconomic Duty, both being levers for promoting fairness and equality. Increasing requirements for pay transparency and action to tackle pay inequality has also shown that the Living Wage particularly benefits low-paid, part-time, women, and ethnic minority employees.

As well as benefitting significant numbers of employees, Tameside Council's influence as a major employer makes the Living Wage a key policy lever to reduce the prevalence of in-work poverty within the borough.

Mechanisms that the Council could undertake to increase the number of Living Wage employers locally include raising awareness of the benefits of paying the Living Wage, offering support to help cover the accreditation costs for local SMEs, or explicitly giving weight to the Living Wage at the tender evaluation stage of procurement as a valid Social Value consideration or as a method of achieving financial Best Value.

## APPENDIX 2

### Local Context: Poverty in Tameside

- Tameside as a borough faces significant issues with poverty that make adopting the socioeconomic duty and other anti-poverty measures an urgent issue.
- As with the rest of the country, Covid-19 has had a major impact on every aspect of life, particularly on income, health and wellbeing. There are limitations on the data available when trying to understand the full impact of Covid-19 on poverty in Tameside, though it is fair to state that pre-existing inequalities have been greatly exacerbated by the global pandemic.
- In the Index of Multiple Deprivations 2019, Tameside is ranked as the 28th most deprived of 317 Local Authority districts in England. Tameside is the fifth most deprived authority district in Greater Manchester, with Manchester, Rochdale, Salford, and Oldham also in the most deprived 10% of authorities nationally. Within Tameside, 29 of the borough's 141 lower layer super output areas (LSOAs) are within the most deprived 10% of such areas nationally, with 11 of these within the most deprived 5% nationally.
- Data taken from July 2020 to June 2021 shows that 4.1% of the general population in Tameside are unemployed, for Great Britain this number is 4.8%. 7% of residents with disabilities are unemployed. Men with disabilities more likely to be unemployed than non-disabled men, the difference (5.9%) being much more notable than the difference between disabled and non-disabled women (0.8%).
- 75% of white residents are in employment compared to 70.1% of ethnic minority residents, and 55% of people with disabilities/health conditions lasting over 12 months are in employment. Tameside has a 50.8% employment rate for men of working age with an Equality Act core or work-limiting disability. This rises to 57% amongst women. The lowest discrepancy in employment between genders is found in the mixed ethnic group (1.2%), with the largest discrepancy in the Pakistani/Bangladeshi group (28.7%) The cumulative population from ethnic minority communities makes up 13.8% of Tameside's general population.
- 88.3% of men in employment are employed full time, compared to 70.9% of women. Men are also more likely to be both in full time employment and working a greater number of hours.
- Tameside's average net household income (after housing costs) is £23,670. This is slightly below the GM average of £24,862 and eighth (from highest to lowest) in GM. Within Tameside, the highest net household income (after housing costs) can be found in Stalybridge South at £29,100; and the lowest in St Peter's at £17,100.
- As of April 2020, 8.1% of the borough's population are claiming Universal Credit, with 36.2% of claimants in Tameside being in employment. By gender, 10.1% of men and 6% of women are claimants.
- Disability Living Allowance Cases in Payment, as of May 2021, show that the most claimants are in MSOA E02001248 (Hyde Newton, with 404) and the fewest are in E02001242 (Audenshaw, with 113). To break this down by gender, men make up 3,393 (53.2%) and women 2,985 (46.8%) of the total. Similarly for Cases with Entitlement, as of May 2021, the same MSOAs are the highest and lowest with 408 and 113 respectively, and the breakdown by gender is almost identical (53.3% male, 46.7% female).
- The most recent available data from 2019-2020 shows that the highest percentage of child poverty in Tameside can be found in St Peters (52%) and the lowest in Denton West (23.1%). According to DWP statistics the number of children in Tameside in absolute and relative low income families has been growing since the 2015/16 financial year until the 2019/20 financial year where there is a slight decline. This data does not take into account the full impact of the pandemic.



- In non-working families, it is more likely for lone-parent households to have children in relative poverty, whereas in working families it is more likely for couple households. As of October 2021, there are 9,676 pupils in Tameside claiming free school meals. This number is lowest in Denton West at 177 (1.8%) and highest in St Peters at 944 (9.8%)
- According to the ONS, the number of people in the borough aged 16-64 without any academic qualifications has been trending steadily downwards since 2017, however the most recent available data is from Jan-Dec 2020, so the impact of the pandemic cannot yet be fully seen. The percentage of people of working age with no qualifications has decreased from 9.2% in 2016 to 7.5% in 2020. This compares to 7.5% in England, and 9.4% in Greater Manchester. When compared by gender, 8.25% of men have no academic qualifications in comparison to 7.25% of women.
- 10.7% of households in Tameside face fuel poverty, defined as having required fuel costs that are above the national median level and, were they to spend that amount, being left with a residual income below the poverty line. This is below the North West and England averages of 14.5% and 14.8% respectively. The highest percentage of fuel poor households can be found in LSOA Katherine/Police Station in St Peters (23.8%), and the lowest is in Little Moss (East) in Droylsden East (6.8%).
- Residents are more likely to be fuel poor when living in private rented households (26.8%), in comparison to social housing (18.4%) and owner occupied homes (8.2%). In terms of household composition, lone parent households are most likely to be fuel poor (28%), whereas a household of a couple under sixty with no dependent children is the least likely to be fuel poor (5.6%). Fuel poverty among ethnic minority communities in the borough is at 19.8%, while fuel poverty among White communities is 12.6%.
- Data provided by the Economic Social Research Council shows that households in West Park in St Peter's are at the highest risk of food poverty in Tameside, and Mottram Road (Middle)/Woodlands in Stalybridge South in the least likely. For those over 65, food insecurity is most prevalent in Dukinfield Stalybridge (45.99%) and lowest in Hyde Newton (26%).
- The Trussell Trust end of year data for April 1st 2020 to March 31st 2021 shows that their foodbanks in Tameside have given out the fourth most parcels in Greater Manchester. This equates to 11.1% of their total food parcels for Greater Manchester, 10.6% of their parcels for adults in GM, and 12% of their parcels for children in GM.
- The recently released (January 2022) government statutory homelessness statistics for July-September 2021 show that there are 186 households assessed as homeless in Tameside; this makes up 6.1% of Greater Manchester's total. Single adult males make up the largest percentage of these 186 households, with male single parents with dependent children being the lowest.
- Life Expectancy (at birth) for men is 77.57, with Healthy Life Expectancy for men being 61.9. For women Life Expectancy (at birth) is 80.7, however Healthy Life Expectancy is only 58.3.
- In comparison, male LE and HLE for England is 79.63 and 63.36 respectively, and the female expectancies are 83.21 and 63.88. In Greater Manchester these numbers for men are 77.99 and 60.86, and 81.48 and 60.76 for women. Tameside has the 5th best male Life Expectancy and Healthy Life Expectancy in Greater Manchester, but the 9th best female Life Expectancy and Healthy Life Expectancy.

#### **National Context: The Cost of Living Crisis**

- The national context, particularly the cost of living crisis, has further intensified the need to develop better ways of combating poverty and socioeconomic disadvantage in Tameside. The cost of living has been increasing across the UK since early 2021. In March 2022 inflation also reached its highest recorded level since 1922, further affecting the affordability of goods and services for households.

- According to the Resolution Foundation, the poorest quarter of households are set to see their real incomes drop by 6% in 2022/23. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation estimate that 19% of the incomes of low-income families could be spent on energy costs in 2022/23.
- Low-income households spend a larger proportion than average on energy and food, and will therefore be relatively more affected by increases in prices. In 2019/20, 13.8% of spending among households in the bottom tenth of incomes was on food and non-alcoholic drink compared to 8.5% with incomes in the top tenth (This does not include spending in restaurants or in pubs and bars).

In regards to energy, households in the lowest income group spent 7.1% of their overall spending on electricity and gas, compared to 2.5% for households in the highest income group. Due to energy prices rising particularly quickly, the Institute for Fiscal Studies estimated in January that the lowest-income tenth of households will face around 1.5% more inflation than the highest income tenth. Research by the Resolution Foundation estimated in April 2022 that a £600 increase in annual energy bills would lead to households in the bottom tenth of income seeing the proportion of total spending going on energy bills rising from 8.5% to 12%. This is three times the proportion for households in the top income group.

- As a result of this, the Resolution Foundation estimates that an extra 1.3 million people will fall into absolute poverty in 2023, including 500,000 children. An individual is defined as living in absolute poverty if they live in a household with income less than 60% than median income in 2010/11, adjusted for inflation. This will be the first recorded incident of a rise in absolute poverty in Britain outside of a recession.

Relative poverty is projected to rise to the highest level since the 1990s, with a third of children in relative poverty by 2026/27. As a result of national insurance contribution increases and a real decrease in the value of benefits, The Joseph Rowntree estimates that relative poverty will rise by 600,000 in 2022/23.

## APPENDIX 3

### **Case Studies**

#### **Leadership on Financial Inclusion – City of York Council**

- York's Financial Inclusion Steering Group has been in place since 2012. The Leadership Group retains Executive Member and senior officer engagement and includes key representatives from the voluntary and community sectors.
- A wider networking group is in place with the inclusion of other council and external partners.
- The Group is the driving force behind the implementation of the Council's commitments as set out in their Financial Inclusion Policy and Action Plan, supporting the City's Economic Strategy.
- The Group distributes funding and grants for crisis loans and financial inclusion initiatives. The allocations for 2022/23, which amount to £157,000, can be found on their website [here](#).
- A thematic approach acknowledges the multi-faceted nature of financial inclusion, with a focus on mental health in 2018.

#### **Promoting the Living Wage – Cardiff Council**

In 2012 Cardiff Council started paying its entire workforce the Living Wage. Since gaining accreditation in 2015, the Council has actively promoted the Living Wage across Cardiff. In 2017-18, Cardiff Council was awarded the title of Living Wage for Wales Champion as a result of this work. Actions include:

- Displaying the Living Wage logo in all council buildings and on the Council jobs page.
- Flying 40 Living Wage flags, sourced from another Living Wage Employer, from Cardiff Castle's ramparts during Living Wage Week
- Amending tender documentation to ask tenderers a range of questions on fair work practices including encouraging payment of the Living Wage
- Publicising a blog from the Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation and Performance, Chris Weaver, about the Council being named the Living Wage for Wales Champion 2017-18
- Developing and then circulating a Living Wage leaflet to businesses in Cardiff and handing out at Economic Development Business Forum meetings
- Making a video with Living Wage Employers and employees to promote the benefits of paying the real Living Wage
- Embedding the Living Wage into the Council's key strategic documents including "Capital Ambition", the five year plan for Cardiff, and the "Socially Responsible Procurement Policy" which sets out the Council's values and principles
- Establishing and marketing a Living Wage Accreditation Support Scheme to 4,000 business to encourage more SMEs to pay the Living Wage by covering their accreditation costs for 3 years
- Publicising the fact that 2,200 full and part-time Council staff get an annual pay uplift, at a cost of around £1 million
- Putting Living Wage advertisements on bin lorries.

#### **Impact on Welfare and Social Security Benefits and Advice Provision – Newcastle City Council**

- The need to understand and, where possible, address the impact of welfare reform on residents was cited by some authorities as a driver for using the socioeconomic duty.
- Newcastle City Council have examples of how assessing the impact of council budget proposals has shaped their approach to mitigating benefit cuts.
- Adopting the socioeconomic duty through the use of integrated impact assessments has directly influenced spending priorities, resulting in continued funding for the Council's Welfare Rights Service.
- The assessment process and work on financial inclusion means the authority has clear sight of the amount of resources Welfare Rights advice has secured for residents and households in the city, together with a full understanding of the negative impacts should the service be reduced or withdrawn.
- Newcastle also emphasised the importance of investing in information-sharing across the authority, and with partners, to build a picture of residents' financial circumstances, noting that

its joined-up approach has prevented escalating debts from pushing people into crisis.

- One such scheme has been delivered by Citizens Advice offering advice in GP surgeries, and its success has resulted in it being considered as part of the organisation's core service provision review.

### **Joining Up the Data – Bristol City Council**

- The “Fair and Inclusive” strategic priority in Bristol City Council has been emphasised in the development of various initiatives, such as an Inclusive Economic Development Strategy, the “One City Plan”, a “collaborative partnership approach to how we work in the city” and “One Public Estate”.
- The One City Plan seeks to strengthen the sharing and use of data across the city, utilising the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, the Quality of Life survey with residents, and the Open Bristol Data platform.
- A partnership has been formed with the Thriving Places Index, which brings together 48 local level indicators to give an overall assessment of the wellbeing of citizens and communities in terms of sustainability, local conditions, equality and other domains.
- These are based on data drawn from the Office for National Statistics, Public Health England and the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Unemployment, overwork and deprivation all feature within the six indicators in the “Work and Economy” domain.
- Bristol City Council is considering the socioeconomic duty as part of a review of equalities practice, echoing the approach of a number of other councils to better understand and address the needs of communities.

### **Poverty Truth Commission – Salford City Council**

The Salford Poverty Truth Commission (PTC) was launched in July 2016 and consisted of 15 people with personal experience of poverty and 15 people in business or public life, whose positions might enable them to make changes happen.

After 15 months of work, in October 2017 the findings of the PTC were shared at a public event: Salford Poverty Truth Commission – Our Story So Far. People from across Salford and around the country gathered at the The Sanctuary, Salford Quays to hear first-hand stories of how the PTC has influenced and inspired change in Salford.

Through listening to the voices and strong evidence of those with first-hand experience, working closely with the council to influence key parts of the Tackling Poverty Strategy, and altering the way that the council speaks with, writes to and meets with residents, the Salford PTC has inspired the organisation to:

- Review its debt recovery and income collection systems to ensure they are as sensitive as possible and do not create further hardship, distress or difficulty for vulnerable people.
- Stop using enforcement agents when recovering debts from the most vulnerable residents who receive a council tax reduction, adopting the Local Government Association's and Citizen Advice Bureau's “Collection of Council Tax Good Practice Protocol”.
- Launch new face-to-face coffee drop-in sessions for people seeking help and advice on debt.
- Rewriting its standard letters to prevent “brown envelope syndrome” (a common term for people being scared to open official letters out of fear that it contains bad news).
- Give full Council Tax exemptions for Salford care leavers.
- Waive the £11 charge for copies of birth certifications for homeless people, enabling them to more easily obtain the official identification they need to access benefits.

Some of these measures are now being discussed across Greater Manchester and in London.

## APPENDIX 4

### Key Terms

The socioeconomic duty aims to ensure that **strategic decisions** are carefully thought through so that they are effective as possible in tackling socioeconomic disadvantage and reducing inequalities of outcome. Such decisions may only be taken annually or, in other cases, they will come up more often. The duty applies to both new strategic decisions and when reviewing previous strategic decisions.

These are some examples of strategic decisions public bodies may make:

- Medium to long term plans (Corporate Plans, Development Plans, Service Delivery and Improvement Plans)
- Changes to and development of public services
- Strategic financial planning
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Strategic policy development

“**Due regard**” is an established legal concept in equalities law, by which public bodies must give weight to a particular issue in proportion to its relevance. Decision makers within public bodies must be satisfied that the evidence and likely impact of a policy on reducing inequality of outcomes as a socioeconomic disadvantage has been considered.

**Socioeconomic disadvantage** is defined as living in less favourable social and economic circumstances than others in the same society. This can be disproportionate in both “communities of interest” – those who share an identity (For example: lone parents, carers, common language or one or more of the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010) – and “communities of place” – those who share a geographical location where they work, reside, visit or otherwise spend a substantial portion of their time. Socioeconomic disadvantage can also be increased further when intersectionality is considered.

**Inequality of outcome** relates to any measurable difference in outcome between those who have experienced socioeconomic disadvantage and the rest of the population. Examples of socioeconomic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome include:

<b>Socioeconomic Disadvantage</b>	<b>Inequality of Outcome</b>
Area deprivation	Education
Low or No Wealth	Health
Socioeconomic Background	Employment
Low or No Income	Justice and Personal Security
Material Deprivation	Living Standards
	Participation in Decision-Making, Communities and Accessing Services

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