

**EXECUTIVE CABINET**

**Day:** Wednesday  
**Date:** 29 March 2023  
**Time:** 1.00 pm  
**Place:** Tameside One, Market Square, Ashton-Under-Lyne, OL6 6BH

Item No.	AGENDA	Page No
1.	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> To receive any apologies for the meeting from Members of the Executive Cabinet.	
2.	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest from Members of Executive Cabinet.	
3.	<b>MINUTES</b>	
a)	<b>JOINT MEETING OF OVERVIEW PANEL/EXECUTIVE CABINET</b> To consider the attached Minutes of the Joint Meeting of Overview Panel/Executive Cabinet held on 8 February 2023.	1 - 12
b)	<b>ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP</b> To consider the attached Minutes of the Environment and Climate Emergency Working Group held on 15 March 2023.	13 - 18
c)	<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING AND CAPITAL MONITORING PANEL</b> To consider the Minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel held on 16 March 2023 and approve the recommendations arising from the meeting as follows:  <b>2022/23 P10 CAPITAL MONITORING</b>  <b>RECOMMENDED</b> That Executive Cabinet be recommended to: (i) Note the forecast position for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 1. (ii) Note the funding position of the approved Capital Programme as set on page 4 of Appendix 1. (iii) Note the changes to the Capital Programme as set out on page 9 in Appendix 1 (iv) Note the updated Prudential Indicator position set out on pages 10-	19 - 26

11 of Appendix 1, which was approved by Council in February 2022

- (v) Approve a budget of £0.060m to be drawn down from the £0.500m allocation for works in Tameside One for the worksmart programme as set out in Appendix 2(f).

#### **CAPITAL PROGRAMMES FOR GROWTH DEPARTMENTS**

##### **RECOMMENDED**

That Executive Cabinet be recommended to

- (i) Note the progress with regards to the schemes within the Place Capital Programme (Town Centres, Property and Planning) as set out in the report
- (ii) Approve the allocation of £31,000 to the capital programme to finance the additional expenditure at Hyde Pool as stated in section 2.34. The funding to be allocated via the cumulative underspend of £207,000 against schemes detailed in table 2 (section 2.32),
- (iii) Approve the allocation of up to £30,000 to the capital programme to finance the additional expenditure at Hattersley Station as stated in sections 2.21 and 2.22. The sum to be allocated via funding held in Council reserves on behalf of the Land Board and is subject to a separate Council decision.
- (iv) Approve the allocation of up to £7,500 to the capital programme to finance expenditure relating to the relocation of the Mottram show as stated in section 2.18. This sum to be resourced via the earmarked capital programme budget of £103,000 that is allocated to the Mottram showground.

#### **OPERATIONS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS CAPITAL REPORT: UPDATE**

##### **RECOMMENDED**

That Executive Cabinet be recommended to:

- (i) Note the progress with regards to the schemes within the Operations and Neighbourhoods Capital Programme as set out in the report.
- (ii) Approve the reprioritised resurfacing schemes for the Highway Maintenance programme as outlined in Appendix 1.
- (iii) Note the progress on the list of highway maintenance schemes identified in Appendix 1 that are to be funded from the Highway Maintenance Grant Allocation
- (iv) Approve the drawdown of funds in respect of the S106 agreements detailed in Section 4 of this report and add to the Council's Capital Programme to allow the detailed design, procurement and installation of the various works.
- (v) Reverse the previous recommendation approved in November 2022 which requested that £1,600,000 of the 2022/23 Highways Maintenance Grant be added to the Councils Revenue budget to fund the cost of reactive maintenance works. Due to a required change in accounting treatment, it is necessary to reverse this decision and transfer that grant funding back to the Council

capital programme. It is important to note that this is purely an accounting adjustment and the funds will still be utilised in for the same purpose.

#### **EDUCATION CAPITAL PROGRAMME: UPDATE**

##### **RECOMMENDED**

That a report is produced for April Executive Cabinet to agree the funding, scope and contract for Hawthorns to enable it to be delivered and that Executive Cabinet be recommended to APPROVE:

- (i) The addition of £667,612 2022/23 additional Devolved Formula Capital grant to the capital programme as detailed in paragraph 2.10 to the programme in 2023/24.
- (ii) The Section 106 contributions totalling £529,205.04 as detailed in paragraph 2.16 are approved to finance Education Capital Schemes.
- (iii) The proposed estimate of £1,400,000 School Condition Grant for 2023/24 is added to the programme as detailed in paragraph 4.21. The final amount of grant will be updated on receipt of the final confirmation of the grant.
- (iv) The 2023/24 School Condition grant is allocated to the projects detailed in the table at paragraph 4.29.
- (v) The addition of £20,000 school contributions to the capital programme in 2023/24 as detailed in paragraph 4.30, subject to the confirmation of School Condition Grant as per recommendation.
- (vi) The allocation of £150,000 from High Needs Provision Fund for Oakdale School as detailed in paragraph 6.4 to be added to the programme in 2023/24.
- (vii) The allocation of £720,000 from High Needs Provision Fund for the New Bridge Academy Trust as detailed in paragraph 6.5 to be added to the programme in 2023/24.
- (viii) An allocation of £70,414 from High Needs Provision Fund for St James' Church of England Primary School as detailed in paragraph 6.6 to be added to the programme in 2023/24.
- (ix) A grant agreement for £70,414 is agreed with the Forward as One Academy Trust as detailed in paragraph 6.6 to provide 10 resourced pupil places at St James' Church of England Primary School, Ashton from September 2023.

That Executive Cabinet be recommended to NOTE:

- (i) Lyndhurst Primary and Ravensfield Primary – Air Con units (£11,000) to be returned to the unallocated school condition fund and (£20,000) removal of school contributions as detailed in paragraph 4.15.
- (ii) The addition of £203,210 Direct Revenue Funded projects to the capital programme as detailed in paragraph 2.11.
- (iii) The use of £30,000 contingency to support asbestos removal and fire compartmentalisation at Stalyhill Juniors (as part of the works required for the decarbonisation schemes) as detailed in paragraph 4.14.

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4.	<b>MONTH 10 FINANCE REPORT</b> To consider the attached report of the First Deputy, Finance, Resources and Transformation / Interim Director of Finance.	27 - 86
5.	<b>BUSINESS RATES REVALUATION AND RELIEFS 2023-24</b> To consider the attached report of the First Deputy, Finance, Resources and Transformation / Assistant Director for Exchequer Services.	87 - 96
6.	<b>COUNCIL TAX - EMPTY PROPERTIES AND SECOND HOMES</b> To consider the attached report of the First Deputy, Finance, Resources and Transformation / Assistant Director, Exchequer Services.	97 - 104
7.	<b>ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY</b> To consider a report of the Executive Member, Population Health & Wellbeing / Director of Population Health.	105 - 264
8.	<b>ENERGY SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE FUEL PAYMENT</b> To consider the attached report of the First Deputy, Finance, Resources and Transformation / Assistant Director for Exchequer Services.	265 - 274
9.	<b>ASHTON PUBLIC REALM: PHASE ONE, MARKET SQUARE</b> To consider the attached report of the Executive Member, Towns and Communities / Director of Place.	275 - 428
10.	<b>HYDE TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN UPDATE</b> To consider the attached report of the Executive Member, Towns and Communities / Director of Place.	429 - 490
11.	<b>HATTERSLEY ANNUAL REPORT</b> To consider the attached report of the First Deputy, Finance, Resources and Transformation / Director of Place.	491 - 500
12.	<b>ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND 2 – FULL SCHEME DELIVERY APPROVAL</b> To consider the attached report of the Executive Member for Planning, Transport & Connectivity / Assistant Director, Operations and Neighbourhoods.	501 - 512
13.	<b>PROBATION DEPENDENCY &amp; RECOVERY SUPPORT SERVICE (DRUGS &amp; ALCOHOL) – FUNDING TRANSFER AND CONTRACT VARIATION</b> To consider the attached report of the Executive Member, Population Health and Wellbeing / Director of Population Health.	513 - 520
14.	<b>DOMESTIC ABUSE COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS 2023-2024</b>	521 - 534

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From: Democratic Services Unit – any further information may be obtained from the reporting officer or from Carolyn Eaton, Principal Democratic Services Officer, to whom any apologies for absence should be notified.

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To consider the attached report of the Executive Member, Population Health and Wellbeing / Director of Population Health.

**15. URGENT ITEMS**

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

**16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To note that the next meeting of Executive Cabinet is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 26 April 2023.

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From: Democratic Services Unit – any further information may be obtained from the reporting officer or from Carolyn Eaton, Principal Democratic Services Officer, to whom any apologies for absence should be notified.

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## JOINT MEETING OF OVERVIEW PANEL WITH EXECUTIVE CABINET

8 February 2023

Commenced: 1.00pm

Terminated: 1.50pm

**Present:** Councillors North (in the Chair), Choksi, Feeley, Jackson, Sweeton, Ward and Wills

**Overview Panel:** Cllrs Naylor, Cartey, M Smith, N Sharif, T Sharif and Billington

**In Attendance:**

Sandra Stewart	Chief Executive
Stuart Fair	Interim Director of Finance
Stephanie Butterworth	Director of Adults Services
Alison Stathers-Tracey	Director of Children's Services
Julian Jackson	Director of Place
Debbie Watson	Director of Population Health
Ilys Cookson	Assistant Director, Exchequer Services
Emma Varnam	Assistant Director, Operations and Neighbourhoods
Caroline Barlow	Assistant Director of Finance
Simon Brunet	Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence
Jordanna Rawlinson	Head of Communications

**Apologies for absence:** Councillors Cooney, Fairfoull, Taylor and Kitchen (ex officio)

### 114. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted by Cabinet Members.

### 115. MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE CABINET

#### RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting of Executive Cabinet held on 25 January 2023 be approved as a correct record.

### 116. SCRUTINY UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive summarising the work of the Council's Scrutiny Panels for the period November 2022 to February 2023. A chronology of scrutiny activity for each Scrutiny Panel during the period was provided.

It was explained that Scrutiny had completed review activity in the following areas:

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

Town Centres – oversight and input to consultation on Phase 1 – Ashton public realm and market square. A response letter of the Scrutiny Chair sent to Councillor Vimal Choksi, Executive Member (Towns & Communities); and Julian Jackson, Director of Place, was appended to the report.

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

Children's Workforce Strategy (Recruitment and Retention of Social Workers) – The final report with recommendations and response of the Executive, was circulated as a separate report later in the

agenda.

In terms of the Budget Consultation, it was reported that all Scrutiny Panel members were invited to attend one of two annual budget sessions held on 16 January 2023. The independence of Scrutiny enables members to seek assurances on budget planning, process and priorities for 2023/24 and beyond. It was appropriate for budget priorities to inform future Scrutiny activity and work programmes. A response letter of the Scrutiny Chairs had been sent to the First Deputy (Finance, Resources and Transformation); and Interim Director of Finance – Section 151 Officer, a copy of which was appended to the report.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the report and summary of Scrutiny activity for the period November 2022 to February 2023, be noted.**

### **117. SCRUTINY ACTIVITY 2022/23**

The Chief Executive submitted a report summary of the work undertaken by the Council's three Scrutiny Panels: Place and External Relations, Children's Services and Health and Adult Social Care. A chronological breakdown of activity and oversight of all Scrutiny Panels during 2022/2023 was given.

Details of the Budget Consultation were provided in the Scrutiny Update report (Minute 116 refers).

In terms of follow up reviews, it was reported that Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel had recently revisited the following review: Homelessness and Housing.

With regard to Consultation and Engagement, it was explained that Scrutiny remained suitably informed of open consultations at a local, regional and national level. Responses included:

- Phase 1 – Ashton Market Square – December 2022. Details of which were provided in the Scrutiny Update report (Minute 116 refers).

Members were advised that Scrutiny Panels continued to review decisions and focus reports published by the ombudsman. The aim was to ensure learning opportunities be shared with services in a timely manner and for a formal response and/or position statement to be returned to the appropriate Scrutiny Panel within agreed timescales.

Scrutiny activity informed by recently published LGSCO focus reports included:

- Focus report – Unprecedented pressure: Learning from complaints about council and care provider actions during the Covid-19 pandemic (published February 2022).
  - Report shared with the Executive Member for Adult Services and Director of Adult Services. The activity was reported to Overview Panel on 25 July 2022.
- Guidance report – Section 117 aftercare: guidance for practitioners (published April 2022).
  - Report shared for information and awareness with the Executive Member for Population Health and Wellbeing.
- Focus report – Out of school, out of sight? Ensuring children out of school received a good education (published July 2022).
  - Report shared with the Executive Member for Education & Achievement and Director of Education. The activity was reported to Overview Panel on 26 September 2022.

In respect of Training and Development, it was reported that there was an ongoing commitment to ensure all scrutiny members received a suitable level of training and guidance. In addition to online resources, it was important that new and existing members had access to external provision based on scrutiny principles, national guidance and expectations. Details of training and development sessions delivered in 2022/23 were provided.



## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the report and summary of Scrutiny activity during 2022/23, be noted.**

### **118. SCRUTINY REVIEW ON CHILDREN'S WORKFORCE STRATEGY - SOCIAL WORKER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Panel / First Deputy, Finance, Resources and Transformation / Deputy Executive Leader, Children and Families providing, activity undertaken by the Children's Services Scrutiny Panel into the workforce strategy for children's social worker recruitment and retention.

It was explained that a working group of the Scrutiny Panel was established to review current arrangements and with a view to support improvement priorities of the Executive. Activity took place from October to December 2022.

The key findings of the review were detailed including a number of recommendations made to the Executive, which were provided in an appendix to the report together with the Executive response.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the recommendations and Executive Response, as detailed in appendices to the report, be noted.**

### **119. 2023/2024 BUDGET**

Consideration was given to a report of the First Deputy, Finance, Resources and Transformation / Interim Director of Finance (Section 151 officer), setting out the detailed revenue budget proposals for 2023/2024 and the Medium Term Financial Plan for the 5 year period 2023/24 to 2027/28, including the proposed council tax increase for 2023/4.

It was explained that the Council set a balanced budget for 2022/23 in February 2022, but the process was yet again very challenging. This was achieved through the utilisation of one-off funding, very challenging budget reductions targets and an increase in Council Tax. The budget assumed limited pay inflation, no general inflation and funded known demographic and cost pressures in Adults and Children's Social Care, but with a challenging budget reductions target for Children's Services.

Since setting the Council Budget in early February 2022, the economic landscape had changed adversely, with significant inflationary pressures impacting both generally and in specific service areas. These changes presented both cost pressures and challenges in delivering budget reductions and additional income targets, and, without a robust, proactive response, the Council was facing significant presenting risks to the delivery of a balanced position in 2022/23.

2022/23 had been a year of significant change in the NHS, with the formation of Integrated Care Boards (ICB) which replaced Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) from 1 July 2022. During 2022/23, the Strategic Commission (Tameside Council and the Tameside locality of the Greater Manchester ICB) had continued to report on the financial position of the Tameside Health Economy as a whole in monthly Integrated Commissioning Fund (ICF) financial monitoring reports. As at the end of December 2022, the Strategic Commission was forecasting a net overspend of £1.958m due to significant inflationary pressures on utility costs and pay inflation, combined with ongoing demand pressures in Adults and Children's Social care services.

The 2022/23 budget report included forecasts for 2023 to 2027 which identified a budget gap of £11.764m in 2023/24. This gap assumed that all budget reductions and additional income identified in the 2022/23 budget plans would be delivered, that expenditure in Adults and Children's Services would be contained within budget, and that budget reductions plans of £9m would be delivered.

The significant budget pressures for 2023/24 had been mitigated through the identification of significant budget reductions, efficiencies, additional income and funding changes resulting from the Local Government finance settlement. This had resulted in a final proposed net budget of £221.397m including a 4.99% overall increase in Council Tax. The changes to the net budget were summarised in the report, with further information on the changes in resources to fund the budget summarised in Appendix 4 to the report.

The Council continued to face significant cost pressures from demographic growth and increased costs. The key cost pressures for 2023/24 had been reviewed and assumptions recalculated and were summarised in the report, with further detail in Appendix 2 to the report. The budget for 2023/24 included a number of budget reductions and additional income, including the full year effect of budget reductions identified in previous years. The nature of budget reductions was summarised in the report, with further information contained in Appendix 3 to the report.

In terms of Council tax, after taking account of budget pressures, additional income and budget reductions identified for delivery in 2023/24, the total net budget requirement for the Council was £221.397m. Before any increase in Council tax levels, the resource available in 2023/24 was £216.155m, leaving a gap of £5.241m. Appendix 4 to the report provided further detail on resourcing and Council Tax. The remaining budget gap of £5.241m could be closed with a 2.99% general increase in Council Tax (1.99% had previously been assumed in the MTFP) and a 2% Adult Social Care Precept.

For a typical band A property in Tameside a 4.99% increase in Council Tax on the Tameside element of the bill would equate to an increase of £54.96 per year, or £1.06 per week.

Under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Section 151 Officer was required to prepare a statement on the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves and the robustness of the budget estimates. The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) statement on the robustness of the budget estimates was set out in Appendix 5 to the report.

Section 26 of the Local Government Act 2003, placed a duty on the Section 151 Officer to ensure the Council had established a minimum level of reserves to be retained to cover any unforeseen demands that could not be reasonably defined within finalising the proposed budget. The Director of Finance was recommending a proposed minimum level of general fund balances from 1 April 2023 at £27.537m, which was an increase on the level assessed in 2022. Further information was set out in the reserves strategy in Appendix 6 to the report.

Appendix 14 to the report was the Corporate Charging Policy which was adopted in February 2022. The Corporate Charging Policy established principles and a framework for setting and reviewing non-statutory fees and charges, and had been used to review fees and charges during the year. No changes had been made to the policy since adoption. Fees and charges were reviewed annually to ensure that they were set at appropriate levels, seeking to ensure costs were recovered, and that they are comparable to similar authorities across Greater Manchester. Appendix 15 set out the proposed fees and charges for 2023/24 and the proposed increase for 2023/24 where relevant.

In terms of Treasury Management, it was explained that the Treasury Management service was an important part of the overall financial management of the Council's affairs. At 31 March 2022 the Council had £144m of investments which need to be safeguarded and £140m of long term debt, which had been accrued over the years to help to fund the Council's capital investment programmes. The significant size of the amounts required careful management to ensure that the Council met its balanced budget requirement under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Members were advised that whilst the budget proposals for 2023/24 presented a balanced position (after Council Tax increases) the projected gap for 2024/25 and beyond was significant and relied on the delivery of all proposed budget reductions identified as part of this budget process. The gap was primarily driven by forecast demographic and other cost pressures, particularly in Adults services, along with continued pressures in Children's Social Care services, and general inflationary

pressures on pay and utilities. The budget forecasts for 2024/25 and beyond assumed that the £15.776m of budget reductions planned for 2023/24 were delivered in full or mitigated with alternative proposals. This budget reductions programme was ambitious and would require relentless focus on planning, project management and delivery.

The Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 was set out in Appendix 20 to the report. It set out the Council's approach to pay policy in accordance within the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. The pay policy applied for the year 2023/24 unless replaced or varied by Full Council.

It did not cover teaching staff whose salaries and terms and conditions of employment were set by the Secretary of State. Academy Schools were an entirely separate legal entity from the Council and were covered by Academies Act 2010 and as a separate employer were responsible for setting salaries for their employees. The purpose of the Pay Policy Statement was to ensure transparency and accountability with regard to the Council's approach to setting pay. The Pay Policy Statement had been approved by Council and was publicised on the Council's website in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 in March each year.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the following recommendations, as outlined in the submitted report be RECOMMENDED to Council for approval, subject to any final minor changes to the final figures:**

- (i) That the significant financial challenges and risks set out in the report be noted;**
- (ii) That the budgeted net expenditure for the financial year 2023/24 of £221.397m as set out in section 3 and Appendix 1 to the report, be approved, noting the significant pressures outlined in Appendix 2;**
- (iii) That the proposed budget reductions to be delivered by management outlined in section 3 and Appendix 3 to the report, be approved;**
- (iv) That the uplifts to fees and charges as set out in Appendix 15 to the report, be approved;**
- (v) That the proposed resourcing of the budget as set out in Appendix 4 to the report, be approved;**
- (vi) That a 2.99% increase to Council Tax and an increase of 2% in respect of the Adult Social Care precept for 2023/24, be approved;**
- (vii) It be noted that the budget projections set out in section 6 of the report assume a 1.99% per annum increase in general Council Tax from 2024/25 through to 2027/28. The budget projections also assume that there is no reduction to current levels of Government funding;**
- (viii) That the Director of Finance's assessment of the robustness of the budget estimates and adequacy of reserves as set out in Appendix 5 of the report, be accepted. Following this, it be determined that the estimates are robust for the purpose of setting the budget and that the proposed minimum General Fund Balance is adequate;**
- (ix) That the proposed minimum General Fund Balance of £27m set out in Appendix 6 to the report, be approved;**
- (x) That the Reserves Strategy be approved and the projected reserves position as set out in Appendix 6 to the report, be noted;**
- (xi) That the position on the Capital Programme (Section 9 and Appendix 18) previously approved by Executive Cabinet, and the forecast future investment requirements, be noted;**
- (xii) That the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 as set out in section 12 and Appendix 20 to the report, be approved;**
- (xiii) That the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24, which includes the proposed borrowing strategy, Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy (Appendix 17), be approved;**
- (xiv) That the Capital Strategy 2023/24 (Appendix 19) be approved; and**
- (xv) That delegated authority be given to the Directors (in consultation with the Section 151 officer) to agree any uplifts required to other contractual rates from 1 April 2023 which Directorates will manage within their approved budgets for 2023/24.**

## **120. CONSOLIDATED 2022/23 REVENUE MONITORING STATEMENT AT 31 DECEMBER 2022**

Consideration was given to a report of the First Deputy, Finance, Resources and Transformation / Director of Finance, which reflected actual expenditure to 31 December 2022.

It was explained that TMBC forecasts were for a full 12 months, but only 9 months of budgets were included for the ICB. Whilst still reporting an overspend on Council budgets, the scale of the overspend had reduced at month 9 to £2,491k, an improvement of £861k since month 8. ICB budgets for the Tameside locality were forecasting an underspend of £533k, an increase in the level of underspend since Month 8 of £325k.

The improved forecast at Month 9 on Council budgets mainly reflected updated staffing forecasts, where vacancies across a number of services remained open, resulting in an increase in the level of underspend on staffing budgets. As reported in months 7 and 8, a number of mitigations had also been identified to offset against the non-delivery of planned savings in year. The forecast outturn position assumed that the mitigations would be delivered before the end of the financial year.

Ongoing demand and cost pressures on Council budgets had implications for the 2023/24 budget and work continued at pace to deliver mitigations for 2022/23, whilst plans were developed to ensure a balanced budget could be delivered for 2023/24. The 2023/24 budget plans were now being finalised, with the budget proposals for next year due for consideration and approval at Full Council at the end of February 2023.

Plans for Tameside Locality were submitted for delivery of a £595k surplus in 22/23. Month 9 was forecast to achieve the surplus plus a further £533k. The plan to deliver a surplus required savings of £7.3m to be found, and whilst this had now been achieved, work continued to ensure that savings identified became recurrent.

Further details on the financial position were appended to the report.

### **RESOLVED**

**That the forecast outturn position and associated risks for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.**

## **121. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT FUND**

Consideration was given to a report of the First Deputy, Finance, Resources and Transformation / Assistant Director, Exchequer Services, which advised Members that government had provisionally allocated £455,437 to Tameside to fund a Council Tax reduction by up to £25 for residents in receipt of Council Tax Support. Any remaining monies were to be used on a discretionary basis to support economically vulnerable households with council tax bills under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Act 1992.

It was explained that a total of 13,265 Council Tax Support recipients would receive an automatic reduction on their year start Council Tax bill at an estimated cost of £331.6k, leaving £123.8k to fund a discretionary scheme. As in previous years a £25 reduction could be awarded to those not in receipt of Council Tax Support but known to have low incomes due to being in receipt of Severely Mentally Impaired Discounts, Care Leavers Discount, Carers Discount and Disabled Relief, which totalled £27.7k. This would leave £96.0k to be administered via a Section 13A Policy award as detailed in the guidance, upon evidence of hardship.

Applications for a Section 13A award would commence in June 2023 after year start billing activity slowed to enable resource to be effectively deployed to support the administration of this. The discretionary scheme would operate from June 2023 to end of March 2024 or until such time that the Council Tax Support Fund was exhausted.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the Council Tax Support Fund 2023/24, as detailed in Section 4 of the report, be approved.**

### **122. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Leader / Chief Executive, which provided evidence to demonstrate progress towards achievement of the Corporate Plan and improving the services provided to residents, businesses and key stakeholders within the locality.

The Corporate outcomes scorecard, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, contained long term outcome measures that tracked progress to improve the quality of life for local residents.

A glossary providing more information about the indicators included in the Corporate Outcomes Scorecard was attached at Appendix 2 to the report.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the report, Scorecard (at Appendix 1) and Glossary of Indicators (Appendix 2) be noted.**

### **123. EQUALITY STRATEGY**

The Executive Member, Education, Achievement and Equalities / Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence submitted a report seeking approval to adopt a new Equality Strategy, following a final period of consultation. A copy of the Strategy was appended to the report.

It was explained that, Under the Equality Act 2010 the Local Authority had a duty to publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives, and subsequently at intervals of no more than four years.

The strategy had been developed using an Local Government Association self-assessment tool, advice from an independent review of the approach to equalities in Tameside Council, engagement with the Partnership Engagement Network, reports delivered through the Inequalities Reference Group and a review of equalities data.

It was proposed that the strategy formed the basis of an action plan that would be overseen by the Executive Member and delivered by all services of the council with support from an officer group. Delivery would be in partnership where appropriate, including work with the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Inequalities Reference Group.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the Equality Strategy 2023 – 2027, as appended to the report, be agreed and published.**

### **124. INEQUALITIES REFERENCE GROUP (IRG) – ANNUAL REPORT 2022**

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member, Education, Achievement and Equalities / Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence, which explained that Tameside Inequalities Reference Group (IRG) was established in November 2020 and aimed to reduce inequality in Tameside by providing advisory recommendations on tackling key issues within the community. When established, the group's terms of reference committed to the publication of an annual update.

The report discharged that obligation and provided an overview of the group's activities in the last 12 months.

## **RESOLVED**

- (i) That the content of the report be noted; and**
- (ii) That the proposals for ensuring that recommendations emanating from the IRG are considered in the most appropriate forums, be supported.**

### **125. CAR PARKING REVIEW**

A report was submitted by the Executive Member, Planning, Transport and Connectivity / Assistant Director, Operations and Neighbourhoods providing an update regarding immediate and longer term changes in Tameside Council's car parks.

It was explained that there were 53 Pay & Display machines in situ across the borough in car parks. All of the machines currently only accepted cash. Tameside Council was the only Greater Manchester authority that could not accept card or mobile app payments. In view of the widespread move away from cash in all areas of life in recent years, this made it less attractive to use the car parking facilities or to visit and do business in Tameside.

It was proposed to prioritise improvements in town centre car parks for immediate action. This involved 27 machines, 17 of which could be upgraded and 10 of which would need to be replaced as they were too old to be upgraded. (An appendix to the report provided a detailed breakdown).

The cost of the improvements would be £71,450. A compliant procurement route had been identified by STAR Procurement for the upgrading / replacement of the 27 machines. It was proposed to review the future of the remaining 26 machines in Tameside car parks as part a wider strategic review for medium and longer-term developments. This enabled the Council to make urgent high-priority improvements in the most cost-effective manner, and recognised the fact that more substantial changes in land usage may affect the future use of those 26 car parks.

Currently there was no system to monitor of the usage and income of each individual car park. Data about patterns of usage would be essential for future decisions about changes to estates usage and town centre development. It was proposed to purchase a software system, the cost of which would be £4,606 per year.

The costs of the proposed improvements were £76,056 in 2022/23. It was proposed to fund the cost from the existing vehicle and equipment replacement reserve and to repay this in subsequent years. A detailed costs analysis was provided in the report.

In terms of the longer term strategy for developing the parking estate, it was reported that Tameside's position, with its proximity to key economic growth drivers, leisure and recreation offers made the borough an ideal location for businesses. In particular, businesses looking for links and ease of access to markets and skills bases across the north, as well as for skilled workers wanting to live within commutable distance of Manchester and Leeds, whilst enjoying an excellent quality of life afforded by its close links with the Peak District.

Tameside Council recognised that its main town centres, Ashton-under-Lyne, Denton, Droylsden, Hattersley, Hyde, Mossley, and Stalybridge were crucial components to the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of the borough. It was proposed to develop a Car Parking Strategy to ensure parking services were an effective part of the wider developments underway in the borough. There was a two-way synergy between parking services and other areas of development, and the strategy would therefore address the ways in which car parking could change to optimise its own contribution to the Council; and the ways in which it needed to align with other developments.

## **RESOLVED**

- (i) That approval be granted to procure, update and install 27 pay and display machines in town centre car parks. The related cost (£71,450) to be financed via the Council's Vehicle**

- Replacement reserve and repaid over a 4 year period as outlined in section 4 of the report;
- (ii) That approval be granted to purchase new pay machine management software for the contactless payment system. The related year 1 cost (£4,606) to be to be financed via the Council's Vehicle Replacement reserve and repaid over a 4 year period as outlined in section 4 of the report. Future year annual costs to be financed via the Place Directorate revenue budget; and
  - (iii) The phased approach of car park development be noted and that a further report will be received in May 2023 setting out an approach to proposed strategic developments of car parks and estate development.

## **126. AWARD OF PRE-PLACEMENT AGREEMENT FOR CARE HOMES (WITH OR WITHOUT NURSING) IN TAMESIDE**

The Executive Member, Adult Social Care, Homelessness and Inclusivity / Director of Adults Services submitted a report advising Members that, on 27 October 2021, Strategic Commissioning Board initially approved a renegotiation of the current contract to commence within the next 12 months with a contract go live date on 1 April 2023 for the provision of a Pre-Placement Agreement for the provision of permanent, temporary or respite care for older people in a care home (with or without nursing).

It was explained that, following a comprehensive procurement process, the successful providers had been identified and the report sought approval to award the contract as detailed in the report with a contract commencement date of 1 April 2023.

### **RESOLVED**

**That the contract for the provision of a Pre-Placement Agreement for the provision of permanent, temporary or respite care for older people in a care home (with or without nursing) be awarded as follows:**

<b>Provider A</b>	<b>Anchor Hanover Group</b>
<b>Provider B</b>	<b>Auden House</b>
<b>Provider C</b>	<b>Care UK Community Partnerships</b>
<b>Provider D</b>	<b>Cartwright Care Balmoral</b>
<b>Provider E</b>	<b>Devonshire Care</b>
<b>Provider F</b>	<b>Domain Care Limited</b>
<b>Provider G</b>	<b>Downshaw Lodge</b>
<b>Provider H</b>	<b>HC-One Limited</b>
<b>Provider I</b>	<b>Hurst Hall Care Home</b>
<b>Provider J</b>	<b>Hyde Nursing Home</b>
<b>Provider K</b>	<b>Laurel Bank Residential Care Home</b>
<b>Provider L</b>	<b>Moss Cottage Nursing Home</b>
<b>Provider M</b>	<b>Oakwood Care Centre</b>
<b>Provider N</b>	<b>Parkhill Nursing Home</b>
<b>Provider O</b>	<b>Polebank Hall Residential Care Home</b>
<b>Provider P</b>	<b>Sandtoft Care Home Ltd – Partnership Caring Ltd</b>
<b>Provider Q</b>	<b>St Lawrence's Lodge</b>
<b>Provider R</b>	<b>The Lakes Care Centre (R1) and Fairfield View (R2)</b>
<b>Provider S</b>	<b>The Vicarage Residential Care Home</b>
<b>Provider T</b>	<b>Tulsi Homes TA Clarkson House</b>

## **127. SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS AND SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING**

A report was submitted by the Executive Member, Education, Achievement and Equalities / Director

of Children's Services setting out the proposed admission arrangements for Tameside community, and voluntary controlled schools for admission in September 2024, following a public consultation exercise.

It was explained that there were proposed changes to the Published Admission Number at two community high schools and slight amendments to the wording of the school admission arrangements to comply with the School Admissions Code. The latest information on school place planning was presented which concluded that there were currently sufficient places to meet expected demand.

Members were advised that the school place planning process must continue to be dynamic particularly in view of significant housing development that was predicted within the borough and the impact that would have on demand and travel to learn patterns. Consideration also needed to be given to predicted rising levels of surplus capacity in some areas of the borough and the need to consider reducing admission numbers in future years.

The report concluded that there was a need to continue to develop capacity for specialist places given the predicted continuing rise in demand. The report also sought approval for capital spend to support the establishment of a new specialist resource base at Dane Bank Primary School.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (i) That the admission arrangements for all Tameside community and voluntary controlled schools for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved;**
- (ii) That a reduction in the published admission number at Hyde Community College to 210 from September 2024, be approved;**
- (iii) That a reduction in the published admission number at Denton Community College to 270 from September 2024, be approved;**
- (iv) That approval be given to a grant agreement for £63,066 with The CLIC Trust to create a safe outdoor space; a breakout space; a sensory room and remodel a current classroom to accommodate a new resource at Dane Bank Primary School. This will provide 10 resourced pupil places for children with communication and interaction needs for at least 10 years from Easter 2023.**

#### **128. UK SHARED PRSPERITY FUND (SME WORKSPACE)**

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member, Inclusive Growth, Business and Employment / Director of Place, which provided an update on the successful bid by the Council to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) for Tameside under the SME Workspace investment priority (Intervention E22).

It was reported that the Council submitted bids in October 2022 of £1,979,141 and £1,700,000 for Tameside against the UKSPF Communities and Place and SME Workspace investment priorities. Both bids were designed to be an economic driver that delivered genuine levelling up opportunities across Tameside supporting national, GM and Tameside strategic policies.

In December 2022 GMCA received unconditional approval of the GM UKSPF Investment Plan and a draft MOU and grant determination letter. Following this approval, it had been confirmed that both the Tameside Communities and Place submissions had been successful and the associated funding would now be awarded subject to a funding agreement.

The report concluded that the interventions supported by the UKSPF programme for Tameside would support delivery of the Council's strategic priorities as set out in the Tameside Corporate Plan and Tameside Inclusive Growth Strategy. The funding secured provided a significant financial contribution to the Council and provided a proactive approach to the delivery of future inclusive growth.



Full details of the projects were appended to the report.

**RESOLVED**

- (i) That the successful bid by the Council to UKSPF be noted;**
- (ii) That approval be delegated to the Director of Place for entering into the formal agreements for the receipt of UKSPF funding subject to satisfactory approval by Legal and Finance for the projects set out in Appendix 1;**
- (iii) That approval be given to the Director of Place to manage the programme of works associated with the UKSPF Programme for Tameside and to drawdown and incur all UKSPF expenditure related to delivery;**
- (iv) That any variations to the programme be agreed by Councillor David Sweeton – Executive Member (Inclusive Growth, Business & Employment) in consultation with the First Deputy, Finance, Resources and Transformation; and**
- (v) That the projects within the UKSPF SME Workplace programme for Tameside be included in the Council’s Capital Programme to ensure quarterly monitoring by the Strategic Planning & Capital Monitoring Panel.**

**129. URGENT ITEMS**

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

**130. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED**

**It be noted that the next meeting of Executive Cabinet is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 29 March 2023.**

**CHAIR**

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## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP

15 March 2023

**Commenced: 4.35pm**

**Terminated: 6.15pm**

**Present:** Councillors Boyle (Chair), Affleck, Jones, Mills, Newton, Pearce, Roderick and Turner

**In Attendance:** Emma Varnam Assistant Director, Operations and Neighbourhoods  
Jo Oliver Head of Waste Management and Fleet Services  
Gary Mongan Regulatory Services Manager, Environmental Services  
Christina Morton Environmental Development Officer  
Jemma Parkinson Area Engagement Lead, United Utilities  
Mark Sewell Wastewater Catchment Manager, United Utilities  
Chris Matthews Head of Regional Engagement, United Utilities

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor B Holland

### 25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 26. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Climate Emergency Working Group held on 16 November 2022 were approved as a correct record.

### 27. AMENDMENT TO ORDER OF BUSINESS

In accordance with the Council's constitution, the Chair advised Members of a change in the order of business to the published agenda.

### 28. GREATER MANCHESTER GREEN CITY REGION UPDATE

The Chair, Councillor Boyle, gave a verbal update in respect of the Greater Manchester Green City Region Partnership. Members were informed that the last meeting had taken place on 10 February 2023 and updates were provided in relation to the Five Year Environment Plan as well as those areas where targets were not currently being met.

It was highlighted that Greater Manchester was taking part in the Government's Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Heat Network Zoning Pilot which would inform national policy development for the future use and growth of heat networks to reduce carbon emissions.

### 29. CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Group received an update from the Assistant Director, Operations and Neighbourhoods in relation to the Council's Climate and Environment Action Plan. The five priority areas of the Action Plan were; greenspace & biodiversity; homes, workspaces & council buildings; influencing others; reducing consumption & procuring sustainably; and travel & transport.

A number of working groups related to each priority area that had been established involving Members and officers were currently unable to meet regularly due to a number of vacancies within

the Place Directorate. However, the Chair of the Group, the Assistant Director and Environmental Development Officer continued to meet with the lead officer from each group.

The slides showed the project status against each task area using a RAG rating system.

Members were encouraged to email any questions in relation to the Action Plan to the Assistant Director and the Chair requested that they be sighted.

## **RESOLVED**

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

### **30. DECARBONISATION OF THE PUBLIC ESTATE UPDATE**

The Group received a presentation from the Environmental Development Officer updating Members on the steps being taken by the Council to decarbonise buildings across the Tameside estate.

Members were informed that Phase 1 of the Scheme had seen £1 billion made available to public sector bodies, including schools and hospitals, to fund both energy efficiency and low carbon heat upgrades. As part of Phase 1, the Council had been awarded £2.5 million to decarbonise 14 buildings across the borough.

Measures undertaken included insulation, draught proofing, improvements to building management systems (BMS), solar PV, solar thermal, air source heat pumps and window replacements. It was anticipated that these measures would reduce carbon emissions by an estimated 355.86 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e per annum. All of these measures had been completed in June 2022.

The Environmental Development Officer advised the Group that as part of Phase 3a of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, Tameside Council had been awarded £1.5 million. Under Phase 3a there was a match-funding requirement meaning the total project value was £2.3 million.

As part of Phase 3a, four buildings were currently undergoing decarbonisation works. The works related to Active Hyde, Active Medlock, Stalyhill Junior School and St John's Primary School. Measures included the installation of air source heat pumps, LED lighting, insulation, BMS measures and solar PV. In total, the measures would eliminate 6,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e of carbon over the 20-year project lifecycle. All of the money had to be drawn down by the end of March 2023 and work was underway at pace.

A further round of buildings in the Council's estate were undergoing decarbonisation surveys in readiness for any future funding rounds or opportunities. The four buildings currently being surveyed were Active Copley, Denton town hall, Greswell Primary School and Ryecroft Hall.

Members queried if decarbonisation projects could be undertaken without grant funding and it was explained that due to Council budgetary pressures only those schemes that were invest to save were likely to be successful as part of a business case.

## **RESOLVED**

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

### **31. GREATER MANCHESTER CLEAN AIR PLAN UPDATE**

The Group received a presentation from the Regulatory Services Manager updating Members on the Clean Air Plan for Greater Manchester.

Members were informed that government had mandated Greater Manchester to tackle illegal levels of air pollution on some local roads. It was estimated that poor air quality contributed to nearly 1,200 premature deaths across the city region each year. Consequently, local authorities and the

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) were committed to cleaning up the air that residents breathed. The aim was to achieve this in a way that did not jeopardise jobs, livelihoods and businesses.

Initially, Greater Manchester was required to have a city region wide clean air charging zone, but following the covid-19 pandemic government agreed that this scheme would not be implemented on 30 May 2022. It was explained that the pandemic had resulted in significant vehicle supply chain issues, resulting in rising vehicles prices and a cost of living crisis. The original Clean Air Plan could therefore have caused significant financial hardship and would not have met the government's legal direction (issued before the pandemic) to tackle harmful nitrogen dioxide levels on local roads by 2024.

Greater Manchester had been directed by government to meet legal limits for nitrogen dioxide limits on local roads in the "shortest possible time" and by 2026 at the latest. The Regulatory Services Manager advised the Group the new investment-led Clean Air Plan would not include a charging Clean Air Zone. Instead, resources would be targeted at those specific areas that modelling showed would have exceedances in 2025, including parts of Bury, Manchester and Salford.

In relation to vehicles, it was explained that 90 per cent of Greater Manchester's bus fleet already met government emission standards due to funding from the government Clean Air Bus Fund. Further funding would mean that 100 new zero emission buses would be rolled out when the first regulated bus services were introduced in Wigan and Bury from September 2023. An additional 170 zero emission buses were due to run from Stockport by 2024.

Concerning other vehicles, it was explained that £120 million government Clear Air funding would be used to clean up the most polluting vehicles that travelled frequently on the most polluted local roads. Local policies and regulatory measures would be reviewed to speed up fleet upgrades. The cameras that had already been installed as part of the original Clean Air Zone proposals would be used to send letters to those driving non-compliant vehicles, advising them of the support available to upgrade.

Details of the current status of the proposals were provided to Members and it was advised that in January 2023 the government had requested additional evidence to support Greater Manchester's case for an investment-led, non-charging Clean Air Plan. Initial evidence had been submitted demonstrating how zero-emission buses would help meet Greater Manchester's legal limits for nitrogen dioxide.

Further evidence had been requested relating to modelling to understand how Greater Manchester's case for an investment-led, non-charging plan performed against the benchmark of a charging Clean Air Zone to address the nitrogen dioxide exceedances identified in central Manchester and Salford.

The Regulatory Services Manager informed the Group that the additional evidence, which required detailed modelling, would be provided to government by the end of 2023. Once formal government feedback on the Clean Air Plan had been received, timescales for a public consultation on the plan would be announced.

## **RESOLVED**

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

## **32. WASTE AND RECYCLING UPDATE**

The Group received a presentation on waste and recycling from the Head of Waste Management and Fleet Services.

Members were informed that the government proposed to implement a deposit return scheme on plastic bottles and steel and aluminium cans from October 2025. It was likely that individuals would

receive 20 pence on cans and plastic bottles if returned to a shop with reverse vending machines. Whilst it was hoped the scheme would reduce littering, it was explained that the Council would lose some income from good value, high quality plastic and cans being returned through the scheme.

Proposals to extend producer responsibility for packing waste would see producers charged according to the amount of packaging materials they placed on the market, which would generate a fund that would then be allocated to local authorities. Local authorities would then receive financial support for collection, recycling, treatment, and disposal of packaging with payments being based on modelled costs. The first issue of extended producer responsibility (EPR) model outputs were expected in Spring 2023 with guidance on efficiency and effectiveness in Summer 2023.

Details of the requirement for separate weekly food waste collections from 2025 were outlined to Members. Under the proposals, all households including flats and hard to access properties would be included. The Council would undertake a TEEP assessment to ascertain if its current collection system was acceptable. If the Council were required to change its system, then funding would be available through the new burdens fund.

The reporting officer explained that as part of the Environment Act, businesses and schools would be required to have separate weekly food waste collections. It was expected to be introduced in October 2025 but currently it was unclear how the scheme would be resourced.

Concerning the Wider Waste Strategy for the Council, it was advised that Waste Services was currently awaiting further guidance from DEFRA on the National Waste Strategy. It was likely that the Council would need additional resources and to introduce champions to monitor, encourage and promote the work.

An update in relation to progress on waste and recycling in Tameside was provided and it was highlighted that the number of waste complaints had declined from a peak in Spring 2022 following the introduction of three weekly bin collection in April of that year.

A review of bin routes was currently being undertaken and the requirement for any additional resources would be discussed with crews. The changes were likely to be implemented on 23 June 2023 but the majority of resident's collections would remain the same. It was advised that there would be some short-term disruption as the new rounds took effect, but would ultimately lead to a more reliable service and accommodate growing property numbers in the borough.

Following a review of assisted bin collections, it was reported that the number required across the borough would reduce by 60 per cent following a scoping exercise carried out by Waste Services to understand the properties that still required them. Given the forecasted significant drop, Members were keen that those households that required them still received an assisted collection.

Members were advised that residents would now be required to pay for new or replacement bins. The capacity of recycling bins had also been increased to 240 litres, giving the Council more scope if required to collect additional materials in future, such as plastic pots, tubs and trays.

A summary of recycling rates for the borough was provided and showed that the overall recycling rate for 2021/22 was 52.6 per cent. In quarter one of 2022/23 the recycling rate was 54.6 per cent and reflected the increase in garden waste tonnages. Data for quarter two would be submitted shortly because there was a six-month delay in reporting.

The Assistant Director, Operations and Neighbourhoods proposed that Members of the Group undertook a site visit to the Longley Lane Waste and Recycling Centre in Gatley.

## **RESOLVED**

- i. That the content of the presentation be noted.**
- ii. That a site visit of the Longley Lane Waste and Recycling Centre be arranged for Members of the Group.**

### 33. UNITED UTILITIES UPDATE

Chris Matthews, Head of Regional Engagement; Mark Sewell, Wastewater Catchment Manager; and Gemma Parkinson, Area Engagement Lead, United Utilities gave a presentation in respect of River Tame investment activities and micro plastic pollution.

Information on short term (2025-present), medium term (2025-2030) and long term (2025-2050) investment planning activities were highlighted to Members. United Utilities were investing in the Mossley and Saddleworth water treatment works to improve water quality. Investment would include better detection of phosphorus, BOD and ammonia.

Details of the River Tame Operational Working Group were provided and it was explained that the group was formalised following a previous United Utilities/Tameside update meeting. The group, facilitated through the Mersey Rivers Trust, were developing a partnership action plan to mitigate 'catchment operation' issues including littering/fly-tipping, pollution and habitat improvements. There would also be opportunities for the group to influence longer term planning activities, including United Utilities water quality investment programmes.

In addition, United Utilities would bolster local operational support, including:

- Better Rivers Better North West programme, including appointing an initial four River Rangers;
- £25k initial support to the partnership for habitat improvement works; and
- Staff time for volunteering day, including tree planting and planned river clean up events.

An event held at Jet Amber Fields in Denton on 3 March 2023 saw the planting of 500 trees.

Information in relation to the Natural Course project was presented and it was explained that United Utilities was working in partnership with the GMCA and Environment Agency. As part of the project, investigation work was being undertaken on the impact of micro plastics from both wastewater assets (including wastewater treatment works final effluent and intermittent discharges) and other catchment sources.

Members were informed that whilst early discussions identified the River Tame as a potential source for the investigation, the study required a wider representation of micro plastic impacts on both rural and urban rivers and their connected drainage systems. Consequently, the Roch, Irk and Medlock catchments were taken forward. It was anticipated that learning from these projects would help inform the understanding of sources and impact of micro plastics on the wider environment and help to inform any decision making on potential future regulation on micro plastics.

Progress in relation to the study was provide. Following sampling, analysis was still ongoing and was due to be concluded by the end of April 2023. Early conclusions, deduced from the samples that had been analysed at the half way point of the investigation, indicated that water treatment works involved in the investigation were not a major source of micro plastics. This therefore indicated that they were likely to be coming from other, yet unknown, sources. Members were informed that the final report was due to be published in August 2023.

A discussion ensued in relation to what was being done to deal with the discharge of sewage into the River Tame. In response, United Utilities highlighted that the water industry was having to alter how sewage was dealt with and this involved prioritising improvements to the waste water network. Investment in cleaning up the North West's rivers was the largest made by the company and exceeded the money spent on the clean up of the region's coastline.

Members also sought clarity in relation to the number of discharges into the watercourse since the last meeting of the Group that exceeded limits. It was explained that United Utilities could not provide details in relation to third party discharges as these were a matter for the Environment Agency, but would bring details of 'pollution incidences' to a future meeting of the Group.

**RESOLVED**

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

**34. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

**35. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Environment and Climate Emergency Working Group was scheduled to take place on 14 June 2023.

**CHAIR**



## STRATEGIC PLANNING AND CAPITAL MONITORING PANEL

16 March 2023

**Commenced:** 13:30

**Terminated:** 14:10

**Present:** Councillors Cooney (Chair), Bray, Dickinson, Fairfoull, Feeley, North, McNally, and L Boyle

**In Attendance:**

Sandra Stewart	Chief Executive
Stuart Fair	Interim Director of Finance
Caroline Barlow	Assistant Director of Finance
Alison Stathers-Tracy	Director of Children's Services
Dave Leadbetter	Project Manager (Children's)
Tracy Harrison	Assistant Director of Adults Services
Sue Hogan	Service Unit Manager (Adults)
Stuart Knight	Interim Assistant Director for Strategic Property
Emma Varnam	Assistant Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Ryan

### 29 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 30 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel on the 17 November 2022 were approved as a correct record.

### 31 2022/23 P10 CAPITAL MONITORING

Consideration was given to a report of the First Deputy (Finance, Resources and Transformation)/Interim Director of Finance. The report focused on the budget and forecast expenditure for full approved projects in the 2022/23 financial year.

It was reported that the approved budget for 2022/23 was £52.477m and the projected outturn for the financial year was £22.891m. There were additional schemes that had been identified as a priority for the Council, and, where available, capital resource has been earmarked against these schemes, which would be added to the Capital Programme and future detailed monitoring reports once satisfactory business cases had been approved by Executive Cabinet.

The current forecast was for service areas to have spent £22.891m on capital investment in 2022/23, which was £29.586m less than the current capital budget for the year. This variation was spread across various directorates and was made up of a number of over/underspends on various schemes (£0.724m) less the re-profiling of expenditure in other areas (£28.862m) due to delays on a number of schemes.

Discussion ensued on how the work undertaken at Asset Management Panel would inform the Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel. It was explained that officers in property and legal were tracking all disposals and receipts and this was being reported to AMP where any risks or slippage was reported. Going forward the work undertaken through AMP would enable for better predictions and confidence of the receipts coming in which can be used to inform the SPCM. The Panel was also assured that there were now set processes in place which would enable for an efficient disposal of assets

## **RECOMMENDED**

**That Executive Cabinet be recommended to:**

- (i) Note the forecast position for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 1.**
- (ii) Note the funding position of the approved Capital Programme as set on page 4 of Appendix 1.**
- (iii) Note the changes to the Capital Programme as set out on page 9 in Appendix 1**
- (iv) Note the updated Prudential Indicator position set out on pages 10-11 of Appendix 1, which was approved by Council in February 2022**
- (v) Approve a budget of £0.060m to be drawn down from the £0.500m allocation for works in Tameside One for the worksmart programme as set out in Appendix 2(f).**

## **32 CAPITAL PROGRAMMES FOR GROWTH DEPARTMENTS**

Consideration was given to a report of the First Deputy (Finance, Resources & Transformation)/Director of Place. The report provided an update on the delivery of Capital Projects in the Place Directorate in relation to Town Centres, Property and Planning.

The report set out capital schemes which had reached the end of their 12 month defect liability period with all outstanding retentions financed in this financial year. The schemes had been completed with the approved budget with residual underspend balances. The scheme underspends have a cumulative value of £207,000.

It was reported that the defects liability period for Hyde pool had been extended due to lack of progress in dealing with outstanding issues. The final retention payment was unlikely to be settled by the end of the 2022/23 financial year. The final account for the scheme has been estimated at £102,000 which was £31,000 over the remaining scheme budget. The extra cost was attributed to the provision of additional building security measures not included in the original contract with the LEP along with some minor alterations to the existing building required to improve interfaces not included in the original contract with the LEP. It was proposed that the estimated additional cost of £31,000 was financed via the residual balance of £207,000 as referenced in table 2. In order to ensure that the scheme wasn't delayed, thereby incurring additional costs, it was envisaged that the additional cost of the essential works would be met from scheme contingency. However, other "end of scheme" demands on the contingency budget has meant that the scheme requires additional funding.

In regards to works undertaken at Hattersley Station Passenger Facilities. Preliminary work for the delivery of the project to provide a refurbished and extended ticket office at Hattersley Railway Station completed at the end of January 2023 with the main construction works beginning at the end of March 2022.

The scheme had a total budget of £750,000, and spend on the scheme at Q3 2022/23 was £546,141. The remaining funding of £203,859 was due to be invoiced for by the end of March 2023 for costs incurred to final completion. The scheme completed at the end of January 2023 with the official opening of the new ticket office on 16 February 2023.

It was explained that the scheme had experienced delays due to extended delivery periods for some materials being used on the project. Furthermore the extremely cold weather in late 2022 resulted in delays to final completion of the project as contractors were unable to lay the floor screed or undertake other works.

The costs of the materials had increased significantly from the original forecasts due to the impact of inflation. Whilst these cost increases have been mitigated as much as possible, the scheme had an estimated overspend of up to £30,000 on final completion. The Council had been working closely with Northern Trains and Network Rail on mitigations to reduce this overspend as much as possible. Network Rail had reduced some of their costs and Northern Trains have provided some additional funding for scheme, however the contractor has been unable to absorb all additional project costs.

A report was presented to the Hattersley Land Board on 30 November 2022 requesting the additional budget of up to £30,000 via funding held in Council reserves on behalf of the Land Board. The approval was subject to a separate Council decision and would enable completion of the scheme at no additional cost to the Council.

It was reported that as part of the Mottram show relocation, approval would be required for a payment of up to £7,500 to be made toward the cost of new containers which are required to store the property of the society between shows, e.g. fencing etc. It was proposed that this sum was resourced via the earmarked capital programme budget of £103,000 that is allocated to the Mottram showground.

Discussion ensued on the outstanding issues at Hyde pool and the minor alternations to the existing building required to improve interfaces no included in the original contract with the LEP.

## **RECOMMENDED**

**That Executive Cabinet be recommended to**

- (i) Note the progress with regards to the schemes within the Place Capital Programme (Town Centres, Property and Planning) as set out in the report**
- (ii) Approve the allocation of £31,000 to the capital programme to finance the additional expenditure at Hyde Pool as stated in section 2.34. The funding to be allocated via the cumulative underspend of £207,000 against schemes detailed in table 2 (section 2.32),**
- (iii) Approve the allocation of up to £30,000 to the capital programme to finance the additional expenditure at Hattersley Station as stated in sections 2.21 and 2.22. The sum to be allocated via funding held in Council reserves on behalf of the Land Board and is subject to a separate Council decision.**
- (iv) Approve the allocation of up to £7,500 to the capital programme to finance expenditure relating to the relocation of the Mottram show as stated in section 2.18. This sum to be resourced via the earmarked capital programme budget of £103,000 that is allocated to the Mottram showground.**

## **33 OPERATIONS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS CAPITAL REPORT: UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report of the First Deputy (Finance, Resources & Transformation)/Assistant Director, Operations & Neighbourhoods. The report provided an update on the delivery of Capital Projects in Operations and Neighbourhoods.

It was reported that the footway refurbishment schemes were now complete except for Huddersfield Road, Stalybridge where the presence of scaffolding had prevented the works from being carried out. As soon as the scaffolding was removed the works will be undertaken. The carriageway schemes (Phase 1) were all complete except for Yew Tree Lane, Dukinfield. This scheme would need a wider consultation with the estate off Tennyson Avenue, the Primary School and Golf Club, due to access issues. This work will be rescheduled into the 2023/24 programme. Costs for the works undertaken in Phase 1 had yet to be finalised but they are expected to be within budget.

The programmed list of roads to be resurfaced in the carriageway schemes (Phase 2) schedule had been revised to reflect a reprioritisation following recent inspections of the network condition. These were set out within the report. The revised list of schemes to be funded from the Highway Maintenance Grant were identified in Appendix 1. The revised estimate for the Phase 2 works was £915,000. It was anticipated the Phase 2 works would start to be delivered in March / April 2023.

In regards to Section 106 Agreements and Developer Contributions the current position for s106 agreements was £2,775,000 in credit. Allocations approved were £840,000 leaving a balance available of £1,935,000 as at January 2023 as detailed in the attached Appendix 3.

As a condition of planning consents for three developments, financial contributions had been made available, under Section 106 Agreements of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, for a number of highway, trip mitigation, Public Rights of Way improvements in the vicinity of the developments. The developments and proposed works were:

- Kings Road, Audenshaw – financial contribution of £137,404
- Crowhill Road, Ashton-under-Lyne – financial contribution of £5,633
- Nield Street, Mossley – financial contribution of £26,036

The schemes listed were subject to viability and budget constraints. Some revisions of the proposals could be required if schemes were not viable or were due to be completed as part of other funding streams. Any changes to the above schemes will require the approval of the developer.

The payment of the S106 monies had been received by the Council. Approval was now sought from members to allow the drawdown of funds in order to progress the detailed designs and estimates. Members would be provided with future updates concerning progress and costs.

Approval was sought for the drawdown of funds in respect of the s106 agreement for the development at Edge Lane in Droylsden and add to the Council's Capital Programme to allow the detailed design and estimates for the delivery of improvements to greenspaces in Droylsden.

The Panel were advised that in the November 2022 Capital Update report recommendation (ii) requested that £1,600,000 of Highway Maintenance Grant be transferred to the Councils Revenue budget to fund the cost of reactive maintenance works. Due to a required change in accounting treatment, it was necessary to reverse this decision and transfer that grant funding back to the Council capital programme. It was important to note that this was purely an accounting adjustment and the funds would still be utilised for the same purpose.

## **RECOMMENDED**

**That Executive Cabinet be recommended to:**

- Note the progress with regards to the schemes within the Operations and Neighbourhoods Capital Programme as set out in the report.**
- Approve the reprioritised resurfacing schemes for the Highway Maintenance programme as outlined in Appendix 1.**
- Note the progress on the list of highway maintenance schemes identified in Appendix 1 that are to be funded from the Highway Maintenance Grant Allocation**
- Approve the drawdown of funds in respect of the S106 agreements detailed in Section 4 of this report and add to the Council's Capital Programme to allow the detailed design, procurement and installation of the various works.**
- Reverse the previous recommendation approved in November 2022 which requested that £1,600,000 of the 2022/23 Highways Maintenance Grant be added to the Councils Revenue budget to fund the cost of reactive maintenance works. Due to a required change in accounting treatment, it is necessary to reverse this decision and transfer that grant funding back to the Council capital programme. It is important to note that this is purely an accounting adjustment and the funds will still be utilised in for the same purpose.**

## **34 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE CAPITAL SCHEMES UPDATE REPORT**

Consideration was given to a report of the Deputy Executive Leader (Children and Families)/Assistant Director Children's Services. The report provided an update on the Children's Social Care Property Capital Scheme and set out details of the major approved property capital schemes in this Directorate.

In regards to the Respite Unit, as reported to the Panel on the 14 March 2022, the purchase of a respite property did not conclude due to the report on title and the service conclusion that the

property would not be fit for the purpose it was intended. The delivery of edge of care respite would now form part of the work Salford City Council were undertaking as Sector Led Improvement Partners commissioned by the DFE which will inform future model and provision of in-house children's. The way forward on capital spend would also be influenced by the Government's response to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care (Stable Homes Built on Love), that included proposals to establish regional commissioning care co-operatives.

The Panel was advised that Boyds Walk was Children's Home for children with disabilities requiring long term and short-term care. The property from which the service operates was not fit for purpose. The property had significant health and safety, safeguarding and Children's Home Regulation deficiencies and Ofsted, Fire Service and Children's Services senior management were all of the same opinion that an urgent replacement was required. Executive Cabinet had approved a new build replacement for Boyds Walk on the former Flowery Field Infant School vacant site. A bid to the DFE Children's Home Capital Programme funding opportunity was successful (50% of estimated capital cost and a Grant Offer Letter has been signed for £1.6m).

The start of the project had been delayed due to the DFE requirement for formal consultation on the appropriation of land (former Infant School site). The formal consultation period ended on the 10 February 2023. A pre-construction site agreement has been signed in order for design work and site investigations to start.

#### **RECOMMENDED**

**That Executive Cabinet be recommended to NOTE the progress update in the report.**

### **35 ADULTS CAPITAL PLAN 2022/23 UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member for Adult Social Care/Homelessness and Inclusivity/Director of Adult Services. The report provided an update of the developments in relation to the Adults Capital Programme for schemes previously approved and still underway, the usage of wider disabled facilities grant (DFG) including the housing adaptations budget.

It was reported that recruitment to posts within social care continued to be challenging and impacted on a number of the capital schemes. However, work was underway with Human Resources to seek to improve the recruitment processes and attract more people to work in Adult social care and sustain them longer term.

It was highlighted that all costs and benefits were being monitored and reviewed regularly taking into account people's changing needs and ensuring the right support was in place; whether that be assessment staff or adaptations to enable people to live well and as independent as possible in their own homes.

The publication of the Adult Social Care White Paper (People at the heart of Care) in December 2021 set out a 10 year vision for Adult social care and provides information on funded proposals that the government would implement over the next 3 years. There were capital funding implications contained within it, which were still being worked through both nationally and locally. Updates would be provided appropriately as further details are announced and impacts were clearly understood.

#### **RECOMMENDED**

**That Executive Cabinet be recommended to NOTE the progress updates against the Adults Capital Plan.**

### **36 EDUCATION CAPITAL PROGRAMME: UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member for Education Achievements & Equalities/ First Deputy (Finance, Resources and Transformation)/Director of Place/Assistant Director of Education. The report provided members of the Panel with an overview and updated

position on the Council's Education Capital Programme and sought approval of the recommendations to Cabinet as set out in the report.

The Panel were advised that the Devolved Formula Capital was provided to schools to maintain their buildings and fund small-scale capital projects that met their own priorities and schools arrange these works directly. For 2022/23 the total for Tameside schools was £325,584 and £173,874 for Voluntary Aided schools. On 6 December 2022, the Government announced additional capital funding for DFC for 2022/23. The total additional allocation for Tameside schools was £667,612 and £375,072 for Voluntary Aided schools. Schools could undertake their own capital projects which they fund from revenue (as a revenue contribution to capital). It was proposed that £203,210 be added to the capital programme for 2022/23.

Since the previous meeting in November 2022, further work had taken place to identify other Section 106 amounts. The report proposed Section 106 contributions totalling £529,205.04 be approved to finance Education Capital Schemes. It was explained that the Section 106 contributions would "top up" the remaining Basic Need, High Needs provision or School Condition budget.

It was reported that the 2023/24 School Condition grant had not been received. This was an annual formulaic grant and it was estimated that £1.4m would be received for 2023/24. It was requested that this be added to the programme in 2023/24 to allow Summer 2023 Term schemes to begin as soon as possible to ensure urgent works can be delivered. To also support these scheme of works it's requested that the school contributions were also added to the 2023/24 programme.

It was highlighted that Oakdale were currently working with the Capital Projects Team to identify where internal space within the school could be remodelled to provide accommodation for anticipated additional pupils. It was forecast that the school would need to take 14 more pupils by September 2025 which would require two new classrooms. The final scheme was currently being reviewed by the school and the LEP will then be able to finalise quotes for the work. Panel was asked to recommend to Executive cabinet the allocation of £150,000 of the 2023/24 High Needs Provision Fund to this scheme being a high level estimate of costs for the internal refurbishment to create additional teaching spaces.

The Panel were advised that plans were being finalised for the new Hawthorns building that would accommodate 220 children with Education, Health and Care Plans. Whilst work was at an early stage of planning, the Trust have established that 4 demountables would cost a maximum of £720,000 to become operational for September. It was therefore requested that a budget of £720,000 be allocated to the project and a grant agreement was agreed up to a maximum of £720,000 once the scheme was agreed. The exact amount and full details of the scheme will be brought to the next meeting of the Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel.

## **RECOMMENDED**

**That a report is produced for April Executive Cabinet to agree the funding, scope and contract for Hawthorns to enable it to be delivered and that Executive Cabinet be recommended to APPROVE:**

- (i) The addition of £667,612 2022/23 additional Devolved Formula Capital grant to the capital programme as detailed in paragraph 2.10 to the programme in 2023/24.**
- (ii) The Section 106 contributions totalling £529,205.04 as detailed in paragraph 2.16 are approved to finance Education Capital Schemes.**
- (iii) The proposed estimate of £1,400,000 School Condition Grant for 2023/24 is added to the programme as detailed in paragraph 4.21. The final amount of grant will be updated on receipt of the final confirmation of the grant.**
- (iv) The 2023/24 School Condition grant is allocated to the projects detailed in the table at paragraph 4.29.**
- (v) The addition of £20,000 school contributions to the capital programme in 2023/24 as detailed in paragraph 4.30, subject to the confirmation of School Condition Grant as per recommendation.**
- (vi) The allocation of £150,000 from High Needs Provision Fund for Oakdale School as detailed in paragraph 6.4 to be added to the programme in 2023/24.**

- (vii) The allocation of £720,000 from High Needs Provision Fund for the New Bridge Academy Trust as detailed in paragraph 6.5 to be added to the programme in 2023/24.**
- (viii) An allocation of £70,414 from High Needs Provision Fund for St James' Church of England Primary School as detailed in paragraph 6.6 to be added to the programme in 2023/24.**
- (ix) A grant agreement for £70,414 is agreed with the Forward as One Academy Trust as detailed in paragraph 6.6 to provide 10 resourced pupil places at St James' Church of England Primary School, Ashton from September 2023.**

**That Executive Cabinet be recommended to NOTE:**

- (i) Lyndhurst Primary and Ravensfield Primary – Air Con units (£11,000) to be returned to the unallocated school condition fund and (£20,000) removal of school contributions as detailed in paragraph 4.15.**
- (ii) The addition of £203,210 Direct Revenue Funded projects to the capital programme as detailed in paragraph 2.11.**
- (iii) The use of £30,000 contingency to support asbestos removal and fire compartmentalisation at Stalyhill Juniors (as part of the works required for the decarbonisation schemes) as detailed in paragraph 4.14.**

### **37 URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

**CHAIR**

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# Agenda Item 4

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE CABINET</b>
<b>Date:</b>	29 March 2023
<b>Executive Member / Reporting Officer:</b>	Cllr Jacqueline North –First Deputy (Finance, Resources & Transformation) Stuart Fair – Director of Finance
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>PERIOD 10 2022/23 REVENUE MONITORING STATEMENT AT 31 JANUARY 2023</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	<p>As highlighted in previous reports this year, the Council is facing significant inflationary and demand pressures across a number of areas.</p> <p>As we enter the last few months of the financial year, the financial position at the end of Month 10 shows overall further signs of improvement, although within this improvement, there are some significant over and underspends.</p> <p>Whilst still reporting an overspend, the scale of the overspend has reduced at month 10 to <b>£1,634k</b>, an improvement of (£857k) since month 9.</p> <p>This movement is driven by an increase in Adults, Governance and Finance &amp; IT forecasts which have been offset by reductions in forecasts for Place, Children’s and Corporate.</p> <p>Ongoing demand and cost pressures on Council budgets will have implications for the 2023/24 budget. Mitigations are in place for 2022/23, and 2023/24, although further work is still needed.</p>
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p>Members are recommended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Note the forecast outturn position and associated risks for 2022/23 as set out in <b>Appendix 1</b> and <b>Appendix 2</b>;</li><li>2) <b>Note</b> the forecast position on the Collection Fund as set out in <b>Appendix 3</b>.</li><li>3) <b>Note</b> the current position in respect of the Dedicated Schools Grant deficit as set out in <b>Appendix 4</b>.</li><li>4) <b>Approve</b> the write off of uncollectable debts as set out in <b>Appendix 5</b>.</li><li>5) <b>Approve</b> the reserve transfers set out in <b>Appendix 6</b>.</li><li>6) <b>Note</b> the transfer of unspent grant to the Household Support Fund in section 4.</li></ol>
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	Budget is allocated in accordance with Council/CCG Policy
<b>Financial Implications:</b>	As contained within the report.
<b>(Authorised by the Section 151 Officer &amp; Chief Finance Officer)</b>	
<b>Legal Implications:</b>	The Local Government Act 1972 (Sec 151) states that “every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs...”
<b>(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	

Revenue monitoring is an essential part of these arrangements to provide Members with the opportunity to understand and probe the Council's financial position.

Members will note that the current outturn position is currently predicting a forecast net deficit of £8.198m on Council budgets. As the council has a legal duty to deliver a balanced budget by the end of the financial year Members need to be content that there is a robust plan in place to ensure that the council's final budget position will be balanced. Ultimately, failure to deliver a balanced budget can result in intervention by the Secretary of State.

The council has a statutory responsibility to ensure that it operates with sufficient reserves in place. The legislation does not stipulate what that level should be, rather that it is the responsibility of the council's 151 officer to review the level of reserves and confirm that the level is sufficient. Reserves by its very nature is finite and so should only be drawn down after very careful consideration as the reserves are unlikely to be increased in the short to medium term.

**Risk Management:**

Associated details are specified within the presentation.

Failure to properly manage and monitor the Council's budgets will lead to service failure and a loss of public confidence. Expenditure in excess of budgeted resources is likely to result in a call on Council reserves, which will reduce the resources available for future investment. The use and reliance on one off measures to balance the budget is not sustainable and makes it more difficult in future years to recover the budget position.

**Background Papers:**

Background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting : Caroline Barlow, Assistant Director of Finance, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council



Telephone:0161 342 5609



e-mail: [caroline.barlow@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.barlow@tameside.gov.uk)

## **1. FINANCIAL SUMMARY (REVENUE BUDGETS)**

- 1.1 As highlighted in previous reports this year, the Council is facing significant and growing inflationary pressures across a number of areas, combined with demand pressures in Adults and Children's services, resulting in a significant forecast overspend by 31 March 2023 of £1,634k. This represents a (£857k) improvement since M9. This movement is driven by an increase in Adults, Governance and Finance & IT forecasts which have been offset by reductions in forecasts for Place, Children's and Corporate.
- 1.2 Ongoing demand and cost pressures on Council budgets will have implications for the 2023/24 budget. Mitigations are in place for 2022/23, and 2023/24, although further work is still needed.
- 1.3 Further detail on the financial position can be found in **Appendix 1** with further detail by Directorate set out in **Appendix 2**.

## **2. COLLECTION FUND**

- 2.1 The latest forecast for the Collection Fund in 2022/23, together with collection performance, is summarised in **Appendix 3**.

## **3. DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT**

- 3.1 The latest position and forecast for the Dedicated Schools Grant funding and deficit position is summarised in **Appendix 4**. If the 2022/23 forecasts materialise the deficit will further increase to £4.956k. A deficit recovery plan has been developed and submitted to the DfE. Discussions are continuing with the DfE and are ongoing. The position will continue to be closely monitored and updates reported to Schools' Forum and Members.

## **4. WRITE OFFS FOR THE PERIOD OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2022**

- 4.1 **Appendix 5** lists those debts scheduled for write off as uncollectible in the period 1 October to 31 December 2022.

## **5. HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND**

- 5.1 The Director of Finance has approved the re-purposing of £245k unspent Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) grant to the Household Support Fund (HSF) grant. HSF applications are forecast to exceed the funding available for 2022/23. This transfer will ensure we can continue to support the most vulnerable and those in need of support for essential living costs via the HSF until the end of March. Further HSF grant funding has been allocated from April 2023.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 As stated on the front cover of the report.

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## Finance Update Report Financial Year 2022/23 Month 10 – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023

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Stuart Fair  
Interim Director of Finance

## Period 10 Finance Report

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As we enter the last few months of the financial year, the financial position at the end of Month 10 shows overall further signs of improvement, although within this improvement, there are some significant over and underspends.

Whilst still reporting an overspend on Council budgets, the scale of the overspend has reduced at month 10 to **£1,634k**, an improvement of (£857k) since month 9.

The improved forecast at month 10 mainly reflects updated staffing forecasts, where vacancies across a number of services remain open, resulting in an increase in the level of underspend. There is also a forecast reduced expenditure on a range of non-staffing budgets, in particular on utilities, as year end spend can now be predicted with more confidence and accuracy. In addition the Council has received a return of Business Rates levy surplus funding for 22/23, of (£472k), as part of the final local government settlement announced in January 2023.

On the pressures side, there have been a range of pressures over a number of service areas, including within Housing Benefit and Insurance provision. The most significant emerging pressure however is an increase of **£707k** costs due to increasing demand and complexity of adult social care placements.

Efforts will continue for the remaining months of the year to bring the overspend down further, in order to minimise any ongoing impact on the 23/24 budget position.

# P10 Forecast Position and Net Variance

Forecast Position £000's	Forecast Position (Net)			Net Variance		Gross Budget (full year)	
	Budget	Forecast	Variance	Previous Month	Movement in Month	Expenditure Budget	Income Budget
Adults	45,961	48,233	2,272	1,565	707	118,879	(72,918)
Children's Services	57,024	57,371	347	617	(270)	69,344	(12,320)
Education	7,200	7,936	736	858	(121)	33,593	(26,393)
Schools	0	0	0	0	0	130,344	(130,344)
Population Health	14,301	12,820	(1,481)	(1,332)	(150)	15,995	(1,694)
Place	28,438	33,516	5,078	6,352	(1,275)	93,232	(64,794)
Governance	9,614	9,821	207	(162)	369	72,057	(62,443)
Finance and IT	9,882	9,828	(54)	(455)	401	11,914	(2,033)
Quality and Safeguarding	106	106	0	(8)	8	349	(243)
Capital and Financing	4,513	2,423	(2,090)	(1,988)	(102)	8,680	(4,167)
Contingency	(4,303)	(7,674)	(3,372)	(2,978)	(393)	2,704	(7,007)
Corporate Costs	5,169	5,144	(24)	7	(32)	5,479	(310)
Levies	30,704	30,719	15	15	0	30,704	0
<b>TMBC Expenditure</b>	<b>208,609</b>	<b>210,243</b>	<b>1,634</b>	<b>2,491</b>	<b>(857)</b>	<b>593,275</b>	<b>(384,666)</b>

**The Month 10 forecast is for a significant net overspend by 31 March 2023 of £1,634k. This represents an improvement of (£857k) since M9.**

Council budgets continue to face significant pressures with continued challenges with the delivery of savings, combined with ongoing inflationary cost pressures around utilities and fuel costs, meaning that the forecast outturn position by March 2023 remains challenging. The movements by directorate are detailed on the next pages;



# Summary Position at P10 Council Budgets

## Adults

The Adults Services Directorate is forecast to **overspend** against budget in 2022/23 by **£2,272k**. The main variations include a **£1,012k** increase in expenditure in Residential & Nursing Placements for short stay placements, Out of Borough Care and also Additional Support for increased needs for care. There has been a reduction in client contributions towards non residential care to the value of **£1,458k**. There is also a reduction in the Covid Grant income which was anticipated to be received. These overspends have been partially offset by vacant posts throughout the year and also additional funding streams such as Continuing Health Care Funding and Health contributions.

Significant movements since the last reporting period include adverse changes to placement demand and increased unit costs due to increased complexity in needs, resulting in an adverse variation of **£707k**.

## Children's Services

At period 10 the Directorate forecast position is an **overspend of £347K**, a favourable reduction in forecast variation of (**£270K**) since period 9. The favourable reduction in forecast overspend is predominately due to additional Youth Justice Board Grant of (**£95K**) and slippage in training and events (**£40K**).

At the end of January, the number of Cared for Children was 661, an increase of 5 from the previous month.

## Education

The overall position for Education has improved by (**£121k**) but there is a continued pressure of **£736k**. The main reason for the overspend relates to Transport Related expenditure (SEN Transport) of **£1,100k** which has a continued increasing demand. This is partly offset by in year staffing under spends of (**£414k**).

The main reasons for the improved forecast relate to an increased forecast on fixed penalty notice income in Education Welfare of (**£54k**), a reduced forecast spend on SEN Transport of (**£50k**) and health income expected for support provided on the Neurological Developmental Pathway within the Pupil Support Service of (**£78k**). This is partly offset by an increase in forecast cost of **£97k** for the use of Associates on the Education Psychology Service for the delivery of statutory assessments. There are other minor variations under (**£50k**).

# Summary Position at P10 Council Budgets

## Population Health

The Population Health Directorate is forecast to underspend against budget in 2022/23 by (£1,481k). The main variations to budget include a (£693k) underspend on staffing due to full and part year vacancies in the service. Contain Outbreak Management Funding of (£229k) to support staffing on Covid related objectives. (£204k) underspend due to a reduction in the ICFT contract. A (£124k) underspend relating to prescribing costs based on actual activity levels.

## Place

Overall the Growth Directorate is forecasting an overspend of **£2,400k** by 31 March 2023. This overspend position is slightly better than previously forecast due to a reduction in the forecast cost of utilities since the last monitoring period. The overspend is driven by a number of factors, with key pressures relating to energy costs, non delivery of planned savings and shortfalls in income recovery.

The forecast position for Operations & Neighbourhoods is a **£2,700k** overspend. The level of forecast overspend has reduced since period 9, mainly due to a reduction in the forecast for Street Lighting Electricity costs. The overall forecast overspend can be categorised into the following key themes; Energy & Fuel **£540k**; Non delivery of savings **£839k**; Income shortfalls in Parking Services **£874k**; Net staffing underspend pending service redesigns and vacant posts (£300k); Other key variations **£755k**, including additional demand for housing & temporary accommodation.

## Governance

The directorate is reporting an overall **£207k over budget**. This is a change from period 9 of £369k, This is mainly due to an additional pressure for the need to increase the level of the bad debt provision for Council Tax Summons costs. The increase is needed following a re-assessment in January of the level of the provision required for unpaid debts. Rising debt levels and falling collection rates are a national issue and mean that the likelihood of collection has reduced, resulting in an increase in provision for debt write offs.

The main areas of overspend are in Exchequer services where additional costs have arisen due to a need to increase the provision for non recovery of council tax court costs combined with reduced housing benefit overpayment income. There are also additional staffing costs due to work required by government in response to the cost of living crisis. In addition Legal Services face cost pressures due to the cost of locums and shortfalls in schools traded services income is creating a budget pressure in HR Operations and Strategy. The significant overspends are being off set by underspends on employee costs across the other service areas due to vacancies and delays to recruitment/service reviews.

## **Finance and IT**

Overall the directorate is forecast to be (£54k) underspent. The main reasons for this are vacant posts across the service, as well as IT projects not going ahead as a result of the spending moratorium. The reduction in the level of underspend reported compared with the previous month is primarily due to additional costs of insurance claims required, following receipt of the annual actuarial review in January 2023, to be funded from the provision and a corresponding increase in the contribution to the insurance provision in excess of budget.

## **Capital and Finance, Contingency and Corporate Costs**

The overall forecast on Corporate Budgets is an underspend of (£5,471k), which is an improvement in the forecast of £527k compared to period 9. The main factors driving the improved forecast are the Business rates levy surplus funding for 2022/23 that was announced in the Final Local Government Settlement on 6 February 2023 (£472k), additional investment income as interest rates continue to rise (£34k), an increase in the pension advance payment saving following the Local Government pay award (£68k), and some other minor changes **£47k**.

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# APPENDIX 2 – P10 Detailed Analysis

## Contents:

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# Overview of Progress - Local Authority Savings as at Jan 2023

Budget Reductions Delivery	Opening Target £000's	High risk of non delivery £000s	Amber £000's	Green £000's	Achieved £000's	Total Forecast £000's
2022/23 Budget resources redirected	2,497	0	0	40	2,497	2,537
2022/23 Budget Reductions	6,565	3,752	875	287	1,715	2,877
2021/22 Budget Reductions not delivered in prior year	2,312	1,496	223	101	492	816
<b>Total Budget Reductions in 22/23</b>	<b>11,374</b>	<b>5,248</b>	<b>1,098</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>4,704</b>	<b>6,230</b>

## Budget Reductions Delivery 2022/23

## BUDGET REDUCTIONS PROGRESS

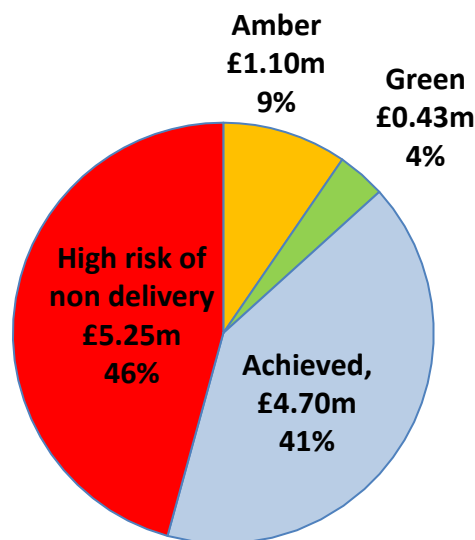
The 2022/23 Budget Report, approved by Full Council on 22 February 2022, included total savings of £11.374m.

Of that total, £2.497m are agreed budget resources that have been redirected that have not resulted in a change to our service delivery, these savings will be achieved.

£6.565m are new budgeted reductions for 2022/23 and £2.312m are budget reductions from 2021/22 which were not delivered. These budget reductions will impact service delivery and are subject to additional monitoring throughout the year.

There are currently savings of £5.248m where there is a high risk of non delivery which is contributing to the overall forecast overspend in 22/23. At this stage in the year it is now highly unlikely that these savings will be achieved.

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**EFFICIENCY FACTOR** - The total efficiency factor for the year is £4.933m (approximately 5% of total staffing budget).

As at the end of period 10, forecast underspends relating to vacant posts was (£11.240m), however a number of these are being covered by agency staff which across the council is forecast to be **£6.625m** overspent. This gives a net forecast underspend across the council of £4.616m on employee costs.

# Local Authority Savings Progress as at January 2023

2022/23 Resources Redirected	Opening Target	High Risk of non delivery	Amber £000s	Green £000s	Achieved £000s	Total forecast
Children's - Education	90	0	0	40	90	130
Growth	147	0	0	0	147	147
Corporate Costs	2,260	0	0	0	2,260	2,260
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,497</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>2,497</b>	<b>2,537</b>
%		<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>101.6%</b>

2022/23 Budget Reductions	Opening Target £000s	High Risk of non delivery £000s	Amber £000s	Green £000s	Achieved £000s	Total forecast £000s
Children's Services	2,944	2,304	615	0	25	640
Children's - Education	235	0	0	0	235	235
Population Health	645	0	0	99	546	645
Operations and Neighbourhoods	753	429	0	0	324	324
Growth	862	452	260	0	150	410
Capital and Financing	126	2	0	188	0	188
Contingency	1,000	565	0	0	435	435
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,565</b>	<b>3,752</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>1,715</b>	<b>2,877</b>
%		<b>57.2%</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>26.1%</b>	<b>43.8%</b>

2021/22 Budget reductions not delivered in prior year	Opening Target £000s	High Risk of non delivery £000s	Amber £000s	Green £000s	Achieved £000s	Total forecast £000s
Population Health	93	0	0	0	93	93
Operations and Neighbourhoods	878	410	50	49	369	468
Growth	1,341	1,086	173	52	30	255
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,312</b>	<b>1,496</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>816</b>
%		<b>64.7%</b>	<b>9.6%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>21.3%</b>	<b>35.3%</b>

# Service Area Monitoring - Adults Services

Adult Services	Gross Expenditure Budget £000's	Gross Income Budget £000's	Net Budget £000's	Actual to date £000's	Forecast £000's	Variance £000's
Adults Commissioning Service	66,017	(27,319)	38,698	37,692	39,833	1,135
Adults Neighbourhood Teams	9,875	(1,124)	8,751	7,745	8,633	(118)
Integrated Urgent Care Team	3,028	(2,733)	295	196	(101)	(396)
Long Term Support, Reablement & Shared Lives	17,582	(3,677)	13,905	11,736	14,192	287
Mental Health / Community Response Service	6,188	(1,770)	4,418	3,233	4,166	(252)
Senior Management	16,190	(36,295)	(20,105)	(9,052)	(18,489)	1,616
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>118,879</b>	<b>(72,918)</b>	<b>45,961</b>	<b>51,549</b>	<b>48,233</b>	<b>2,272</b>

## Adults Commissioning Service £1,135k

- **£1,012k** over spend in Residential and Nursing Placements. Residential & Nursing Placements have seen an increase in demand volume. Budget was based on 698 placements, period 10 data is now showing a total number 751 active placements. This is an increase of 8% since Budget Setting 22/23. The budgeted average cost of a placement was £756 per week, period 10 data shows an average placement cost of £774, an increase of 2%.
- **£123k** overspend on minor variations

## Adults Neighbourhood Teams (£118k)

- **(£495k)** under spend in core staffing costs due to full and part year vacant posts with agreed Grant Funding included where applicable
- **£210k** over spend on placement costs. Costs relate to two emergency high cost placements
- **£180k** over spend on Direct Payment costs. Direct payment clients have seen an increase in demand volume. Budget was based on 270 clients, period 10 data is now showing a total number 315 active clients. This is an increase of 17% since Budget Setting 22/23. The budgeted average weekly cost per client was £323 per week, period 10 data shows an average placement cost of £356, an increase of 10%.
- **(£14k)** under spend - Minor Variation to service costs based on actual expenditure volume



# Service Monitoring Areas - Adults Services Continued

## Integrated Urgent Care Team (£396k)

- (£425k) in core staffing costs due to full and part year vacant posts with agreed Grant Funding included where applicable
- £29k overspend - Minor Variation to service costs based on actual expenditure volume

## Long Term Support, Reablement & Shared Lives £287k

- £255k Over spend in staffing costs due to an increase in staffing costs across 24 hour supported accommodation properties to ensure service is at required capacity offset by staffing underspends in other areas of the service.
- £31k overspend - Minor Variation to service costs based on actual expenditure volume

## Mental Health / Community Response Service (£252k)

- (£296k) under spend in core staffing costs due to full and part year vacant posts with agreed Grant Funding included where applicable
- £44k Minor Variation to service costs based on actual expenditure volume

## Senior Management £1,616k

- £802k under achievement in income of Covid related Grant Funding
- £538k Reallocation of Better Care Fund to fund services that are supporting the BCF Plan 22/23, this additional service income is offsetting staffing related expenditure as the BCF is to ensure sufficient staffing to front line support services
- £275k under achievement income - inflationary uplifts in BCF grant was lower than anticipated at budget setting

# Service Area Monitoring - Children's Services – Children's Social Care

Childrens Services- Social Care	Gross Expenditure Budget £000's	Gross Income Budget £000's	Net Budget £000's	Actual to date £000's	Forecast £000's	Variance £000's
Child Protection & Children In Need	8,639	(447)	8,192	7,095	8,530	338
Children's Social Care Safeguarding & Quality Assurance	2,270	(99)	2,171	1,775	1,995	(176)
Children's Social Care Senior	334	(7,239)	(6,905)	(3,905)	(6,829)	77
Early Help, Early Years & Neighbourhood	7,232	(2,948)	4,283	3,696	3,632	(651)
Adolescent Services	3,199	(647)	2,553	1,926	2,543	(9)
Cared for Children	47,379	(939)	46,440	37,251	47,207	768
Commissioning	291	0	291	379	292	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>69,344</b>	<b>(12,320)</b>	<b>57,024</b>	<b>48,216</b>	<b>57,371</b>	<b>347</b>

The net variances incorporate a number of underspends and pressures to note for specific service areas including:

## Child Protection & Children In Need, £338k

- **£5k** Employees under budget, offset by consultancy costs for the Head of CIN and CP
- **£49k** overspend on Nursery Fees **£25k** and IT equipment **£13k** and other minor variations
- **£147k** overspend primarily due to transport recharges for children
- **£111k** over budget on payments predominately due to financial assistance payments including **£65k** no recourse to public funds families. Additionally there are overspends in relation to parent contact costs **£26k** and overnight respite for a child in need **£20k**
- **£40k** over budget in relation to a mother and baby placement for a child in need case.
- **(£16k)** Staff car allowances and staff travel costs under budget

## Children's Social Care Safeguarding & Quality Assurance, (£176k)

- **(£294k)** Staffing underspend due to part year vacant posts
- **£151k** Reserves – reduced draw down of reserves of **£151k** due to part year vacant posts within the Signs of Safety Team and also Ofsted reserve funded posts.
- **(£26k)** Supplies and Services underspend primarily due to the saving from bringing back in-house the Missing from Home Service
- **(£7k)** underspend on room hire for training events

# Service Area Monitoring - Children's Services – Children's Social Care

## Children's Social Care Senior Management, £77k

- (£23k) underspend on employees predominantly due to the Assistant Director post covered by a consultant prior to permanent recruitment (see below).
- £100k over budget on professional consultancy costs of £50k for recruitment of three Heads of Service posts and two Assistant Director posts. There is also a £37k over spend on IR35 Consultancy costs for the Assistant Director of Children's Social Care prior to permanent recruitment (see above) plus some additional minor costs.

## Early Help, Early Years & Neighbourhoods, (£651k)

- (£348k) Staffing underspend due to vacancies
- £95k Supporting Families Grant
- £139k overspend on community based activities and short breaks for children with disabilities £56k. Additionally there is expenditure of £51k in relation to the family hub grant, although this is offset by the new grant funding
- (£308k) under budget for Homecare fees for children with disabilities
- (£226k) additional income consisting of (£163k) Family Hubs Income, (HAF £58k), Train the trainer contribution (£5k)

## Adolescent Services, (£9k)

- £168k over spend on employees due to the vacancy factor and use of agency employees. In addition there are £59k of staffing costs in relation to Turnaround and SHIFT funded posts (which are offset below by additional grant income)
- (£285k) of additional income which consists of (£95k) additional Youth Justice Grant, (£97k) new grant funding for the SHIFT Programme, (£55k) new grant funding for the Youth Offending Turnaround Programme and an additional (£38k) from the National Probation Service.
- (£8k) under spend on staff travel costs and car allowances.
- £31k over spend due to the number of remand nights for young people.
- £38k reduction in forecast drawdown of ring-fenced funding. Consisting of (£27k) additional draw down for remand nights, £23k unspent Early Intervention Prevention Grant (EIPG) monies transferred to reserve and the transfer of £44k unspent Turnaround funding to reserves
- £46k overall over spend, predominantly due to expenditure relating to two new grant funded schemes (Turnaround Programme and SHIFT).

# Service Area Monitoring - Children's Services – Children's Social Care

## Cared for Children, £768k:

- **£2,304k** overspend on External placements which consists of the following
  - an under spend of (£518k) on placements for young people aged 18+,
  - an over spend of **£2,958k** in relation to the cost and number of children's homes placements, private fostering placements and semi-independent placements for young people under 18
  - an under spend of (£196k) for inter-agency adoption fees
  - an over spend of **£59k** on medical expenses to support children on hospital wards
- **(£1,205k)** Internal placements underspend predominantly due to the number of mainstream foster carers and SGOs. In addition the transition support properties are forecast to under spend by (£41k) due to the number of young people aged 18+ living in the flats who are therefore able to cover the rent payments via benefits or earnings.
- **(£367k)** Edge of Care underspend on the Childrens Residential Estate, due to delays in opening the assessment unit and securing a short breaks Edge of Care Unit.
- **£36k** overspend on Other Cared for Children Support Services

## Commissioning, £1k

- **(£55k)** under budget on staffing due to part year vacancies within the Commissioning Team.
- **(£4.5k)** Kickstart programme additional income
- **£69k** reduced drawdown from reserves for Ofsted Funded Commissioning posts.

## Budget Reductions 2022/23

R

Scheme	Budget reductions target 22/23 £000's	Not expected to be delivered £000s	Red £000's	Amber £000's	Green £000's	Achieved £000's	Total £000's
Children's Social Care Safeguarding & Quality Assurance Re-procurement	25	0	0	0	0	25	25
Convert Residential to IFAs & Reduction in CFC placement numbers	2,919	2,304	0	615	0	0	615
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,944</b>	<b>2,304</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>640</b>

# Service Area Monitoring - Children's Services – Education

Education	Gross Expenditure Budget £000's	Gross Income Budget £000's	Net Budget £000's	Actual to date £000's	Forecast £000's	Variance £000's
Access Services	16,577	(12,855)	3,722	3,115	4,822	1,100
Assistant Executive Director - Education	172	(178)	(6)	81	94	100
Education Improvement and Partnerships	1,240	(798)	443	201	257	(186)
Schools Centrally Managed	1,795	(228)	1,567	599	1,526	(41)
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities	12,055	(10,586)	1,469	1,112	1,237	(232)
Virtual School and College	1,754	(1,748)	6	(407)	0	(5)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33,593</b>	<b>(26,393)</b>	<b>7,200</b>	<b>4,700</b>	<b>7,936</b>	<b>736</b>

The net variance reflects a number of underspends and pressures including:

## Access Services, £1,100k:

- **£1,212k** over spend relating to Special Education Transport. Costs of SEN Transport continue to be reviewed. The routes have been retendered and implementation commenced in Autumn Term. Costs are being avoided as a result of this and the service continue to face demand pressures. The position will continue to be closely monitored.
- **(£66k)** Staffing under spends due to part and full year staffing vacancies.
- **(£54k)** fixed penalty notice income above budget. This relates to fines for unauthorised absences in schools issued by Education Welfare.
- **£8k** other minor variations.

## Assistant Executive Director – Education, £100k:

- **£92k** of the over spend mainly relates to the efficiency factor identified for the whole of Education which is offset by staffing savings across the directorate.
- **£8k** other minor variations.

# Service Area Monitoring - Children's Services – Education

## Schools Centrally Managed, (£41k):

- (£40k) under spend relating to reduced demand on the budget for teachers retirement pension costs. This has been offered for additional budget reductions in 2023/24.
- (£1k) other minor variations.

## Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, (£232k):

- (£221k) Staffing under spends due to part and full year staffing vacancies.
- £97k pressure on Education Psychology for the use of Associates to deliver statutory assessments.
- (£128k) additional income which relates to health income received on Education Psychology of (£50k) and expected income for support provided on the Neurological Developmental Pathway within the Pupil Support Service of (£78k).
- £20k other minor variations.

## Education Improvement and Partnerships, (£186k):

- (£202k) Staffing under spends due to part and full year staffing vacancies.
- £96k other minor variations.

## Virtual School and College, (£5k):

- (£5k) other minor variations.

# Children's Services – Education

## BUDGET REDUCTIONS 2022/23

**G**

Scheme	Savings Target 22/23 £000's	Not expected to be delivered £000s	Red £000's	Amber £000's	Green £000's	Achieved £000's	Total £000's
Review use of Education Central Support Grant	74	0	0	0	0	74	<b>74</b>
Psychological Welfare Practitioner (PWP) - SEND	46	0	0	0	0	46	<b>46</b>
Education Psychology Service Redesign	74	0	0	0	0	74	<b>74</b>
Education Welfare Traded Services expansion with 12m fixed term post	15	0	0	0	0	15	<b>15</b>
Education Welfare - Access & Attendance services - deletion of post	26	0	0	0	0	26	<b>26</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>235</b>

# Service Area Monitoring - Population Health

Population Health	Gross Expenditure Budget £000's	Gross Income Budget £000's	Net Budget £000's	Actual to date £000's	Forecast £000's	Variance £000's
Population Health	15,995	(1,694)	14,301	10,095	12,820	(1,481)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15,995</b>	<b>(1,694)</b>	<b>14,301</b>	<b>10,095</b>	<b>12,820</b>	<b>(1,481)</b>

- **(£424k)** Review of staffing capacity in Be Well Service following transfer from Pennine Care in April 2022. There is an increased underspend is due to posts remaining vacant until 1st April when new the new structure is in place.
- **(£347k)** Senior Management Vacancies held within the core Population Health Team, there is an increased underspend is due to posts remaining vacant until 1st April when new the new structure is in place.
- **(£229k)** Contain Outbreak Management Funding to support staff currently working to support Covid related objectives, this has been agreed in year as part of the COMF planning process.
- **(£204k)** Negotiations with the Integrated Care Foundation Trust has led to reduction in budget requirement for 22/23. There was an expected pressure to the contract due to Agenda for Change Pay uplifts 7 Growth increase, however this has not materialised to the expected value at the time of budget setting. Pay uplift is £90k and there is expected to be a request for 100k from Corporate for 23/24 Agenda for Change.
- **(£124k)** Prescribing activity levels are lower than anticipated since budget setting. Forecasts are based on Actual levels of activity and charge values.
- **(£68k)** CGL Contract is lower than anticipated at budget setting, forecast is based on actual monthly invoice total for 22/23
- **(£51k)** Reduction to Operating Expenses in the Be Well Service, Review to take place in 23/24 to reallocation budget requirement.
- **(£34k)** Minor Variations based on expected spend levels across the Directorate.



# Service Area Monitoring - Population Health

G

## BUDGET REDUCTIONS

Scheme	Budget reductions target 22/23 £000's	Not expected to be delivered £000s	Red £000's	Amber £000's	Green £000's	Achieved £000's	Total £000's
Health Improvement Recommissioning	93	0	0	0	16	78	93
Review of NHS Commissioned Contracts	500	0	0	0	83	417	500
Population Health Staffing changes	12	0	0	0	0	12	12
Review of all commissioned contracts	40	0	0	0	0	40	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>645</b>

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## BUDGET REDUCTIONS FROM 21/22 THAT WERE NOT DELIVERED

Scheme	Budget reductions target 21/22 £000's	Not expected to be delivered £000s	Red £000's	Amber £000's	Green £000's	Achieved £000's	Total £000's
Health Improvement Recommissioning	93	0	0	0	0	93	93
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>93</b>

# Service Area Monitoring - Quality And Safeguarding

Quality & Safeguarding	Gross Expenditure Budget £000's	Gross Income Budget £000's	Net Budget £000's	Actual to date £000's	Forecast £000's	Variance £000's
Safeguarding and Quality Assurance	349	(243)	106	(18)	106	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>(243)</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>(18)</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>0</b>

- **(£69k)** underspend on staffing costs mainly due to a part year vacant post, offset by (£14k) vacancy factor.
- **(£4k)** underspend on staff travel costs and car allowances.
- **(£12k)** Supplies & Services underspends on External Consultancy Costs, printing, and stationery.
- **£80k** - Capital Items & Reserve Movements - The overall Directorate underspend £80k has been forecast to be transferred to reserve for future funding and investment in the service. (£24k Adults Safeguarding and £56k Childrens Safeguarding).
- **£18k** Budget Pressure in Recharge Income - Removal of £5k Interdepartmental Income recharge in Adults Safeguarding Partnership from Work force Development; this funding is no longer available and underachievement of income from maintained Schools Traded Services £13k.
- **(£3k)** Additional income from academy Schools Traded Services.
- **(£10k)**. Forecast over achievement in Health income for contribution from CCG to Childrens Safeguarding Partnership (£8.4k), based on amount received in 2021-22; and other unbudgeted contribution (£1.6k) from Oldham Safeguarding Childrens Partnership towards a Peer Review.

# Service Area Monitoring - Operations and Neighbourhoods

Operations and Neighbourhoods	Gross Expenditure Budget £000's	Gross Income Budget £000's	Net Budget £000's	Actual to date £000's	Forecast £000's	Variance £000's
Community Safety & Homelessness	7,115	(2,821)	4,294	2,994	4,783	489
Cultural & Customer Services	3,542	(320)	3,222	2,629	3,172	(50)
Engineers, Highways & Traffic Management	16,460	(12,376)	4,084	6,060	4,528	444
Management & Operations	1,474	(2,829)	(1,354)	(1,175)	(1,386)	(32)
Operations & Neighbourhoods Management	322	(31)	291	299	310	18
Operations & Greenspace	5,843	(490)	5,353	4,141	5,236	(117)
Public Protection & Car Parks	4,271	(3,755)	517	719	1,582	1,066
Waste & Fleet Management	10,733	(6,603)	4,130	2,887	5,032	903
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>49,761</b>	<b>(29,225)</b>	<b>20,536</b>	<b>18,554</b>	<b>23,257</b>	<b>2,721</b>

## Cultural & Customer Services, (£50k) :

- Minor variations across the service

## Engineers, Highways & Traffic Management, £444k :

- **£444k** - A range of overspends across Engineers, Highways and Traffic Management including significant Street Lighting Energy overspend due to the increase in electricity unit costs. The replacement of over 7,000 standard street lighting lanterns with LED technology has mitigated what would have been a significantly higher cost increase, and this has reduced the forecast compared to prior periods. Also overspends are projected on Winter Gritting and external support for planning applications

# Service Area Monitoring - Operations and Neighbourhoods

## Community Safety & Homelessness, £489k:

- **(£285k)** - A number of posts across homelessness and community safety have been held vacant throughout the financial year pending a service redesign (which has now been approved). This has resulted in an underspend against staffing. There has also been a contribution to existing staff costs from the Homes for Ukraine grant as staff have been diverted from their usual work.
- **£897k** - Housing Options Service / Temporary Accommodation (TA) - There has recently been an increase in demand as a result of the ongoing increases in cost of living. There are also delays with properties becoming available for residents to move on from TA, resulting in greater ongoing costs. Alongside these issues, it has recently been identified that there is an under-utilisation of properties available under a contract for TA provision. Whilst the cost of this contract isn't included here, this issue does have an impact on the overall costs to the council as other providers are having to be used to a greater extent at an additional cost. This is being investigated to ensure that the contract delivers value for money.
- **£25k** - Contracts Overspend - There is a gross variation of £300k in this financial year, however this is being mostly offset by a utilisation of one-off grant monies in this year of £275k (already agreed). This is a one off and there will be a pressure going forward if a comprehensive review of all contracts isn't completed prior to any future procurement activity.
- **£52k** - Tameside Resettlement Scheme overspend - An additional contribution from residual grant balances of £125k has already been agreed, however there is a further £52k of spend incurred as a result of increased demand. Total spend against the Tameside Resettlement Scheme in this financial year is expected to total £443k. A review of this scheme is underway.
- **£59k** - A Bed for Every Night (ABEN) Security Costs - Security costs are now forecast to be £55k higher than previously calculated. Further work will be carried out urgently to fully understand the other costs being incurred as part of the ABEN scheme in order to protect the financial position of the organisation in future years as grant funding is expected to reduce.
- **(£403k)** - Use of external ring fenced grant funding for Homelessness and Community Safety to fund various initiatives
- **£99k** - Community Accommodation Service (CAS) provision. The costs incurred to date are in excess of the original funding bid due to continuing beyond the initial timeframes. Investigations are underway to ascertain if further funding is due following the national roll out of the programme.
- **£45k** - Minor variations across the service

# Service Area Monitoring - Operations and Neighbourhoods

## Management & Operations (£32k)

- Minor variations across the service

## Operations & Neighbourhoods Management, £18k

- Minor variations across the service

## Operations & Greenspace, (£117k)

- **(£297k)** - Underspend on Street Cleansing Waste Disposal budget. Due to changes in the process there is a significant reduction in the costs of disposing for street cleansing waste. This underspend is offsetting a number of pressures elsewhere in the service.
- **£83k** - Fuel related cost pressure due to price increases. Round reviews have been undertaken to ensure route optimisation to minimise this pressure.
- **£20k** - Non Delivery of cross cutting savings (STAR / Commercialisation elements)
- **£27k** - Other minor variations

## Waste & Fleet Management, £903k

- **£157k** - Shortfall in savings on three weekly refuse collections. Three weekly collections have been implemented and savings achieved but the savings are lower than target.
- **£89k** - Shortfall of Savings on the charging for replacement bins
- **£72k** - Non Delivery of cross cutting savings (STAR / Commercialisation elements)
- **(£214k)** - Trade Waste Income in excess of income target due to a combination of increased charges and contracts
- **£194k** - Staffing overspend (largely due to non achievement of Vacancy Factor saving which is not operationally viable for waste services)
- **£210k** - Agency costs are in excess of budget, in order to maintain collection rounds it is necessary to employ Agency staff to cover times of sickness and unforeseen absence.
- **£136k** - Transport workshop costs, unplanned repairs and damage in excess of budget, in part due to an ageing fleet and increased costs.
- **£286k** - Fuel related cost pressure due to price increases. Round reviews have been undertaken to ensure route optimisation to minimise this pressure.
- **(£27k)** – Other minor variations

## Public Protection & Car Parks, £1,066k

- **£73k** - CCTV Non Delivery of savings - The saving as a result of the CCTV connection to dark fibre will not be delivered in 22/23. A full review of the CCTV strategy, future provision and capital investment is required before this saving can be delivered.
- **£111k** - Backdated Business Rates following revaluations on a number of car parks during 2022/23.
- **£874k** - Shortfall in Parking Services Income against the budgeted target. A wider service review exercise is underway which will seek to address this as far as possible in future years.
- **£8k** - Other minor variations.

# Operations and Neighbourhoods

## BUDGET REDUCTIONS 2022/23

Scheme	Budget reductions target 22/23 £000's	Not expected to be delivered £000s	Red £000's	Amber £000's	Green £000's	Achieved £000's	Total £000's
Bring Security Activities in House	10	0	0	0	0	10	10
Review of customer services face to face offer	46	0	0	0	0	46	46
Bring Statutory Housing Service in house	50	0	0	0	0	50	50
Transfer processing of street sweepings into the waste levy	50	0	0	0	0	50	50
Grounds Maintenance Staffing	54	0	0	0	0	54	54
Work with STAR to ensure procurement in Stores is best value and on contract	69	69	0	0	0	0	0
CCTV Connection to Dark Fibre	89	89	0	0	0	0	0
Public Protection staffing review	115	115	0	0	0	0	0
Reduce collection frequency - 3 weekly Blue Bin collections	135	78	0	0	0	57	57
Reduce collection frequency - Black bin collections to 3 weekly	135	78	0	0	0	57	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>753</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>324</b>

# Operations and Neighbourhoods

## BUDGET REDUCTIONS FROM 21/22 THAT WERE NOT DELIVERED

Scheme	Budget reductions target 21/22 £000's	Not expected to be delivered £000s	Red £000's	Amber £000's	Green £000's	Achieved £000's	Total £000's
Bring Statutory Housing Service in house	50	0	0	50	0	0	50
Public Protection staffing review	110	110	0	0	0	0	0
CCTV Equipment	49	0	0	0	49	0	49
Reduce collection frequency - 3 weekly Blue Bin collections	130	0	0	0	0	130	130
Reduce collection frequency - Black bin collections to 3 weekly	130	0	0	0	0	130	130
Charge for all new bins ordered	190	81	0	0	0	109	109
STAR Procurement	50	50	0	0	0	0	0
Work with STAR to ensure procurement in Stores is best value and on contract	69	69	0	0	0	0	0
Extending commercial offer	100	100	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>878</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>468</b>



# Service Area Monitoring - Growth

Growth	Gross Expenditure Budget £000's	Gross Income Budget £000's	Net Budget £000's	Actual to date £000's	Forecast £000's	Variance £000's
Growth Management	105	0	105	44	154	49
Development & Investment	1,245	(515)	730	1,109	813	83
Economy, Employment & Skills	1,351	(394)	957	280	929	(28)
Major Programmes	0	0	0	(1)	0	0
Infrastructure	101	0	101	178	78	(23)
Planning	1,834	(1,156)	679	553	713	34
BSF, PFI & Programme Delivery	24,126	(24,126)	0	2,015	0	0
Asset Management	414	(90)	324	(92)	64	(260)
Capital Programme	1,513	(440)	1,072	1,033	994	(78)
Corporate Landlord	7,581	(2,473)	5,108	5,971	6,752	1,644
Environmental Development	551	(28)	524	343	353	(170)
Estates	2,514	(4,201)	(1,688)	(557)	(577)	1,111
School Catering	2,136	(2,146)	(9)	(156)	(14)	(5)
Vision Tameside	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43,471</b>	<b>(35,569)</b>	<b>7,902</b>	<b>10,719</b>	<b>10,259</b>	<b>2,357</b>

The net variance reflects a number of underspends and pressures including:

**Growth Management, £49k**

- This is a combination of minor variations.

**Development & Investment, £83k**

- **£54k** The Ashton Old Baths management contract is forecast to overspend.
- **£29k** there are further minor variations.

# Service Area Monitoring - Growth

## **Economy, Employment & Skills, (£28k)**

- Primarily relating to an overspend on employees

## **Infrastructure, (£23k)**

- This is a combination of minor variations.

## **Planning, £34k**

- Within Planning and Building Control there are a significant level of vacancies which are partially offset by agency staff and the vacancy factor. Overall there is a net underspend against staff of (196k).
- There are a number of shortfalls in expected income including £74k against Building Control Regulation Fee income, £111k against Planning Fee income and £84k across the remaining income streams.
- The remaining variance of (£39k) is a combination of a few smaller variations.

## **Asset Management, (£260k)**

- There are a number of vacancies within Asset Management resulting in savings of (£272k). This is partially offset by the vacancy factor of £12k

## **Capital Programme, (£78k)**

- This is a combination of minor variations.

## **Environmental Development, (£170k)**

- There are a number of vacancies within Environmental Development resulting in savings of (£241k). This is partially offset by the vacancy factor of £33k. This net underspend of (£208k) is partially offset by other minor variations in the service of £38k.

## **School Catering, (£5k)**

- This is a combination of minor variations.

# Service Area Monitoring - Growth

## Corporate Landlord, £1,644k

- The cost of utilities is expected to overspend against budget by £809k for Electricity and £284k for Gas. This will be partially offset by an underspend in Water (metered and rates) of (£62k). This forecast overspend has reduced since last month due to greater confidence over usage figures and forecasts to the end of the year.
- There is a forecast overspend on the Facilities Management (FM) Services contract of £588k. This is in part due to budget not being uplifted in line with indexation in the contract, and partly due to the non-delivery of prior and current year savings targets linked to the FM contract.
- There is a shortfall in income expected within corporate landlord of £552k against building and shop lease and rental income and a further shortfall of £173k from the hire of rooms. The main shortfalls are against Tameside One (£300k savings target not delivered and £72k shortfall on shop rental income) and a non achievement of rental income at Clarence Arcade £83k.
- Asset disposal costs not offset by income from the sale of assets is expected to be £192k. There is a limit of 4% in respect of the level of disposal costs that can be funded from the capital receipt - where disposals are complex and low value, the costs associated with disposal will often exceed the 4% limit.
- (£587k) Release of provisions relating to rental charges which are no longer required.
- (£505k) additional Utility Control Fee Income is expected to be realised, reflecting the increase in utility costs for and also a contribution to prior year costs for the Concord Suite.
- There is a forecast overspend of £163k for building repairs and maintenance and other general building costs across the estate.
- There are further minor variations across the Corporate Landlord service of £37k.

## Estates, £1,111k

- There are savings within Estates that are not expected to be delivered this financial year resulting in an overspend of £605k (£500k relating to rent reviews and £105k linked to lease income from additional commercial units).
- There is a shortfall in income from Markets expected of £203k and a further shortfall in income from Town Centre licences of £99k
- There is an under-recovery of costs relating to rented out industrial units of £89k
- There are a series of minor variations across Estates and Markets of £115k.

## BUDGET REDUCTIONS 2022/23

Scheme	Budget reductions target 22/23 £000's	Not expected to be delivered £000s	Red £000's	Amber £000's	Green £000's	Achieved £000's	Total £000's
Cost Reduction of Utility (Gas and Electricity) by installation of energy saving measures in Council Buildings	20	20	0	0	0	0	0
Service redesign (Building Control & Planning Development management)	20	20	0	0	0	0	0
Relocation of Droylsden Library and Coming out of Hathersley Hub Offices and Community 7 Rooms	60	60	0	0	0	0	0
Commercial Estate Income Generation - opportunities to increase income through build/purchase of industrial estate.	105	105	0	0	0	0	0
Asset Management Accommodation Strategy (operational)/ WorkSmart	207	207	0	0	0	0	0
Sport and Leisure	150	0	0	0	0	150	150
Facilities Management and Estates Savings	300	40	0	260	0	0	260
<b>Total</b>	<b>862</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>410</b>

## BUDGET REDUCTIONS FROM 21/22 THAT WERE NOT DELIVERED

Scheme	Budget reductions target 21/22 £000's	Not expected to be delivered £000s	Red £000's	Amber £000's	Green £000's	Achieved £000's	Total £000's
Asset Management Accommodation Strategy (operational)/ WorkSmart	177	30	0	147	0	0	147
Lease Out of Tameside One Office Floor	300	300	0	0	0	0	0
Future Income Generation – Contributions to post	52	0	0	0	52		52
Recurrent income Review Land Charges fees aligned to completion of Land Registry digitisation project to ensure that the remaining chargeable services are at an appropriate up to date level	57	31	0	26	0	0	26
Planning and Transportation Restructure	55	25	0	0	0	30	30
Reduction in costs associated with the Tameside Additional Services Contract (TAS)	200	200	0	0	0	0	0
Estates Property Rent Reviews	500	500	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,341</b>	<b>1,086</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>255</b>

# Service Area Monitoring - Governance

Governance	Gross Expenditure Budget £000's	Gross Income Budget £000's	Net Budget £000's	Actual to date £000's	Forecast £000's	Variance £000's
Democratic Services	779	(113)	665	551	639	(26)
Executive Support	2,091	(166)	1,925	1,475	1,776	(149)
Governance Management	193	(95)	98	(42)	(32)	(130)
Legal Services	1,663	(39)	1,625	1,543	1,757	132
Exchequer	61,226	(60,159)	1,067	(37)	1,942	875
Policy, Performance & Communications	1,916	(346)	1,571	1,266	1,499	(72)
HR Operations & Strategy	1,827	(1,083)	743	690	837	94
Organisational & Workforce Development	707	(47)	659	334	364	(295)
Payments, Systems and Registrars	1,656	(395)	1,261	925	1,039	(222)
Transformation	0	0	0	252	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>72,057</b>	<b>(62,443)</b>	<b>9,614</b>	<b>6,957</b>	<b>9,821</b>	<b>207</b>

The net variance reflects a number of underspends and pressures including:

## Democratic Services, (£26k)

- (£38k) Employee costs are (£38k) under budget due to vacant posts being held whilst the service review was carried out.
- £12k Other minor variations across the service in excess of budget.

## Executive Support, (£149k)

- (£148k) Employee costs are (£213k) under budget due to a number of posts within the service being held or recruited to over the course of the year. There is a forecast reduction in the level of income from the CCG/ICB in relation to Employees costs of £65k which has been offset by underspends in Employee Costs
- (£1k) Other minor variations across the service of (£1k) under budget.

# Service Area Monitoring - Governance

## Governance Management , (£130k)

- **(£130k)** Due to the Director of Governance and Pensions being appointed to the Chief Executive role the staffing budget is forecast to be under budget.

## Legal Services, £132k

- **£175k** - Employee costs and the cost of locums across the service are **£175k** over budget. Within the current locum staffing costs there are costs of **£83k** that will be funded from the planned budget reserve that relates to the Children's service improvement plan.
- **(£35k)** There is a current forecast for Legal Service Income with no budgeted income target in 2022/23.
- **(£8k)** Other minor variations across the service

## Policy, Performance & Communications, (£72k)

- **(£90k)** - Employee costs are under budget; this is due to staff members having left the service and replacements in the process of being appointed to.
- **£34k** The Council has drawn down funding of £140k from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG/ICB) for the 22/23 financial year. This is based on arrangements that were in place under the previous shared service arrangements with the CCG. This is a **£34k** under achievement on the budgeted income target and has ceased at 31/12/2022
- **(£43k)** Policy Projects is under budget this is for bespoke projects emergent in year that have not commenced due to changing priorities and some projects funded by service budgets
- **£27k** Other minor variations across the service of **£27k** in excess of budget.

## HR Operations & Strategy, £94k

- **(£28k)** Employee costs across the service are (£28k) under budget due to timing of the service review and implementation process.
- **£68k** Income is less than the budgeted income target on Schools and Academies due to reduced take up of the HR, Recruitment and Payroll Service and Trade Union Service.
- **£43k** There is a budget pressure on non-traded trade unions costs.
- **£31k** There is a pressure in relation to the Clinical Commissioning Group no longer requiring the HR provision as now in the ICB
- **(£20k)** Other minor variations across the service of (£20k) under budget.

# Service Area Monitoring - Governance

## Exchequer, £875k

### **Exchequer Services:**

- **(£19k)** Employee Costs - Additional expenditure on employee costs to implement government initiatives supporting the cost of living crisis has been offset by one-off funding to support administration costs and a balance of grant from 21/22 in relation to COVID 19 Test and Trace Support payments Admin Grant. These grants are not expected to be available to support staffing costs in future years.
- **£97k** - Other Minor Variations across the service over a number of areas.

### **Housing Benefits:**

- **£64k** - Additional costs in relation to the 21/22 Housing Benefit Final Subsidy claim. Due to timings, the year end position is closed based on estimates which can result in costs or benefits in the following year once the final subsidy claim is completed.
- **£92k** - Forecasts in relation to 2022/23 Housing Benefit Expenditure and subsidy are for a **£92k** net cost in excess of budget due to an increase in rent allowance expenditure not eligible for full subsidy. This will be closely monitored for the remaining months of the financial year.
- **£183k** – The Housing Benefits net budget includes an income budget relating to the recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments. Until recent years, there had been a net benefit to the budget from the recovery of housing benefit overpayments. However, as claimants move over to Universal Credit, the amount of housing benefit paid out by the Council is reducing year on year, and consequently the level of overpayment that can be recovered is reduced. The current forecast is that Housing Benefit overpayment recovery in 22/23 will be **£183k** less than budget. This shortfall is likely to increase in future years as more claimants move to Universal Credit.

### **Council Tax:**

- **£458k** - There is an additional pressure due to the need to increase the level of the bad debt provision for Council Tax Summons costs. The increase is needed following a re-assessment in January of the level of the provision required for unpaid debts. Rising debt levels and falling collection rates are a national issue and mean that the likelihood of collection has reduced, resulting in an increase in provision for debt write offs.



## **Organisational & Workforce Development, (£295k)**

- **(£226k)** Employee costs across the service are (£226k) under budget due to timing of the service review and implementation process.
- **(£47k)** There is one off income from the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in relation to new apprentices and the Kickstart programme
- **(£22k)** Other minor variation across the service of (£22k) under budget.

## **Payments, Systems and Registrars, (£222k)**

- **(£139k)** - Employee costs across the service are (£139k) under budget this is due to vacant posts across the service, staff either not in/or opted out of the Pension Scheme and the impact of the service review and implementation process.
- **(£20k)** Income in relation to Registration, Marriages and Deaths and Ceremony Notifications is forecast to be (£20k) in excess of budgeted income due to volumes taking place within the registrars service.
- **(£40k)** - Consultancy days for the iTrent system and Agresso system are forecast to be underspent by (£40k) as not been utilised.
- **(£23k)** Other minor variation across the service of (£23k) under budget

# Finance and IT

Finance and IT	Gross Expenditure Budget £000's	Gross Income Budget £000's	Net Budget £000's	Actual to date £000's	Forecast £000's	Variance £000's
Financial Management	4,788	(1,537)	3,250	1,904	3,083	(167)
Risk Management & Audit Services	1,981	(262)	1,719	2,292	2,125	406
Digital Tameside	5,146	(233)	4,913	4,457	4,620	(293)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,914</b>	<b>(2,033)</b>	<b>9,882</b>	<b>8,652</b>	<b>9,828</b>	<b>(54)</b>

## Financial Management, (£167k)

- (£171k) underspend on Employees costs due to vacant posts across the service.
- £4k minor variations across the service

## Risk Management and Audit Services, £406k

- (£130k) underspend on Employees costs due to vacant posts across the service.
- £415k overspend on Central Insurance Costs. Following receipt in January 2023 of the annual insurance actuarial review by the insurance expert, the insurance provision requires a higher contribution than previously budgeted and an increase on claims required to be funded from the provision. Prior to 2022, the costs of the insurance provision had generally been within budget, however this is the second year that costs have significantly increased. Further work is being carried out to understand if this is a general trend which may require additional budget provision in future years.
- £107k overspend on insurance premiums due to premium cost increases.
- £14k minor variations across the service.

## Digital Tameside, (£293k)

- (£276k) underspend on Employees costs due to vacant posts across the service.
- (£368k) underspend in Corporate IT Costs. This is a combination of projects being delayed and also the spending moratorium.
- £231k planned reserve drawdown not utilised due to reserve funded corporate IT investments being delayed.
- £108k overspend on managed services due to additional laptop purchases for the laptop replacement programme.
- £12k other minor variations across the service.

# Capital Financing, Contingency and Corporate Costs

Corporate	Gross Expenditure Budget £000's	Gross Income Budget £000's	Net Budget £000's	Actual to date £000's	Forecast £000's	Variance £000's
Chief Executive	251	0	251	215	255	5
Corporate and Democratic Core	3,562	(243)	3,319	2,898	3,303	(16)
Democratic Processes	1,666	(67)	1,599	1,287	1,585	(13)
Investment and Financing	8,680	(4,167)	4,513	(1,215)	2,423	(2,090)
Contingency	2,704	(7,007)	(4,303)	(4,475)	(7,674)	(3,372)
Levies	30,704	0	30,704	30,854	30,719	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47,566</b>	<b>(11,484)</b>	<b>36,082</b>	<b>29,563</b>	<b>30,611</b>	<b>(5,471)</b>

The variance is a net position and reflects a number of underspends and pressures including:

## Chief Executive, £5k

- Minor variations of £5k over budget.

## Corporate and Democratic Core, (£16k)

- (£130k) - The Pension Increase Act payments made to the Greater Manchester Pension Fund are forecast to be (£42k) under budget due to reductions in pensioner numbers. The annual contribution to Greater Manchester Combined Authority will be (£40k) under budget, due to contribution levels being held at the 21/22 levels. Also contributing to the net underspend is (£48k) of additional income which cannot be allocated or returned.
- £40k - The Coroners Service is forecast to be in excess of budget due to staffing and utility cost pressures of £40k.
- £62k Apprenticeship Levy additional expenditure due to the impact of the pay award, and other minor variations across the service of £12k in excess of budget

## Democratic Processes, (£13k)

- (£13k) - Forecast expenditure in relation to Civic related Ceremonies is in excess of budget due to additional expenditure on Whit Friday, Remembrance Day and the Funeral of Her Majesty the Queen. This is offset by Members and other running expenses (£26k) under budget, mainly due to reduced expenditure on audio equipment and computer hardware.

# Capital Financing, Contingency and Corporate Costs

## Investment and Financing. (£2,090k)

- **(£1,987k)** - Forecast interest income is (£1,711k) in excess of initial estimates, largely driven by rising interest rates during the year. Forecast interest expense is (£123k) below budget as no borrowing has been taken up in year. Interest received from Manchester Airport group is (£153k) greater than budget due to additional interest being earned on deferred payments.
- **(£56k)** - The net cost of the minimum revenue provision (MRP) is determined by the level of Capital Expenditure in the prior year - for 2022/23 MRP is (£56k) below budget as a result of capital expenditure in 2021/22 being lower than initially forecast.
- **(£64k)** - Savings due to the advance payment of pension contributions to GMPF are greater than budget due to the impact of the pay award.
- **£17k** There are other minor variations in excess of budget.

## Contingency. (£3,372k)

- **(£1,900k)** - Use of collection fund reserve to support service pressures
- **(£1,525k)** - Release of earmarked contingency to support service pressures
- **(£472k)** - Business rates levy surplus 2022/23 funding announced in Final Local Government Settlement (6 February 2023). This is compensating the council for any changes arising from the new 2023 revaluation and central list transfers.
- **(£40k)** - Other minor variations
- **£565k** - Digital and transformation savings - £435k of efficiencies have been identified against the original £1,000k target. This has been identified against budgets that have seen reductions because of changes to how the Council is working and delivering services, the budget efficiencies include reductions in staff travel, printing costs, telephone landline costs, training and room hire).

## Levies. £15k

- **£15k** - Overspend on land drainage levy due to increase in fee after the budget was set.

# Capital Financing, Contingency and Corporate Costs

## BUDGET REDUCTIONS 2022/23

Scheme	Budget reductions target 22/23 £000's	Not expected to be delivered £000s	Red £000's	Amber £000's	Green £000's	Achieved £000's	Total £000's
Airport Land Rent - additional lease income	44	2	0	0	42	0	42
Pensions Advance Payment - additional savings in excess of existing savings target	82	0	0	0	146	0	146
Digital and transformational savings	1,000	565	0	0	0	435	435
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,126</b>	<b>567</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>623</b>

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# APPENDIX 3 - Collection Fund

## Collection Fund Forecast to 31 March 2023

The Collection Fund is a separate ring fenced fund where income from Council Tax and Business Rates is collected before being distributed to the 'precepting' bodies (the Council, the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority and the Greater Manchester Mayoral Police and Crime Commissioner). The annual precept amount for each body is fixed as part of the budget setting process resulting in either a surplus or a deficit on the Collection Fund where the amount collected in year is different to the amount estimated and set at the beginning of the financial year as part of budget setting. Regulations require that any surplus or deficit is settled in future financial years – this means that surpluses or deficits forecast in year do not have any immediate impact on the Council's revenue budget position.

For the 2022/23 Financial Year, the budget assumed an in year deficit on Council Tax of £3,653k which was based on distribution of the forecast surplus (estimated in January 2022) at 31 March 2022. The actual surplus on the Collection Fund at 31 March 2022 was slightly lower than forecast, and this shortfall, combined with Council Tax Income currently being forecast to be slightly lower than budget (based on the net collectible debit at the end of December 2022) is resulting in a an overall forecast deficit on the Council Tax Collection Fund of £203k at 31 March 2023. This deficit will be repaid in 2023/24 from Collection Fund Reserves.

On the Business Rates side of the Collection Fund, the Budget for 2022/23 assumed an in year surplus of £15,213k based on the allocation of the forecast deficit (estimated in January 2022) at 31 March 2022. The actual deficit at 31 March 2022 was significantly lower than forecast due to the provision for appeals in 2021/22 not being increased by the amount originally anticipated. In 2022/23 there are several other elements in the Business Rates side of the Collection Fund which are now forecast to be significantly different to budget:

- Income from NDR is less than budget due to an increase in the Government Funded Reliefs awarded in year when compared to budget. These reliefs are funded by Government Grant and the Council will receive additional grant to compensate for the reduction in income.
- The allowance for non-collection is lower than previous forecast due to the reduction in collectible rates. As more reliefs are awarded to businesses, the amount of income that the Council needs to collect is reduced, and as a result the level of arrears relating to 2022/23 is reduced.
- The provision for appeals is significantly reduced compared to budget and previous years. The level of provision has historically been based on appeals rates in the period 2010 to 2017 which averaged 4.7% nationally. The recent completion of the 2023 national revaluation exercise has concluded that average losses on appeals in the period 2017 to 2022 has averaged 3.2% and Tameside average losses average 3.5% - this has enabled the appeals provision to be reduced to 3.5%.

The net impact of the above means that there is now a forecast surplus on the Business Rates side of the Collection Fund in 2022/23. Any surplus will be taken to reserves at year end.

# APPENDIX 3 - Collection Fund

Collection Fund for the year ended 31 March 2023	BUDGET 31 MARCH 2023			P10 FORECAST 31 MARCH 2023			VARIANCE £000
	Council Tax £000	NDR £000	Total £000	Council Tax £000	NDR £000	Total £000	
<b>Income</b>							
Income from Council Tax	(129,444)		(129,444)	(129,292)		(129,292)	152
Income from NDR		(54,047)	(54,047)		(51,484)	(51,484)	2,563
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(129,444)</b>	<b>(54,047)</b>	<b>(183,491)</b>	<b>(129,292)</b>	<b>(51,484)</b>	<b>(180,776)</b>	<b>2,715</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>							
<u>Council Tax</u>							
The Council*	104,622		104,622	104,622		104,622	
Mayoral Police and Crime Commissioner	14,453		14,453	14,453		14,453	
GM Fire and Rescue Authority	6,517		6,517	6,517		6,517	
<u>NDR</u>							
The Council		47,100	47,100		47,100	47,100	
Central Government							
GM Fire and Rescue Authority		476	476		476	476	
Allowance for cost of collection		285	285		285	285	
Transitional Protection Payments					(78)	(78)	(78)
Increase/(decrease) in:							
Allowance for non-collection	3,883	2,702	6,585	3,798	1,310	5,108	(1,477)
Provision for appeals		3,485	3,485		405	405	(3,080)
<u>Surplus/deficit (allocated)/paid out in year:</u>							
The Council	3,036	(15,062)	(12,026)	3,036	(15,062)	(12,026)	
Mayoral Police and Crime Commissioner	413		413	413		413	
GM Fire and Rescue Authority	172	(152)	20	172	(152)	20	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>133,096</b>	<b>38,834</b>	<b>171,930</b>	<b>133,011</b>	<b>34,284</b>	<b>167,295</b>	<b>(4,635)</b>
<b>(Surplus)/deficit for the year</b>	<b>3,653</b>	<b>(15,213)</b>	<b>(11,560)</b>	<b>3,719</b>	<b>(17,200)</b>	<b>(13,481)</b>	<b>(1,921)</b>
Balance brought forward	(3,516)	10,570	7,054	(3,516)	10,570	7,054	
(Surplus)/deficit for the year	3,653	(15,213)	(11,560)	3,719	(17,200)	(13,481)	(1,921)
<b>(Surplus)/deficit carried forward</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>(4,643)</b>	<b>(4,506)</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>(6,630)</b>	<b>(6,427)</b>	<b>(1,921)</b>
<u>Share of (surplus)/deficit</u>							
The Council	114	(4,597)	(4,483)	169	(6,564)	(6,395)	(1,912)
Mayoral Police and Crime Commissioner	16	-	16	23	-	23	8
GM Fire and Rescue Authority	7	(46)	(39)	11	(66)	(56)	(16)
<b>Total (Surplus)/Deficit</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>(4,643)</b>	<b>(4,506)</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>(6,630)</b>	<b>(6,427)</b>	<b>(1,921)</b>



# APPENDIX 3 – Collection Fund

Month	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January
<b>Council Tax</b>										
<b>Target % 2022/23</b>	10.60%	19.50%	28.50%	37.00%	46.00%	55.00%	64.00%	73.00%	81.00%	90.00%
<b>Achieved % 2022/23</b>	10.20%	19.11%	28.08%	36.91%	46.71%	55.30%	63.99%	72.65%	81.01%	89.55%

Month	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January
<b>NNDR</b>										
<b>Target % 2022/23</b>	12.00	22.00	32.00	40.00	49.00	57.00	66.00	73.00	80.50	89.50
<b>Achieved % 2022/23</b>	11.22%	21.56%	25.99%	36.83%	45.39%	56.57%	63.99%	72.01%	79.43%	87.68%

## Collection rates

In year collection rates for both Council Tax and Business Rates are below target.

The budget assumes a cumulative collection rate (the amount collected 5 years after the billing year) of 97% and whilst this has been achieved or exceeded for a number of years, the current in year collection rates mean that achievement of the cumulative target is at risk. Collection of arrears remains challenging and is expected to be increasingly difficult as the cost of living pressures remain during 2022 and 2023.

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# Dedicated Schools Grant 2022/23

The dedicated schools grant is allocated through a nationally determined formula to local authorities in 4 blocks the forecast position for 2022/23 is outlined below;

- Central Services Schools Block - provides funding to Local Authorities to support carrying out statutory duties on behalf of schools.
- Schools Block - This is intended to fund mainstream (non-special) Schools
- High Needs Block - This is to fund Special Schools, additional support in mainstream schools for Special Educational Needs (SEND) and other SEND placements / support.
- Early Years Block -This funds the free/extended entitlement & funding of places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds in school nurseries and Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) Sector settings.

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DSG Funding Blocks	Estimated DSG Settlement £000	Block Transfer 2022/23 £000	Revised DSG 2022/23 £000	Forecast Distribution / Spend 2022/23 £000	Forecast Surplus / (Deficit) £000
Schools Block	190,743	(954)	189,789	189,436	353
Central School Services Block	1,182	0	1,182	1,182	0
High Needs Block (Pre/Post 16)	32,843	954	33,796	36,539	(2,743)
Early Years Block	17,304	0	17,304	16,630	674
<b>Total</b>	<b>242,071</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>242,071</b>	<b>243,787</b>	<b>(1,716)</b>

The projected outturn position against the 2022/23 DSG settlement is included in the table above. It should be noted that the DSG allocation is adjusted throughout the financial year by the DfE for High Needs allocations to academies and out of borough adjustments and Early Years Funding based on take-up of places. Tameside MBC starts the financial year with a carried forward deficit of **£3,243k** which will need to be addressed.

## Schools Block

The forecast surplus of £353k on the schools block relates to £355k unallocated growth, a minor variation of £1k on an academy conversion offset by a (£3k) retrospective business rates charge. The growth allocation is based on pupil numbers at the October 2022 census point and the figures have been updated to reflect this. It is proposed that any surplus on the schools block contributes to the DSG deficit.

## Early Years

The forecast distribution / spend is based on the actual payments made to providers for the summer and autumn term and estimated uptake for the spring term for 2, 3 and 4 year olds. The current forecast indicates underspends of £453k for 3 & 4 year olds, £245k for 2 year olds and £28k for the Disability Access Fund, and an overspend of £57k on early years pupil premium.

Participation is difficult to estimate but is continuing to reduce which is why there appears to be a surplus against 3 and 4 year olds. There will be an adjustment to the early years funding based on the Spring Term census data and if the estimated participation is accurate, there will be a clawback of funds, which will reduce the anticipated surplus. The reduction in participation for 3 and 4 years olds is partly due to the birth rate reducing but take up of places has also dropped. Historically Tameside has seen a high level of take up at approx. 98% but more recently, this is closer to 95% as based on the latest census information.

This is a complex area of funding which will continue to be closely monitored and reported to Schools' Forum and Members.

## Central Services Schools Block

The central service schools block is estimated to be fully spent.

# Dedicated Schools Grant 2022/23

## High Needs

The forecast in-year deficit on the high needs block is £2,939k and is similar to the original forecast with only a slight increase of £10k. However included in this are a number of savings or areas of cost avoidance (see table below) that were agreed as part of the Deficit Recovery Plan. These total £688k and there are potential risks in realising these, if they do not materialise the in-year deficit will increase and affect future years.

	2022-23 £000
Planned Savings Included in Template	
<b>Resource Base Review</b>	152
<b>Growth and Overcapacity</b>	50
<b>Contract Review</b>	288
<b>TPRS and improved inclusive practice</b>	98
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>688</b>

The budget also includes a significant amount of growth at £5,401k representing the expected further increases in the number of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) as well as the creation of the new resourced units.

To date £4,133k or 77% of earmarked growth has been spent. Growth was predicted to be spent more or less equally over the financial year so we would have expected to have spent around 75% of the budget so far, at 77% this could indicate growth could be slightly higher than expected. Also some of the growth was in areas not anticipated as the table below shows there has been higher than expected growth in the Post 16 sector and in out of borough placements. Growth will continue to be monitored closely and a more detailed review will need to be carried out following updated intelligence from the SEN team as well as updates on the new resourced units.

Sector	Growth Provision £000	Actual Growth to Date £000	% Spent	Remaining Growth £000	% Left
Mainstream	2,108	872		1,236	
Special	1,387	724		663	
Resourced Units	767	74		693	
Independent Schools	908	1,307		(399)	
PVI	0	54		(54)	
NMSS	0	59		(59)	
OOB (Pre 16)	0	412		(412)	
Post 16	231	631		(400)	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5,401</b>	<b>4,133</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>1,268</b>	<b>23%</b>

# Dedicated Schools Grant 2022/23

## DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT RESERVE POSITION

Prior year's dedicated schools grant is set aside in a reserve, details of which are outlined in the table below for both the final year end position in 2021/22 and the forecast for 2022/23.

	2021/22 Surplus / (Deficit) £000	2022/23 Forecast Surplus / (Deficit) £000
<b>DSG Reserve Brought Forward</b>	<b>(1,686)</b>	<b>(3,243)</b>
Schools Block	178	353
In year surplus on Central Service Block	7	0
In year deficit on High Needs Block	(1,973)	(2,743)
In year surplus on Early Years	147	674
Early Years 2020-21 Final Adjustment	6	0
Estimated Early Years 2021-22 Adjustment and Final Adjustment as confirmed in July 2022	78	4
<b>DSG Reserve after Commitments</b>	<b>(3,243)</b>	<b>(4,956)</b>

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In 2021/22 the deficit increased to £3,243k, in the main this due to funding the overspend on the High Needs Block. There have been contributions to the reserve in year, the most significant of these relating to surplus funds in the Early Years Block, the underspend on schools block relates to business rates and unallocated growth.

If the 2022/23 forecasts materialise the deficit would further increase to £4,956k. A deficit recovery plan has been developed and submitted to the DfE. Discussions are continuing with the DfE and are ongoing. The position will continue to be closely monitored and updates reported to Schools' Forum and Members.

## APPENDIX 5

### IRRECOVERABLE DEBTS OVER £5000

1 October 2022 to 31 December 2022

Note individuals are anonymised

REF:	DEBT:	FINANCIAL YEAR(S)	BALANCE	REASON
13634308	Council Tax	2013 – 2014 £479.37 2014 – 2015 £725.60 2015 – 2016 £695.54 2016 – 2017 £998.60 2017 – 2018 £1129.36 2018 - 2019 £548.75 2019 – 2020 £541.03 2020 – 2021 £455.37 2021 – 2022 £918.00	£6491.62	Individual Voluntary Arrangement approved 18/02/2022
14659502	Council Tax	2013 – 2014 £110.15 2014 – 2015 £96.78 2015 – 2016 £377.82 2016 – 2017 £423.95 2017 – 2018 £868.02 2018 – 2019 £618.03 2019 – 2020 £1072.76 2020 – 2021 £1218.12 2021 - 2022 £1361.60	£6147.23	Individual Voluntary Arrangement approved 23/03/2022
17039527	Council Tax	2016 – 2017 £88.26 2017 – 2018 £896.83 2018 – 2019 £913.77 2019 – 2020 £962.85 2020 – 2021 £1165.64 2021 – 2022 £1281.99	£5309.34	Individual Voluntary Arrangement approved 11/02/2022
16480204	Council Tax	2014 – 2015 £334.98 2015 – 2016 £1111.72 2016 – 2017 £981.50 2017 – 2018 £241.52 2018 – 2019 £699.87 2019 – 2020 £958.27 2020 – 2021 £999.59 2021 – 2022 £1042.70	£6370.15	Individual Voluntary Arrangement approved 22/02/2022
17214183	Council Tax	2017 – 2018 £186.38 2018 – 2019 £909.09 2019 – 2020 £958.27 2020 – 2021 £999.59 2021 – 2022 £1042.70 2022 – 2023 £927.68	£5023.71	Individual Voluntary Arrangement approved 05/07/2022
16480848	Council Tax	2014 – 2015 £336.75 2016 – 2017 £156.33 2017 – 2018 £784.02 2018 – 2019 £911.59 2019 – 2020 £958.27 2020 – 2021 £999.59 2021 – 2022 £1042.70 2022 – 2023 £927.68	£6116.93	Individual Voluntary Arrangement approved 13/07/2022

16740498	Council Tax	2014 – 2015 £98.87 2015 – 2016 £1272.02 2016 – 2017 £1240.03 2017 – 2018 £1303.58 2018 – 2019 £1371.38 2019 – 2020 £1442.87 2020 – 2021 £1507.16 2021 – 2022 £1574.20 2022 – 2023 £398.75	£10,208.86	Individual Voluntary Arrangement approved 14/06/2022
<b>COUNCIL TAX</b>		<b>SUB TOTAL – Individual Voluntary Arrangement</b>	<b>£45,667.84</b>	
15344612	Council Tax	2011 – 2012 £9.90 2012 – 2013 £425.51 2013 – 2014 £944.42 2014 – 2015 £451.70 2015 – 2016 £796.29 2016 – 2017 £987.87 2017 – 2018 £345.34 2018 – 2019 £359.86 2019 – 2020 £414.94 2020 – 2021 £529.57 2021 – 2022 £153.95	£5419.35	Debt Relief Order approved 09/09/2022
13377103	Council Tax	2003 – 2004 £262.26 2008 – 2009 £624.45 2011 – 2012 £208.22 2012 – 2013 £635.19 2013 – 2014 £380.74 2015 – 2016 £299.62 2016 – 2017 £359.19 2018 – 2019 £930.47 2019 – 2020 £1249.03 2020 – 2021 £302.62 2021 – 2022 £26.25	£5278.04	Debt Relief Order approved 15/09/2021
<b>COUNCIL TAX</b>		<b>SUB TOTAL – Debt Relief Order</b>	<b>£10,697.39</b>	
<b>COUNCIL TAX IRRECOVERABLE BY LAW TOTAL</b>			<b>£56,365.23</b>	

65630217	Business Rates	Stockwaha Limited Unit 5 Market Arcade The Arcades Warrington Street Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 7AD Company Dissolved 30/08/2022	2021 – 2022 £5072.37	£5072.37
65595178	Business Rates	No. 1 Discount Furniture Store (Hyde) Limited 21 Clarendon Place Hyde Cheshire SK14 2NE Company Dissolved 20/07/2021	2016 – 2017 £5370.79 2017 - 2018 £8155.00 2018 – 2019 £8400.00 2019 – 2020 £6627.05 2020 – 2021 £1497.42	£30,050.26
65608715	Business Rates	Hammer Logistics Ltd Unit 5 at 250 Bay Street	2020 – 2021 £18,339.08	£32,556.29



		Denton Manchester M34 3RU Company Dissolved 16/11/2021	2021 – 2022 £14,217.21	
65524831	Business Rates	570 PKR Ltd. Unit 22 Shepley Industrial Estate Shepley Road Audenshaw Manchester M34 5DW Company Dissolved 15/03/2022	2016 – 2017 £10,432.28 2017 – 2018 £11,193.50 2018 – 2109 £10,779.51	£32,405.19
<b>BUSINESS RATES</b>		<b>SUB TOTAL – Company Dissolved</b>	<b>£100,084.11</b>	
<b>BUSINESS RATES IRRECOVERABLE BY LAW TOTAL</b>			<b>£100,084.11</b>	

4016310	Sundry Debts	Keith Jones and Son Northwest Limited Unit 2 Charlestown Industrial Estate Robinson Street Ashton-Under-Lyne OL6 8NS Company in Administration 06/01/2022	2020 – 2021 £4566.97 2021 – 2022 £4125.94	£8692.91
<b>SUNDRY DEBTS</b>		<b>SUB TOTAL – Company in Administration</b>	<b>£8692.91</b>	
<b>SUNDRY DEBTS IRRECOVERABLE BY LAW TOTAL</b>			<b>£8692.91</b>	

### DISCRETION TO WRITE OFF OVER £3000

65512517	Business Rates Anonymised as an individual	2018 – 2019 £3084.20 2019 – 2020 £23,199.75 & £5232.33	£31,516.28	Debtor Absconded - unable to trace
<b>BUSINESS RATES</b>		<b>SUB TOTAL – Absconded</b>	<b>£31,516.28</b>	
<b>BUSINESS RATES DISCRETIONARY WRITE OFF TOTAL</b>			<b>£31,516.28</b>	

### SUMMARY OF UNRECOVERABLE DEBT OVER £5000

<b>SUMMARY OF UNRECOVERABLE DEBT OVER £5000</b>		
IRRECOVERABLE by law	Council Tax	£56,365.23
	Business Rates	£100,084.11
	Overpaid Housing Benefit	NIL
	Sundry	£8692.91
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£165,142.25</b>

DISCRETIONARY write off – meaning no further resources will be used to actively pursue	Council Tax	NIL
	Business Rates	31,516.28
	Overpaid Housing Benefit	NIL
	Sundry	NIL
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£31,516.28</b>

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## APPENDIX 6 – Forecast use of reserves and earmarked funds

Category	Ring Fenced / Earmarked	Available	Total
Ring Fenced / Available	£000s	£000s	£000s
<b>Opening Balance 1 April 2022</b>	<b>£162,504</b>	<b>£31,063</b>	<b>£193,567</b>
Approved 2022/23 Capital Programme (Period 6, excluding GG & LUF)	(23,454)	-	(23,454)
Planned use of reserves approved as part of 22/23 budget - Approved February 2022 Council	(4,787)	(458)	(5,245)
Childrens managed social care service - Approved 28/09/22 Exec Cabinet	-	(255)	(255)
Use of ring-fenced grants	(1,726)	-	(1,726)
Childrens Social Care Improvement Plan funding for Childcare Legal Services - Approved June 2021 Exec Cabinet	(83)	-	(83)
S75 Risk Share - support Adults around COVID related pressures and Hospital discharge processes and for SEND CYP Parent Carer Forum (ISCAN) - Approved period 3 monitoring report	(814)	-	(814)
Investment in Adults and Children's IT systems - Approved 24/08/22 Exec Cabinet	(1,739)	-	(1,739)
S75 Risk Share - support Adults around COVID related pressures and Hospital discharge processes - Approved period 6 monitoring report	(3,500)	-	(3,500)
Remaining Funding owed to the council from the Cabinet Office in relation to the Parliamentary election 2019 - Approved period 6 monitoring report	92	-	92
Communication officer for the Godley Green Scheme - Approved period 6 monitoring report	(38)	-	(38)
<b>Closing Balance 31 October 2022</b>	<b>£126,456</b>	<b>£30,350</b>	<b>£156,805</b>
Items approved in November 2022	-	-	-
<b>Closing Balance 30 November 2022</b>	<b>£126,456</b>	<b>£30,350</b>	<b>£156,805</b>
Items approved in December 2022	-	-	-
<b>Closing Balance 31 December 2022</b>	<b>£126,456</b>	<b>£30,350</b>	<b>£156,805</b>
ADULTS - Workforce Collaboration Insulin Training - Transfer to Reserves for use in 23/24 as per service planning since transfer to ICB	21	-	21
CHILDREN'S - Transfer 2023/24 underspend on the Youth Offending Turnaround Programme Grant to reserves for utilisation next financial year.	44	-	44
CHILDREN'S - Transfer previous years unspent remand grant from reserves to cover the cost of additional remand nights during 2023/24	(27)	-	(27)
CHILDREN'S - Transfer unspent Staying-Close grant to reserves to be spent next financial year	439	-	439
CHILDREN'S - Transfer unspent donations to Cared for Children to next financial year	8	-	8
FINANCE & it - Contribution to Teachers Maternity Insurance reserve scheme. Scheme is self financing over the medium term but net cost/surplus will fluctuate between years.	215	-	215
QUALITY & SAFEGUARDING - Adults Safeguarding Partnership Board - underspend to reserve	25	-	25
QUALITY & SAFEGUARDING - Childrens Safeguarding Partnership General - underspend to reserve	56	-	56
<b>Closing Balance 31 January 2023</b>	<b>£127,237</b>	<b>£30,350</b>	<b>£157,586</b>

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# Agenda Item 5

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE CABINET</b>
<b>Date:</b>	29 March 2023
<b>Executive Member:</b>	Councillor J North – First Deputy, Finance, Resources and Transformation
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ilys Cookson – Assistant Director Exchequer Services
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>BUSINESS RATES REVALUATION AND RELIEFS 2023-24</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	<p>The Local Government Finance Act 1988 Part 3 Sec 41(2), updated in the Non-Domestic Rating (Lists) Act 2021, determines that the Valuation Office Agency shall compile a Non-Domestic Rating List. This report details the revaluation of Business Rates effective from 01 April 2023, the implications of this based on data from the Valuation Office Agency to all local authorities and the reliefs available in the 2023/24 financial year.</p>
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p>The Executive Cabinet be requested to note the 2023 national revaluation and the new reliefs introduced by central government effective from 01 April 2023.</p>
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	<p>The report supports the Corporate Plan priority themes.</p>
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	<p>The Non-Domestic Rating (Lists) Act 2021 determines that the Valuation Office Agency shall compile a Non Domestic Rating List on 1 April every 5 years. However the October 2021 Business Rates review confirmed the governments intentions to increase the frequency of revaluations to take place every 3 years rather than every 5 years commencing 01 April 2023.</p> <p>The Business Rates revaluation is prescribed by law there is no alternative that can be proposed.</p>
<b>Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer &amp; Chief Finance Officer)</b>	<p><u>Income</u></p> <p>Income from Business Rates is a significant source of funding for the Council's annual revenue budget. In 2022/23 total income from Business Rates, including government grants paid to the Council in lieu of reliefs awarded, is forecast to total in excess of £61 million. The Council also receives a 'Top-up' grant, which reflects Government's assessment of the difference between Business Rates income and the amount that Government determines is required by the Council as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement. The Business Rates Revaluation is intended to have a neutral impact on the Council's funding, with any increase in Business Rates Income being offset by a corresponding reduction in the 'Top-up' grant.</p> <p><u>Expenditure</u></p> <p>As the owner and occupier of a range of non-domestic properties across the Borough, the Council is also a Business Rates payer. Council owned properties have seen both increases and reductions in rateable values and section 3 of the report identifies some examples where the 2023 revaluation has had a significant impact. Increases in the rateable value</p>

will result in additional business rates being paid by the Council, although the initial impact of this will be dampened through transitional relief. Whilst it is not possible to precisely calculate the additional cost until year start billing has commenced, initial estimates based on the overall change in the rateable value, indicate that the total additional net cost is not likely to exceed £175k in 2023/24. This figure is a maximum estimate, and includes schools (where business rates are paid from Dedicated Schools Grant). Transitional Relief will be applied to those properties whose increases fall within the thresholds set out in Appendix One.

**Legal Implications:  
(Authorised by the Borough  
Solicitor)**

The legal implications are set out in the main body of the report.

**Risk Management:**

Risks are set out in section 5 of this report.

**Access to Information:**

Further information is available from Ilys Cookson - Assistant Director Exchequer Services [Non-domestic rating: Reval 2023 draft list statistical commentary and background information - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Business Rates Information Letter \(7/2022\): Business Rates guidance and general information \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[NDR Revaluation 2023 Tables.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

**Background Information:**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Ilys Cookson



Telephone: 0161 342 4056



e-mail: [ilyl.cookson@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:ilyl.cookson@tameside.gov.uk)

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Valuation Office Agency generally reassesses all rateable values in respect of business premises in England and Wales every 5 years<sup>1</sup>, based on their open market value on a fixed date, in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1988 Part 3 Section 41 (2) updated in the Non-Domestic Rating (Lists) Act 2021.
- 1.2 The last revaluation was carried out in 2017 and a new revaluation has taken place which will become effective from 01 April 2023. Rateable values in the rating lists held by the Valuation Office Agency, are used by local Councils to calculate Business Rates bills.
- 1.3 The Valuation Office Agency's aim of regular revaluation is to maintain fairness in the system by reflecting changes in the property market. A wide range of property information is used when setting the rateable value of a property and generally represents the yearly rent the property could have been let for in an open market; size and location are also used to compare values of similar properties. Other factors which may affect the rateable value are whether there has been a material change to the property e.g. a change in the property's physical state or use, or a change in the property's locality or a change in the use of neighbouring property.
- 1.4 There are over 300 local rating lists in England and Wales, one for each local authority. There are two central rating lists, one for England and one for Wales. The local ratings list includes a wide range of rateable properties such as shops, storage depots, pubs, hotels and offices etc. The central ratings list includes major transport networks, utility and telecommunication pipelines across the country.
- 1.5 The Valuation Office Agency notify local authorities each week to amend rateable values for a number of reasons such as:
  - As a result of appeal outcomes; or
  - A change in the use of premises which has resulted in a new determination being made of the rateable value; or
  - A new property has come into the valuation list; or
  - The property circumstances have changed, for example the property is demolished and needs removing from the list by the Valuation Office Agency.

At revaluation, *all* properties are revalued by the Valuation Office Agency using rental values and other factors as detailed in 1.3 above and the premises are then given a new rateable value.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The amount of Business Rates payable are calculated by applying a multiplier (set annually by central government) to the rateable value. Various deductions (known as reliefs) may then be awarded as permitted in legislation.
- 2.2 Central government set two national non-domestic rate multipliers for each financial year for the whole of England, which are the standard multiplier and the small business multiplier. Businesses can calculate how much business rates they will have to pay by:
  - 1) Finding the correct multipliers for the size of their business and location;
  - 2) Multiplying the rateable value by the correct multiplier;
  - 3) Subtract any business rate relief awarded.

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<sup>1</sup> The government announced its intention in the October 2021 Business Rates Review that future revaluations would be more frequent and be every 3 years starting from 2023, meaning that the next revaluation will take place in 2026. The government will bring forward legislation over the course of the next list to give effect to the new cycle.

- 2.3 The multiplier has not been increased from 2022/23 and has been set for the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities DLUHC for 2023/24 as follows:
- non-domestic rating multiplier 51.2p (0.512)
  - small business non-domestic rating multiplier 49.9p (0.499)

2.4 A simple example is set out below to show how business rates are calculated:

Mrs X has a business in England (outside London)  
 The rateable value of her business is £10,000, so she uses the current small business multiplier for England (49.9p) to estimate her business rates as follows:  
 £10,000 (rateable value) x £49.9p (multiplier) = £4,900 (basic business rates payable)

2.5 As a result of revaluation changes in rateable value, some ratepayers will see their business rates bills fall, while others may remain the same, and some will increase.

### 3. REVALUATION CURRENT POSITION

3.1 Information released to date by the Valuation Office Agency compares rateable value information across English regions and the total rateable value on local lists in England has increased by 7.3%, with the East of England experiencing the largest increase, and North East of England experiencing the smallest. The retail sector is the only sector to show a decrease in rateable values and the industry sector has had the biggest increase across all regions. The central ratings lists in England has seen a decrease of 0.7%. More information on regional variations can be found here: [Non-domestic rating: Reval 2023 draft list statistical commentary and background information - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/non-domestic-rating-reval-2023-draft-list-statistical-commentary-and-background-information)

3.2 Overall rateable values in the North West have increased. There are changes between the 2017 and the 2023 rating list as detailed below, however while this provides information, which is accurate only at a given point in time, any amendments made now could retrospectively alter the 2017 rating list. Therefore any premises that have entered the 2017 rating list or been removed from the 2017 list since the publication of the draft 2023 rating list will have an impact on both the 2017 list and 2023 list. Therefore direct comparisons between the rateable values in the 2017 list should be treated with caution as these have been subject to change over time.

3.3 In Tameside the change in rateable value from the 2017 rating list to the 2023 rating list based on 7,860 businesses as at January 2023 is as follows:

**Table 1:** Rateable value percentage change in Tameside between the 2017 and 2023 Ratings Lists as at 25 January 2023.

2017 Rateable Value overall total £m	2023 Rateable Value overall total £m	Percentage change
149	160	7.4% increase

**Table 2:** Rateable value changes in Tameside between the 2017 and 2023 Ratings Lists by sector as at November 2022.

Sector	No of businesses	2017 rateable values total £m	2023 rateable values total £m	Percentage change
Retail	2,240	50,963	44,958	-11.8%
Industry	2,900	45,746	56,730	+24%
Offices	1,030	10,010	10,976	+9.7%
Other	1,700	42,285	47,377	+12%

3.4 Further information on changes in rateable values between the 2017 and 2023 Rating Lists



across all local authorities can be found here: [NDR Revaluation 2023 Tables.xlsx \(live.com\)](#)

- 3.5 Tameside business assessments have seen an overall increase in rateable value from £149m to £160m; a difference of £11m. This includes all Tameside Council owned buildings and also car parks, libraries, cemeteries, depots etc. Tameside One is the largest Tameside Council assessment and which has had a £25k increase in rateable value from £525k and now £550k giving a gross charge of £281,600. Other large assessments are Dukinfield Cemetery and Dukinfield Town Hall, which have both increased in rateable value. Dukinfield Town Hall has had an increase from £60,500 to £71,500 giving a gross charge of £36,352.
- 3.6 Other notable large assessments in the Borough are IKEA and Ashton-under-Lyne Asda supermarket. IKEA has experienced a £840k reduction in rateable value from £2.37m down to £1.53m, and Asda has a £660k reduction in rateable value from £2.23m to £1.57m, and this follows the national trend of the retail sector reducing in rateable value.
- 3.7 Further examples of Tameside businesses following the national trend as detailed in Table 2 is that industry has experienced an increase. System 3 Ltd manufacturing in Denton has had an increase in rateable value of £167k and Wienerberger Ltd brickworks in Denton has also had an increase in rateable value of £142.5k.
- 3.8 The overall movement indicates an increase in the net collectable debit, subject to the award of any reliefs and which have the effect of reducing the amount of Business Rates payable.

#### **4. RELIEFS AVAILABLE**

- 4.1 In the Autumn Statement on 17 November 2022, the Chancellor announced that the government would provide a new package of measures to support businesses in England over the next five years. For 2023/24 the Chancellor announced:
  - Transitional Relief scheme.
  - Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) rate relief scheme
  - Supporting Small Business (SSB) relief scheme

##### **Transitional Relief Scheme**

- 4.2 The aim of transitional relief is to cushion the potential impact of a revaluation arrangement on businesses and limit bill increases caused by changes in rateable values. These changes will have effect from 1 April 2023. The structure and format of the transitional relief scheme only differs from the 2017 scheme in that there is no downward transition and, the cap to attract transitional relief is different. The effect of business premises experiencing a significant increase in rateable value and being eligible for transitional relief is that the increase in the amount of bill payments is phased in over several years and underpinned by transitional relief, rather paying the large increase from the 01 April 2023. This approach ensures that ratepayers have time to gradually adapt to their new rate bills. There is a cap on increases and which is detailed in **Appendix 1**.

##### **Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) rate relief**

- 4.3 The current relief for eligible retail, hospitality and leisure sectors is to increase from the current 50% relief to 75% in 2023-24, up to £110k cash cap across all business premises in England and no ratepayer can, in any circumstances, exceed the £110k cap.
- 4.4 To be eligible for relief the premises must be wholly or mainly used as a shop, restaurant, café, drinking establishment, cinema or live music venue, and for assembly and leisure as hotels, guest houses or self-catering accommodation. The government department for Business Energy Industrial and Strategy (BEIS) have determined that the premises falling into the specific categories at Appendix Two be eligible.
- 4.5 Local authorities are expected to apply and grant relief to qualifying ratepayers from the start

of the 2023/24 billing year and are expected to use their discretionary relief powers (under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 as amended) to grant this relief in line with the relevant eligibility criteria provided by government. Authorities will be compensated for the cost of granting these reliefs via a section 31 grant from government. No new legislation will be required to deliver these schemes. The government anticipates that local authorities will include details of the relief to be provided to eligible ratepayers for 2023/24 in their bills for the beginning of the 2023/24 billing cycle.

- 4.6 Billing authorities must not grant the relief to themselves and a ratepayer may refuse to accept the relief if they so wish. RHL relief may be recalculated where circumstances change and eligibility ceases. The government has published guidance setting out the eligibility criteria for the scheme. This guidance can be found at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-rates-relief-202324-retail-hospitality-and-leisure-scheme-local-authority-guidance>
- 4.7 Supporting Small Business (SSB) relief scheme ensures that no small business faces a bill increase greater than £600 a year for 2023-24 as a result of losing eligibility for Small Business Rate Relief<sup>2</sup> or Rural Rate Relief at the 2023 revaluation. The scheme also provides support for those previously eligible for the 2022/23 SSB scheme and facing large increases in 2023/24 but in those cases for one further year only.
- 4.8 The government anticipates that local authorities will include details of the relief to be provided to eligible ratepayers for 2023/24 in their bills for the beginning of the 2023/24 billing cycle. Again central government expect Councils to use discretionary relief powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 as amended to grant this relief. The government has published guidance setting out the eligibility criteria for the scheme which can be found at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-rates-relief-2023-supporting-small-business-relief-local-authority-guidance>.
- 4.9 New burdens funding will be available to support the administration of the revaluation and reliefs however, the timescale in which this will be provided, and the amount available, has not yet been confirmed by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The Business Rates Discretionary Relief Policy will be updated to reflect the new reliefs that government expect local authorities to administer under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, and communication will take with businesses regarding relevant reliefs.

## **5. RISKS**

- 5.1 The risks associated in delivering this are such that resources are expected to be significantly stretched from March to early May 2023 as during that period over 150,000 Council Tax bills, Business Rates bills and Sundry Debtor invoices are sent out, in addition to over 15,000 benefit notifications. Customer contact during this period is extremely busy.
- 5.2 The year start 2023/24 is expected to be busier than usual due to the additional work imposed on the service by government, with the anticipated increased contact from businesses as a result of the revaluation and the administration of the 3 new reliefs, in addition to administering the Council Tax Support Fund and the Energy Bill Support Scheme Alternative Fuel payment for which guidance has not yet been received.
- 5.3 It is clear that with such considerable additional workload the priority, in accordance with legislation, is to ensure that Business Rates and Council Tax bills are sent in a timely manner

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<sup>2</sup> Small Business Rates Relief continues to be in place for eligible premises. Small Business Rates Relief of 100% is awarded to those qualifiers with a rateable value below £12,000 leaving nil payable. Properties with a rateable value between £12,000.1 and £15,000 will continue to qualify with a tapered relief.

to support the Councils income requirements. There is a risk that as system updates are required and then systems testing for the new reliefs, that the timescale of bill production may slip and bill instalments have to be revised. However, every opportunity will be taken to guard against this occurring.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 A national revaluation has taken place by the Valuation Office Agency effective from 01 April 2023, to review all rateable values, the aim of which is to maintain fairness in the system by reflecting changes in the property market. The retail sector is the only sector to show a decrease in rateable values and the industry sector has had the biggest increase across all regions and which is reflected in the rateable value changes to businesses in Tameside. Overall there has been a 7.4% increase in overall rateable values in Tameside from £149m to £160m.
- 6.2 The government has introduced three new business rates reliefs from 01 April 2023 subject to specific eligibility criteria. The effect of being awarded a relief is that there is a reduced amount of business rates payable. The three new reliefs are a transitional relief scheme, Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) rate relief scheme and Supporting Small Business (SSB) relief scheme.
- 6.3 There is an expectation that ratepayers that are eligible to receive the reliefs will have the relief applied to year start bills issued in March 2023. Processing systems require upgrades and testing to ensure that the reliefs can be applied to bills in time for the new financial year.
- 6.4 Risks are identified as being the timescale and capacity to deliver the new reliefs on year start bills, given that the government has imposed further additional work on revenues and benefits services at what is already the busiest time of year for core business.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

# APPENDIX 1

**Transitional Relief: Cap on increases for the 2023 revaluation apply for years 2023/24 and 2025/26.**

<b>Rateable Value</b>	<b>Cap on increases 2023/24</b>	<b>Cap on increases 2024/25</b>	<b>Cap on increase 2025/26</b>
Up to and including £20,000	5%	10% plus inflation	25% plus inflation
More than £20,000 and up to and including £100,000	15%	25% plus inflation	40% plus inflation
More than £100,000	30%	40% plus inflation	55% plus inflation

**Note: The cap is applied before any other applicable relief.**

## APPENDIX 2

### **BEIS determination of Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief eligibility**

#### **i. Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public:**

- Shops (such as: florists, bakers, butchers, grocers, greengrocers, jewellers, stationers, off licences, chemists, newsagents, hardware stores, supermarkets, etc)
- Charity shops
- Opticians
- Post offices
- Furnishing shops/ display rooms (such as: carpet shops, double glazing, garage doors)
- Car/caravan show rooms
- Second-hand car lots
- Markets
- Petrol stations
- Garden centres
- Art galleries (where art is for sale/hire)

#### **ii. Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public:**

- Hair and beauty services (such as: hairdressers, nail bars, beauty salons, tanning shops, etc)
- Shoe repairs/key cutting
- Travel agents
- Ticket offices e.g. for theatre
- Dry cleaners
- Launderettes
- PC/TV/domestic appliance repair
- Funeral directors
- Photo processing
- Tool hire
- Car hire

#### **iii. Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of food and/or drink to visiting members of the public:**

- Restaurants
- Takeaways
- Sandwich shops
- Coffee shops
- Pubs
- Bars

#### **iv. Hereditaments which are being used as cinemas**

#### **v. Hereditaments that are being used as live music venues:**

- Live music venues are hereditaments wholly or mainly used for the performance of live music for the purpose of entertaining an audience. Hereditaments cannot be considered a live music venue for the purpose of business rates relief where a venue is wholly or mainly used as a nightclub or a theatre, for the purposes of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended).

3. We consider assembly and leisure to mean:

#### **i. Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of sport, leisure and facilities to visiting members of the public (including for the viewing of such activities).**

- Sports grounds and clubs
- Museums and art galleries
- Nightclubs
- Sport and leisure facilities

- Stately homes and historic houses
- Theatres
- Tourist attractions
- Gyms
- Wellness centres, spas, massage parlours
- Casinos, gambling clubs and bingo halls

**ii. Hereditaments that are being used for the assembly of visiting members of the public.**

- Public halls
- Clubhouses, clubs and institutions


4. We consider hotels, guest & boarding premises and self-catering accommodation to mean:

**i. Hereditaments where the non-domestic part is being used for the provision of living accommodation as a business:**

- Hotels, Guest and Boarding Houses
- Holiday homes
- Caravan parks and sites

# Agenda Item 6

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE CABINET</b>
<b>Date:</b>	29 March 2023
<b>Executive Member:</b>	Councillor Jacqueline North – First Deputy Finance, Resources and Transformation
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ilys Cookson – Assistant Director Exchequer
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>COUNCIL TAX - EMPTY PROPERTIES AND SECOND HOMES</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	The report sets out proposed increases to empty properties and second homes on the condition that local authorities must 'make the determination at least one year before the financial year to which it relates', as detailed in the Levelling Up Bill and which is expected to become legislation within the current financial year.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	That Executive Cabinet be recommended to agree that subject to legislation being in place within the current financial year, that Council Tax in respect of empty properties and second homes be increased to 200% charge after the necessary 12 months notice has been given.
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	The proposal supports each of the Corporate Plan themes.
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	Up to a maximum of a further 100% Council Tax in addition to that already charged, may be charged from the time the property has been empty for one year instead of the current 2 years and second home Council Tax charges may be increased by no more than 100% providing that there is no-one resident and the dwelling is substantially furnished.
<b>Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer)</b>	<p>Council Tax is a significant and important source of funding to support the annual revenue budget. In 2022/23 total forecast income from Council Tax is expected to exceed £104 million and in 2023/24 more than £110 million. The proposals set out in this report should increase the amount of Council Tax available to collect from 1 April 2024.</p> <p>Further details of the estimated amounts of additional Council Tax, based on current numbers of empty properties and second homes, is set out in section 3. The estimated additional income that could be collected of £506k on empty properties and £210k on second homes is based on 22/23 Council Tax rates and current property numbers. The total amount of additional income that will actually be collected from 1 April 2024, if these changes are implemented, will be subject to change as property numbers and Council Rates change.</p>
<b>Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	The legal implications are set out in the main body of the report.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	Risks are detailed in section 4 of this report.
<b>Background Information:</b>	The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Ilys Cookson

 Telephone: 0161 342 4056

 e-mail: [ilyc.cookson@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:ilyc.cookson@tameside.gov.uk)



## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Section 11B of Local Government Finance Act 1992 amended by Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 gave local authorities powers to increase the amount of Council Tax charged in relation to empty properties. Executive Cabinet approved that charges be increased up to the maximum permissible with effect from 01 April 2019.
- 1.2 The draft Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill contains proposals to further increase Council Tax charges on empty properties and second homes. The proposals in the Bill will be inserted into the Local Government Finance Act upon legislation being passed. The Bill proposes as follows:
- Up to a maximum of a further 100% Council Tax in addition to the council tax already charged may be charged from the time the property has been empty for one year instead of the current 2 years.
  - Discretionary discounts on second homes be withdrawn
  - Second home Council Tax charges may be increased by no more than 100% of what is currently charged providing that there is no-one resident and the dwelling is substantially furnished.
- 1.3 Further conditions are set out in the Bill that local authorities must *'make the determination at least one year before the financial year to which it relates'* and that local authorities *'must publish a notice of the determination in a local newspaper within 21 days of the date of determination'*. In respect of empty properties the Bill states it *'does not matter whether the period mentioned in section 11b(8) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 begins before this section comes into force'*.
- 1.4 A key consideration as to whether to increase Council Tax charges for empty properties and second homes is the requirement that Councils must make the decision one year in advance of the financial year to which it relates. If the Levelling Up Bill becomes an Act within the current financial year, and before 31 March 2023, then the decision to increase the charges needs to be made in advance on the assumption that the Bill will be passed, or immediately upon becoming an Act so the any increased charge can take effect from 01 April 2024.

## 2. CURRENT POSITION

- 2.1 Properties are left empty for a number of reasons such as a period of time between previous occupiers moving out and new occupiers moving in, properties awaiting repair, properties that are inherited and in the process of being sold for example. The length of time a property is empty can range from one day to many years. Various Council Tax reliefs are available depending on the circumstances for example where a property is empty because the occupier has died or moved into a care home. In most cases consideration is given on the affordability of paying Council Tax on an empty property by way of considering chargepayers income and expenditure as appropriate, however it must be borne in mind that some empty property owners retain the property until such time that the housing market is more buoyant. It is acknowledged that upon inheritance a property can make a chargepayer asset rich until the property is sold and solicitors undertakings to discharge a Council Tax debt from the proceeds of sale are also considered.
- 2.2 No discounts have been awarded to second homes in Tameside with effect from 01 April 2013. Although second homes are often associated with areas which attract tourists there are some second homes in Tameside which are either as a result of familial ties where the owner resides elsewhere, or owned by choice. A second home is defined in the legislation as a dwelling which is not a person's sole or main home and is substantially furnished. These dwellings are referred to in the 1992 Local Government Finance Act as dwellings occupied

periodically and are commonly called second homes. The distinction between an empty property and a second home is that a second home must be substantially furnished.

- 2.3 There are currently 1,362 empty properties in Tameside and 133 second homes. The table below details empty properties by Council Tax band as at January 2023.

**Table 1: Current empty properties and second homes by Council Tax band as at January 2023**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
<b>Empty up to 2 years</b>	794	277	195	63	27	4	2	0	1,362
<b>Empty for more than 2 years</b>	159	31	24	7	6	2	3	0	232
<b>Second Homes</b>	67	27	24	6	1	6	2	0	133

- 2.4 The table below details the current Council Tax charges for empty properties and second homes.

**Table 2: Current Empty Property and Second Home Council Tax Charges**

Empty Properties		Second Homes	
Timeframe	Amount of Council Tax payable	Timeframe	Amount of Council Tax payable
Empty up to 24 months	100%	From date of determination the property is a second home	100%
More than 24 months and less than 5 years	200%		
Empty between 5 and 10 years	300%		
Empty for 10 years or more	400%		

### 3 PROPOSAL TO INCREASE

- 3.1 There are currently 341 empty properties in Tameside that are empty for more than one year but less than 2 years which could be affected if Council Tax charges are increased, as the 200% charge would commence after 12 months rather than the current 24 months and up to 5 years. The number of empty properties fluctuates on a daily basis.
- 3.2 The table below gives an estimate of the possible income from empty properties which could be raised in 2024/25, based on data as at January 2023, if legislation is passed in the current financial year<sup>1</sup> and approval given to increase the charge.
- 3.3 **Table 3: Possible income in 2024/25 in respect of properties that have been empty for more than one year and less than two years should the determination be made to implement after legislation approved**

<sup>1</sup> Note Council Tax charges set in 2024/25 will differ from those set in 2023/24. The number of empty properties fluctuates regularly.

<b>Estimated income from empty properties based on 2022/23 Council Tax charge</b>			
<b>Band</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>2022/23 charge</b>	<b>Total £</b>
A	200	1322.24	264,448
B	70	1542.61	107,983
C	51	1762.99	89,912
D	13	1983.39	25,784
E	4	2424.12	9,696
F	2	2864.87	5,730
G	1	3305.63	3,306
<b>Total</b>	<b>341</b>		<b>£506,859</b>

Note: Based on current year data. No empty properties in Bands H.

3.4 Second homes within the Borough have been subject to a full Council Tax charge from April 2013 in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and a decision at Council was made on 26 February 2013. There are currently 133 properties in the Borough which are classed as second homes as the persons sole or main residence is elsewhere. The table below outlines the possible income, should legislation be approved, and proposals implemented, to increase second home charges based on data as at January 2023<sup>2</sup>.

3.5 **Table 4: Possible income in 2024/25 in respect of second homes should the determination be made to implement after legislation approved**

<b>Estimated income from second homes based on 2022/23 Council Tax charge</b>			
<b>Band</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>2022/23 charge £</b>	<b>Total £</b>
A	67	1,322.24	88,590
B	27	1,542.61	41,650
C	24	1,762.99	42,312
D	6	1,983.39	11,900
E	1	2,424.12	2,424
F	6	2,864.87	17,189
G	2	3,305.63	6,611
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>		<b>£210,676</b>

Note: Based on current year data. No second homes in Bands H.

3.6 The following factors have been considered when proposing the increased charges:

- The proposed legislation being passed in the current year to permit Councils to increase empty properties after one year of being empty, and to increase second home charges,
- The charging principles contained in Councils Corporate Charging Policy
- A number of Greater Manchester authorities are also considering increasing the charges effective from 01 April 2024, subject to legislation,
- The Council's overall budget position as the proposal to increase charges is likely to increase Council Tax debit by an estimated £700k.

3.7 This estimate will depend on the number of empty properties and the period in which they are empty, the number of second homes, and the annual Council Tax charge. Consideration has been given to aligning second home increases with empty properties and that 100% Council Tax is charged for the first year and then subsequent increases would be as follows:

<sup>2</sup> Note the number of second homes can fluctuate and Council Tax charges in future years will differ from those set in 2023/24.

**Table 5: Proposed Empty Property and Second Home Council Tax charges**

Empty Properties		Second Homes	
Timeframe	Amount of Council Tax payable from 01 April 2024*	Timeframe	Amount of Council Tax payable from 01 April 2024*
Empty up to 12 months	100%*	Up to 12 months	100%
More than 12 months and less than 5 years	200%	More than 12 months	200%*
Empty between 5 and 10 years	300%		
Empty for 10 years or more	400%		

\*Subject to legislation being passed before 31 March 2023

- 3.8 Alignment of the proposed charges would guard against empty property owners leaving furniture in a property and classing as a second home in an attempt to attract a reduced charge for a longer period of time ie being charged 100% Council Tax regardless as to the time frame rather than being subject to an increased charge over time as is the case with empty property charges.
- 3.9 It is therefore proposed, subject to legislation being passed in the current financial year, that Council Tax in respect of empty properties and second homes be increased to 200% charge after 12 months, effective from 01 April 2024, or at least one year after legislation is passed as by law the council has to provide 12 month's notice of the change in charge.
- 3.10 Should this decision be approved a programme of communication would be put into place. Information would be available on the Councils website, and all current owners and new owners of empty properties and second homes, would be informed to ensure that they would be aware of the increased changes as soon as possible.

#### 4. RISKS

- 4.1 The proposals are currently contained in the Levelling Up Bill and while legislation is expected to be passed in the current financial year, that may not come to fruition. If legislation is not passed before 31 March 2023, then the proposed increase could not become effective from 1 April 2024 and the effective date would be expected to be one year after the legislation is passed in adherence to the clause that Councils must '*make the determination at least one year before the financial year to which it relates*'. This would mean that the full year effect of any increased income would be reduced.
- 4.2 There is a risk in terms of the financial assumption made as it may not result in that amount of revenue being collected as the numbers of empty properties and the period which they are empty and the number of second homes changes over time.
- 4.3 It is sometimes difficult to collect Council Tax from people who are liable for properties which are not occupied on a continuous basis and in the current economic situation, however the policy to charge Council Tax on empty properties and second homes has been in place since 2013. Extended payment arrangements based on affordability and solicitors undertakings are offered to those who have difficulty in paying for an empty property, particularly where the property has been inherited and Council Tax discounts in respect of probate are no longer applicable.
- 4.4 The current economic position may indicate that there will be fewer empty properties in the future, however the economic situation may also see some properties taking longer to sell and so be empty for a period in excess of 12 months and attracting the higher charge. Equally an increased empty property charge may deter buyers where the property requires renovation or improvement prior to occupying or selling on.


## 5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Proposals to increase empty property and second home Council Tax charges are contained in the Levelling Up Bill currently progressing through Parliament. The proposals in the Bill will be inserted into the Local Government Finance Act upon legislation being passed. The Bill proposes as follows:
- Up to a maximum of a further 100% Council Tax be charged from the time the property has been empty for one year instead of the current 2 years.
  - Discounts on second homes be withdrawn
  - Second home Council Tax charges may be increased by no more than 100% providing that there is no-one resident and the dwelling is substantially furnished.
- 5.2 There are currently 133 second homes in the Borough and 341 empty properties however both of these figures fluctuate. If the proposals to increase charges were implemented and based on 2022/23 Council Tax levels, an estimated income of £506,859k could be realised from empty properties and £210,676k from second homes, however it must be taken into account that Councils must *'make the determination at least one year before the financial year to which it relates'*, and the charge could not be effective until 01 April 2024 subject to legislation being passed in the current financial year.
- 5.3 Any proposed increase in Council Tax for second homes and empty properties is aligned to guard against empty property owners leaving furniture in a property and classing as a second home in an attempt to attract a reduced charge for a longer period of time.
- 5.4 Risks are identified as being the fact that legislation may not be passed in the current financial year and the effective date for implementation would not be 01 April 2024, and would be one year after the legislation is passed and which may be a later date in 2024. As the numbers of empty properties and second homes change over time the estimated income may increase or decrease, and recovery of monies on properties which are not occupied can take longer, however charges have been in place from 2013 and repayment arrangements based on affordability are offered where appropriate.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE CABINET</b>
<b>Date:</b>	29 March 2023
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Councillor Eleanor Wills, Executive Member for Population Health and Wellbeing (with lead responsibility for poverty). Debbie Watson, Director of Population Health.
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>BUILDING RESILIENCE: TACKLING POVERTY IN TAMESIDE</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	This report provides an update on the development of a place based anti-poverty strategy by the Health and Wellbeing Board.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	Executive Cabinet are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(I) Note the report and the strategy document (<b>Appendix 1</b>) agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board for the place on 16 March 2023.</li><li>(II) Agree the strategy is adopted by Tameside Council as one of the place based partners who will work together through the Health and Wellbeing Board to deliver the recommendations outlined in the strategy.</li></ul>
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	The strategy cuts across all eight priorities of the Corporate Plan and underpins the life course model.
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	Development of this strategy is in line with and in response to emerging national and regional policy initiatives on reducing inequality and addressing poverty. The recommendations within will have policy implications for partners as they are implemented.
<b>Financial Implications:</b> <b>(Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer &amp; Chief Finance Officer)</b>	There are no direct financial implications arising from this update report on the development of the Anti-Poverty Strategy. However, there are numerous and complex financial implications for the Council that arise as a result of Poverty in the borough, and the implementation of the recommendations within the Anti-Poverty Strategy are likely to have some direct financial implications. The financial implications of the recommendations in the Anti-Poverty Strategy will need to be considered separately as recommendations are implemented, taking account both of the direct financial implications of recommendations and, where possible, considering the complex indirect financial implications of poverty (including areas such as demand for services and income collection).
<b>Legal Implications:</b> <b>(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	As set out in the report, work is ongoing to develop the strategy. Consultation has been undertaken to assist the council in forming this strategy. The feedback from the consultation has been carefully considered as part of the finalisation of the strategy.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	No additional risks identified as a result of this paper or strategy
<b>Access to Information:</b>	Papers relating to this report can be obtained by contacting: Simon Brunet, Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence;  e-mail: <a href="mailto:simon.brunet@tameside.gov.uk">simon.brunet@tameside.gov.uk</a> James Mallion, Interim Assistant Director of Population Health;

 e-mail: [james.mallion@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:james.mallion@tameside.gov.uk)

Tom Hoghton, Policy and Strategy Service Manager.

 e-mail: [tom.hoghton@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:tom.hoghton@tameside.gov.uk)



## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In recent years the rise of poverty, exacerbated by the cost of living crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic has emerged as a major policy issue. The current cost of living crisis has been significantly worsened by a number of longer-term structural weaknesses in the UK, including low wages, low productivity and high inequality relative to other major economies.
- 1.2 All partners recognise the severity of the current crisis and are working hard to support residents and gain a deeper understanding of poverty through cooperation with groups such as the Tameside Poverty Truth Commission.
- 1.3 Following the development of a Poverty Needs Assessment which sits as part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, the Health & Wellbeing Board agreed to support the development of a system-wide strategy to address both the short-term and long-term issues that drive poverty in Tameside.
- 1.4 The strategy – *'Building Resilience: Tackling Poverty in Tameside'* – was adopted by the Health and Wellbeing Board at their meeting on 16 March 2023. The document is attached at [Appendix 1](#).

## 2. DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY

- 2.1 The consultation and research undertaken through the development of the needs assessment served the dual purpose of understanding both the issues prevalent in Tameside but also the available solutions. The needs assessment is attached at [Appendix 2](#).
- 2.2 The following is a summary of the exercises undertaken to gather this information
  - Service mapping interviews to understand processes, pressures and pinch-points and capture the views of service users and front-line staff on causes and potential solutions to poverty. Response data from 43 teams and services was recorded and coded to provide actionable qualitative data.
  - Public consultation on the council's Big Conversation platform for 8 weeks, asking respondents "What do you think about poverty in Tameside?" and "What can we do about poverty in Tameside?" In total, 261 responses were received which were also recorded and coded to identify themes and trends and draw out quantitative data. Plus a further consultation on the draft recommendations.
  - Stockport-based organisation DJS Research was commissioned to conduct a series of four focus groups with people with lived experience of poverty in Tameside, with the aim of taking a more in-depth look at the key themes emerging from the survey and service-mapping work.
  - Poverty was the headline focus of the July 2022 Partnership Engagement Network Conference, which explored the themes emerging from the survey and service mapping work and asked participants to give their views on poverty and our progress to date.
  - Input from the Poverty Truth Commission (PTC). While the PTC is an independent and standalone forum that will produce their own findings and reports, we have worked closely with them and used their knowledge and lived experience of Poverty to inform the Needs Assessment. The PTC report and recommendations are attached at [Appendix 3](#).
  - Adopted findings and recommendations from the Inequalities Reference Group who, in turn, incorporated views of those with lived experience into their reports.

- Data, research, literature and other good practice from organisations such as the Resolution Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, House of Commons Library, and Greater Manchester Poverty Action, as well as national data repositories such as the Office for National Statistics, Public Health England's Fingertips database, StatXPlore from the Department for Work and Pensions, and local statistics gathered through collaborative work with the Greater Manchester Poverty Group

2.3 In addition, on 12 December 2022 a sub-group of the Health & Wellbeing Board was convened with membership invited from key Partners to review a draft of the some proposed recommendations based on the above. Following a robust discussion, a revised version of the recommendations was published for public consultation and also circulated and promoted through networks and agencies with a specific interest in this area. A further meeting of the Health & Wellbeing Board on 19 January 2023 also offered opportunity to review the revised recommendations.

### 3. **GMPA REPORT ON ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGIES**

- 3.1 On 22 February 2023, Greater Manchester Poverty Action (GMPA) published their report '*Local anti-poverty strategies – Good practice and effective approaches*'. The report is attached at **Appendix 4**.
- 3.2 GMPA make twelve advisory recommendations for those areas embarking on the development of an anti-poverty strategy.
- 3.3 Current work puts Tameside in a strong position against GMPA's recommendations. Examples of work that meet the recommendations include:
- Poverty Needs Assessment
  - Programme of engagement and lived experience listening.
  - Poverty Truth Commission.
  - Adoption of the socio-economic duty in 2022.
  - Partnership approach through the Health and Wellbeing Board.
  - Clear leadership with named Executive Member (Cllr Wills).
  - Development of a detailed and tracked action plan (in development now).
  - Poverty dashboard (in development now building on the needs assessment).
  - Pilot and implementation of Money Advice Referral Tool.

### 4. **NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 The final consultation concluded on 31 January 2023 with minimal revision of the core recommendations required.
- 4.2 The final strategy was presented at Health and Wellbeing Board on 16 March 2023 where it was formally adopted by the board on behalf of all partners.

- 4.3 An action plan to deliver the ambitions set out in the strategy is already in development over which the Health & Wellbeing Board will have oversight. Delivery of the action plan will be undertaken by a sub-group reporting into the Board.
- 4.4 It is appropriate for the council to also adopt the strategy and establish an operational delivery group internally to ensure its contribution to delivery of the action plan is progressed quickly and effectively.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

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# Building Resilience

Tackling poverty in Tameside 2023-27



# Foreword

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**Welcome to the new Building Resilience Strategy, aimed at tackling poverty in Tameside. This document sets out in detail our principles and vision for combating the scourge of poverty and its consequences in Tameside.**

Behind the economic facts and figures there lies a very real human cost to poverty. Its impact on the lives of individuals cannot be understated, and encompasses everything from mental and physical health, poor outcomes in education and employment, substandard housing, social marginalisation and even drug and alcohol addiction. Poverty also puts significant extra pressure on services and communities that are already seriously overstretched by a decade of austerity. Even for those who are fortunate enough to have never experienced poverty in their lives, the reality is that any number of unexpected events including bereavement, relationship breakdown, ill health or job loss could very easily leave a household or individual suddenly struggling to make ends meet.

Over the past few years the scourge of poverty has escalated into one of the gravest social issues we face as a country, as the coronavirus pandemic gave way to the worst cost of living crisis in a generation. Large increases in the price of consumer goods and energy, exacerbated by the conflict in Ukraine, have driven the rate of inflation to 10.5% as of January 2023. In response, interest rates have been raised to the highest level since the 2008 Financial Crisis, piling additional pressure on all households but especially those with mortgages or other loans.

**Councillor Eleanor Wills**  
Executive Member (Population Health & Well-being)

Such is the severity of the economic crisis we face that the Bank of England has warned that we are now in the midst of what they predict will be the longest recession in a century.

Despite all this, we must never lose sight of the fact that none of this means that poverty is inevitable. As one of the richest and most developed countries in the world, we can and must do better. If the right support is put in place then not only will those in poverty have a chance to lift themselves out, but we will all enjoy the benefits of a stronger economy, a healthier society and a fairer country too. While much of the work that would be required to make this a reality can only be launched by central government, there are still decisions that local areas working in partnership can take to fight poverty locally.

The Strategy lays out exactly what that means in practice. Over the past year, we have consulted extensively with our residents on what they think about poverty in Tameside and what they would like to see done about it. Much of the information that shapes this Strategy has come from people who have struggled with the reality of poverty in their everyday lives, or organisations that fight on the frontline against poverty within our communities.

In particular, I want to acknowledge the extraordinary bravery and commitment of the members of the Tameside Poverty Truth Commission, whose tireless work and fierce advocacy for change has influenced much of our new approach.

Thanks to the data we have collected from the Tameside Poverty Truth Commission and our Poverty Needs Assessment, we have gained a comprehensive insight into the challenges we face, the areas where good work is already being undertaken, the places where there may be gaps in our provision, and the opportunities that exist to start making a difference.

This in turn has shaped the key priorities that lie at the heart of this Strategy. In no particular order, these include:

**“Raising incomes”** – supporting residents to maximise their income and access all benefits they are entitled to.

**“Making Tameside work for everyone”** – securing high-quality and high-wage employment for all residents.

**“Poverty is everybody’s business”** – supporting residents, communities and partners to spot the signs of poverty and direct those in need to the appropriate help.

**“Climbing out of the debt trap”** – Taking action against the high levels of debt, insolvencies and poor access to good credit experienced by many residents.

**“Breaking the cycle”** – Focusing specifically on providing the best start in childhood and education for our young people.

**“Laying the foundations”** – Ensuring residents have access to what they need in order to live in comfort and dignity, including food, housing and warmth.

**“Putting people first”** – Making sure that our working practices, both customer-facing and internal, are best placed to identify and support those in poverty.

**“No one left behind digitally”** – Focusing specifically on digital skills to help residents access support and opportunities.

**“One size doesn’t fit all”** – Providing additional support for residents identified as being at particular risk of poverty, including disabled residents, carers, ethnic minorities, and those suffering from poor mental health.

**“Advocating for change”** – Highlighting the need for action on poverty-related issues where responsibility lies with national government.

This Strategy complements, and should be viewed in conjunction with, other documents such as the Inclusive Growth Strategy, the Housing Strategy, the ‘Grow with Me’ Child and Parent Relationship Strategy, the Early Help Strategy and the Adult Social Care Strategy.

My thanks go out to everybody involved in this Strategy’s development, and I look forward to working with all of you over the next few years to transform Tameside into a borough where every resident is offered dignity, respect and the opportunity to succeed.



# Introduction

**Poverty in the modern world is a complex and multi-faceted problem. While the Joseph Rowntree Foundation describes poverty as, “When a person’s resources (mainly their material resources) are not sufficient to meet their minimum needs (including social participation)”, there is no single and universally accepted definition.**

This is a reflection of the fact that poverty comes in many shapes and forms, and can vary significantly both in terms of its duration and severity. While some people may experience poverty for a short period due to adverse circumstances (For example, when moving between jobs) for others it is an entrenched situation that can last several years or even bridge generations. At the same time some people may experience poverty as a limiting but survivable condition, while for others it could mean not being able to afford the basics needed to live, such as housing, food, clothing, and energy.

This complexity is also evident when it comes to measuring poverty. In the absence of a single universally accepted best measurement of poverty, different methods are used determined what the best way to capture the desired information is. Some of these include:

- **Absolute income poverty:** This is a measure of whether those in the lowest income households are seeing their incomes rise in real terms. It is defined as “households whose income is below 60% of inflation-adjusted UK median income in 2010/11”
- **Relative income poverty:** This is a measure of whether those in the lowest income households are keeping pace with the growth of incomes in the economy as a whole. It is defined as “households whose income is below 60% of UK median income in the same year”
- **Material deprivation:** Where households or individuals cannot afford certain essential items and activities.
- **Destitution:** Where households or individuals cannot afford basic necessities such as housing, food, clothing etc.

- **Minimum income standard:** Where an income level that allows people to live a “minimum acceptable standard of living” is calculated, and households are considered to be in poverty if they fall below this line.

Typically, these measurements are presented after taking into account direct taxation (including Council Tax) and National Insurance contributions. Housing costs, including rent, mortgage, insurance, water rates etc can also be considered, with measurements defined as “before housing costs” or “after housing costs” as appropriate.

# Causes of Poverty

**Poverty is often a result of a range of factors as opposed to a single cause, and some of the causes can also be consequences, leading to a downward spiral of poverty that can be incredibly difficult to escape. Individual life events – such as sickness, bereavement, job losses and relationship breakdown – can be common triggers, as well as larger scale events such as economic recessions.**

In a broad sense, some of the primary causes of poverty in the UK in recent years include:

- **Employment:** Despite historically low levels of unemployment, an increasing number of jobs do not provide decent pay, security, or potential for progression. This can also lead to inadequate savings and pensions, leaving people more vulnerable to financial shocks beyond their control. Far from being the main route out of poverty, in many cases insecure and/or low-paid employment can actually exacerbate poverty, deprivation and financial insecurity.
- **Low levels of skills or education:** People without necessary skills and qualifications can find themselves at a serious disadvantage when it comes to finding employment, and are at an increased risk of being channelled into low-quality jobs as described above. This is particularly true in the case of digital skills, as a large amount of employment opportunities now require at least a degree of computer literacy.

- **Ineffective and inadequate benefits:** As a result of changes to the benefits system over the past decade, the level of benefits received by people – whether they are in work, seeking work or unable to work because of health or care issues – is no longer sufficient to avoid falling into poverty in many cases. The benefit system, as it stands, is also difficult to understand and navigate, leading to errors or delays, punitive withholding of benefits through sanctions, low take-up of benefits despite people being entitled to them, and increased risks when moving into jobs or increasing working hours.
- **Increasing costs:** While living costs have been increasing at a faster rate than the average wage for a number of years, the cost of living crisis and rising inflation have dramatically accelerated this trend. The high cost of housing and essential goods and services (electricity, water, Council Tax, telephone and broadband) is driving many into poverty. This is not felt equally by all, with some people facing particularly high costs either due to where they live, increased needs (For example, due to ill health or disability), or because they are paying a “poverty premium” – the extra costs people on low incomes and in poverty pay for essential products and services.

- **Inequality of outcomes:** Inequality of outcome occurs when some individuals gain much more than others from a social or economic transaction, regardless of how this came to be. In the context of poverty, it refers to any measurable differences in outcome between those who have experienced poverty and the rest of the population. This includes education, health, employment, living standards, security and participation in public life.
- **Inequality of opportunities:** Differences in people’s backgrounds or circumstances can also have a significant influence on poverty by restricting their access to services and opportunities to improve their condition. While this could be due to protected characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, disability, age, sexuality, religion or parental status, suffering from poverty can also be a source of inequality of opportunities in itself.
- **Life issues:** Issues in people’s own lives, including but not limited to; neglect, abuse or trauma, relationship breakdown or drug and alcohol misuse can lead to, or exacerbate, poverty. This can also lead to further co-morbid issues such as poor mental health, negative impacts on development, education, and social or emotional skills or receiving a criminal record. Children are often particularly at risk in situations such as these.

## What Does Poverty Look Like in Tameside?

**According to the latest English Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) data, 17.5% of the population in Tameside was income-deprived in 2019. Of the 316 local authorities in England, Tameside is ranked 37th most income deprived, falling within the 20% most income deprived local authorities nationally. Of the 141 neighbourhoods in Tameside, 54 were among the 20% most income-deprived in England.**

While the nature of poverty in Tameside aligns closely with many of the national trends described previously, there are a number of specific factors that must be taken into account.

Studies such as The Marmot Review have shown that poverty and health are inextricably linked, with each being a cause and a consequence of each other. Living in poverty increases the chances of poor health, for example through malnutrition, substandard living conditions or inability to afford basic hygiene products, to give just three examples. Poor health can also trap people in poverty, for example by making it harder for them to find and sustain employment.

While several pieces of national-level research have shown a significant difference in life expectancy in the most- and least-deprived parts of the country, this trend is especially apparent in Tameside. The borough is ranked 5th lowest out of 10 in Greater Manchester for male life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, and 9th lowest out of 10 for female life expectancy and healthy life expectancy. There are also significant disparities in life expectancy within Tameside, with a difference of 8.7 years between men and 7.9 years for women in the most deprived wards compared to the least.

The distribution of poverty within Tameside is also unusual when compared to other local authorities. As a rule of thumb, local authorities with a higher overall level of income deprivation tend to have distinct areas of affluence and poverty. However, Tameside is abnormal in that it has a high level of income deprivation, but poverty in the borough is less clustered and more evenly spread geographically. This must be borne in mind when developing recommendations and policies. For example, a focus on targeting the most deprived areas in Tameside may not be effective in delivering support to those that require it.



# Developing the Building Resilience Strategy

Information was gathered through the following exercises to facilitate the creation of this tackling poverty:

## Service mapping

43 individual services were mapped to capture the views of service users and front-line staff, and to understand processes, demand, and pinch-points across the local public and voluntary sector infrastructure. This was achieved through a combination of desk research and conversation with stakeholders, included council officers, representatives from local VCSFE groups and residents' panels. Particular attention was focused on the views of young people and those with disabilities. To engage with these groups, officers attended the Tameside Youth Council and People First Tameside.

## Public surveys

An 8-week consultation was launched in Summer 2022, asking respondents "What do you think about poverty in Tameside?" and "What can we do about poverty in Tameside?".

Following the completion of the first draft of the Building Resilience Strategy in December 2022, this was followed up with a second survey asking for residents' and partners' views on the proposed recommendations as a whole.

## Focus groups

Stockport-based DJS Research Ltd, an employee-owned market research company, was commissioned to conduct a series of four focus groups with people with lived experience of poverty in Tameside.

## Partnership Engagement Network



Poverty was the headline focus of the July 2022 Partnership Engagement Network Conference, exploring the themes emerging from early consultation and service mapping work.

## Poverty Truth Commission

To amplify the voices of people living in poverty, Tameside Council have supported the Poverty Truth Commission, delivered by Greater Manchester Poverty Action. The commission brought together grassroots commissioners, people with lived experience of poverty and senior civic, political and business leaders, known as civic commissioners, on an equal footing to inform decision making within Tameside. Grassroots commissioners shared difficult stories and worked tirelessly to help identify and shape urgent priorities across the borough, focusing on: housing, access to services and mental health.

Recommendations from these groups have enormously influenced the development of the Tackling Poverty in Tameside Strategy as well as the wider approach to poverty across the borough.

## Data

Data, research, literature and other qualitative and quantitative data was used to inform the Tackling Poverty in Tameside Strategy and supporting material such as the Needs Assessment. Exact sources have been referenced where appropriate.

## Inequalities Reference Group (IRG)

The Inequalities Reference Group (IRG) aims to reduce inequality in Tameside & Glossop. The group meets on a quarterly basis, providing a forum for the sharing of ideas and thoughts on carrying out responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. Membership is drawn from Tameside Council elected members, local NHS Governing Body members, VCSFE representatives and the Tameside Independent Advisory Group.

The group has produced a number of papers on topic ranging from Barriers to Accessing Information to Voices of People with Learning Disabilities which have been incorporated into this Strategy.



# Needs Assessment

A comprehensive Needs Assessment was created to understand the nature of poverty in Tameside, as well as gaps in services and processes. The full document has been attached as Appendix 1 to this report. However, key challenges identified are as follows:



## Benefits

**4.8%** of people in Tameside were in receipt of benefits.

As of July 2022, 4.8% of people in Tameside were in receipt of benefits, compared to just 3.7% of people in Great Britain.

**£5.2million** unclaimed pension credit per year in Tameside.

Many benefits are under-claimed. For example; there is an estimated £5.2million unclaimed pension credit per year in Tameside.

## Debt



**Almost 1 in 4** of Tameside residents are over-indebted

(i.e. owing money that needs to be paid back, but struggling to do so).

**7th highest rate**

of individual insolvencies in the country.

**36%** of respondents expected their financial circumstances to worsen.

Data collected from the DJS surveys show that 36% of respondents expected their financial circumstances to worsen over the next five years.

## Food Poverty



**15.07%** experiencing struggle with food insecurity” in Tameside.

The percentage of households defined as “experiencing struggle with food insecurity” in Tameside is the highest in Greater Manchester at 15.07%.



**12,976** food parcels distributed by foodbanks in 2020-21.

The number of food parcels distributed by foodbanks in the Trussell Trust Network in Tameside increased from 9,917 in 2019-20 to 12,976 in 2020-21.



## Fuel Poverty

**14.1%** of households in Tameside are estimated to be in fuel poverty.

This is higher than the national average of 13.2%.



**60%**

of homes in Tameside are considered to be energy inefficient.

## Employment



**71.5%** of Tameside jobs pay the Living Wage.

Tameside has the lowest proportion of jobs paying the Living Wage or above in Greater Manchester at 71.5%, compared to the Greater Manchester average of 79.2%.



**26.6%** of residents achieve an NVQ4 or above level qualification.

Tameside has the lowest rate of residents with higher level of qualifications in Greater Manchester. Just 26.6% of residents achieve an NVQ4 or above level qualification, 17% lower than the national average.

## Council Tax



**25%** of working age claimants receiving Council Tax Support within Tameside.

When compared to other Greater Manchester local authorities, working age claimants receiving Council Tax Support within Tameside had to pay the highest percentage of their bill as a minimum contribution (25%).



**Four in five respondents (79%)**

to a UK-wide survey of National Debtline clients with council tax arrears felt that the actions of their council in collecting the debt had a negative impact on their wellbeing.



## Mental Health

**19.5%** of Tameside residents aged 16 or over have one or more **Common Mental Disorder (CMDs)**

The estimated rate of Common Mental Disorders (CMDs) in Tameside is 19.5% for residents aged 16 or over. This is above the England average of 16.9%.

There is a significant gap in terms of employment support for people with CMDs, with only 33% of respondents to a poll conducted by the Money and Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI) saying that they had received such a service.

## Disabilities



**£583** extra costs a month for adults with disabilities. Families with children with disabilities face average extra costs of £581 a month due to issues associated with disability and ill health.

Tameside's disability employment gap in 2019-20 was 31.9%, the 4th highest in Greater Manchester.

## Life Expectancy



While Tameside is ranked 5th out of 10 in Greater Manchester authorities for male life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, it is ranked 9th out of 10 for female life expectancy and healthy life expectancy.

There are significant disparities in life expectancy within Tameside. Males born in Denton West can expect to live 8.7 years longer than those born in St. Peters, while females born in Stalybridge South will live 7.9 years longer than those born in St. Peters.

Males born in Denton West can expect to **live 8.7 years longer** than those born in St. Peters, while females born in Stalybridge South will **live 7.9 years longer** than those born in St. Peters.



## Carers

**11% (14,106)** of residents in Tameside have some kind of unpaid caring responsibilities.

Additionally, according to data from the 2011 Census, 2.9% of residents (6,359) provided more than 50 hours of unpaid care a week.

**30%** of families in receipt of Carer's Allowance and in poverty in 2019-20.

Research from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has also shown that the number of families in receipt of Carer's Allowance and in poverty has doubled from 15% in 2005-6 to 30% in 2019-20.

## Barriers to Accessing Services



**14.9%** Digital exclusion in Tameside

Digital exclusion in Tameside is high, with 14.9% of LSOAs with a Digital Exclusion Risk Index score of 5.0+ compared to 4.2% across Greater Manchester.



**59%** of residents found it "difficult or very difficult" to access information and services before the Covid-19 pandemic.

This increased to 80% during the pandemic.

## Service User Experience



**People** in poverty should be treated with more dignity, respect and compassion by council staff and services. A number of respondents to our consultation stated their belief that people in poverty should be treated with more dignity, respect or compassion by council staff and services.

## Child Poverty



**1,250** households in Tameside are affected by the two-child limit on Universal Credit and tax credits.



**30%** of Children in Tameside were eligible for Free School Meals (FSMs)  
In the 2022 Summer term, 30% of Children in Tameside were eligible for Free School Meals (FSMs) which is 7.15% higher than England's national average.

## Social Housing



**71.7%** of tenants in the affordable rented sector receive an income of less than £300 gross each week. Data from the latest Tameside Housing Strategy shows that 71.7% of tenants in the affordable rented sector receive an income of less than £300 gross each week and 41.3% receive less than £200 gross each week.



**1,628** affordable homes, have been built in Tameside in the 13 years between 2006/7 and 2018/19.

In the 13 years between 2006/7 and 2018/19 5,985 homes, of which 1,628 were affordable, have been built in Tameside. This is significantly below the target of 8,720 for the same period.



# Private Rent

**£40** a month gap between Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and average rent in Tameside.

Between 2020 and 2021, the gap between Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and average rent in Tameside increased from £30 to £40 a month. This is the 3rd highest increase in Greater Manchester over this period.

**20%** median rent increase for properties in Tameside.

The median rent for properties in Tameside has increased by nearly 20% across all property sizes in the last 4 years.

# Homelessness



**31%** increase in the number of people requiring temporary accommodation in Tameside from June-December 2021.

Following the lifting of lock down measures, including the eviction ban, there has been a 31% increase in the number of people requiring temporary accommodation in Tameside from June-December 2021.

**66,000** more people nationally will be homeless by 2024 due to the cost-of-living crisis.

According to Crisis, due to the cost of living crisis, more than 66,000 more people nationally will be homeless by 2024, with the bulk of the increase being among people forced to “sofa surf”.



# What are we doing already?

While this strategy will be used to develop a more strategic approach to combating poverty in the borough, there is a recognition that the impact of the cost of living crisis will require immediate action in the coming months to protect residents. To that end, the following actions have been undertaken:

## Tameside Helping Hand

Tameside Helping Hand is a one-stop-shop specifically curated for cost of living support. The core aim of Helping Hand Tameside is to ensure that people know how to get in touch with local services and organisations, how to book appointments for support, and that they receive money they're entitled to, for example pension top up credit, Healthy Start vouchers and tax free child care.

Activities launched under the Helping Hand programme include Cost of Living support events, complemented by a Helping Hand Roadshow which proactively brings information stalls, council officers, and elected members to communities across Tameside. A website and a series of printed leaflets have also been created to signpost to services which can help residents with a number of issues, such as finances, housing, employment, digital literacy, and health and wellbeing.





## Accessibility of Services

In order to strengthen awareness and accessibility of services, a number of Cost of Living Champions have been recruited and trained to provide advice and signposting in their own workplaces and communities. This has been complemented by a new face-to-face Customer Services offer, which allows residents to book in-person and telephone appointments with services provided by Tameside Council and the Citizen's Advice Bureau within Tameside One.

## Tameside Money Advice Referral Tool (MART)

The Tameside Money Advice Referral Tool (MART) is a joint project by Tameside Council's Welfare Rights service, Citizen's Advice Bureau, Greater Manchester Poverty Action and local VCSFE groups. The MART is set up to assist frontline workers through a conversation with service users about their financial difficulties so they can confidently direct them to relevant advice and support within the local area. The aim is to help people to get all the money that they are entitled to, and to reduce the need for referrals to food banks, by increasing referrals to other kinds of support.

## Household Support and Winter Pressure Funds

Tameside Council manages a number of one-off discretionary payment schemes to support local residents and organisations through cost of living pressures. This includes the Household Support Fund, which provides money for essentials such as food and energy to vulnerable households, and the Winter Pressure Fund which supports local activity that can help to alleviate pressures, create additional capacity, or extend existing provision where other funds are not available over the winter period.

## Warm Welcome Hubs

Warm Welcome Hubs have been launched across the Borough to provide a warm, safe and welcoming space for anyone to use. Warm Welcome Hubs are located within libraries during staffed hours. Partnerships have also been undertaken with the VCFSE sector to promote any community-based Hubs to residents and, using the Winter Pressures Fund, provide financial support to several Warm Welcome Hubs.



## Digital Skills and Inclusion

The use of technology in the workplace, the rollout of Universal Credit (which is predominantly accessed via an online journal) and the trend of local authorities to encourage residents to access services online has made it increasingly necessary for all residents to have at least a basic level of digital literacy. The Tameside Digital Inclusion Strategy aims to improve digital skills and ensure that every resident has free access to high quality internet services through libraries and SWIFT public Wi-Fi. This strategy will help to prevent residents suffering from financial hardship or poor health outcomes as a result of digital exclusion.

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# Building Resilience:

## Tackling Poverty in Tameside Strategy Recommendations and Key Themes

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### 1. “Raising incomes” – supporting residents to maximise income and access all benefits they are entitled to

- Influence employers in the borough to become both Living Wage and Living Hours employers, and provide support for them to do so through improved productivity and skills development through delivery of the Inclusive Growth Strategy.
- Further promote the effective use of the Tameside Money Advice Referral Tool in all appropriate settings and commit to updating as required. Promote a culture of effective referrals over signposting.

### Case Study

#### Royal Borough of Greenwich

Partners across Greenwich have funded the rollout of three advice hubs in partnership with Citizens Advice, Greenwich Housing Rights, and Plumstead Community Law Centre. These weekly drop-in sessions include a range of services such as free face-to-face benefits, debt, immigration, and housing advice. Roaming advice hubs have also been introduced at five further locations across the borough to maximise the delivery of face-to-face support.

- Strengthen our preventive approach to tackling poverty by facilitating easier access to advice at an earlier stage. This includes exploring opportunities to deliver increased outreach, welfare rights and debt advice and making sure everyone knows their role in tackling poverty and supporting residents.
- Introduce and adequately resource a permanent Local Welfare Provisions scheme which is responsive, easy to access and connects residents to support to resolve root causes of presenting issues providing timely help, to those in crisis.

## Case Study

### Salford Assist

Salford Assist offers help for residents facing financial hardship to meet their immediate needs by providing support with food, baby milk, nappies, fuel, essential furniture items or white goods, bedding, cooking equipment, costs associated with moving, and copies of birth certificates for homeless people. The service also links in with advice and referrals to other services, agencies or funds. Assistance may also include things such as seeking debt advice, referral routes to affordable loans and recycled furniture schemes. They also give advice on how to access more affordable fuel tariffs and benefits.

The scheme is linked to other support services including homelessness prevention, debt advice, welfare rights, money management skills, affordable loans and council tax.

- Proactively identify and support households on legacy benefits ahead of the 2024 managed migration to Universal Credit to ensure they are receiving everything they are entitled to.
- Ensure everyone who needs welfare rights advice can access support by securing capacity within the Welfare Rights Advice Team, associated services and other partners to carry out targeted work with groups known to be under-claiming benefits, such as older residents missing out on pension credit.

## Case Study

Page 13

Scott Silverton was referred to the Welfare Rights Team as he had worsening memory loss issues and was struggling for money after paying rent and Council Tax in full each month out of his State Pension. His son had tried to apply for benefits on his behalf but had been unsuccessful. A benefit check was completed which identified that claims for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Pension Credit and Attendance Allowance were required. This included a request to backdate the housing benefit and council tax support by 3 months. Following the team's intervention Mr Silverton was in a much more secure financial position, able to afford his rent and not required to pay any Council Tax.

- Work with water and energy utility providers to identify opportunities for low-income customers to move to reduced or social tariffs.

## Case Study

### Maidstone Borough Council

Maidstone has launched a data sharing partnership with South East Water UK to identify low-income customers and transfer them to a social water tariff. The council have utilised the powers set out in the Digital Economy Act - a piece of legislation aimed at improving public services through the better use of data - to achieve this. It is expected that a total of 7,000 residents will benefit from the scheme, equating to around 10% of the total properties in the borough.

- Improve the ability of households to pay their energy bills by raising awareness of discounts and how to apply e.g. Winter Fuel Payment, Warm Home Discount, Cold Weather Payments, energy provider discretionary funds.

## 2. “Making Tameside Work for Everyone” – securing high-quality and high-wage employment for all residents

Expand the capacity of the Routes to Work programme to meet demand.

- Reform Social Value approach to increase the weighting applied to “real living wage” and “real living hours” providers in tendering applications, ensuring that contract values enable this.
- Use links with businesses to identify skills gaps in the local economy and drive education and training opportunities to match.

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### Case Study

Since its launch in January 2022, Tameside In Work has supported over a third of its customers into better paid work or increased their working hours. The programme has successfully helped residents overcome skills barriers, increased their confidence to help them meet their potential, and provided specialist information on how they can develop skills for different employment sectors and job opportunities. Year 2 of the programme will enhance the offer further with an increased focus on specialist skills training, digital skills tools and peer mentoring group sessions.

- Further develop the Tameside-in-work progression programme to enhance progression opportunities for those in work.
- Promote awareness of skillsets that disabled and neuro-diverse people can offer to drive employment and support employers to reduce the barriers those groups face in the workplace.
- Improve access to employment opportunities and address in-work poverty for people in housing need or those at risk of becoming homeless, to help them sustain long-term housing.

### 3. “Poverty is Everybody’s Business” – supporting residents, communities and partners to spot the signs of poverty and signpost to support

- Build on the ‘Helping Hand’ campaign to deliver a financial resilience communications plan to raise awareness of the support on offer for residents experiencing hardship both nationally and locally, highlighting priorities at opportune times such as The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

## Case Study

### Partnership Working - Bradford

In Bradford, the council health and voluntary and community sector partners, have come together to support residents with the cost-of-living crisis. Together they are running a number of activities to support residents and colleagues. Work includes community outreach, webinars and meetings for frontline professionals and a targeted cost of living campaign aimed at local people.

[NHS England » Partnership working in Bradford District and Craven helps communities with the cost-of-living crisis](#)

- Promote a ‘no wrong door approach’ by offering training to organisations in community settings (Community Champions, GPs, market traders, charity workers, hairdressers, schools etc) to identify vulnerable residents, and refer them to appropriate support with sensitivity and compassion.

## Case Study

### Collective Response to Cost of Living Crisis – North WALES

#### Community Housing Cymru ([chcymru.org.uk](http://chcymru.org.uk))

Six North Wales Housing Associations with a ‘common social purpose to make a positive impact on local people across North Wales have produced a joint commitment to tackle poverty in their area.’

- Partners across Tameside to explore how to increase capacity across across VCFSE sector, acknowledging the increased demand upon services as a result of the Cost of Living crisis.
- Strengthen coordination with local Registered Providers to share good practice and resources to best support their tenants and also the wider community, including incorporating lived experience into decision-making.
- Embed a customer-focused approach by reviewing resident feedback of their journey through services to ensure support is easy to access, non-stigmatising and effective.



## Case Study

### Onward Homes – Helping Hand Winter Warmer Event

Local housing association Onward Homes partnered with Tameside Council to host a Cost of Living Support event, Helping Hand’s Winter Warmer.

The event linked Tameside residents who were struggling with cost of living pressures to a wealth of support services and organisations who provided help with finances, debt, housing, food, employment, mental health and wellbeing. Onward’s tenancy support team was also on hand to provide details on local work and skills coordination, income management and social investment.



#### 4. “Climbing out of the debt trap” – Tameside residents have relatively high levels of debt and insolvencies, and poor access to good credit as a result.

- Formulate a task and finish group under the Health & Wellbeing Board to look in detail at the issue of why Tameside residents hold relatively high levels of debt, have high rates of insolvency and low credit scores to identify some preventative solutions.

### Case Study

Using a “Low Income Family Tracker” dashboard for Housing and Council Tax debt Haringey Council are able to identify household poverty trends to proactively target debt advice and inform their Debt Strategy.

- Improve access to, and promote the use of, Cash Box Credit Union services, including savings accounts and sustainable and ethical credit.

- Implement the national breathing space debt respite scheme within the local authority, enabling TMBC Debt advisors to utilise the portal and raise awareness within the borough.
- Explore the possibility of increasing the capacity of co-located advisors specialising in debt and housing advice for tenants living in the private rented sector.
- Work across the partnership to proactively tackle illegal money lending by promoting awareness through training and campaigns, and developing procedures to better support affected residents.

## 5. “Breaking the cycle” – specific focus on providing the best start in childhood and education

- Work with schools and colleges in the borough to agree a good practice model for financial education for pupils across all age group.

### Case Study

A ‘financial champion’ award-winning school in Yorkshire undertook an audit of its subjects, identifying opportunities to strengthen the delivery of financial education and make links across the curriculum.

It also undertook student voice activities to hear directly from the young people about the financial topics they were keen to learn about. The school now has a planned approach to the delivery of financial education. Financial education is overseen by a senior member of staff who also ensures the delivery is quality assured.

An element of financial education is included in PSHE education for years 7 to 13, and students can access level 2 and 3 finance qualifications. The school has also worked with local feeder primary schools.



- Establish a working group with school leaders to develop a mechanism to enable schools to better identify and overcome the barriers to learning that children and young people from families with less financial resources face.

## Case study

### Poverty Proofing© the School Day - Children North East ([children-ne.org.uk](http://children-ne.org.uk))

Poverty Proofing© the School Day is a tool developed by Children North-East for identifying the barriers children living in poverty face when engaging fully with school life and its opportunities. Focused on listening to the voices and experiences of young people and their families, it offers a pathway for schools to address often unseen inequalities within their activities, helping them reduce stigma, break the link between educational attainment and financial background, and supports schools to explore the most effective way to spend Pupil Premium.

## Case study

### Cost of the School Day Calendar

The “Cost of the School Day” calendar breaks down on a month-by-month basis common barriers to education for disadvantaged children and offers alternatives and other suggestions. This includes highlighting common annual celebration days in schools and how we can avoid making these inaccessible for disadvantaged children.

There is also general advice about issues such as uniforms, trips, school lunches, gym kits, pencils and pens, dress down days and other school costs that can be difficult to afford for low-income families.

Throughout the calendar, there are ideas and good practice examples from schools across England, Scotland and Wales who have taken part in the Cost of the School Day project.

- Work with relevant partners such as Tameside Hospital, GPs and other health community settings to increase take up of Healthy Start vouchers by signposting and encouraging eligible service users to apply.
- Increase the uptake of Healthy Start vouchers, using public campaigns and assets (such as Community Champions) to ensure that all eligible families are aware of and can access the scheme.
- Investigate options of working with DWP to auto enrol or send personalised invitation letters to families eligible for Healthy Start vouchers through flagging of Universal Credit accounts.

## Case Study

### Feeding Britain: A Policy for Improving Child Nutrition – Securing Full Take-Up of Healthy Start Vouchers and Free School Meals in England

Research from charity Feeding Britain has shown that, despite investment in time, effort, and resources, 44% of potentially eligible families are not registered for Healthy Start and, as a result, £1 million worth of vouchers go unclaimed each week. Of particular concern is the finding that some families are having to rely on food banks because they are not registered for their Healthy Start entitlement.

It was suggested that, in order to address this, the basis for Healthy Start and free school meal registration should shift from 'opt in' to 'opt out' through an automated process. While the primary drive for this could only come from national government, it has been identified that local authorities could facilitate this in their own area by amending the Council Tax Support application form, and other forms where appropriate, so that applicants are given the option of ticking a box to consent to their data being used automatically to register eligible children in their household for free school meals and/or Healthy Start vouchers.

- Explore opportunities to enable auto-enrolment for Free School Meals for eligible families. Improve systems and processes around monitoring of Free School Meals to encourage uptake among eligible families through awareness-raising and improving school catering offers.

## Case Study

### Sheffield City Council Auto-Enrolment

Sheffield City Council has analysed Housing Benefit and Council Tax support information they already hold, and have found that a significant number of households may meet the criteria for Free School Meals but have not yet made an application.

In an effort to make sure that all school pupils receive the support they are entitled to, as well as to increasing the Pupil Premium funding for all academies and locally maintained schools in Sheffield, the council used Housing Benefit data to automatically award Free School Meals during the months of August-September 2022.

Those families who appear to qualify for Free School Meals, but haven't applied yet were contacted by letter to explain how the automatic award works.

An information sheet giving more background to the scheme is attached [here](#).

- Encourage employers to signpost eligible women about to go on maternity leave to the availability of Healthy Start vouchers and other benefits.
- Explore the option of working with schools to coordinate school uniform collections and distribution to assist families on low incomes.
- Continue to drive supply of Further Education opportunities in the borough and increase demand through improved communication and celebrating success.
- Improve uptake and awareness of free early education and childcare entitlements for two, three and four-year-olds.
- Redesign the Family Help offer across Childrens Services to bring a greater emphasis on direct help for improved parenting, including management of family plans, empowering independence and promoting structure and achievable goals. This will maximise access to work, childcare, education and training, household budgetary management, reduce parental conflict and neglect to create stronger, resilient homes built on love and care.

## 6. “Laying the foundations” – ensuring residents have access to what they need in order to live in comfort and dignity, including food, housing, warmth etc.

- Encourage people to seek Housing Advice through campaigns and other communications to raise awareness and prevent homelessness.
- Increase the volume of nominations to the Housing Waiting List from Registered Providers in Tameside, for example through development of Choice-Based Lettings and/or a Common Housing Register.
- Cultivate relationships with Private Rented Sector landlords to increase housing options for homeless households, recognise signs of poverty and motivate their tenants to seek support early to avoid eviction.

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## Case Study

### Salford City Council and Irwell Valley Homes – Private Landlord Training

Salford City Council and Irwell Valley Homes have teamed up to launch the first training course in the country for private landlords whose tenants may be experiencing or causing problems. The aim is to sustain tenancies by helping landlords to draw up a clear action plan.



- Develop a Social Lettings Agency model to increase housing options in the Private Rented Sector.
- Encourage the take up of free fire safety home assessments to support vulnerable residents to stay safe and access appropriate support.
- Gain a better understanding of food poverty in Tameside through surveying, data collection and other engagement and consultation.

## Case Study

### Food Insecurity in the Lancaster District: Beyond Imagination Life Survey

Commissioned by Lancaster University and undertaken by BMG Research, this research survey collected 3,000 resident's views and combined it with a number of bespoke and national-level datasets to gather a representative picture of views, attitudes and experiences of Food Insecurity in the Lancaster District.

The conclusions from the survey, which were released in June 2022, will be used inform strategy, activities and further research opportunities for Imagination Lancaster - Lancaster University's cross-disciplinary design research lab, relevant local authorities and other partners.

- Work with food banks/pantries and partner organisations in Tameside to identify supply and capacity pressures and unlock funding and support to alleviate such issues.

## Case Study

### London Borough of Lewisham: Working with partners to address food poverty

The London Borough of Lewisham is making tackling food poverty a priority in the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. Partners from across the system are working with local groups to create social supermarkets, which differ from food banks in that residents pay for products albeit, at a significant reduced price, from the networks that sprang up during the pandemic.

It is now focussing on building on this work. A food poverty summit was held in early 2022, and there is now a dedicated working group on food poverty, with a new service to promote awareness, support food chains and the local food economy set to be launched.

- Support the expansion of food pantries and community gardens (including opportunities for new and existing allotments) to increase access to healthy food for residents who are experiencing, or at risk of, food insecurity.
- Map and publicise all community cooking sessions and classes taking place in Tameside.





- Work with residents and partners to investigate and implement effective ways of reducing food waste.

## Case Study

### Oldham Community Fridges (1) (2)

The Community Fridge Network, which is run by environmental charity Hubbub, collects and shares food from businesses and individuals which would have otherwise been thrown away.

Community fridges are open to everyone – with fresh food donated by businesses and residents themselves. As well as improving access to food, the fridges go beyond this by “empowering communities to connect with each other” and learn new skills through activities such as cookery sessions and workshops on how to grow your own fruit and veg.

Community Fridges accept donations of unopened, packaged foods within their use-by date and raw fruit or vegetables, which will then be available to anyone in the community.

To date a number of Community Fridges, operated by various charitable organisations and supported by the Co-Operative Group, have been opened in Manchester and Oldham. Research from US community network ChangeX has shown that, over 3 months, it is estimated that one Community Fridge can:

- Redistribute 12 tons of food waste,
- Save households and community groups over £10,000 worth of food
- Provide local employment opportunities.



- Collaborate with partners to draft an action plan and framework for delivery to ensure that the number of people living in homes below Energy Rating C decreases over time.
- Enhance approaches to address fuel poverty including ongoing work with the Local Energy Advice Partnership (LEAP) and work with GMCA around a statement of intent for energy company obligation funded measures to be installed.
- Support Registered Provider partners to deliver new homes, affordable housing and specialist accommodation.
- Explore the feasibility of expanding subsidised access to Active Tameside facilities, ensuring that residents experiencing poverty are not disadvantaged or excluded from activities that may be beneficial to their physical and mental health.

## Case Study

### Birmingham City Council “Gym for Free Scheme” [\(1\)](#) [\(2\)](#)

Local professionals in Birmingham City Council working in public health believed that cost could be a barrier to the uptake of leisure facilities. To test this perception, the Heart of Birmingham Primary Care Trust transferred £500,000 towards free access to leisure facilities for adults in one economically deprived constituency in the city for 6 months. Access remained free if adults used this service a minimum of four times per month.

Following this 6 month period, surveys and focus groups were set up to gauge the success of the scheme. These found that it was successful in increasing the uptake of the exercise facilities among study participants from 25% to 64% either every day or most days, and a reduction among those who never used these facilities from 28% to 0%. This was particularly the case among women, ethnic minorities and the most economically disadvantaged.

## 7. “Putting people first” – making sure that all service’s working practices (both customer-facing and internal) are best placed to identify and support those in poverty

- Accept the recommendations of the Tameside Poverty Truth Commission and work with Partners to formulate a delivery response alongside this Strategy.
- Facilitate the collective and proactive identification and support of people vulnerable to socio-economic disadvantage by addressing data-sharing hurdles between services and creating a forum to facilitate this work.
- Develop a bespoke Poverty Monitor to gather and warehouse comprehensive, relevant and up-to-date data and information about poverty in Tameside.

## Case Study

### Calderdale Data Works Poverty Index

This is a collection of dashboards showing selected statistics on poverty in Calderdale which has been developed alongside the Calderdale Anti-Poverty Action Plan. The plan has been produced in consultation with local partner agencies.

### Greater Manchester Poverty Monitor 2022

The aim of the Monitor is to equip stakeholders with relevant knowledge to tackle socio-economic disadvantage in their own activities, from policy development to service design, advocacy and campaigning.

- Review council tax collection practices and Council Tax Support Policy to support those with vulnerabilities including people on low income. Explore adopting the Citizens Advice Council Tax Arrears Good Practice Protocol.

## Case Study

### London Borough of Tower Hamlets

“Tower Hamlets is one of 74 authorities in 2020/21 to have no minimum payment. This means that working age adults on the lowest incomes pay no council tax. Tower Hamlets has the second largest number of people receiving Council Tax Support in London in 2021.”

Since 2017, Tower Hamlets care leavers under 25 have been exempt from council tax. An additional fund provides further discretionary reductions in Council Tax for residents in exceptional hardship: this provided £45,000 to 109 households in 2018/19.

As well as benefiting low-income residents, more generous council tax reduction schemes can also improve collection rates. Tower Hamlets’ collection rates for 2020/21 were 97.5%, compared to an average collection rate of 96.8% across England and 95.6% for Inner London. Tower Hamlets council is one of eight London boroughs to have adopted the Citizens Advice/Local Government Council Tax Protocol.”

- Provide enhanced support to residents seeking advice about council tax and housing benefit, and explore the option of establishing regular and clearly advertised drop-in sessions.



## Case Study

### Greater London Authority and Policy in Practice “Council Tax Debt Collection and Low-Income Londoners” 2020

The Greater London Authority commissioned Policy in Practice to undertake an evaluation of flexible, customer-centric debt collection practices for low-income Londoners. The project focused on deepening understanding of the business case for council tax collection practices that more effectively support low-income households.

The research concluded that no clear relationship was found between stricter council tax collection policies and higher council tax collection rates, and that higher council tax collection rates were associated with the generosity of a borough’s Council Tax Reduction Scheme and lower collection with the level of poverty in the borough.

Other recommendations included overcoming the relative rigidity of the regulations and limitations to IT systems, enabling councils to pause recovery action for Council Tax Reduction recipients before the summons stage, and more data-sharing to help move towards a more rounded, single view of household debt as well as identifying the households who need the most help, both now and in the future.

- Where possible, facilitate the principle of a Single Point of Contact for customer-facing services to address the issue of vulnerable people re-telling their stories.
- Streamline the application process for all Council discretionary support, including s.13a, DHP, TRS and HSF.
- Improve the process for applying for s13.A Discretionary Council Tax Reduction by creating an online application form based around the discretionary housing payment portal.
- Ensure appropriate resources are being allocated to S.13A Discretionary Council Tax reduction to enable residents to receive financial assistance towards their council tax liability when they need it.
- Roll out automatic claims for council tax support upon a claim being submitted for Universal Credit.
- Continue to expand of the range of face-to-face services available from Tameside One, and clearly communicate the offer.

- Work with STAR Procurement, internal contract managers and suppliers to embed and expand social value and community wealth building in local procurement processes, and encourage a similar approach in relevant partner organisations.

## Case Study

### Birmingham City Council – Match my Project

Many grassroots organisations fail to access funding and resources from mainstream funders – including local authorities themselves.

To tackle this problem, Birmingham City Council developed MatchMyProject – an online platform that matches community organisations in need of resources for the delivery of their projects and businesses working directly for Birmingham City Council or in the area.

Using this tool, community organisations can post requests for support on specific projects, with businesses able to browse a curated directory of projects and make offers of support directly.

- Implement the socioeconomic duty in Tameside to ensure that socioeconomic disadvantage is considered and relevant organisations and people with lived experiences of poverty consulted in the development of all relevant council policies.
- Review resourcing within Tameside Housing Options to maximise its potential for homeless prevention, including exploring opportunities to expand capacity within the service to meet increasing demand.
- Establish channels for continuing engagement with people with lived experience of poverty to enable enhanced collaboration and co-design of council processes, strategies and action plans. Coordinate a public directory of these opportunities through Action Together.

## 8. “No one left behind digitally” – specific focus on digital inclusion

- Register for the “Good Things Foundation National Data Bank Centre”, enabling us to “gift” data and free SIMS to eligible residents. Explore delivery through libraries and warm spaces.
- Investigate possibility of recruiting Digital Assistants (either through a paid role or volunteers) to provide capacity in Library Services to deliver digital and IT support to residents.
- Promote and raise awareness of programmes to improve digital literacy among residents, including TechKnow Buddies, Learn My Way, Online Job Search and Idea.

- Unlock funding and support to allow people in poverty to access technology and the internet using programmes such as the Device Gifting Scheme.

## Case Study

### Hubbub/O2 – Community Calling

London-based environmental charity Hubbub and O2 have partnered to create and deliver the Community Calling programme - a scheme that re-homes old smartphones.

Community Calling receives donations of used smartphones (as long as they hold a charge and the screen isn't cracked) from members of the public, as well as corporate and public sector organisations. They've partnered with Reconome, a device upcycling expert, to clean, data wipe, and refurbish the donated smartphones, before packaging them up and redistributing the devices to someone in need. Each recipient also receives 12-months' free data provided by O2 and access to free digital skills training.

Community Calling adopts a hyperlocal approach by partnering with small, community based grassroots organisations in order to reach digitally excluded people, which have been identified by the community partners. So far, they've re-homed over 5,000 smartphones, but have a target of reaching 10,000 digitally excluded people across the UK.

- Liaise with local VCSE organisations such as Age UK to proactively reach out to groups identified as being particularly vulnerable to digital inclusion (low income, older people etc) to encourage them to develop digital skills.
- Review current public Wi Fi provision with the aim of delivering the service in a way that is more appropriate to residents' needs.
- Investigate the possibility of working with broadband and housing providers – including social housing and new developments - to deliver internet access to residents at a reduced cost.
- Review processes for accessing support to ensure there is always an online and offline method available.



## 9. “One size doesn’t fit all” – additional support for residents identified as being at particular risk of poverty (disabled, carers, ethnic minorities, mental health etc)

- Increase targeted employability support for groups which have been identified as under-served in regards to mental health provision and/or vulnerable to falling into poor-quality employment, particularly ethnic minorities, young people and residents over 50.
- Increase availability and promotion of domestic abuse services for victims, and targeted perpetrator programmes to break the cycle of abuse.
- Explore the possibility of developing Mental Health Awareness Training for staff and volunteers, working with residents experiencing poverty to help address the known impacts of poverty on mental health and signpost them to further support (income maximisation, welfare rights, food security etc).
- Encourage uptake of community-centred approaches to people in poverty suffering with mental health issues, such as peer support groups to challenge isolation and provide lasting support beyond the scope of commissioned services.

## Case Studies:

### Shropshire: Training hairdressers, personal trainers and hospitality staff to become champions

Shropshire Council has been working in partnership with the Samaritans to train local business staff to support their customers with their mental health.

### North East Derbyshire and Chesterfield: Connecting communities and nurturing neighbourliness

A project to connect local communities has been launched in North East Derbyshire and Chesterfield by Derbyshire Voluntary Action to provide funding and support aimed at tackling social isolation

- Develop measures to ensure that carers, particularly from seldom heard groups, are identified as early as possible and are assessed, informed, empowered and supported as needed.
- Expand income maximisation and money advice services to carers (both working and non-working) to ensure that they are receiving all appropriate guidance around carer's allowances and other benefits.
- Facilitate focus groups with carers to improve and build on our offer for working carers, recognising and respecting their views and opinions as expert partners.
- Promote and encourage support for working carers in Tameside from employers in the borough, linking in with the GM Carer's Charter/Employer's Forum and covering issues such as flexible working policies, guaranteed assessment schemes and emergency time off.
- Provide comprehensive and wrap-around support to help carers get into employment if they want to, ensuring that they are informed of and are supported to achieve their rights, opportunities and responsibilities as both carers and employees.

## Case Study

Tameside Council and Tameside & Glossop Integrated Care Foundation Trust (ICFT): Collaborative work undertaken in relation to supporting young carers into a career in health and social care in the future

A group comprised of Human Resources professionals from Tameside Council and Tameside & Glossop ICFT determined that they wanted to support young carers with an information session on how their transferable skills could make them suited to embark on a further education or employment in Health and Social Care.

Colleagues from the Tameside Council Young Carer's Team, ICT, local education institutions and charities came together to create and deliver a 3 hour interactive session. This included a health and wellbeing talk, volunteering information, group discussions, talks from higher education providers and "A Day in the Life" examples of actual job roles.

Participants were asked to complete an evaluation at the end of the session, and the feedback obtained showed that they felt the session was very informative and gave them an increased awareness of the employment and education pathways open to them.

- Conduct audits on public buildings and websites to gauge accessibility for residents in poverty (particularly those with physical/learning disabilities or for whom English is not a first language) and take action to improve if necessary.
- Review existing offers for foster carers and care leavers to take into account new cost of living pressures.
- Commit to ensuring that all services can access relevant communication and interpretation services.
- Work with Action Together to develop and improve links with community organisations supporting ethnic minority residents and those for whom English is not a first language to improve access to and understanding of information related to poverty.

## Case Study

### Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole CP Council Equality Action Commission Group

An example of a council-led cross party and joint community stakeholder group aimed at improving the way the council works with and supports ethnic minority individuals and communities in its area.

In particular, the commission aims to:

- Review current practices and what it could do to improve it's understanding of the needs and vulnerabilities of ethnic minority communities and individuals
- Review and understand the impact of the council's public profile and how it can encourage ethnic minority communities and their representatives to engage with the council
- Understand the experiences of ethnic minority communities to enable the council to take appropriate actions which increase participation and representation, and reduce marginalisation.

- Carry out work to understand whether local support to residents with refugee status, (including those seeking asylum, facing financial hardship, or subject to No Recourse to Public Funds restrictions) could be improved, and to understand how best to support EEA+ nationals with pre-settled status.
- Provide free period products within libraries and explore opportunities to expand this to all publically accessible council buildings and partner organisations.

## 10. “Advocating for change” – highlighting the need for action on poverty-related issues where responsibility lies with national government

Though there is much that can be achieved locally to address poverty, many of the drivers of poverty can only be addressed by national government. Recognising this, we commit to working with partners to campaign on the following issues as identified in the Needs Assessment, including:

### Benefits

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- Increase the levels of Universal Credit, Discretionary Housing Payment allocations and Local Housing Allowance rates.
- Abolish the bedroom tax, the two child limit and the benefit cap.
- Abolish punitive benefits sanctions.
- Abolish the ‘No recourse to public funds’ condition for those who are habitually resident in the UK and to increase the payments under Asylum Support.

### Local Government Funding

- Deliver a fairer local government settlement based on the needs and deprivation of local areas.
- Deliver fairer funding to local social care services.

### National Policy

- Develop a national strategy for tackling poverty (particularly child poverty) and inequality.
- Support the Right to Food campaign which aims to make access to sufficient and nutritious food for everyone a legal right, embedded within the National Food Strategy.
- Address prohibitive childcare costs for families, the shortage of childcare places and improve conditions for childcare professionals.

### Debt

- Improve debt collection practices in line with Citizen Advice’s Fairness in Government Debt Management Report, including the introduction of regulation of bailiffs and a shared approach to affordability assessments.
- End no fault evictions and, in the interim, reinstate the ban on evictions for the duration the cost of living crisis.




# Governance

## **Tackling poverty cannot be done in isolation but instead requires a coordinated approach with commitment from all stakeholders.**

As a statutory function where political, clinical and professional community leaders come together to improve health and tackle inequalities Tameside's Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) is well-placed to oversee the implementation of the Strategy. This will involve the creation of a sub-group where an Action Plan can sit and will be accountable to the Board for delivery.

Implementing an Action Plan of this scope will require a whole system approach and buy-in to ensure successful delivery. This should include incorporating the views of the Poverty Action Group, those with lived experience of poverty and key partners through a two-way mechanism.

Leaders must be aware and well informed of what causes poverty so that decision-makers can implement remedial actions swiftly and effectively. All partners should also pay due regard to the Building Resilience: Tackling Poverty in Tameside Strategy when planning and implementing any relevant work going forward.



**Appendix 1 –  
Tameside  
Poverty Needs  
Assessment**

[Poverty-Needs-Assessment-Final.pdf \(tameside.gov.uk\)](#)

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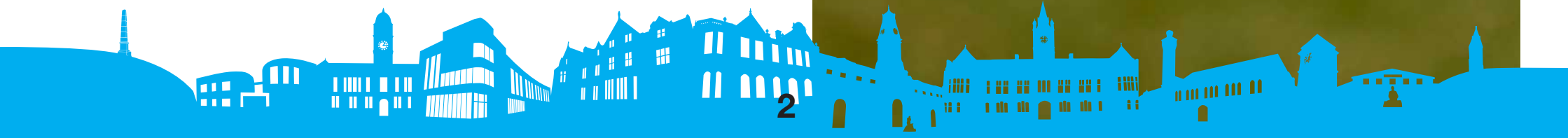
# Tameside Poverty Needs Assessment

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In recent years the rise of poverty, exacerbated by an economic downturn, cost of living crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic has emerged as a major policy issue. 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. Absolute poverty is where households have less than 60% of the median income in 2010/11, uprated by inflation, signifying that people may be unable to afford to meet their basic needs. This will be the first recorded incident of a rise in absolute poverty in Britain outside of a recession.
- 1.2 Tameside Council, alongside partners in the public, private and voluntary sector, recognises the severity of the current crisis and is working hard to support residents. However, poverty is more than just a lack of income, and its interactions with other areas such as physical and mental health, education, housing and the ability to participate fully in public life are cross-cutting and multi-faceted. We are aware that, given the scale of the crisis, many people will be requiring assistance who have not previously required support. Therefore, we will need to explore ways to use data to identify those at risk of falling into poverty to ensure everyone is able to access the support they need. Furthermore, consideration must be given to the rising scale of demand across public and voluntary, community and faith based services across the borough, necessitating a coordinated approach. This means that these issues need to be looked at through a wider lens in order to fully contextualise the problems and begin to develop comprehensive solutions.
- 1.3 This Needs Assessment has been produced to begin the process of exploring some of these relationships, inform the development of the Council's Poverty Strategy, and provide a robust evidence base to support short and long-term actions to combat poverty in Tameside.



# 2. Poverty in Context

2.1 The national discourse around poverty over recent months has been dominated by the cost of living crisis. At the time of writing, UK inflation has risen beyond 10% for the first time in over 40 years. The Office for National Statistics states that the three primary drivers of consumer price inflation have been “housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels”, “transport” and “food and non-alcoholic beverages”. Together, these three components collectively account for over 50% of the Consumer Prices Index including owner occupiers’ housing cost (CPIH) basket by weight. The Bank of England predicts that inflation will peak at 13.1% in Q4 2022 and will not return to below 2% until Q3 2024.

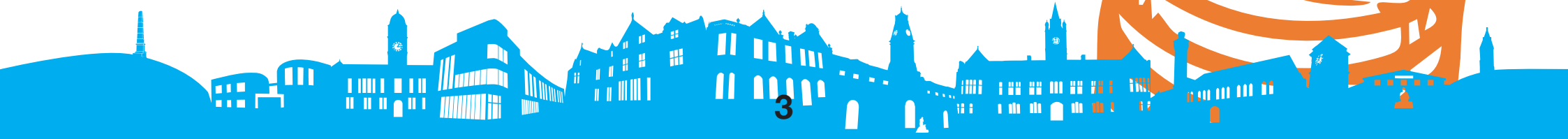
2.2 However, it is important to note that the current cost of living crisis has been significantly exacerbated by a number of longer-term structural weaknesses in the UK, including low wages, low productivity and high inequality relative to other major economies. Before the financial crisis in 2008, GDP per capita in the UK was just 6% lower than in Germany, however by 2019 this gap had widened to 11%. Over this same period, labour productivity grew by just 0.4%, less than half the rate of the 25 richest OCED countries (0.9%). This slowdown has been reflected in wages, which grew by an average of 33% a decade from 1970 to 2007 but fell to below zero in the 2010s.

2.3 Income inequality in the UK as a whole is higher than any other large European country, and low-income households in the UK are now 22% poorer than their counterparts in France, and 21% poorer than low-income households in Germany. There is also significant income inequality at a sub-national level in the UK. Income per person in the richest UK local authority (Kensington & Chelsea - £52,500) is 4.5 times that of the poorest (Nottingham - £11,700) in 2019. Productivity disparities are larger still, with London being 41% more productive than Manchester compared to a 26% difference between Paris and Lyon.

2.4 This confluence of issues means that poorer households are incredibly vulnerable to either falling into poverty, or becoming further entrenched. Low wage growth and productivity means that British households were less financially resistant than those in equivalent developed countries going into the cost of living crisis, and surging inflation has disproportionately affected those on lower incomes. The Institute for Fiscal Studies - based on estimates of the share of budgets spent on different broad product groups - believes that the annual inflation rate for the poorest 10% of households was 10.9% in April 2022 compared to 7.9% for the richest 10%. This is because the major drivers of inflation make up a greater proportion of budgets for low-income households.

2.5 While it is important to understand these national and macroeconomic trends, they must also be placed in a local context. According to Official for National Statistics data, Tameside was the 37th most income-deprived out of the 316 local authorities in England in 2019. Of the 141 neighbourhoods in Tameside 54 were among the 20% most income-deprived in England, while only 8 were in the least 20% income-deprived in England.

2.6 The measure of inequality within a local authority area can be calculated by using an index called Moran’s I. This is measured from +1, which would indicate that deprived and non-deprived neighbourhoods are highly clustered, to -1, which would indicate that deprived and non-deprived neighbourhoods are more mixed together. Areas with a higher overall level of income deprivation general tend to have a higher Moran’s I. However, Tameside is unusual in that it has both a high level of income deprivation and a low Moran’s I meaning that deprivation and affluence are less clustered and more evenly spread. This must be borne in mind when developing recommendations and policies to alleviate poverty and deprivation in the borough.



# 3. Key Data Points Highlights

Income Deprivation affecting older people (2019)

Percentage of jobs paid below National Minimum Wage / National living wage rates for workers aged 16+ (2021)

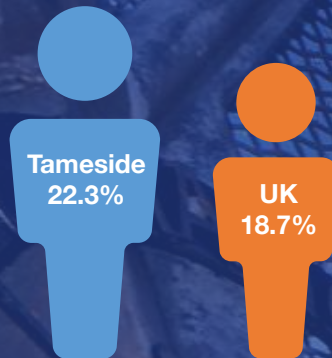


Tameside  
17.70%

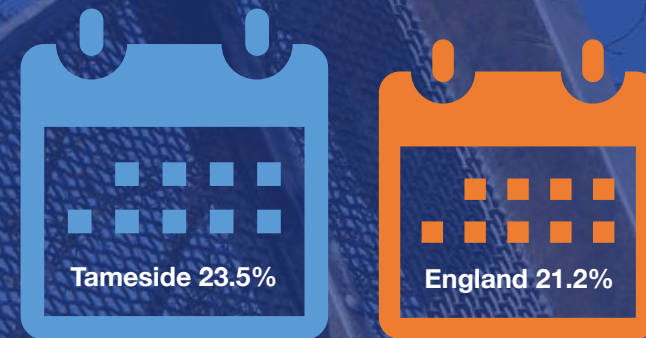
England  
14.2%

Source: NOMIS, <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/construct/submit.asp?menuopt=201&subcomp=>

Percentage of children living in relative low income (2021)

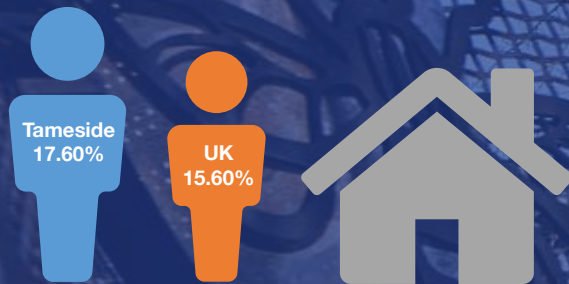


Economic Inactivity Rate

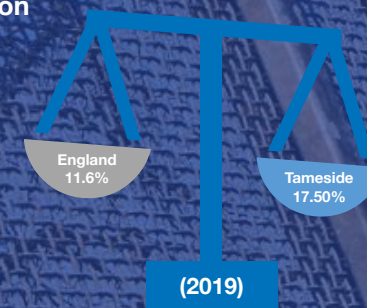


Source: NOMIS, <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/construct/submit.asp?menuopt=201&subcomp=>

Percentage of children living in absolute low income families



Income Deprivation



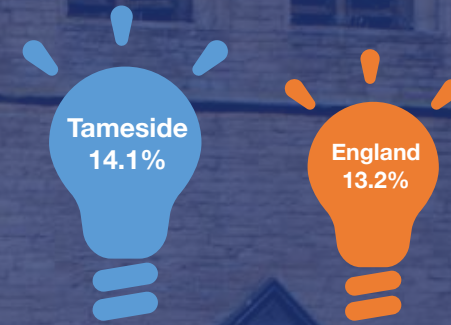
Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2021>

Source: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/incomeandwealth/datasets/mappingincomedeprivationatalocalauthoritylevel>.

### Percentage of jobs paid below living wage in 2021



### Percentage of fuel poor households by administrative area 2020



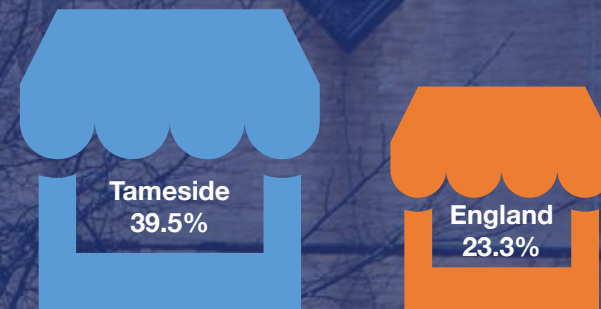
Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fuel-poverty-sub-regional-statistics>  
<https://cpag.org.uk/news-blogs/news-listings/fuel-poverty-updated-estimates-uk>

### Median Gross Annual Pay 2021 (workplace)



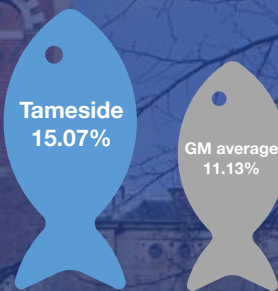
Source: NOMIS, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/construct/summary.asp?mode=construct&version=0&dataset=30>

### Number of insolvencies per 10,000 adults



Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/insolvency-service-official-statistics>

### Proportion of households struggling with food insecurity



Source: <https://www.gmpovertyaction.org/pm2022-fuel-utilities-food/>

Tameside has one of the lowest Good Credit Index Scores, coming 276 out of 307 local authorities in England, indicating poor financial health in the borough



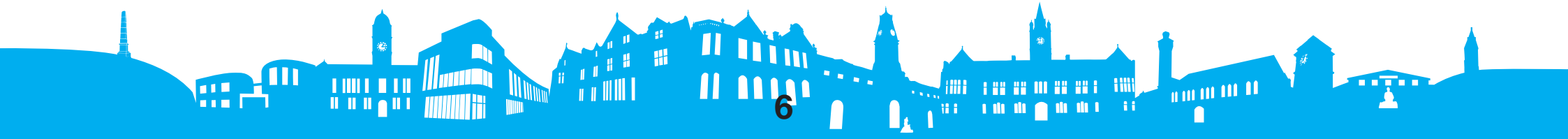
Source: NOMIS, Claimant Count, <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/datasets/ucjsa>

# 4. Methodology

## 4.1 In creating this Needs Assessment we undertook the following exercises:

- **Service Mapping** – All relevant external and internal services were contacted in order to map their processes, understand the pressures and pinch-points and capture their views on the causes and potential solutions to poverty. In all, 43 different teams and services were contacted, consisting of hundreds of individuals including service-users and those with lived experience of poverty. All response data was recorded and coded to provide quantitative data for assessing trends and themes.
- **Survey** – A public Poverty Strategy Consultation survey was run on the council's SurveyMonkey platform for 8 weeks. In order to get as wide a variety of views as possible, the survey consisted of only two simple and open questions, "What do you think about poverty in Tameside?" and "What can we do about poverty in Tameside?". In total, 261 responses were received which were also recorded and coded to identify themes and trends and draw out quantitative data.
- **DJS Focus Groups** – Stockport-based organisation DJS Research was commissioned to conduct a series of four focus groups with people with lived experience of poverty in Tameside, with the aim of taking a more in-depth look at the key themes emerging from the survey and service-mapping work.
- **Partnership Engagement Network (PEN)** – PEN is the primary engagement forum for Tameside Council, NHS Tameside & Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Tameside & Glossop NHS Integrated Care Foundation Trust (ICFT). Poverty was the headline focus of the July 2022 PEN Conference, which explored the themes emerging from the survey and service mapping work and asked participants to give their views on poverty and our progress to date.
- **Poverty Truth Commission (PTC)** – The PTC brings together local residents with lived experience of poverty and senior political, civic and business leaders on an equal footing to share insights, build relationships and discuss solutions to poverty. While the PTC is an independent and standalone forum that will produce their own findings and reports, we have worked closely with them and used their knowledge to inform the Needs Assessment.

- **Data, research, literature and other good practice** – Given the urgency around poverty and the cost of living crisis there is a large and increasing body of data being produced, research papers being written and conversations taking place at a local, regional and national level. Selected pieces of work from organisations such as the Resolution Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, House of Commons Library, and Greater Manchester Poverty Action have been used to guide and inform the Needs Assessment. We have also employed national data repositories such as the Office for National Statistics, Public Health England's Fingertips database and StatXPlore from the Department for Work and Pensions, as well as local statistics gathered through collaborative work with the Greater Manchester Poverty Group



# 5. Summary of Key Points

5.1 The findings of the Needs Assessment have been summarised into a number of key themed areas:

**Benefits**  
**Debt**  
**Food Poverty**  
**Fuel Poverty**  
**Employment**  
**Council Tax Support and Council Tax**  
**Mental Health**  
**Disability**  
**Life Expectancy**  
**Carers and Care**  
**Barriers to Accessing Services**  
**Service-User Experience**  
**Child Poverty**  
**Social Housing**  
**Private Rent**  
**Homelessness**

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# Benefits

## Key Challenges

- Tameside is ranked the 37th most income deprived local authority area.
- A higher proportion of Tameside residents receive benefits than the national average.
- 25,581 people are receiving Universal Credit in Tameside, this is disproportionately claimed in Ashton St Peters, Ashton St Michaels and Hyde Newton
- The Office for Budgetary Responsibility predicts that household disposable incomes will fall substantially in 2022-23, leading to the largest fall in living standards since records began in 1957.
- Some benefits are under-claimed and an estimated £5.2million in pension credit remains unclaimed across Tameside.

Tameside is the 37th most income deprived local authority area and 17.5% of the population was income deprived in 2019. (1)(page 41) 17 out of 19 wards have income deprivation in excess of the national average (12.9%). (2)(page 41) As of July 2022, 4.8% of people in Tameside were in receipt of benefits, compared to just 3.6% of people in Great Britain. (3)(page 41)

The Office for Budgetary Responsibility (OBR) predicts household disposable incomes will fall by 2.2% 2022-2023, creating the biggest fall in living standards since 1956. (4)(page 41)

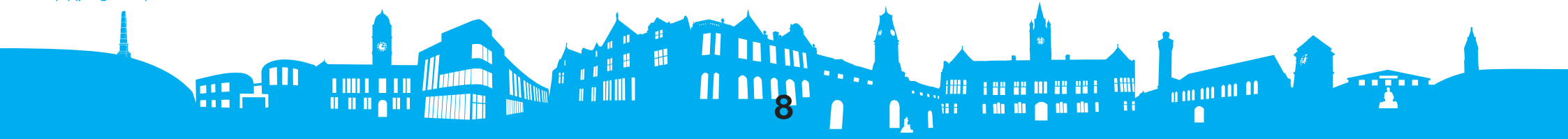
The main income replacement benefit for working age people is Universal Credit (UC) which is claimed by 25,581 people in Tameside – the 6th highest as a proportion of population in GM (5)(page 41) This number is set to rise as the DWP intends to move everyone over from legacy benefits to UC by 2024. The ward with the highest number of people on Universal Credit was Ashton St Peters and the ward with the fewest claims was Denton West. Most UC claimants in Tameside were women (57.47%) (6)(page 41) and single parent households with dependent children are also over-represented in UC claims, making up 39.6% of claims. (7)(page 41)

Nationally, 86% of households referred to Trussell Trust foodbanks in 2020 were in receipt of benefits. (8)(page 41) Research by Joseph Rowntree Foundation suggests that by uprating benefit levels by 3.1% instead of by the rate of inflation there has been an average real-terms cut of £500 per year per household. (9)(page 41)

Ongoing issues identified relating to the administration of benefits include the benefit cap, sanctions, the five week wait for Universal credit and the two child limit. Nationally, 5.93% of UC claimants with work search and work preparation requirements were sanctioned as of May 2022, meaning their income was significantly reduced. (10)(page 41) This is more than double pre-pandemic levels, indicating that even more households will be facing financial hardship.

Within Tameside 1105 households are subject to the benefit cap under Universal Credit, 714 subject to housing benefit cap (11)(page 41), reducing household incomes by an average of £50 per week (12)(page 41). Child Poverty Action Group found that the vast majority (85%) of those affected by the benefit cap are families with children. (13)(page 42) Citizens Advice also identified that restrictions on benefit entitlements such as the 'no recourse to public funds' (NRPF) visa condition cause financial hardship to affected households. (14)(page 42).

There is often a lack of awareness about benefit entitlements leaving households claiming less money than they are entitled to. Considering pension credit, a benefit for those over state pension age and on a low income, there is an estimated £5.2million unclaimed per year in Tameside and 3,042 estimated eligible non-claimants. The highest proportion of those not claiming were In St Peters, followed by Denton South and Ashton Waterloo.





# Benefits

## What's happening to address this?

- Routes to Work scheme
- Delivery of the Tameside Resettlement Fund to ease the costs of moving for low income households. There were 420 approved applications between 1st April 21 and 30th March 2022.
- Delivery of the Household Support Fund online application portal. The first round of the scheme saw 1,572 successful applications and an average payment of £310.
- Helping Hands campaign launched.
- Welfare Rights/Debt Advice promote benefits take-up through team meetings and community work
- Welfare Rights/Debt Advice working with Mortgage Lenders to identify those in arrears facing court to offer help and advice

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*Five weeks without money & to keep borrowing from my parents who don't have the money to lend me was exceptionally hard for us all in the family. My parents had to cut down their shopping & other spending to help me out with money. I had an advance payment of £50 which in this day & age goes nowhere.*

**Step Change Client, Written evidence to Work and Pensions Committee (2020)**

*UK's core level of benefit support is not enough to meet the necessary costs for an adequate standard of living.*

**The Economy 2030 Inquiry (16)**



## Key Challenges

- 17.6% of adults in Tameside are over-indebted.
- Citizens Advice Tameside reported that on average people seeking debt advice owed £1,550.00.
- Tameside has the 7th highest rate of individual insolvencies in England and Wales. Tameside has the highest rate of individual insolvencies in Greater Manchester. Residents of Tameside are becoming insolvent at nearly twice the national average.
- People experiencing debt are more likely to experience a mental health problem than the national average.
- Tameside has one of the lowest Good Credit Index Scores, coming 276 out of 307 local authorities in England, indicating poor financial health in the borough.
- People in Tameside are more likely to seek debt advice once enforcement action has begun, indicating a need for earlier intervention.

Latest available data suggests 17.6% of adults in Tameside are over-indebted. (1)(page 42) Debt was also the most common issue raised by residents in poverty, according to council services and local partners across Tameside.

According to Citizens Advice Tameside, the most common debts people sought advice with were: council tax arrears; fuel debts; credit, store cards and charge cards; water supply and sewerage; unsecured personal loans; bank and building society overdrafts and Universal Credit Advance Payments/ Budgeting Advance. (2)(page 42)

Citizens Advice Tameside reported average debt (2021) of £1,550 per client. (3)(page 42)

Additionally, 13.3% of people seeking debt advice from Citizens Advice in Tameside were subject to enforcement action, the second highest in Greater Manchester, (4)(page 42) suggesting that people seek debt advice at a later stage within the borough when compared to other areas. Individuals are not uniformly impacted by debt, research by Citizens Advice shows that people with no recourse to public funds are four times more likely to be behind on at least one essential bill. People who need debt advice are more likely to be aged under 35 and have children. Additionally, people from ethnic minority communities are more likely to need debt advice.

Half of adults in problem debt also have a mental health problem, highlighting the link between debt and ill-health. (5)(page 42)

Tameside has the highest rate of individual insolvencies in Greater Manchester, the 7th highest in England and Wales. (6)(page 42) Individual insolvencies include bankruptcy, Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVA) and Debt Relief Orders (DRO). Tameside also has the highest rate of DROs in Greater Manchester and the 4th highest rate of IVAs in England and Wales. (7)(page 42)

The annual growth rate for consumer credit increased to 6.5% in June 2022; the highest rate since May 2019 (6.5%), with credit card borrowing being the major source, indicating a growing use of credit to meet everyday costs. (8)(page 42)

As of 2021, Tameside borough was ranked as having one of the lowest Good Credit Index Scores in England, 276th out of 307 Local Authorities. (9)(page 42) The Good Credit Index score measures access to affordable credit. Lower Good Credit Index scores identify the prevalence of credit deserts – places where high need for credit coincides with low credit scores and an overrepresentation of unaffordable lenders, pushing people into financial hardship.

# Debt

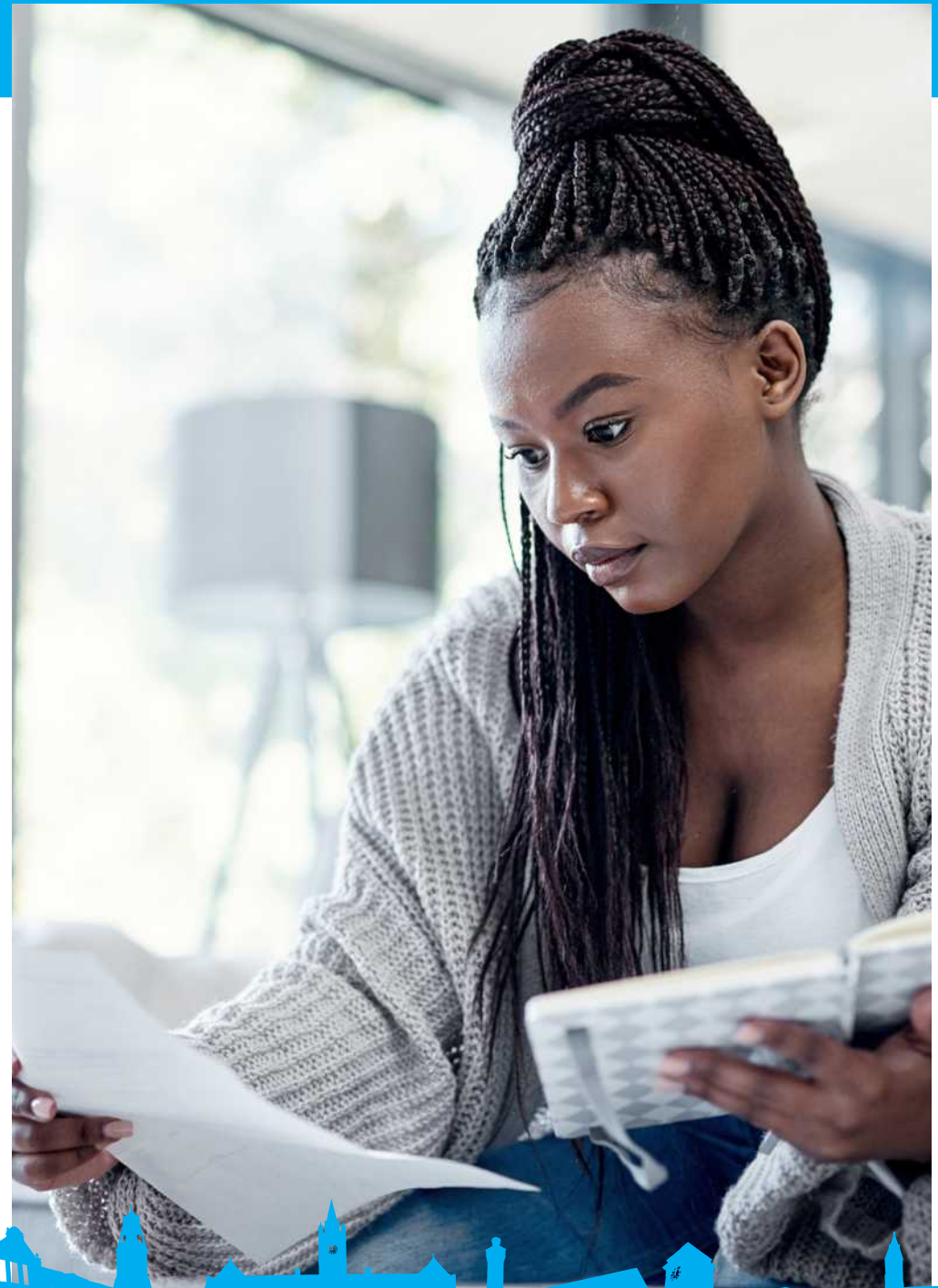
## What's happening to address this?

- Tameside councils' Welfare Rights and Debt Advice Service helped clients write off £16,272 worth of debt.
- Citizens Advice Tameside have helped residents renegotiate and write off £392,249 and renegotiate £77,338 worth of debt.
- Tameside council has launched the Helping Hands campaign to help with the cost of living crisis, directing residents to help and support.
- Tameside council partnered with GMPA to pilot the first Money Advice Tool, a website used by advisors, volunteers and the public to locate money advice services and welfare support.
- Co-located debt adviser based in the housing advice team, sharing knowledge and referrals for cases at risk at homelessness.

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*We've ended up in huge amounts of debts and financial difficulties... We are now in a better position but do still struggle and live month to month. There doesn't appear to be much in terms of support for people with managing their finances, borrowing money with an APR that is actually affordable.*

**Response to Tameside Poverty Survey**



# Food Poverty

## Key Challenges

- The cost of living crisis is having a significant impact on food prices, meaning that the poorest households must spend a greater proportion of their income to feed themselves.
- Tameside faces particular issues with food poverty, with a disproportionate number of families and LSOAs facing food insecurity relative to the size of the borough.
- Tameside has a large number of food banks relative to its size, and the amount of food parcels distributed has increased significantly since 2019-20.
- Due to the cost of living crisis, food banks are facing increased demand at a time when their capacity and funding is being degraded.

Food poverty, or lacking the income required to secure an adequate and nutritious diet, has emerged as a major issue since 2010 and has been significantly exacerbated by the cost of living crisis. Experimental statistics from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) have shown that the price of the lowest cost goods has increased by 6.4% between April 2021-22. However, this masks significant fluctuations in individual items, including a 50% increase in pasta and increases of 15-17% in rice, beef mince, bread and crisps. (1)(page 43)

This rate of inflation on many common food items, combined with the fact that many lower income households buy food at local stores with higher prices means that those in poverty spend a far greater proportion of their income on food. Research by The Food Foundation has shown that the poorest fifth of UK households would need to spend 47% of their disposable income on food to meet the cost of the government-recommended healthy diet compared to 11% for the richest fifth. (2)(page 43). Multiple pieces of research have identified Tameside as an area with particular issues with food poverty. Greater Manchester Poverty Action data shows that 1 in 20 households in Tameside (5.27%) are experiencing hunger, and the percentage of households defined as “experiencing struggle with food insecurity” is the highest in GM at 15.07%. (3) 82 of the 141 LSOAs in Tameside (58.2%) are in the lowest 25% for food security in the country (4)(page 43). Hattersley & Mottram has also been identified by the Social Market Foundation as the 3rd most deprived “food desert” in England. (5)(page 43) Food insecurity has led to the proliferation of food banks, food pantries and food clubs. The latest data estimates there are around 21 of these operating in Tameside, giving a rate of 0.91 per 10,000 residents. (6)(page 43) This is the 3rd highest proportion in GM behind only Manchester (1.14) and

Salford (0.96). (7)(page 43) 18 of the 20 Tameside-based food banks operate in LSOAs that are within the lowest 25% for food security nationally. The number of food parcels distributed by foodbanks in the Trussell Trust Network in Tameside increased from 9,917 in 2019-20 to 12,976 in 2020-21. (8)(page 43)

The UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS) has found that low income, being young, unemployed, living alone, and identifying as an ethnic minority were strong predictors of food insecurity, controlling for other factors. Being a lone parent was on the margins of statistical significance. People reporting poor health were six times more likely to be food insecure than people reporting “excellent” health. (9)(page 43). The cost of living crisis is having a major impact on both demand for food banks and their ability to meet that demand. A survey by the Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) in May ‘2022 found that 93% of the organisations surveyed have reported an increase in the need for their services in 2022, but more than 80% have struggled with supply issues and 78% had also saw a drop in food and/or financial donations. 95% believed that the cost of living crisis was the reason behind these issues. (10)(page 43).

Local consultation and service mapping work has identified food poverty as a serious concerns for residents and partner organisations in Tameside. Concerns about food poverty were highlighted as the second-most pressing concern (after fuel prices) by local services and “Taking action on food poverty” was the third-most cited action to take in our Poverty Strategy consultation, behind increasing benefits and expanding/simplifying pathways to services. (11)(page 43).

# Food Poverty

## What's happening to address this?

- **The Bread and Butter Thing:** A mobile food club charity that provides weekly groceries at a fraction of high street prices. Members pay £7.50 for approximately £35 worth of food. Operating in 6 locations across Tameside and supported by £100,000 Council funding.
- **Tameside Food Partnership:** An umbrella organisation of public, private and voluntary sector partners with the aim of creating a food environment, system and culture that promotes health, stimulates the local economy, benefits communities and reduces environmental impact.

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*I feel there should be more Bread and Butter hubs as the West End Hub at St Peters Church is always oversubscribed! People come from all areas of Tameside and you pay so there is no shame. If it's oversubscribed you don't get on every week and people rely on it.*

Poverty Strategy Consultation respondent



# Fuel Poverty

## Key Challenges

- **More homes in Tameside are experiencing fuel poverty than the national average.**
- **Fuel poverty is not evenly spread across Tameside and is concentrated in 20% of LSOAs.**
- **The number of people approaching Citizens Advice for assistance with energy issues has increased by more than 140% compared to June 2021 and is expected to increase by 145% by December 2022.**
- **Nearly 60% of homes in Tameside are not energy efficient.**
- **Some age groups are more likely to experience fuel poverty than others**
- **Tenants living in privately rented properties are more likely to be in fuel poverty.**
- **Diesel and Petrol prices have risen by 70% and 70% respectively over the last two years.**

1 in 9 LSOAs in Tameside have fuel poverty above 20%, national average is 13.2%. On average, 14.1% Tameside households are classed as fuel poor. (1)(page 43)

Energy performance ratings – nearly 60% of homes in Tameside are rated below C for energy performance, indicating the majority of homes in Tameside are not energy efficient (defined as rated below C for energy performance) Government target is for all homes to be C or above by 2035 and for fuel poor homes to be above C by 2030 (2)(page 43)

From June 2020 to June 2022 petrol and diesel prices have increased over 70% per litre. (3)(page 43)

At present, 25% of privately rented properties are in fuel poverty, 18.7% of social rented homes and 8.4 % of owner occupied properties. (4)(page 43) Child Poverty Action Group predict that by January 2023 59.4% of households in North West and Merseyside will be in fuel poverty – spending over 10% of their net income on fuel (5)(page 43). In terms of household demographics, single parent households (26.5%) and households where the age of the oldest member is between 16 and 24 (28.8%) have the highest likelihood of being in fuel poverty (6)(page 43). Following the scheduled consumer price cap reviews, fuel prices are predicted to rise again in October 2022 and January 2023, with the average annual household bill expected to reach £4,266 by January 2023. (7)(page 43)

Joseph Rowntree Foundation estimate that energy bills for low-income households are already £1,800 higher than last year, and other costs such as food have risen by £1,000 at the same time (8)(page 43), placing extra pressure on household budgets.

Latest available data suggests 5.75% of people in Tameside live in a household with an energy pre-payment meter (9)(page 44). Based on this, Tameside ranks 4th highest in Greater Manchester. Due to the risk of disconnection and increased cost, people using a pre-payment meter are more severely affected by energy price rises than those on direct debit. Citizens Advice predicted that the number of people contacting them who are unable to top up their pre-payment meter will reach 21,604 by December 2022, an increase of 250% compared with 2021. (10)(page 44).

Citizens Advice analysis comparing energy prices against benefit levels shows that April's price cap rise leaves a single adult spending over a quarter (27%) of their Universal Credit standard allowance on energy bills and leaving little to cover remaining costs. This could rise to 30% in October 2022. (11)(page 44).

# Fuel Poverty

## What's happening to address this?

- Action together were given money from HSF to support local charities and community groups who are in turn distributing fuel vouchers.
- HSF Voluntary Sector: The amount granted was £300,000 of which £298,915.40 was distributed. £85,139.40 was distributed toward fuel voucher provision.
- Reopening of the Household Support Fund online application.
- Energy works continue to support residents by providing free energy advice to residents in Tameside.

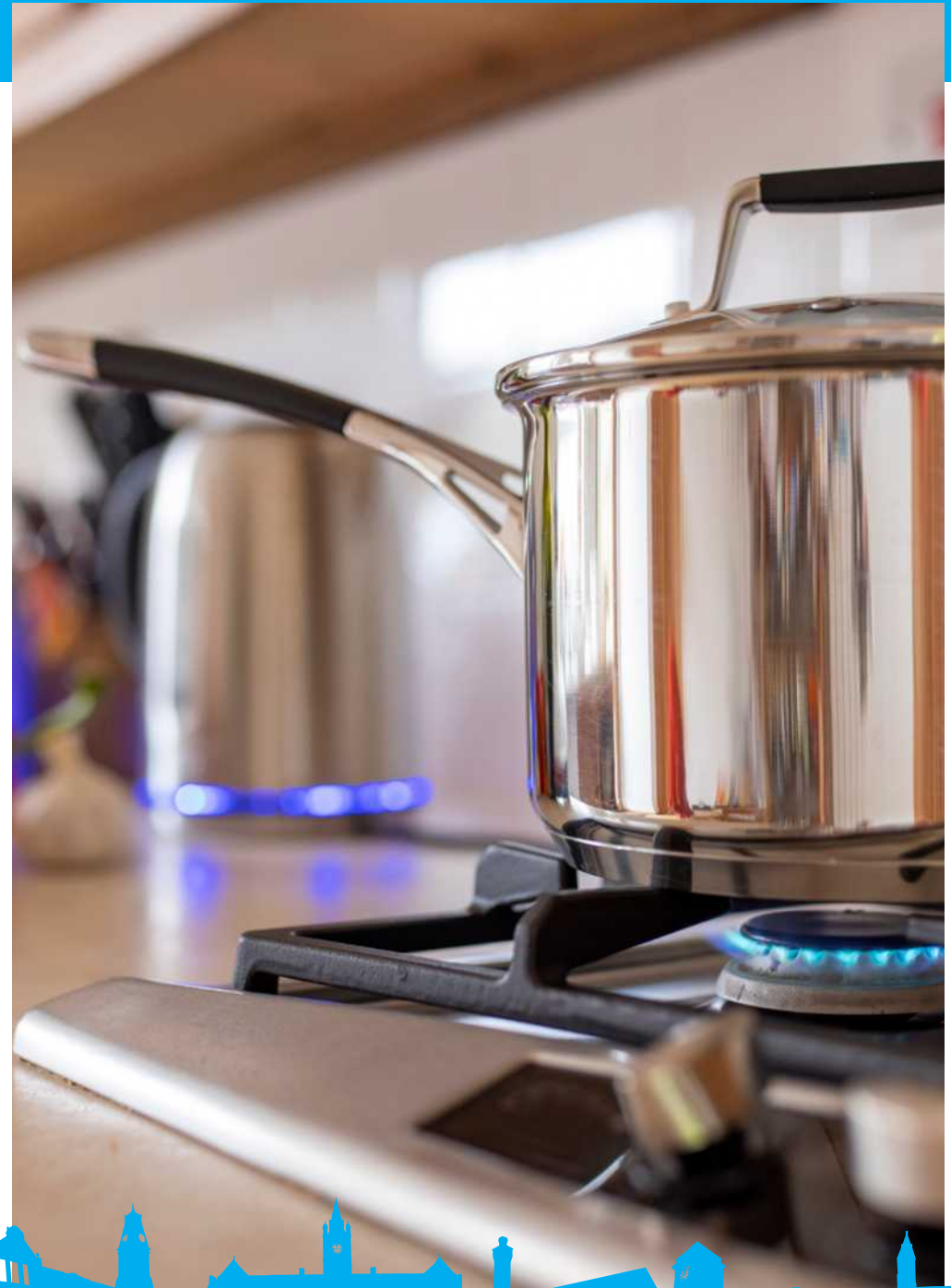
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*Me and my partner have a disabled child and a young baby and a large amount of debt between us and I am not earning now... There seems to be nothing which might help at present and I am worried about how we will afford things we need especially fuel/heating and extra expenses like if a boiler breaks or car issues.*

**Response to Tameside Poverty Survey 2022**

*This winter, low-income households will have to reduce their spending by three times as much as high-income households in order to afford their energy bills.*

**Resolution Foundation, 'Cutting Back to Keep Warm' (15.08.2022) (12)**



# Employment

## Key Challenges

- Whilst Tameside's employment figures are in-line with the rest of Great Britain, the quality of employment is an area for improvement. Almost a third of Universal Credit claimants in Tameside are in employment
- Tameside has the lowest proportion of Living Wage jobs in Greater Manchester
- The Gender Pay Gap is significant, particularly for those who only work part-time. Significantly more women work part-time, leading to a large reduction in income for women, compared to men.
- Tameside has the lowest rate of residents with higher level of qualifications in Greater Manchester. Just 26.6% of residents achieve an NVQ4 or above level qualification, 17% lower than the national average. As higher level qualifications are commonly associated with social mobility and higher paying roles, this may indicate that people in Tameside are at a disadvantage within the employment market.

The level of employment in Tameside is consistently higher than the Greater Manchester average and has been since 2017; as of 2022 it is now level with the average for Great Britain (Tameside at 74.5% and Great Britain at 74.5%). (1)(page 44) However, the median annual salary in Tameside is £2,322 less than the Greater Manchester average and £5,628 less than the England figure. (2)(page 44) Tameside has the lowest proportion of jobs paying the Living Wage or above in GM at 20.5% (the GM average being 79.2%). (3)(page 44).

The gender pay gap (gross hourly pay) between men and women in full time employment is £1.10, this is tripled for those in part-time employment where men are paid an average of £3.40 more than women, 28% of women are in part time employment, compared to 11% of men. (4)(page 44) Men are not only more likely to be working full-time, but also often work more hours on average than their female counterparts whilst doing so, thus driving up the income inequality between genders.

Almost 40% of Universal Credit claimants in Tameside are in employment, 63% of the UC claimants in employment are female. (5)(page 44).

Women are more likely to be economically inactive than men. As of 2021, 24.7% of women aged 16-64 were economically inactive, compared to 17.7% of men within the same age group. (6)(page 44). The main reasons behind economic inactivity differ between men and women. The leading reasons for economic inactivity for women are caring responsibilities, long-term sickness, studying, whereas, for men, studying, long-term sickness and retirement. (7)(page 44).

Latest available data indicates the disability employment rate for the UK is 52.5%, but just 48.4% in Tameside. (8)(page 44).

The main employment industries in Tameside are health (19.1%), manufacturing (16.2%) retail (13.2%) and education (8.8%). (9)(page 44).

Only 7.1% of Tameside's workforce are managers, directors, or senior officials (compared to 9% in GM and 9.1% in the North West) (10)(page 44).

Just 26.6% of Tameside residents have qualifications at NVQ4 level or above, the lowest rate in Greater Manchester, falling behind the North West average (38.6%) and national average (43.6%).(11)(page 44).



# Employment

## What's happening to address this?

Tameside in Work has been launched by the DWP & TMBC. This is aimed at improving a working person's circumstances. The scheme has currently achieved 22 progressions in 6 months. The service has been working closely with partners including the Bread and Butter thing to reach those that would benefit from the service.

Tameside Council manages the Routes to Work Programme, helping people to find work with a disability, offering advice, support and practical assistance to local residents with a disability, mental health condition or a substance misuse issue which is a barrier to employment, training, or volunteering.

Inclusive Growth Strategy identifies these same issues and some actions to remedy.

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*I'm a working single mother of two. I have struggled with poverty for many years...I would love to work more hours to make more money but childcare is so expensive and UC never pay out until months later.*

Response to the Tameside Poverty Survey 2022



# Council Tax Support and Council Tax

## Key Challenges

- As of June 2022, 17,403 people in Tameside were claiming council tax support, 7.53% of the total population.
- The number of Council Tax Support claimants has not risen in line with the number of out of work benefit claimants, meaning many people are not claiming council tax reduction although they may be eligible.
- In 2019-20, council tax was the most common type of debt issue residents presented with to Citizens Advice Tameside, however, energy debt is now the most common debt issue.
- Research from the Money Advice Trust suggests council tax arrears have increased by 51% since 2013 when local council tax support was introduced.
- When compared to other Greater Manchester local authorities, working age claimants receiving Council Tax Support within Tameside had to pay the highest percentage of their bill as a minimum contribution (25%).
- Four in five respondents (79%) to a survey of National Debtline clients with council tax arrears felt that the actions of their council in collecting the debt had a negative impact on their wellbeing.

## Facts and Figures

Council tax is a priority debt and is a major expense for residents. National data from the ONS shows that on average households spend £27.60 per week on council tax. (1)(page 45). In 2019-20, council tax was the most common type of debt issue Tameside residents presented with to Citizens Advice, however, energy debt has become the most common issue in 2022-23. (2)(page 45).

As of June 2022, 17,403 or 7.53% of people in Tameside were claiming council tax support (CTS), a benefit to help reduce their council tax bills. (3)(page 45).

Claims for Council Tax Support are not uniform across the borough, Ashton St Peters, Denton South and Hyde Godley have the highest proportion of residents claiming CTS. (4)(page 45).

Nationally, the number of Council Tax Support claimants has not risen in line with the number of out of work benefit claimants, meaning many people may not be claiming council tax reduction although they may be eligible. (5)(page 45).

Research from the Money Advice Trust suggests council tax arrears have increased by 51% since 2013 when local council tax support was introduced. In Tameside, council tax arrears collection rates for in year council tax collection have fallen slightly since 2015/16, by 0.22% (2021/22). (6)(page 45) The number of referrals to enforcement agents in respect of Council Tax rose to an all-time high in 2019/20.

Due to the cessation of recovery due to the COVID pandemic in 2020/21, the number of referrals fell, however may rise again in 2022-23 as the cost of living-crisis impacts the ability of households to maintain payments. (7)(page 45).

When compared to other Greater Manchester local authorities, working age claimants receiving Council Tax Support within Tameside had to pay the highest percentage of their bill as a minimum contribution (25%). Across Greater Manchester, the average minimum percentage of council tax required to be paid by working age council tax support was 14.2%.

Four in five respondents (79%) to a survey of National Debtline clients with council tax arrears felt that the actions of their council in collecting the debt had a negative impact on their wellbeing. (8)(page 45).

# Council Tax Support and Council Tax

## What's happening to address this?

- Exchequers signpost residents to support such as:
  - Claiming council tax support;
  - Claiming benefits;
  - Welfare Rights
  - National Debtline
  - Citizens Advice
  - Adults Social Care
  - Independent legal advice
- Exchequers facilitated the administration of the £150 Council Tax Energy Rebate.
- Exchequers have re-drafted their collection letters.

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*I think sometimes the problem is not knowing what you're entitled to. I only found out about the single person discount on your council tax because my friend moved in a couple of doors down and told me.*

### **Tameside Council - Poverty Insights Report - DJS**

*Council tax support is not enough, you work out excess income as zero, then still expect people to find money to make a payment.*

### **Response to the Tameside Council Poverty Survey 2022**



# Mental Health

## Key Challenges

- **There is a link between mental health and poverty, with each being a cause and consequence of the other.**
- **Estimated rates of Common Mental Disorders (CMDs) in Tameside are above the England average for residents aged over 16 and over 65.**
- **Suicide rates in Tameside are currently below the England average, although they have fluctuated over the past 20 years and were at many points significantly above the England average.**
- **Unemployment and low-quality work are closely associated with an increased rate of CMDs. However, there is a lack of specialised employment support to help people into work that matches their needs.**
- **There are gaps around residents being able to access mental health services in an easy and timely fashion.**

The estimated rate of CMDs in Tameside is 19.5% for residents aged 16 or over, and 12.1% for residents aged 65 or over. This is above the England averages of 16.9% (16+) and 10.2% (65+). (1)(page 45).

Multiple studies have shown that there is a significant correlation between mental health and the social, economic and physical environment in which people live. This means that not only is poverty a risk factor for poor mental health, but that poor mental health can also exacerbate poverty (for example: through impacting a person's ability to work).

Employment status is linked to mental health outcomes. The 2014 Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey (APMS) found that the CMD rate in employed people aged 16-64 was 14.1% for those in full-time employment and 16.3% of those in part-time employment compared with 28.8% of unemployed people looking for work and 33.1% of the economically inactive. (2)(page 45).

However, data from the Health and Safety Executive has shown that prevalence rates of self-reported stress, depression or anxiety caused or exacerbated by work by people in employment has increased, driven at least partly by an increase in low-paid, insecure, health-damaging and poor-quality work since 2010 (3)(page 45). Despite this, there is a significant gap in terms of employment support for people with CMDs. Only 33% of respondents to a poll conducted by the Money and Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI) had received such a service, and those who had reported that it rarely supported them into work that matched their needs. (4)(page 45).

Research from the MMHPI also suggests that a quarter of people with CMDs are in financial difficulty, and that financial difficulties can also negatively affect the chance of recovery. Data from NHS IAPT found that the recovery rate for people with both depression and problem debt was 22% compared to 55% for those with depression only. For anxiety, the rate is 38% with problem debt compared to 52% without. (5)(page 45).

There is a strong association between high area-level deprivation and suicidal behaviour. Suicide rates are two to three times higher in the most deprived neighbourhoods compared to the most affluent. (6)(page 45). Within Tameside, the suicide rate in 2018-20 was 8.3 per 100,000 residents. While this is lower than the England average of 10.4, the rate has fluctuated significantly over the past 20 years and at many points was significantly higher than the England average. (7)(page 45). Research has also shown that the 2008-10 economic recession resulted in 846 more suicides among men in England than would have been expected based on historical trends, and 155 more suicides among women. It is therefore reasonable to expect that suicide rates may once again trend upwards as a result of the cost of living crisis. (8)(page 45).

A significant obstacle to improving mental health is a lack of availability of treatments. A MMHPI survey found that just 2 in 10 respondents agreed that their area had mental health services they could easily access, with long wait times being the main barrier. (9)(page 46). In 2020/21 Tameside & Glossop CCG had the 8th longest waiting time in England for both IAPT 1st to 2nd treatment (103 days) and IAPT referral to 2nd treatment (131 days). (10)(page 46).

# Mental Health

Focus group consultation by DJS Research has shown that most residents in Tameside do not see mental health and wellbeing as a council priority, and that those who have attempted to access support have found it somewhat lacking. (11)(page 46).

Mapping work with partner services, supported by national level data, has also found gaps in mental health provision related to “dual diagnosis”, where people experience mental health issues and substance misuse at the same time. Research shows that mental health problems are experienced by the majority of drug (70%) and alcohol (86%) users in community substance misuse treatment nationally, and a history of alcohol or drug use has been recorded in 54% of all suicides in people experiencing mental health problems. However, despite the shared responsibility that NHS and local authorities have to provide treatment, care and support, people with a dual diagnosis are often excluded from services. (12)(page 46).

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## What's happening to address this?

- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Tameside & Glossop 2021/21
  - The JSNA provides a detailed picture of the health and social care needs of the local population. This identifies actions that local agencies will need to take to improve the wellbeing of individuals and communities.
- Tameside & Glossop is currently prototyping “Living Life Well”, a new system-wide approach to mental health that ensures people never “fall between the thresholds” of services.
- Launch of Tameside “Helping Hand” website to assist people in accessing services

*My own experience of poverty is that it can be all consuming. It is near impossible to feel happy, work or study, raise children and generally function well if you are constantly worrying about how you will afford food, fuel, clothes for children. You feel guilt and shame when can't afford the children's school trip or a small treat. No one should have to live like this.*

**Poverty Strategy Consultation respondent**

## Key Challenges

- Disabled people and their families face a number of constraints that make them far more vulnerable to poverty than their non-disabled counterparts.
- Disabled adults face average extra costs of £583 a month, and families with disabled children face average extra costs of £581 a month due to issues associated with disability and ill health.
- Despite progress in recent years, there continues to be a significant “employment gap” between non-disabled and disabled people. Disabled people are also likely to be more insecure in their employment.
- Disabled people and/or families rely on benefits as a source of income, which are insufficient to prevent them from falling into poverty. 80% of disabled people have also experienced some difficulties accessing benefits and pension services.

There is a clear link between disability and poverty. Research from the House of Commons Library shows that people living in families where someone is disabled made up around 48% of the total population in relative low income Before Housing Costs, and 46% After Housing Costs. (1)(page 46)

Data from Tameside Citizens Advice Bureau reveals that 52% of all residents presenting themselves identified as having a disability or a long-term health condition. (2)(page 46). 42 of the 141 LSOAs in Tameside, or 29.8%, are in the lowest 10% nationally for Health Deprivation and Disability. (3)(page 46).

There a number of factors faced by disabled people that significantly increases their risk of falling into poverty, including additional costs associated with disability and ill-health. The Scope “Disability Price Tag 2019” report concludes that, on average, disabled adults face average extra costs of £583 a month and families with disabled children face average extra costs of £581 a month. This covers specialist goods and services (therapies, equipment, adaptations), as well as greater use of, and higher costs for, non-specialist goods and services (insurance, energy, transport). (4)(page 46).

Disabled people also face barriers to accessing and maintaining employment. While successive governments have focused on assisting disabled people into work, the “employment gap” between disabled and non-disabled people in England stood at 26.6% in 2019-20. Tameside’s disability employment gap in 2019-20 was 31.9%, the 4th highest in Greater Manchester but a significant improvement from 2013-14, where it was 40.1% and the highest in Greater Manchester. (5)(page 46).

Surveys from the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) in August 2020 have also shown that while 1 in 6 (17%) of the working population were facing redundancy as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, this increased to 1 in 4 (27%) for disabled people, over 1 in 3 (37%) for those whose disability has a substantial impact on their activities, and 1 in 2 (48%) for people defined as extremely clinically vulnerable to coronavirus. (6)(page 46).

This means that disabled people and/or families frequently rely on benefits as a source of income, which are insufficient to prevent them from falling into poverty, especially for families who cannot work. Scope and the Social Market Foundation have found that in 2018-9 1.8 million more people living in a family that includes a disabled person were in poverty than in 2003-4, while the number of people living in poverty in a family with no disabled people remained the same in 2018-19 as it was in 2003-4. (7) Children in families with a disabled member are also more than twice as likely to experience low income and material deprivation (20%) than children in families where no one is disabled (8%). (8)(page 46).

Many disabled residents also face significant hurdles in accessing the benefits they are entitled to. Data from Tameside CAB shows that as of March 2022 over 672 local people were helped with Personal Independence Payment (PIP) claims in the last year. (9)(page 46). At a national level, the average waiting time for an assessment is 5 months, with £294m in payments being held up for 327,00 people. (10)(page 46).

# Disability

Department for Work and Pension figures from March 2022 also show that 67% of decisions cleared at a tribunal were “overturned” and revised in favour of the customer, suggesting that there are serious issues with the capacity and fairness of the current assessment process. (11)(page 46).

Disabled people are less likely to have qualifications, making it difficult for them to access higher-quality employment. As June 2021, 24.9% of disabled people aged 21-64 in the UK had a degree as their highest qualification compared with 42.7% of non-disabled people, while 13.3% of disabled people had no qualifications compared with 4.6% of non-disabled people. (12)(page 46).

Disabled people also face challenges in terms of physically navigating the public realm. The latest UK Disability Survey found that a quarter of respondents had difficulties accessing public buildings, and 1 in 3 often had difficulties accessing public spaces. (13)(page 46).

## What’s happening to address this?

- Routes to Work
- A Supported Employment service provided by Tameside Council, offering advice, support and practical assistance to local residents with a disability.
- Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Boards
- Promoting the independence, rights, choice and inclusion of people who have learning disabilities in the local area and across GM
- GM Disabled People’s Panel have launched a “GM Big Disability Survey 2022” to push for changes across the city region.
- Partnership with Activity Alliance to improve participation of disabled people in sport.



*Disabled people should not be in the same classification as unemployed people. There is no support for disabled people as we can't get vacancies into work*

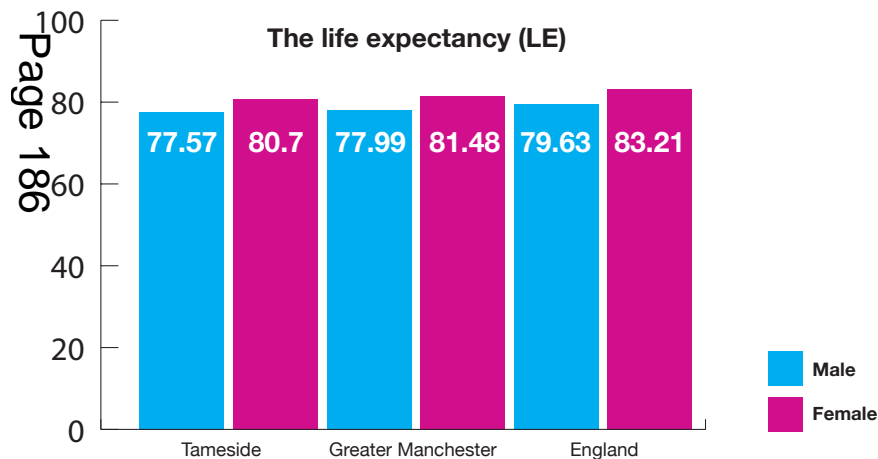
**Poverty Strategy Consultation**

# Life Expectancy

## Key Challenges

- The life expectancy and healthy life expectancy for residents in Tameside is below the England average.
- There is a significant gap in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between men and women in Tameside.
- There is significant disparities in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy within Tameside, with the most-deprived wards having low levels of life expectancy and healthy life expectancy and the least-deprived ward having high levels.

The life expectancy (LE) and healthy life expectancy (HLE) for men and women in Tameside compared to Greater Manchester and England is as follows:



Area	Male HLE	Female HLE
Tameside	61.9	58.3
Greater Manchester	60.86	60.76
England	63.36	63.88

Both life expectancy and healthy life expectancy for men and women in Tameside is below the England average. However, there is a significant disparity in life

expectancy by gender. While Tameside is ranked 5th out of 10 GM authorities for male life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, it is ranked 9th out of 10 for female life expectancy and healthy life expectancy. (1)(page 47).

The Marmot Review on Healthy Equity in England (2020) reveals a strong social gradient in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy. This means that people living in deprived areas can not only expect to live a shorter life, but are also likely to spend more of that shorter life with a limiting long-term illness. (2)(page 47).

This is supported by analysis of IMD and Life Expectancy statistics for Tameside. These show a strong correlation between deprivation and life expectancy/healthy life expectancy. St. Peters, with an IMD score of 50.3, has the lowest life expectancy and healthy life expectancy of all wards in Tameside for both men and women. On the other hand, the least-deprived ward in Tameside, Denton West (IMD score 18.8), has the highest levels of life expectancy and healthy life expectancy for men. The highest levels of female life expectancy and healthy life expectancy are found in Stalybridge South, which with an IMD score of 22.2 is the second least-deprived ward in the borough. (3)(page 47) (4)(page 47).

There is also significant disparities in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy within Tameside. Males born in Denton West can expect to live 8.7 years longer than those born in St. Peters, while females born in Stalybridge South will live 7.9 years longer than those born in St. Peters. The gap between best and worst healthy life expectancy is 14 years for men (St Peters 51.1 years and Denton West 65.1) and 13.2 years for women (St Peters 52.8 years and Stalybridge South 66). (5)(page 47).



# Life Expectancy

## What's happening to address this?

- Establishment of Neighbourhood Hubs to enable residents to access joined-up, face-to-face help and support in a single location.
- Creation of a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Tameside to identify actions that will improve the wellbeing of individuals and communities.
- One-to-one support for residents through Be Well Tameside, including health checks, smoking and alcohol cessation, active lifestyle and weight loss.
- Leisure partners Active Tameside provide a number of services to improve life expectancy and encourage a healthy lifestyle, including:
  - Free "Active Plus Pass" for senior citizens and people in receipt of benefits,
  - "Active Everybody Can" inclusion and disability service.
  - Mainstream and youth intervention provision.
  - "Fuel 4 Fun" - free holiday club places to young people on benefit-related free school meals.
- subsidised memberships for armed forces veterans and those referred by a GP for health reasons.

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### Health since 2010

- *There is a strong relationship between deprivation measured at the small area level and healthy life expectancy at birth. The poorer the area, the worse the health.*
- *There is a social gradient in the proportion of life spent in ill health, with those in poorer areas spending more of their shorter lives in ill health.*

**Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On" (2020), p13**



# Carers and Care

## Key Challenges

- Many residents in Tameside are able to claim support (including Carer's Allowance) but do not due to being unaware of their eligibility, or because of cultural or social stigmas around asking for help.
- The rate of people aged 65 or over in England with unmet care needs (defined as needing help with at least one "activity of daily living") is twice as high in the most deprived neighbourhoods compared to the least deprived.
- Informal or unmet care needs can lead to significant financial pressures on carers and families. This is exacerbated by inadequate support from public services and difficulties balancing work and care responsibilities.
- There is also evidence of clear inequalities in access to end-of-life care services for people with a lower socio-economic status.

Department of Work and Pension statistics shows that there were 3,872 residents in receipt of Carer's Allowance in Tameside in February 2022 (1)(page 47).

The average weekly award amount in Tameside is £67.49. (2)(page 47).

Data from the 2011 Census shows that 11% of residents (14,106) in Tameside have some kind of unpaid caring responsibilities, and 2.9% of residents (6,359) provided more than 50 hours of unpaid care a week. (3)(page 47). The Family Resources Survey estimated that in 2020-21 around 6% of the UK population (4.2 million people) were providing informal care. (4)(page 47). Many of these, according to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), are carers without realising it and therefore go a long time without support or never access it at all. There are also cultural issues around caring roles in ethnic minority families which mean that carers can go unidentified or do not access support because of social stigma. (5)(page 47).

The London School of Economics "Social Policies and Distributional Outcomes in a Changing Britain" programme highlighted that 41% of people aged 65 or over living in the most deprived fifth of neighbourhoods in England had an unmet need for help with at least one "activity of daily living" compared to only 19% of people in the least deprived. (6)(page 47).

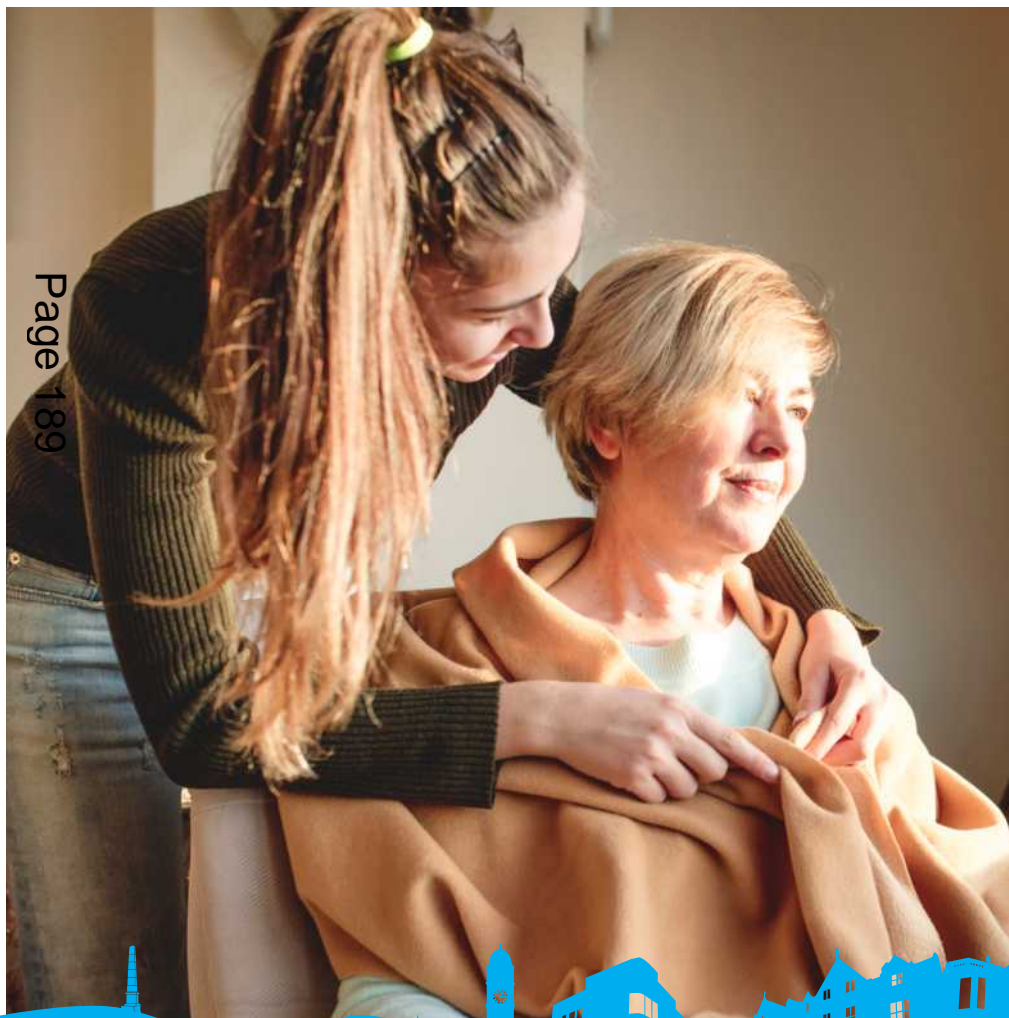
These informal or unmet care needs can lead to significant financial pressures on carers and families. The State of Caring 2021 report states that 31% of carers said they were struggling to make ends meet, 18% are in or have been in debt as a result of caring, and 6% cannot afford utility bills like electricity, gas, water or telephone bills. (7)(page 47). Research from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has also shown that the number of families in receipt of Carer's Allowance and in poverty has doubled from 15% in 2005-6 to 30% in 2019-20. (8)(page 47).

Many carers also face significant difficulties in combining work with their caring responsibilities. Workplace barriers include lack of flexibility in juggling day-to-day caring, lack of support in dealing with emergencies and transitions, and poor attitudes towards carers in general. This is exacerbated by issues with existing support systems, including a lack of respite care, insufficient financial support and low responsiveness of services. The impact of this varies depending on the carer's occupational group – with those in higher skilled occupations (i.e. managerial or professional roles) likely to make smaller reductions in their working hours than those in lower skilled groups. (9)(page 47).

When The State of Caring 2021 report asked carers what barriers they faced in accessing support, the highest response was "I don't know about the services that are available in my local area" (38%). This was followed by concerns about the person they were caring for catching Covid-19 (30%), care and support services available in their area not meeting their needs (28%), high cost (24%), low quality (15%) and not having transport available to take the person they care for to services (12%). (10)(page 47).

# Carers and Care

There is also evidence of clear inequalities in access to end-of-life care services. Research by the University of Exeter and the Wellcome Trust has found that “people with a lower socio-economic status are less likely to ask for a hospice bed and to die in a hospice, more likely to die in hospital, and less likely to feel they had sufficient support to care for someone dying at home than those with a higher socio-economic status”. (11)(page 47).



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## What's happening to address this?

- “Care for the Carer”, Tameside & Glossop Joint Carer’s Strategy 2019-22. Priorities outlined include:
  - Identifying and recognising carers
  - Supporting carers to stay healthy and well.
  - Carers as real and expert partners.
  - Getting the right help at the right time
  - Young Carers.
  - Supporting carers in and into employment.
- Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care NHS FT “SWAN” (Signs, Words, Actions and Needs) end-of-life care service, focusing on person-centred care and improving the patient and family experience.

*New analysis from Age UK shows that the risk of withdrawing from the labour market increases when people start to care, even for as few as five hours per week; and that those caring for more than 10 hours per week are at marked risk of labour market withdrawal*

**Walking the Tightrope: The Challenge of Combining Work and Care in Later Life”, Age UK – July 2016**

*Most shops in Tameside have steps so I can't access them. I can't work as no support and my wife can't rest as she is my full-time carer*

**Poverty Strategy Consultation respondent**

# Barriers to Accessing Services

## Key Challenges

- Research commissioned by Tameside Council in 2021 found that the two main barriers to accessing services, particularly for ethnic minority residents, were a lack of digital skills and language barriers
- Digital exclusion in Tameside is high, with 14.9% of LSOAs with a Digital Exclusion Risk Index score of 5.0+ compared to 4.2% across Greater Manchester.
- Several focus groups and surveys of residents highlight an overall lack of awareness of what the Council does, along with a strong perception that services are “faceless” and/or difficult to contact.
- There is a sense among residents at risk of, but not yet in, poverty that turning to the council for support is a “last resort” for people worse off than them.
- Many leaders in the Voluntary, Charity and Social Enterprise sector (VCSE) are concerned about how the financial impact of the cost of living crisis on their own organisations may erode their capacity to support residents in need.

Accessibility of services and information can have a significant impact on resident’s quality of life, their health and social and economic outcomes. Barriers to accessibility include digital exclusion, language barriers, ineffective communications, and a lack of cultural awareness and sensitivity in service delivery.

(1)(page 48).

Many ethnic minority residents find it difficult to access information due to language barriers. While the Council does provide some interpretation and translation services, most language support is provided informally through family members, friends, relatives and local community centres. Where residents could speak English, they sometimes still struggle to access services because their reading skills were insufficient to navigate large amounts of information and complex language. There is also a gap in provision for languages that, while not the most popular languages in Tameside still have many speakers, such as Farsi, Arabic and Swahili.

(2)(page 48).

Tameside also faces significant challenges around digital exclusion. The Digital Exclusion Risk Index (DERI) shows that 14.9% of LSOAs in Tameside registered a score of 5.0+ for digital exclusion compared to 4.2% across Greater Manchester.

Clusters of digital exclusion exist in the following wards: Ashton Hurst, Ashton Waterloo, Denton West, Dukinfield Stalybridge, Hyde Godley, Hyde Newton and Stalybridge North. (3)(page 48). There are multiple causes of digital exclusion,

however the latest Ofcom report indicates that old age, living alone, having a limiting or impacting condition, and being financially vulnerable are all significant factors.

(4)(page 48).

The Tameside Digital Skills survey, carried out in 2018, also highlighted that very few residents (11%) were aware of the iDEA digital skills programme offered by the Council. (5)(page 48).

As a result of these, combined with the impact of lockdown, the percentage of residents who found it “difficult or very difficult” to access information and services increased from 59% before the pandemic to 80% during it. (6)(page 48).

Focus groups and consultation activities undertaken by the council and external partners show that resident’s perceptions may also constitute a significant barrier to accessibility. A lack of awareness of what the council actually does leads to uncertainty over where to ask for help, and the overriding impression is that services are “faceless” and difficult to contact. There is also a sense among residents at risk of, but not yet in, poverty that approaching the council is a “last resort” for people worse off than them. There is work to do to make residents feel like the council is somewhere that they can turn to for support when they are in need. (7)(page 48).

# Barriers to Accessing Services

These challenges may be exacerbated by changes to the Council's customer service model. Multiple pieces of engagement, including the Poverty Strategy consultation, service mapping and Partnership Engagement Network workshops, have shown that face-to-face support is highly valued and its reduction has a particular impact on vulnerable residents. (8)(page 48). (9)(page 48).

In addition to services directly provided by the council, the local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector is critical to the successful development and rolling out of support for residents at scale and pace. However, research by the Charities Aid Foundation that many leaders are concerned about the impact of the cost of living crisis on their own organisations. 82% are worried about the increased cost of utilities, including energy bills, rent and fuel, 71% expressed anxiety over managing increased demand for their services, and 35% believed that their organisation may struggle to survive altogether. (10)(page 48).

Without additional collaboration and investment, there is a serious risk of deterioration of capacity in the local VCSE sector at a time when it is needed most.

## What's happening to address this?

**Customer Services Review** - The proposed new model for the delivery of customer services promotes a digital first approach, encouraging residents to self-serve if able. Telephone, web chat and e-mail alternatives will be supported for customers unable to self-serve, with face-to-face services by appointment made available where appropriate.

**Neighbourhood Hubs Strategy** - "One-stop shops" bringing together services from Tameside Council, NHS, and voluntary/community sectors in a one location. Residents will be able to access joined-up and face-to-face help and support.

**Tameside iDEA and Adult and Community Education** - Tameside iDEA (Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award) is a free online programme that allows residents to develop digital and enterprise skills. Tameside Adult and Community Education also works closely with Tameside College to deliver a number of adult education services.

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*I think the council would be a last resort or if it came up online. I feel like they'd put you through a lot to say we can't do it*

*I wouldn't associate the council with being able to help with my finances... I've never thought about accessing the council for any help.*

**Respondents to DJS Focus Group**

# Service-User Experience

## Key Challenges

- Service-users want the option to see people face-to-face
- There is a feeling that services do not communicate with each other effectively or have knowledge of what other services do.
- Survey feedback highlighting that services need to be less judgmental and more respectful.
- People do not feel that services were designed on conjunction with those that use them.
- Common theme of people referencing the stigma of poverty which prevents them from accessing services

In the Survey the most frequently expressed response to the question of how we should address Poverty was expanding or simplifying pathways for services.

(1)(page 48).

20 separate respondents commented in the Poverty Strategy Survey that people should be treated with more dignity, respect or compassion. (2)(page 48).

A key finding from the Focus Groups was a lack of clarity about what the Council can offer to help people in Poverty and not being seen as somewhere people would go for help. (3)(page 48).

The need for more face-to-face services was the most cited thing that needed to change from the mapping work and the survey. It also came up strongly in the PEN conference and the Focus Groups. (4)(page 48).

Another theme that came through in the mapping work, the PEN conference and the survey was the perception that services do not communicate with each other effectively and lack knowledge about what other services exist to support people. (5)(page 48).

Feedback from the PEN conference and the Focus Groups suggested that we need to do more ongoing work to co-design services with people in poverty. (6)(page 48).

## What's happening to address this?

- Work is underway to develop Neighbourhood Hubs for multi-agency service delivery at Place.
- Helping Hands website should provide greater clarity on where to go for what information/advice
- Customer Service Survey in place
- Developed the Advice Tameside website which includes information on benefit and money related matters.

# Service-User Experience

*Accessing services is very difficult. I have a son with autism and I cannot access mental health because he does not fall into a particular category. Nobody knows where to signpost him*

*I'm trying to get assessment for my Mum and have been dealing with somebody with no experience who does not seem to know what to recommend. Training is a massive issue*

*I am Autistic - i have a unique way of communicating that is misunderstood by the majority of people. I need people to treat me with respect and give me access to services."*

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*"Service need to be accessible, currently especially after Covid, Tameside councils services are not accessible at all. You get sent around from one service to another*

*People who are new to welfare system' and who are not already known to support services. We need to ensure these people do not slip the net. We need to consider how we promote and improve access to support for those who are not used to looking for it or receiving it.*

## Quotes from Survey Respondents

*Make it everybody's business, every service including health should be aware of what services are available and can signpost- we should be fully integrated between council services and health.*

*Raise awareness, help people to identify themselves, engage from the grass roots upwards, engage with people who have lived experiences, don't judge them use empathy*

*We can't just rely on engaging with people digitally and we need to go to the places where target groups are*

## Quotes from PEN Conference attendees

*The perceived facelessness of the council makes participants feel faceless too*

*The perceived facelessness of the council makes participants feel faceless too*

*I think the council would be a last resort or if it came up online. I feel like they'd put you through a lot to say "we can't do it*

*people who are new to welfare system and who are not already known to support services. We need to ensure these people do not slip the net. We need to consider how we promote and improve access to support for those who are not used to looking for it or receiving it*

## Focus Group feedback

# Child Poverty

## Key Challenges

- **Data from End Child Poverty indicates 31.9% of children in Tameside are in poverty after housing costs.**
- **According to Department of Work and Pensions, 22.5% of children are in relative poverty and 17.6% are in absolute poverty.**
- **Larger families; lone parents, workless families, families with a disabled adult or child and minority ethnic families are at greater risk of living in poverty;**
- **1,250 households in Tameside are affected by the two child limit on Universal Credit and Tax Credits;**
- **National data and consultation responses indicate that childcare costs remain a barrier for families;**
- **Tameside has a higher level of free school meal eligibility than the national average;**
- **Although Tameside has high take up rates of free childcare entitlement, uptake is not uniform and factors such as household income, home language and ethnicity affect take up rates.**

Childhood poverty is strongly associated with negative health, educational and long-term social outcomes.

As of 2020/21, 31.9% of children in Tameside were living in households below median income after housing costs are accounted for. (1)(page 48).

22.3 % of children across Tameside are living in relative poverty, where household income is below 60% of the median before housing costs are accounted for, compared to just 18.5% in England. (2)(page 48).

Within Tameside, 17.6% children live in absolute poverty, where households have less than 60% of the median income in 2010/11 uprated by inflation. (3)(page 48).

Comparatively, Tameside has the 5th highest child poverty rates in Greater Manchester by both measures and although child poverty rates are highest in Ashton St Peters, Hyde Werneth and Longendale, only six wards out of 19 have relative child poverty rates below the national average. (4)(page 48).

Nationally, child poverty rates are heavily affected by household characteristics, with ethnic minority families, families with a disabled member, lone parent families, larger families and families where no one is in employment having facing the highest risks of poverty. Poverty rates are highest where the head of the household is of Pakistani or Bangladeshi ethnicity.(5)(page 48).

Families with a disabled member make up just 29% of the national population but account for 39% of the people in poverty. Similarly, although children of lone parents accounted for around a fifth of all children (22%), they account for a third of all children in relative poverty (36%).(6)(page 49). Resolution Foundation found that 70% of households with four or more children are living in poverty. (7)(page 49). Considering employment within families and income, 53% of children in workless families are in relative low income. (8)(page 49).

The effects of benefit reforms, such as the two child limit, have also put pressure on household finances, affecting 1,250 families in Tameside, driving poverty. (9)(page 49).

Under the two child limit policy, parents are not entitled to claim extra support through universal credit or child tax credits to help with the costs of raising a third or subsequent child born after 6 April 2017, meaning families lose around £55 per week for each affected child, pushing larger families into poverty.(10)(page 49).

Another indicator of deprivation locally is free school meal entitlement. In the summer term 2022, 30% of Children in Tameside are eligible for free school meals which is 7.15% higher than England's national average (11)(page 49). In Longendale, 38.14% of children are eligible for free school meals, nearly twice the national average. (12)(page 49).



# Child Poverty

However, not all children in poverty are eligible for free school meals and Child Poverty Action Group estimate that 1 in 3 school-age children in England living in poverty (800,000) miss out. (13)(page 49). Childcare costs was a common concern amongst respondents to the Tameside Poverty Survey 2022.

The average price of a part time childcare place (25hours) for a week for a child under three in a nursery in the North West is £118.60. Since 2021, there have been price increases for part-time nursery places across Great Britain, rising by 2.5 per cent for those aged under two, 2.0 per cent for two year olds and 3.5 per cent for three to four year olds using the free entitlement. (14)(page 49).

In 99 per cent of local authority areas, Coram Family and Childcare found that the average price of a full time nursery place for a child under two is higher than the maximum costs supported through universal credit and the benefits system. (15)(page 49).

For those receiving the universal credit childcare element, it was recognised by the DWP that the requirement to pay childcare providers upfront coupled with the fact the childcare costs can only be reimbursed one month in arrears created a significant barrier for families. (16)(page 49).

Tameside has 1086 families that are potentially eligible for funded early education and childcare places, 903 of those have enrolled in a place, giving Tameside a take up rate of free childcare or early education places for 2 year olds of 83%. Children may be eligible for a free childcare place at 2 years old where their family receives a relevant means tested benefit, the child is or has been looked after by the authority, the child has special educational needs, the child received DLA, the child has left care, or under some circumstances where their parent or carer is a non-EEA citizen who cannot claim benefits.

A survey conducted by The Children's Society's in 2020 identified that parents spent on average £337 per year on school uniform for each secondary school child and £315 per year per primary school child. (17)(page 49).

One of the leading concerns of 16-25 year olds identified through the care leaver's survey was their finances.

## What's happening to address this?

- Early help have co-located with the voluntary sector to provide advice and support.
- Children's Services have secured funding to provide further free school meals vouchers during school holidays.
- Delivery of the Fuel for Fun project providing activities and meals to children in low income families during school holidays.
- Public Health are carrying out an extensive healthy start voucher take up campaign,
  - delivering training across public, private, VCSE sector professionals;
  - Changing routine questions and assessments within different departments to ensure HS is covered
  - Direct messaging to cohorts of people on GP patient list who are pregnant or have children under 4
  - Advertising Healthy Start vouchers in targeted public spaces and targeted social media posts.

*I would love to work more hours make more money but childcare is so expensive and UC never pay out until months later.*

**Response to the Tameside Poverty Survey 2022**

*I have lived in poverty when I was younger with my first child. I felt worthless not being able to provide for my son, he always missed out on things other kids take for granted. Like school trip or after school activities, eating healthy food.*

**Response to the Tameside Poverty Survey 2022**

# Social Housing

## Key Challenges

- **Incomes for residents in the social housing sector are generally low, which makes them disproportionately likely to be affected by changes to benefits and economic conditions.**
- **Due to the lack of availability of social housing, many residents who are at risk of poverty move into more insecure and expensive housing in the private rental market or temporary accommodation.**
- **In the 13 years between 2006/7 and 2018/19 5,985 homes, of which 1,628 were affordable, have been built in Tameside. This is significantly below the target of 8,720 for the same period.**
- **Demand for social housing in Tameside far exceeds the supply, with 643 applicants currently on the Council's Housing Register.**
- **This is exacerbated in Tameside by the lack of a Common Housing Register, and the small number of properties nominated by Housing Associations to the Council compared to other local authorities.**

The 2017 Household Data Survey shows that, based on Census data, 22.4% of occupied dwellings in Tameside are affordable – including social rented from the council or housing association and shared ownership. This compares to 63.4% owner-occupied dwellings and 14.2% private rented (including tied accommodation and student housing). (1)(page 49).

While the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) shows that 20.57% of Tameside LSOAs are in the 10% more deprived in the country, no LSOAs in Tameside are in the most 10% deprived for housing issues including affordability, overcrowding and homelessness. This suggests that, while housing issues clearly exist, they are not the major driver of deprivation in Tameside. (2)(page 49).

Incomes for residents in the social housing sector are generally low. Data from the latest Tameside Housing Strategy shows that 71.7% of the affordable rented sector receive an income of less than £300 gross each week and 41.3% receive less than £200 gross each week. (3)(page 49).

This means that residents in social housing are disproportionately likely to be affected by changes to benefits and economic conditions. 42% of social renters nationally worked in sectors hardest hit by coronavirus – manufacturing, retail, accommodation and food, arts, entertainment and recreation. (4)(page 49).

Research from the Institute for Fiscal Studies has also shown that the lowest-income households are facing a higher de-facto inflation rate, up to 18% in the case of the poorest quintile compared to 11% for the richest. (5)(page 49). This is exacerbated by cuts to benefits including the £20 Universal Credit uplift, the bedroom tax (estimated to have affected 824 households in Tameside) in February 2022) (6)(page 50). and Discretionary Housing Payments, the government funding for which is now at its lowest level since 2013. (7)(page 50).

Councils and Registered Providers have a particular responsibility to support tenants at risk of falling into poverty or other financial difficulties. As is the case in much of the country, demand for social housing in Tameside far exceeds the available supply. There are currently 643 applicants on the Council's Housing Register, (8)(page 50). and housebuilding rates (including affordable homes) have been significantly below target for the past 13 years. (9)(page 50).

Tameside does not operate a Common Housing Register, with the council and Registered Providers operating their own selection processes and criteria. This means that residents seeking social housing face a fragmented landscape of multiple forms and layers of bureaucracy. Tameside also receives a very low level of relets as nominations from major Registered Providers in the borough, resulting in the council having very limited influence over who can receive social housing. (10)(page 50).

# Social Housing

## What's happening to address this?

- Tameside Housing Strategy 2021-26 contains these key recommendations in regards to social housing provision in Tameside.
  - Establish a successful Registered Provider Partnership. Review allocations and nominations policy and procedures.
  - The adaptation of a robust Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document following the adoption of a new local plan.
  - Development of a standardised and effective s.106 template.
  - Adoption of an updated Housing Needs Assessment.
  - Development of new affordable home ownership access models.

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*There is a severe lack of affordable homes and for many years now, government funding for new homes has focused on homeownership. This is just not an option for people living in poverty so too many people are now living in high cost private rented accommodation across Tameside. As a housing provider we cannot keep up with demand for the affordable rented homes*

**Poverty Strategy Consultation respondent**



# Private Rent

## Key Challenges

- There is a growing gap between LHA and average rent making properties unaffordable. LHA rate has been frozen since but 2020 with rents increasing, properties are increasingly unaffordable.
- Private Rented tenants are more likely to live in poor quality accommodation, which impacts health outcomes and reduces employment prospects. There are fewer opportunities to engage with landlords in the Private Sector.
- A private landlord's duty of care does not extend to the wellbeing of their tenant, so they are less inclined to intervene early to address issues around Mental Health or Food Security.
- Deposits for Private Rented properties are going up in line with rent levels meaning that they are also increasingly unaffordable

In 2020, the gap between Local Housing Allowance and average rent in Tameside was £30, by 2021 it was £40. This was the third highest increase in Greater Manchester. (1)(page 50).

The median rent for properties in Tameside has increased by nearly 20% across all property sizes in the last four years but 1-bedroom properties have gone up nearly 24%. (2)(page 50).

Local Housing Allowance is normally set based on the cheapest 30% of properties in the 'Broad Market Rental Area'. However, LHA has been frozen since 2020 meaning that while prices are continuing to increase (especially in the Private Rented Sector), the options for those on LHA are decreasing.

By association, with the median rents going up, the level of deposit required (usually a months rent) is increasing by the same amount.

Research by The Trussell Trust advises that in early 2020, over one in four (28%) private rented households referred to food banks had a shortfall between their housing benefit and their housing costs. This meant they had to use the benefits meant for household essentials such as food to cover their rent. (3)(page 50).

The Housing Strategy confirms that, while the Private Rented Sector is small in Tameside compared with the GM average, the quality of properties at the lower-end of the market is poor. Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundations makes a link between poor quality housing, the built environment and Health, which has consequences for employment and other aspirations.

# Private Rent

## What's happening to address this?

- Key priority in the new Housing Strategy to Improve the Quality and Management of the Private Rented Sector
- Exploring the evidence to support selective licensing and its potential to drive up standard in problem areas
- Work with and promote GM Good Landlord Scheme and Ethical Letting Agency 'Let Us',
- Place Based intervention with Area Lead Registered Providers in the Private Rented Sector.
- Empowering tenants and the advocates of vulnerable tenants informing and engaging.

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*Areas where most people struggle is private sector. Difficult to establish relationships with private landlords.*

**Save The Children Tameside**

*Having spent hours going around social housing I ended up renting privately as it was the only way I would get somewhere to live. The need to find a deposit drained most of my financial resources.*

**Poverty survey respondent**



# Homelessness

## Key Challenges

- Homelessness and Poverty are intertwined as each one can be responsible for the other. A lack of stable accommodation makes it more difficult to secure and maintain employment.
- There are an increasing number of people presenting as homeless, which is likely to be exacerbated by the cost of living crisis
- Pressures on temporary accommodation are consequently increasing and likely to get worse
- There are insufficient nominations coming through from Registered Providers meaning that, options other than Private Rented sector, are limited for homeless households
- Security of tenure through Private Rented tenancies is a key driver of homelessness

According to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation It is generally accepted that stable accommodation is necessary for seeking and sustaining employment. because it necessitates a 'present orientation' which can make it difficult for those affected to get and work toward goals. Furthermore, the rents and conditions in homeless households are reportedly 'not conducive' to paid employment.

The main causes of homelessness in Tameside are:

1. Family no longer willing to accommodate
2. End of private rented tenancy
3. Relationship with partner ended (non-violence breakdown)
4. Domestic Abuse
5. Friends no longer willing or able to accommodate (1)(page 50).

The 2020 Housing Needs Analysis showed that, over the previous five years, 23.3% of homeless households had moved onto social housing with 72.1% moving to private rented accommodation. (2)(page 50).

In late 2021, following the lifting of lockdown measures, including the eviction ban, there has been an increase in the number of people requiring temporary accommodation from 163 in June '21 to 214 in December '21, a 31% increase. (3)(page 50).

According to Crisis, due to the cost-of-living crisis, more than 66,000 more people nationally will be homeless by 2024, with the bulk of the increase being among people forced to "sofa surf", according to annual forecasts by the housing charity Crisis and Heriot-Watt University. There will be 8,000 more people rough sleeping.

# Homelessness

## What's happening to address this?

- Key priority in new Housing Strategy
- Homelessness Strategy in development
- Promoting GM Good Landlords Scheme
- Developing a TMBC/Registered Provider protocol for tenants under the threat of eviction.
- Delivering Outreach Housing options services into communities to allow early contact with hard to reach households.
- Increasing purpose-built temporary accommodation/ supported housing
- Maximise use of PRS to prevent and relive homelessness more expediently using 'Let Us'
- Tameside statutory Homelessness service has come back in-house.

In November 2017, Tameside's annual Rough Sleepers snapshot estimate was 43, however by November 2020, the annual Rough Sleepers Snapshot Estimate/Count had fallen to 3.

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*No wonder they are so many homeless people in the world like myself who does not have 2 pence to rub together mean I am in debt with my rent and my council tax as well as other things I am having to borrow money to survive*

**Poverty Survey Respondent**

*You get banded silver, gold and bronze. So, because technically I had a bed at my mum's I wasn't homeless, so even though I was saying the boys had none of their stuff and things... unless you're really on your backside they do nothing.*

**Focus Group Participant talking about accessing social housing**



# 6. Conclusion

6.1 The contents of this Needs Assessment will be used to inform the final Poverty Strategy for Tameside, which will consist of a series of recommendations for targeted support for residents currently struggling in poverty, as well as preventative work to stop at-risk residents from falling into poverty.

6.2 Gathering and warehousing comprehensive and up-to-date data and information will be an essential element of any approach to tackling poverty in Tameside. To that end, a key recommendation in the Tameside Poverty Strategy will be the creation of a new Tameside Poverty Monitor.

As well as broadening our understanding of the needs of our residents and what types of poverty reduction strategies will work most effectively, the Poverty Monitor will allow us to keep track of progress following the implementation of the Strategy.

Examples of Poverty Monitors from other public sector organisations include:

- Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council: Calderdale Data Works Poverty Index
- Greater Manchester Poverty Action: Greater Manchester Poverty Monitor 2022

6.3 Whilst all of the key challenges within this Needs Assessment have been recognised as important issues, there are a number that are considered to be especially urgent.

- Fuel Poverty
- Food Poverty
- Homelessness

These are urgent because failing to resolve the key challenges in these areas could have serious implications for the health and wellbeing of our residents in the near future, especially within the context of the current cost of living crisis.

- Council Tax
- Barriers to Accessing Services
- Service User Experience

These are urgent because the key challenges in these areas relate to issues that the council has direct and substantial control over. Our mapping and consultation work has also identified issues in these areas that are of particular importance to our residents, particularly around accessibility and experiences of services.





# 7. Appendices

## 7.1 Introduction

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## 7.2 Poverty in Context

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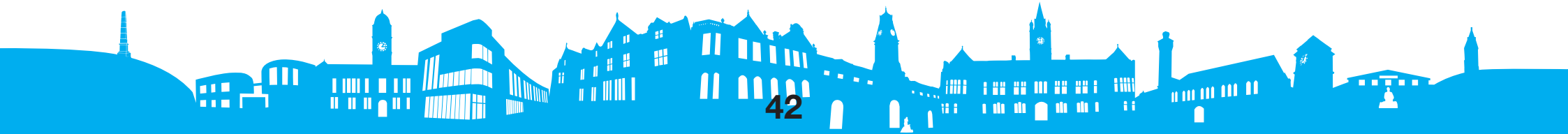
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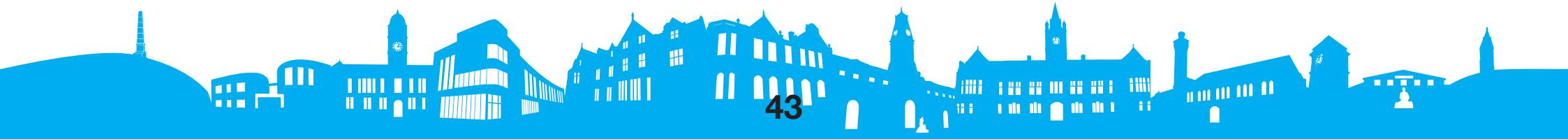
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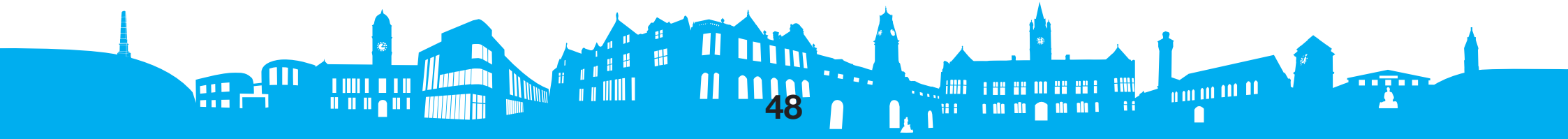
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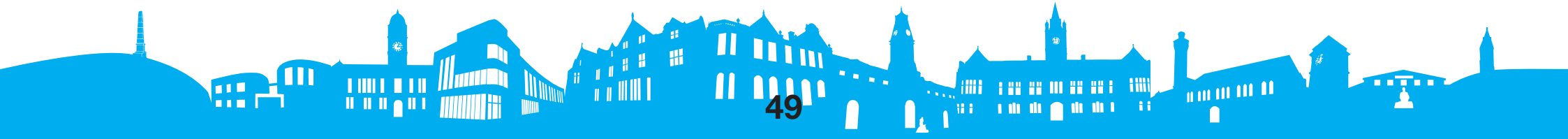




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# TAMESIDE

POVERTY TRUTH COMMISSION (PTC)

OCTOBER 2021 – NOVEMBER 2022 | REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS



**“We may all be weathering the same storm, but we’re definitely in different boats.”**

- Karen McBride, Tameside PTC Commissioner

The Commission ran from October 2021 to November 2022. It was run by Greater Manchester Poverty Action who, in partnership with Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council and with the support of funders, employed three facilitators to deliver the project.

GMIPA is a not-for-profit organisation that works to prevent and reduce poverty across Greater Manchester. We have developed extensive knowledge about poverty in the city region, identified a powerful network of stakeholders and organisations who share our values, aims and vision and we have influenced policy and practice in several ways since we were constituted in 2016.

Our vision is of a Greater Manchester free from poverty where all residents can realise their potential and access the benefits of living in a diverse and vibrant city region.

We believe that policy and practice seeking to address poverty is more effective if it is informed by the perspectives, opinions and experiences of people with lived experience of socio-economic disadvantage. One of our core strategic objectives is to embed the voices of people with lived experience in the decision-making structures and systems of Greater Manchester. We have been proud to run the Tameside Poverty Truth Commission as part of this process.

Published November 2022

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tameside Poverty Truth Commission (PTC) started with the question *“What if people who are living in poverty or have lived in poverty were involved in making decisions to tackle poverty?”*.

As participants in the Commission we believe that *“Nothing about us, without us, is for us”*. Our commissioners brought their experiences of poverty, whether lived experience or through their work with those living in poverty, to create positive change that will prevent and reduce poverty.

During the Commission we have come together, shared our stories and developed friendships. We have looked at what poverty means in Tameside and how it affects the lives of residents, and we have collectively created recommendations for positive change to tackle poverty.

This journey was about our voices being heard and using the collective power of our voices to prevent others from living in poverty. Our path has been long and difficult, with many challenges and tough conversations. In this report we reflect on our experiences and what we have learned.

We are also pleased to share our final recommendations for change in Tameside. We are publishing this report during a *Cost-of-living Crisis* nationally, with prices rising and many struggling to cope. We want to highlight that this is part of a longer-term crisis for those living in poverty. In this context, our recommendations can start to create positive change for the people of Tameside.

Thank you to everyone who has helped us to reach this stage. Now we ask all of you, whether you have been involved with the Commission or not, to work with us to make sure these recommendations are delivered for the benefit of Tameside residents.

It is only by working together that we will tackle poverty in Tameside. This is the start of our journey and we hope that you can join us. Thank you.

**“I have been struggling with poverty for many years, the cause of which is rooted in my health issues... when you have to tell your story over and over again to prove your worth, it’s retraumatising and dehumanising.”**

- Antony, Tameside PTC Commissioner



## Remembering Karen

We dedicate this report to the memory of our friend, Karen McBride.

Karen was a passionate member of the Tameside PTC, knowing from her own experience of poverty that things needed to change. She supported others to use their voice and would often challenge the Commission to listen more and to turn that listening into action, for the benefit of Tameside residents living in poverty. Karen’s passion for social justice shone through every conversation she was in, as she fought for systems to be more compassionate to people living in poverty.

We were devastated when Karen passed away in August 2022 after years of living in poverty. It reminded us once again that poverty kills, and we hope that this report and the legacy of the Tameside PTC will help those living in poverty to be seen, heard and dealt with compassionately, as Karen would have wanted.

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [Recommendations](#)
3. [Timeline and Journey](#)
4. [Working Groups](#)
5. [Achievements and Impact](#)
6. [Learnings and Evaluation](#)
7. [Acknowledgements](#)

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

### General

1. A Tameside Poverty Charter should be created, with a commitment to include involving people with lived experience of poverty in decision-making and providing poverty awareness training to frontline and other relevant staff. Organisations across Tameside should commit to this Charter.
2. Poverty awareness training should be developed in Tameside with lived experience input, and including real stories of poverty, for staff in support services and relevant organisations.
3. Organisations across Tameside should establish meaningful lived experience processes to influence decision making. A public directory should be maintained of these opportunities.
4. Tameside should follow the lead of other local authorities in declaring a poverty emergency and calling on the UK Government to provide more support for those living in poverty.
5. A new body should be established, or an existing body developed, to continue the legacy of the Tameside Poverty Truth Commission and to hold organisations in Tameside accountable for delivering the recommendations of the PTC.

### Access to Services

1. Support services in Tameside should co-operate and better share information, to ensure there is "no wrong door" for accessing support.
2. Support services in Tameside should provide skilled single points of contact to support people with complex needs, through effective referrals, not signposting. People living in poverty should not need to repeat their story.
3. Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council should continue to widen the range of services available in Tameside One and to ensure clear, effective communication of these.

### Mental Health

1. A clear pathway for Tameside mental health and therapy services should be established and communicated, with all support services and staff able to appropriately refer people.
2. Mental health services in Tameside should be regularly reviewed. Reviews should be informed by people with lived experience of poverty and mental health challenges, while also adopting a multi-agency approach.
3. Opportunities should be created for children and young people with lived experience of mental health and poverty to be involved in reviewing and improving services.
4. The process of creating individual care plans should be reviewed and improved with lived experience input, including to add aspects around financial capability and debt.

### Housing

#### (Delivery of recommendations via Tameside Council's Housing Strategy 2021-2026)

1. The Collaborative Partnership of Tameside Registered Providers (of Social Housing) should have direct representation of lived experience of poverty within its membership.
2. Tameside should introduce and maintain a single point of access for all social housing and Registered Providers (of Social Housing) services, to simplify application, allocation and nomination processes.
3. Registered Providers (of Social Housing) in Tameside should review and improve their processes for engaging with customers, for example about rent arrears, with lived experience input and with a focus on delivering a person-centred, compassionate service for those living in poverty.
4. Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council should review and updates its private sector housing strategy, with input from people with lived experience of poverty.

## 3. TIMELINE & JOURNEY

Poverty Truth Commissions bring people with lived experience of poverty together with civic and business leaders in a community, to identify what poverty looks like in their area and what the root causes of it are. The Commissions are designed to build relationships and for commissioners to co-produce recommendations on how to prevent and reduce poverty in their community in future. Including real stories of poverty, for staff in support services and relevant organisations.

### Phase 1 - Setting Up

A Tameside PTC was suggested in 2019 by resident Beatrice Smith, after the success of another local Commission. An initial start-up group was founded, bringing together local partners including Tameside Council, housing associations, voluntary sector organisations, the NHS and more. This group arranged a public gathering at Ashton Old Baths to explore the option of a Tameside PTC.

After different factors affecting the progress of a Tameside PTC, including the Covid-19 pandemic, Greater Manchester Poverty Action was asked to facilitate the programme.

The facilitation team began by recruiting community commissioners, who were people in Tameside with lived experience of poverty. The group started to meet to get to know each other and to prepare for the public launch event in October 2021, where civic and business leaders from across the borough were invited to join as commissioners.



"I know first-hand what it is like to live in poverty and I want to use my voice to make a positive change in our community. Poverty has been with me for most of my life."

- Fran, Tameside PTC Commissioner

### Phase 2 - Launch

At this event, community commissioners shared their powerful and emotional stories of living in poverty in Tameside. Each of these stories gave a stark picture of poverty: of Diana living in poor quality housing not fit for her and her children; of Ed growing up in poverty while his mum struggled with significant mental health problems and suicide attempts; of Fran wanting to provide a better life for her daughter than she had herself. The themes from these stories were clear: people were not getting the right support and at the right time and were instead being passed between organisations or were falling between the cracks.

Councillor Brenda Warrington, the then Leader of Tameside Council, spoke at the launch event. She emphasised the need for the stories of poverty to be heard, listened to and acted upon, and that Tameside was facing a poverty crisis.

"Poverty is one dark cloud that doesn't go away and if left unaddressed can become the nightmare that doesn't go away."

- Ed, Community Commissioner

"Poverty has affected me for the last 10 years after I lost my job... I have to claim for food parcels, these are things I never thought I would have to claim"

- Christopher, Tameside PTC Commissioner



## Phase 3 - Exploring Poverty

In January 2022 we started to meet as a full group, bringing together Tameside residents with lived experience of poverty with local civic and business leaders. Our initial meetings focused on building relationships and getting to know each other, including a group walk along one of Tameside's Canal Heritage Trails.

By March 2022, our commissioners had started to discuss issues around poverty in Tameside in more detail, including the frustrations of some in wanting to enact change sooner. The Commission met on 30th March 2022 to discuss areas of importance, for example stigma and education, and we agreed on three priorities for action and vision statements for each of these: Access to Services, Housing and Mental Health.



Between March and July 2022, our full Commission continued to meet, yet most of the in-depth discussions happened in working groups themed along the priority areas, with commissioners deciding which priority or priorities they wanted to focus on. These working groups looked at specific issues relating to poverty and the root causes of poverty, and to create recommendations for change. Later in this report there are summaries of the discussions in the working groups.

The Commission agreed to continue to meet in themed working groups during August 2022, however these plans changed with the tragic death of our friend and fellow commissioner Karen McBride. Instead we took a break until September 2022, while some continued to gather informally, including meeting with Karen's family.



When we regrouped we took time to reflect on Karen's life and to remember her contributions to the PTC. Our commissioners recognised that it would not be the same without Karen in the PTC, but that the process should be completed in her memory. The working groups met again to consider their recommendations and to complete this report.

## Phase 4 - Legacy

We now have this report with our recommendations for positive change in Tameside. We hope these will form part of the legacy of the Tameside PTC and that we can start to embed these across the borough.

Our plan is to continue meeting with those who are interested in tackling poverty in Tameside, to ensure that our recommendations are delivered. Most importantly, we want to see all services and organisations in Tameside recognising the value of lived experience input in decision-making.

This includes our commissioners with lived experience getting involved in reviewing and redesigning local children and family services, and mental health support. We want to continue this by bringing more people with lived experience into these discussions, and by ensuring that our recommendations are the collective responsibility of everyone in Tameside, not just our commissioners.

We look forward to engaging with more senior leaders and others across Tameside, in supporting them to accept and enact these positive changes.



**"Everyone needs to know that this is the reality of living in poverty... with your help we can really identify ways of improving things."**

- Ivan, Tameside PTC Commissioner

**My life could have been so different had I received the right help from the very beginning... no one chooses poverty, it is not a choice."**

- Helen, Tameside PTC Commissioner

**"Never before has it been more imperative to question how well our systems are working to assist those who need them the most."**

- Beatrice, Tameside PTC Facilitator



## 4. WORKING GROUPS

### Access to Services Working Group

Our Access to Services Working Group created this vision statement:

**“Any resident in Tameside, who needs support knows where to go and can access the help they need at the first point of contact. The level of support should be flexible, appropriate and empathetic to their lived experience. Any resident accessing multiple services will be given a single point of contact with services working in partnerships together for the benefit of all residents.”**

In our meetings we discussed the need for skilled single points of contact within support services, who can effectively work with people with complex needs.

We talked about how services need to move away from signposting and more towards referrals, using a compassionate approach to ensure there is no wrong door for support in Tameside.

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As a group we also discussed the need for frontline staff, and those involved in designing services, to have poverty awareness training. This will ensure that staff are more empathetic and that systems are designed with people living in poverty in mind.

We have worked with Tameside Council to improve support for people living in poverty in Tameside, including by influencing the Helping Hands campaign. We shared our feedback to change how the campaign intended to communicate key messages around support services for people struggling with the cost of living. We also visited Tameside One, a flagship Council building, to share feedback during their review of how the Council was used. Since our visit and based on our feedback, the space now has different support services co-located and available to help people, as well as drop-in support for Council customer services and improved signage of key facilities.

### Mental Health Working Group

Our Mental Health Working Group created this vision statement:

**“Tameside has a mental health system that is proactive and preventative so that we are empowered to believe in ourselves. Where all Tameside residents needing mental health support at any level will receive coordinated and co-produced care that is timely, appropriate, respectful and compassionate for as long as they need it, adapting to lived experience. Where we all work together to reduce the impact of mental health and poverty.”**

In our meetings we discussed the need for a clear pathway of mental health support in Tameside, as those needing mental health support either do not always know where to go or they are turned away based on criteria. We talked about how staff in different services can be unaware of what support is available, meaning no referrals or the wrong referrals are made.

As a group we focused on how services needed a preventative rather than reactive approach, ensuring that people receive mental health support at an early enough stage to prevent further issues later in life. A better understanding of the links between poverty and mental health is needed in services to reduce the chances of people being missed like this in future, and having experiences similar to our commissioners.

**“It’s the ripple effects of poverty: not just the necessities like food and heat. It’s not being able to meet people and the dehumanisation”**

- Ed, Community Commissioner

### Housing Working Group

Our Housing Working Group created this vision statement:

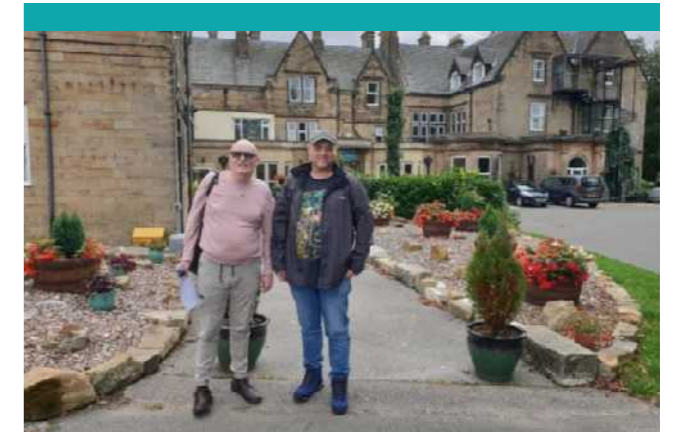
**“To increase the number of available, appropriate and accessible homes that are maintained and providers are held to account and a charter of standards adhered to with compassion, dignity and respect from providers. Ensuring a prompt response and a safe space so people can stay in their homes.”**

**Having a positive experience of the housing process and influenced and evaluated by the voices of lived experience. That homes are safe spaces in which people are able to stay, even in times of adversity and that all tenants have a positive experience of the housing process, influenced and evaluated by the voices of lived experience.”**



In our meetings we reviewed and discussed the Decent Home Standards and the national Charter for Social Housing Residents. We collated a list of the sixteen social housing providers in Tameside and discussed the issues in having so many, with each using their own bidding system for properties.

We also discussed how housing providers deal with rent arrears. This led to housing associations represented in the Tameside PTC comparing their approaches and reviewing how they can best support residents. The automated process and wording of rent arrears communications can often make a situation worse for those living in poverty and need to be more compassionate.



**“The only things I have ever wanted for my children are safety and a clean home for them... the reality of poverty is that I have ended up where I never wanted to be, insecure housing for me and my two girls, the opposite of what I dreamt”**

- Diana, Tameside PTC Commissioner

## 5. ACHIEVEMENTS & IMPACT

At our full Commission meeting in July 2022 we reflected on the impact of the PTC so far, both on ourselves individually but also on the organisations involved and the wider culture in Tameside. We have since updated these based on our reflections of the whole process as a PTC.

### Individual Impacts

- “It opened my eyes to issues I hadn’t considered before” - Civic Commissioner
- “It is reigniting my passion and motivation to make change” - Civic Commissioner
- Our commissioners gained in confidence through ‘Chair training’.
- One of our commissioners has gained employment through their links with the PTC.
- Not all of the impacts were positive. Some commissioners spoke about the difficulties in sharing their stories, especially around struggling to access support.
- “It is frustrating with the slow progress and not being able to solve issues I care about” - Community Commissioner
- “It is thought-provoking and shocking how something can suddenly put you into poverty” - Civic Commissioner
- “I feel like we’re still hitting a brick wall but part of it has come down” - Community Commissioner

### Individual Impacts

- “We now work far more in partnership and have linked up with a community commissioner to get lived experience input” - Civic Commissioner
- “We have moved away from signposting for support and instead to face-to-face support” - Civic Commissioner
- “The Council are treating poverty as more of a priority now. This time is different and feels like a change is going to happen. Information is being shared between organisations” - Civic Commissioner
- “Our health and wellbeing board has poverty within its priorities now” - Civic Commissioner

### Cultural Impacts

- Our commissioners raised their concerns on a national level via the Centre for Social Justice.
- Tameside Council’s Helping Hands campaign, focused on raising awareness of key support services for people in crisis, introduced face-to-face sessions based on our feedback.
- Tameside One is now being used as more of a hub, with different support services having an active presence there for people to access.
- Our commissioners are involved in designing poverty awareness training for Tameside organisations and support services.
- Our commissioners are involved with reviewing and designing services in Tameside, including Family Hubs within Children’s Services, and the Living Well project.



## 6. LEARNINGS & EVALUATION

**Our Commission has faced mainly challenges. We know how important it is to reflect on our progress and we want to share the following learnings from our experience as a PTC.**

- The voices of lived experience are vital to decision making. We have influenced decisions through stories of living in poverty, and we know that more decisions would be influenced if lived experience engagement was adopted on a wider basis.
- Relationships are crucial. If we were to do another Tameside PTC we would focus more on relationships in the early stages, especially between community commissioners and civic commissioners. These relationships would have placed us in a better position ready for challenging discussions further on in the Commission.
- Food is an enabler for conversation. One of our Commission’s favourite sayings became that there “was no meeting without eating”, to enable a safe space for conversation.
- Arrange structured training support for commissioners from the start. One of our most fun sessions was ‘Chair training’ with many laughs had about how to hold a space and facilitate discussion. We did this halfway through our PTC and would have benefited from more opportunities like this earlier in the work.
- Face-to-face engagement wins every time. We had our initial sessions on Zoom due to Covid-19 restrictions but these limited our engagement with each other.
- We need the right voices in the room. We struggled to recruit community commissioners for this PTC and it had negative impacts further down the line, when sessions were unbalanced in terms of there being more civic commissioners than community commissioners. We also had some civic commissioners leave the process, meaning they had to be replaced and these new commissioners did not have the same relationships with others.
- Managing expectations is crucial, and the pace of change can be slow. We had many challenging and frustrating conversations as a Commission about how things were not changing fast enough, and that the expectation was that the PTC would change things during its duration. If we did this again, we would be clear about the quick wins we could achieve and the longer-term change that was needed via the recommendations.
- Structured support pathways need to be available for commissioners along the way as we had times when commissioners were in crisis. Informal support was available but this should be structured and clear from the beginning and delivered by appropriate agencies.
- Listening needs to lead to action. We have focused on sharing stories and listening to each other, but we also challenged each other on the need to act based on these and to look at how these actions should take place.
- A Commission Chair needs to be identified and introduced earlier in the process. We had Sharman Birtles, Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, join us as Chair midway through our Commission; it would have been more effective to have this role filled from the start, to support with ensuring all voices are heard in the Commission.



An evaluation of the Tameside PTC, via interviews with all commissioners is ongoing. The findings of this, with additional reflections and insights from facilitators and commissioners, will be collated in a separate Tameside PTC Learning and Evaluation report.

# 7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As commissioners we have made friendships and bonds that will last beyond the Commission. While the Tameside PTC is coming to an end, we know that this important work will carry on and we are looking forward to our recommendations being delivered in Tameside.

We will continue to call for more opportunities for people with lived experience to be involved in decision-making, both in Tameside and beyond through our links with the Poverty Truth Network.

We would like to thank all our commissioners who have been involved along the way, for their passion and determination in sharing the truth about poverty in Tameside. We know this has not been easy and we appreciate your time and your contributions.



We would like to thank the facilitation team of Beatrice, Carol and Hannah and other members of the Greater Manchester Poverty Action team, as well as the funders who made this possible, including Kenton:



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## Commissioners

- |                        |                |                       |
|------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Alison Stathers-Tracey | Helen Lomas    | Patrick Nolan         |
| Antony Robinson        | Ivan Wright    | Paula Sumner          |
| Ceris Esplen           | Janine Yates   | Roseanna Wain-Basaran |
| Christopher Parkinson  | John Gregory   | Sarah Threlfall       |
| Claire Galt            | Julie Wilson   | Sharman Birtles       |
| Dawn Acton             | Karen McBride  | Susan Riley           |
| Diana Mbithe           | Kas Harwood    | Tracy Temple          |
| Ed Seager              | Kat Evans      | Vanessa Rothwell      |
| Fran Beeston           | Leanne Feeley  |                       |
| Heather Etheridge      | Lynzi Shepherd |                       |

### Note

All photographs were taken by the facilitation team and commissioners with permission to share.

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# Local anti-poverty strategies

## Good practice and effective approaches

Graham Whitham  
Penny Rimmer (Lead author)  
Anna Lopez

February 2023

## About Greater Manchester Poverty Action

Greater Manchester Poverty Action (GMPA) is a not-for-profit organisation that works to address poverty across Greater Manchester.



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Our vision is of a Greater Manchester free from poverty where all residents can realise their potential and access the benefits of living in a diverse and vibrant city region.

We convene and network organisations from public, private and VCSE sectors, and people with lived experience of poverty, to foster collaboration and innovation and to maximise the impact of efforts to address the underlying causes of poverty across Greater Manchester. We equip stakeholders with the knowledge they need to tackle poverty. We carry out research and advocate for changes in policy at a local and city regional level and sometimes at a national level to address the structural and systematic causes of poverty.

## Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the following individuals and organisations, who generously gave their time and expertise to support this research: David Burch (CLES), Dave Beck (University of Salford), Emma Wincup (Joseph Rowntree Foundation), Hollie Walsh (Healthy Me Healthy Community), John McKendrick (Glasgow Caledonian University), Daniel Silver (University of Manchester), Stephen Sinclair (Glasgow Caledonian University), Peter Alcock, Sarah Marie-Hall (University of Manchester), Patrycja Kupiec (Turn2us), Hayley Bennett (University of Edinburgh), Kate Anstey (CPAG) and Silvia Galandini (Oxfam).

We would also like to acknowledge the support of the following local authorities, without whom we could not have undertaken this research: Cambridge City Council, Salford City Council, Scottish Borders, Rother District Council, East Devon District Council, and Leicester City Council.

Finally, our heartfelt gratitude goes to the anonymous participants of our focus group, who shared their lived experience of poverty, insight, and wisdom with us during the research process for this report.

Any errors are the author's own.

To discuss this report please contact Graham Whitham at: [graham@gmpovertyaction.org](mailto:graham@gmpovertyaction.org).

### Download

This document is available to download as a free pdf and in other formats at: <https://www.gmpovertyaction.org/>

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## Summary

**Left to pick up the pieces by central government failure, local authorities and their partners are facing mounting pressures and demands by communities and services to take the lead to address poverty locally. An absence of statutory guidance, adequate funding, and direction from the government has made this a real challenge. However, in response to significant increases in poverty, a number of local authorities have adopted a strategic approach, developing, and implementing local anti-poverty strategies. The need for a strategic approach at a local level has been sharpened, firstly by the Covid-19 pandemic and more recently by the Cost-of-living Crisis. Instead of being reactive to crisis after crisis, strategic approaches to dealing with poverty prioritise the issue and enable more coherent long-term solutions and approaches to address poverty. Local anti-poverty strategies provide local authorities and partners with greater consistency, close coordination of policy, and a sense of direction to address poverty when carefully planned and implemented.**

**This research provides insight into the strategic approach local authorities and their partners can take to address poverty and identifies the key elements of a local anti-poverty strategy that will maximise its effectiveness.**

Poverty is on the rise, but the UK Government has no plan or strategy to address poverty. Whilst many of the main drivers to tackle poverty lie with central government, the lack of consideration for poverty and its consequences nationally means that action at a local level is more important than ever.

There are examples of good practice and impact from localities where there is a strong policy and strategic focus on addressing poverty, delivered through, and steered by a robust anti-poverty strategy. However, there is a lack of up-to-date research that explores best practice and effective approaches in the design and implementation of local anti-poverty strategies.

This research aims to fill this gap by developing new thinking and valuable insights into the most effective ways to design and implement a local anti-poverty strategy, drawing on existing anti-poverty strategies across the country. The report is a response to growing interest in how localities can respond to poverty, taking more of a preventative approach and moving away from crisis responses towards reducing poverty. In an era of perpetual crisis, the report can enable local authorities, working with their partners, to create a structured and systematic approach to the issue.



Six case studies inform this report: Salford City, Rother District, East Devon District, Cambridge City, Leicester City, and Scottish Borders.

In the report, we identify the key elements of a good anti-poverty strategy, from scope and design to aims and measures of success. The central focus is the creation of a framework for what an effective local anti-poverty strategy should look like to support local authorities and partners to develop and/or improve their strategic approach. The framework is also of relevance to the work of combined authorities.

# Framework for an effective local anti-poverty strategy

Based on the findings of our report, Local anti-poverty strategies – Good practice and effective approaches, Greater Manchester Poverty Action (GMPA) has developed a framework that highlights what elements an anti-poverty strategy needs to maximise its impact. This framework is intended to be of use to local authorities seeking to develop or refresh an anti-poverty strategy.

An anti-poverty strategy will only be successful if it is supported by the elements identified in this framework. All these elements are complementary and interdependent.



## Define poverty and its drivers

Local authorities need to adopt a relative definition of poverty and identify the drivers of poverty (using appropriate and available metrics).



## Political and officer leadership

Active committed leadership on poverty (politically and officially) is required to drive change and coordinate strategic and policy responses.



## Focus on prevention, reduction, and mitigation

A medium and long-term perspective is needed that includes actions that prevent and reduce the root causes of poverty.



## Prioritisation

Local authorities need to be clear about what the strategy seeks to achieve and how actions will be taken to achieve it.



## Partnership working

An anti-poverty strategy requires buy-in from local stakeholders to achieve its aims and objectives.



## Lived experience engagement and co-production

An anti-poverty strategy should be developed with people with lived experience of poverty to challenge the existing ways of working and ensure that anti-poverty efforts are centred around the needs of the community.



## Reinforcing and aligning with existing strategies

Tackling poverty needs to be incorporated within existing strategies rather than operating as 'ad-hoc' to existing commitments and services.



## Governance

Anti-poverty strategies should be subject to both internal and external governance.



## Action Plan

Accompanying the anti-poverty strategy should be a high-level action plan detailing who is responsible for the delivery of the actions, timelines, and milestones, and associated outcomes.



## Adopting the socio-economic duty

To support the effectiveness of an anti-poverty strategy, local authorities should voluntarily adopt the socio-economic duty.



## Adaptability

An anti-poverty strategy cannot "standstill", for it to serve its purpose it should be viewed as adaptable, rather than a collection of actions that should be rigidly adhered to.



## Monitoring and evaluation

Local authorities and partners need to identify a clear set of metrics (quantitative and qualitative) against which progress on tackling poverty can be tracked. Working collaboratively to identify data and evidence gaps and addressing these together.

The report is informed by GMPA's work since our formation in 2016 and as a leading advocate for action on poverty at a local, regional, and national level.

### Methodology

The report is based on the following:

- Semi-structured interviews with councillors and policy officers from each of the six case study local authorities featured in the report.
- Desk-based research reviewing the anti-poverty strategies of each of the six local authorities.
- A literature review exploring some of the key elements relating to a strategic approach to tackling poverty.
- Two 'expert panel discussions' with 'poverty experts' from across the UK.
- A focus group with people with lived experience of poverty from Greater Manchester.

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## Introduction

### Background to the research

Poverty in the UK is a significant issue, it is estimated that 1 in 5 of our population (22%) is in poverty - 14.5 million people (Joseph Roundtree Foundation 'JRF' 2022). The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Cost-of-living Crisis is accelerating pre-existing trends of poverty and inequality in the UK. Low-income households who are already struggling to make ends meet are hardest hit by the Cost-of-living Crisis as they face higher inflation rates than better-off households. In November 2022, inflation hit 12.5% for low-income households, whereas the richest 10% of households have the lowest rate of inflation at 10% (Resolution Foundation, 2022).

Greater Manchester is home to some of the highest levels of poverty and deprivation in the country and poverty is a major issue in all ten of the boroughs. Our Greater Manchester Poverty Monitor (2022a) highlights there are an estimated 620,000 people, out of a population of 2.8 million, living below the poverty line the city region and around 145,000 children are living in relative poverty (before housing costs). The child poverty rate in the city region is higher than the England and UK average.

Households are facing constant tough spending decisions day in and day out about whether to pay bills, eat or use gas and electricity. The never-ending cycle of struggling to afford the basic necessities

should not be the reality for so many households in Greater Manchester and across the UK. It is not inevitable or necessary.

It has been encouraging to see in Greater Manchester there is a determination to overcome these challenges. Through GMIPA's work and the commitment of local political leaders and other stakeholders, there is a strong desire to address poverty in the city region. It has been positive to see a growth in the ten local authorities showing an interest or developing strategic responses to poverty and policies and practices which address poverty. We have worked with several local authorities on the design, implementation, and development of their anti-poverty strategies.

However, we believe with longstanding, entrenched poverty in the city region being compounded by the Cost-of-living Crisis, this is a watershed moment for local authorities in Greater Manchester and across the country to implement and/or strengthen anti-poverty strategies to ensure that responses to poverty are well-designed, carefully planned and implemented instead of being reactive to crisis after crisis. Without a concerted and committed response, growing poverty will have a devastating impact now and on future generations.



## Why does a strategic approach matter?

The national government has no clear plan or strategy to address poverty, there is limited interest in poverty and socio-economic disadvantage. Whilst many of the main drivers to tackle poverty lie with central government, the projected increases in poverty over the next few years mean that action at a local level is more important than ever (Corlett and Try, 2022). However, a common challenge for local public bodies and their voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) and private sector partners is that there is a lack of support or direction as to how they can tackle poverty. Local authorities and other local stakeholders often voice frustrations that their role is often one of crisis response and ‘picking up the pieces’ as result of central government policy failure.

Moreover, a decade of austerity measures, cuts, and reforms to the welfare system, combined with years of savage budget cuts to local authorities and other public services has made addressing poverty increasingly difficult. Central government funding for local authorities fell in real terms by over 50% between 2010-11 and 2020-21 and core resources available to provide services have fallen by 26% in real terms over ten years (Committee of Public Accounts, 2022).

Despite this context, there are examples of good practice and impact from places where there is a strong policy and strategic focus on addressing poverty, delivered through, and steered by a robust anti-poverty strategy. The wide-ranging nature of the areas of policy means that a strategic approach is required to ensure joint working by all local government services and key stakeholders.

A strategic approach provides local public bodies with a clear sense of direction to take action to address poverty. Our findings emphasise that local anti-poverty strategies add value to addressing poverty in three ways:

- Firstly, they set clear objectives and set out how they will be achieved, underpinned by a shared understanding of poverty and its causes.
- Secondly, they improve coordination and empower key local stakeholders to do more to address poverty as there is a coherent framework helping to marshal limited resources and capacity and fostering a collective determination to address the issue across partners.

- Thirdly, they increase accountability for action as they provide measurable targets to understand if the actions set out are making a difference but there is an emphasis on longevity and the ability to learn as the strategy progresses.

This report seeks to capture how local authorities and their partners can take a strategic approach to poverty. This report is informed by GMPA’s work since our formation in 2016 and as a leading advocate for action on poverty at a local, regional, and national level. It is in response to growing interest in the role local authorities can take to address poverty.

It is our hope that this report stimulates further discussions about the role of local authorities and partner organisations in addressing poverty. Most importantly, we hope it encourages local authorities to implement local anti-poverty strategies to address poverty.

## Research question

This research sought to answer the following research question:

*What is a good anti-poverty strategy and how can local authorities and their partners develop and implement an anti-poverty strategy in a way that maximises its effectiveness?*

## Aims of research

There is a lack of up-to-date research that explores best practice and effective approaches in the design and implementation of local anti-poverty strategies. This research aims to fill this gap, by developing new thinking and valuable insights about the most effective ways to design and implement a local anti-poverty strategy. This report aims to produce a framework for what an effective local anti-poverty strategy should look like to support local authorities’ and partners to develop and/or improve their strategic approach.

The research had three aims:

- Highlight anti-poverty strategies that are in place across the county that we have identified as being good practice: Salford City, Rother District, East Devon District, Cambridge City, Leicester City and Scottish Borders.
- Identify the key elements of a good local anti-poverty strategy, from scope and design to aims and measures of success.
- Develop a framework for local authorities and partners who are seeking to implement or enhance a local anti-poverty strategy.

## Structure of report

This report is structured as follows:

- [Chapter 1](#) presents the national picture of approaches to poverty and previous research on local anti-poverty strategies.
- [Chapter 2](#) outlines the research methods that were used.
- [Chapter 3](#) presents the findings and analysis of the six local anti-poverty strategies.
- [Chapter 4](#) provides an overview of the six local anti-poverty strategies.
- [Chapter 5](#) presents the findings and analysis of the focus group.
- [Chapter 6](#) the final chapter sets out the framework for an effective local anti-poverty strategy.

## Literature review - setting the scene

In this chapter, we explore approaches to addressing poverty at a national level and review existing literature on local anti-poverty strategies. There are two principal objectives of the literature review. The first is to assess dominant explanations of what makes a good anti-poverty strategy and to highlight the challenges strategies may face. The second objective of examining the literature is to identify the key elements of a good anti-poverty strategy, which serve to guide the development of the anti-poverty strategy framework and choice of six case studies.

### 1.1 UK strategies

After two decades of rising inequality, Labour came into office in 1997 committed to reducing child poverty. In 1999, Tony Blair pledged to 'eliminate child poverty in a generation', in 2003, the UK introduced three child poverty indicators and poverty was said to be falling when all three indicators were moving in the "right direction" (DWP, 2003). The indicators were: absolute low income, relative low income and material deprivation and low income combined. In 2010, the Child Poverty Act was passed with cross-party support, this enshrined four child poverty targets to be met by 2020/2021, placed a duty on the UK government to publish a UK child poverty strategy (and the Scottish and Northern Irish Ministers), set up a Child Poverty Commission to advise on strategies and report annually on progress. It also placed duties on local and other "delivery partners" in England to work together to tackle child poverty, conduct a local needs assessment and produce a child poverty strategy (Kennedy, 2014).

In 2016, the Welfare Reform and Work Act repealed the Child Poverty Act, including the four targets, the requirement for UK and local authorities to develop child poverty strategies, and the duty of local authorities to conduct child poverty needs assessments. The Child Poverty Committee became the Social Mobility Committee with responsibilities covering social mobility only.

Since the abolition of the Child Poverty Act, the government is only required to report on children living in workless households and the educational outcomes of children at age 16; there is no specific requirement to report on these metrics for disadvantaged children. However, after prolonged pressure, the government agreed to continue publishing data on the number of children living in poverty.

In addition, successive governments have not brought the socio-economic duty in Section 1 of the Equality Act 2010 into force. This imposes a legal duty on public bodies to consider how their decisions increase or decrease inequalities that result from socio-economic disadvantage. The government suggests it has the potential to become a tick-box exercise and is thus unnecessary to implement (State Party Report 2022,p.9). Despite these claims, both Wales and Scotland have brought Section 1 into force and a number of local authorities across the country have voluntarily adopted the duty, where it has been adopted meaningfully it is supporting public bodies in shaping their policies and strategic responses to poverty.

Failure to implement the socio-economic duty is detrimental to delivering better outcomes for those with lived experience of poverty. If the socio-economic duty was enforced, there would be a greater onus on the government to tackle issues affecting people experiencing poverty as they would have to evidence how policies and budget decisions were fair and necessary, and compatible with its international human rights obligations. It is a further illustration of the government not taking socio-economic disadvantage seriously.

Currently, there is no strategic approach to poverty at a national level, the government's response to the Cost-of-living Crisis has been focused on ad-hoc and piece meal policies (i.e., one off pieces of support for families or short-term pots of funding for local councils to deliver support to residents). An absence of statutory guidance and direction from the government to develop a strategic response to poverty has led to a patchwork of measures and approaches across the country.

## Devolved nations

The devolved governments have key responsibilities for policy areas that are important to tackle poverty (Lodge, Henderson, & Davies, 2015, p. 5). Currently, Scotland has a higher number of devolved powers than any other UK nation. The varied degree of freedom has resulted in noticeable differences in respect of a strategic approach to tackling poverty. We summarise the approaches of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

### Scotland

Cairney et al highlight (2017, p.346) 'the Scottish Government has nurtured a reputation for doing policy differently – the "Scottish approach"'. In contrast to the UK's approach, the Scottish Government has elements of a strategic approach to anti-poverty policy (Sinclair, 2022).

#### Child Poverty (Scotland) Act

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act was passed by the Scottish Parliament in 2017, following the UK government's decision to repeal the Child Poverty Act 2010. The Scottish Government's long-term ambition is to eradicate poverty, but they are acutely aware that many of the necessary levers for change are not devolved.

The Act sets out a direction of travel for tackling, reporting, and measuring child poverty (Scottish Government 2017, p.3). At present, Scotland is the only part of the UK with statutory income targets on child poverty. The Scottish Government recognises that poverty cannot be measured with one single measure, therefore the act sets out four targets all on an after-housing costs (AHC) basis to be achieved by 2030. The targets state:

- Less than 10% should be living in relative poverty
- Less than 5% should be living in absolute poverty
- Less than 5% should be living with combined low income and material deprivation
- Less than 5% should be living in persistent poverty

In full the Act contains the following elements:

- Four statutory income targets for reducing the number of children living in poverty by 2030 with interim targets for 2023 (as detailed above).
- Places a duty on Scottish Ministers to publish Child Poverty Delivery Plans.
- Places a duty on local authorities and regional health boards to publish joint Local Child Poverty Action Reports (LCPARS) annually.
- A Statutory Poverty and Inequality Commission that scrutinises progress towards tackling poverty and inequality.

## Child Poverty Delivery Plans

Scottish Ministers are required to publish delivery plans in 2018, 2022 and 2026 and to report annually on these plans. A delivery plan must include the following: measures they intend to take to tackle poverty, their projections on the effectiveness of these measures at meeting the 2030 targets and how they have arrived at these figures and what these measures are anticipated to cost.

### Local Child Poverty Action Reports

Local authorities and regional health boards in Scotland are required to provide annual reports describing the work that they are delivering and developing that will contribute to a reduction in child poverty and increase the likelihood of meeting the 2030 national targets. The reports must also describe income maximisation measures taken to support families and pregnant women and for households with one or more members with protected characteristics measures taken to or proposed to be to support households whose income maybe affected.

At a minimum local authorities and health boards must meet the statutory requirements and are encouraged to engage with key local stakeholders. The Scottish Government provides guidance for local authorities and health boards to consider when developing Local Child Poverty Action Reports including involving people with lived experience of poverty and alignment with national delivery plans (Scottish Government, 2018). To support local partners with production of reports, the Scottish Government funds a national co-ordinator based at the Improvement Service, the co-ordinator works with local authorities and health boards sharing best practice, providing information on the support available from national partners and direct feedback on reports (Improvement Service, 2019).

However, it is at the discretion of local partners to identify strategic leadership to coordinate the reports, best policies, and actions to tackle poverty and measures to track progress that are locally feasible (Scottish Government, 2022).

## Wales

Wales has a clear policy objective to address poverty and social exclusion and they have initiated a range of initiatives to tackle poverty. In 2010, the Welsh government introduced a duty on Welsh Ministers to develop a child poverty strategy for Wales. The current strategy has five priority areas: childcare, in-work poverty, food poverty, housing, and regeneration and mitigating the impacts of welfare reform. They are currently working to develop a refreshed child poverty strategy this year, after reaffirming their commitment to a whole government approach to tackling poverty that delivers programmes through a poverty lens (Welsh Government, 2022).

## Northern Ireland

Since the 1998 Northern Ireland Act, the Executive has been required to have an anti-poverty strategy that sets out *'how it proposes to tackle poverty, social exclusion and patterns of deprivation based on objective need'*. They must keep this strategy under review and update it as needed.

However, in 2015, the Northern Ireland High Court ruled that there was no strategy that met these requirements in existence. Development of an anti-poverty strategy in Northern Ireland is currently ongoing, with a co-design group and cross-departmental working group. The working groups are comprised of voluntary and community and advisory organisation and senior representations across all departments. The key anti-poverty strategy in Northern Ireland is the Child Poverty Strategy, the most recent version covers 2016-22. It commits the government to produce a 'Poverty Outcomes Model' to assess which interventions are most effective in tackling poverty. It is accompanied by an action plan and annual progress reports are published (Northern Ireland Executive, 2016). The strategy has two key aims: to reduce the number of children who live in poverty and to reduce the impact living in poverty has on children's lives and life chances.

## Literature review

Before we present a review of the literature, it is worth highlighting that there has been limited literature in this area over the last decade. Most of the literature comes from the 1990s and early 2000s, when anti-poverty strategies were a significant feature of the local government landscape. Consequently, many gaps remain in the research on understanding and evidence on the impact of local anti-poverty strategies. This knowledge gap forms the focus of this report, where we seek to present the latest evidence on local anti-poverty strategies.

## What is an anti-poverty strategy?

It is important to understand what a local anti-poverty strategy is and what it is not.

A local anti-poverty strategy is a corporate strategy that allows for more efficient use of limited resources to help those on the lowest incomes, increase access to services for them, and increase control over their standard of living (Balloch and Jones, 1990). What's more, from GMPA's perspective and the research we have conducted, some common elements can be used to define a local anti-poverty strategy: it identifies the key issues contributing to poverty and sets out priorities for action, it is committed to cultural change, based on multi-stakeholder partnership working, it reinforces and links to existing strategies and is focused on making a long-term difference.

Furthermore, to maximise the effectiveness of local anti-poverty strategies, it is necessary to understand and define what it is not. It is not simply presenting a list of existing initiatives that the local authority has undertaken to address poverty or a shelved internal document.

A local anti-poverty strategy aims to bring greater consistency, close coordination of policy, and a sense of direction for local authorities and key local stakeholders to achieve realistic goals to improve the lives of those on the lowest incomes.

## How do we define what makes a strategy 'good'?

It is not our intention to provide a generic 'off-the-shelf' approach for local authorities to use to take a strategic approach to poverty. The key elements identified are to be used as the basis for developing and/or enhancing local anti-poverty strategies. This recognises that a local place-based approach is needed and that existing context, such as levels of poverty and deprivation, local demographics and the nature of existing partnership working across agencies are among a range of factors that will shape how an anti-poverty strategy is formulated and how it will operate in practice. It is important to emphasise that good practice is not static and that local anti-poverty strategies need to be sustainable in completing current actions and adapting to future needs and changes (Oyen 2002, p.7).

## Key elements of local anti-poverty strategies

Through the literature, we have identified key elements of local anti-poverty strategies that provide the basis for achieving realistic goals to support those on the lowest incomes in both the short and long term to prevent and reduce poverty in local communities.

We summarise the key elements identified as being indicative of a good local anti-poverty strategy into six which we discuss in turn: *prioritisation; partnership working; political and officer leadership; lived experience engagement and co-production; reinforcing and aligning with existing strategies; and monitoring and evaluation.*

In discussing each of these elements, we outline the key themes and issues to be considered.

### Prioritisation

For local anti-poverty strategies to be effective, tangible actions are needed that translate into effective service delivery rather than general aims that remain as formal written commitments (Alcock, 2000). Local authorities need to be clear about their limitations, while articulating what can be achieved by maximising existing possibilities (Gordon et al., 2002; McKendrick, 2018).

### External stakeholders

The role of external stakeholders such as those in the public, private and VCSE sectors is vital to the development and delivery of an effective anti-poverty strategy. It is important to draw on the resources and expertise of key local stakeholders, as local authorities have limited capacity and funding to fight poverty on their own. Pearson (2001, p.65) highlights how partnership working secures a range of other tangible benefits for local authorities: the opportunity to pool and share resources, sharing of best practice and expertise, avoiding duplication of effort, promoting joined-up solutions, and thinking to maximise outcomes for communities. It is required to ensure that tackling poverty is everybody's business, there is a shared understanding of priorities and alignment of local services to deliver the actions set out in the strategy (Gordon et al 2002, p. 13).

## Political and officer leadership

To effectively develop and deliver an anti-poverty strategy requires strong leadership from all levels to ensure there is shared focus and prioritisation of tackling poverty. The Poverty and Inequality Commission (2019) highlights that high-level commitment helps to mobilise resources, facilitate partnership working and effectively deliver change. Having a lead officer and councillor with the responsibility of anti-poverty work gives the strategy impetus.

However, it is important that strategic management does not operate in isolation. The strategy objectives must be shared by departmental managers and front-line staff to avoid tokenism and resistance of departmental staff to take on actions because of expectations that those with the 'anti-poverty' responsibility are solely responsible for the delivery of the strategy (Alcock 2000, p. 70).

## Lived experience engagement and co-production

To ensure that local anti-poverty strategies are tailored to local needs and are sustainable, local authorities must involve people who have lived experience of poverty in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of strategies (Pearson and Craig 2001; Gordon et al. 2002). However, engagement must be done in a genuinely meaningful and consistent way, to avoid it becoming a tick-box exercise, local authorities must aim to sustain and embed lived experience engagement (CFE research, 2020).

## Reinforcing and aligning with existing strategies

Central to the development and delivery of an effective local anti-poverty strategy is rather than operating 'ad-hoc' to existing commitments and services, anti-poverty strategies need to be integrated into the overall activities of local authorities (Wheeler, 1995).

## Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring progress and evaluating the impact of local anti-poverty strategies is a real challenge. However, for local anti-poverty strategies to be effective, there needs to be a well-designed ongoing monitoring and evaluation mechanism to maintain momentum and ensure that local authorities and their partners achieve their goals (MacInnes et al., 2014). There is no 'one size fits all' approach to monitoring and evaluation but local authorities should use quantitative and qualitative data that is locally valid and relevant to evaluate the effectiveness of anti-poverty strategies.

Local authorities must not underestimate the importance of qualitative data (Thomas and Palfrey, 1996). Anti-poverty strategies need to utilise the voices of those with lived experience to understand what works, what does not, and what changes they would like to see. Additionally, anti-poverty strategies should include the voices of those working on the front lines to address and mitigate the impact of poverty in councils and partner organisations.

## Methodology - how we approached this research

This chapter outlines the methodological approach that has been chosen to address the research question. The research was conducted over a period of three months from July to September 2022. This research is qualitative, it is based on the case study design, and it consists of desk-based research, literature review, semi-structured interviews, expert panel discussions, and a focus group. These methods were selected to gather context-rich data.

### Literature review

A literature review was conducted, pertaining to strategic approaches to tackling poverty in local government, which included academic research, publications by organisations working in the anti-poverty field, and local authority specific literature.

### Desk-based research

Desk-based research was conducted to collect and preview relevant published documents relating to the six case studies' anti-poverty strategies detailed in this report.

### Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with councillors and policy officers from each of the six local authorities to gain a deeper understanding of the strategies, uncover any gaps, and cross-validate information from the published strategy documents. This method was chosen as it is flexible and adaptable, it provides room to probe the interviewee to clarify and elaborate answers, yet it maintains a directive sense as the main questions to be discussed have been chosen beforehand (Alamri, 2019).

### Expert panel discussions

We conducted two 'expert panel discussions' in August 2022 with a total of 12 participants. We conducted expert panel discussions for several reasons. Firstly, we wanted to explore what participants believed were the key elements and areas of action needed for an effective local anti-poverty strategy. Secondly, we wanted to establish what the perceived barriers are to implementing local anti-poverty strategies. Finally, to understand how strategies should be monitored and evaluated. The participants fell into the following groups:

- Academics with research interest in poverty.
- National organisations working in the field of anti-poverty work.
- Greater Manchester-based social enterprise providing health and wellbeing services.

In addition, we incorporated findings from GMPA's local authority officer's forum which brings together local authority officers from across Greater Manchester to support efforts to address poverty, discuss challenges and promote success. The forum provides an opportunity for local authority officers to hear from speakers across the UK about some of the most innovative approaches to preventing and reducing poverty.

### Focus Group

A focus group was conducted with 12 people with lived experience of poverty. The focus group was held in September 2022, virtually on zoom and it was recorded. Post-focus group follow-up questions were emailed to participants to gain information on particularly interesting themes that arose from the discussions.

Participants were recruited from VCSE organisations working to address poverty in Greater Manchester. The aim was to have participants from each of the ten boroughs in Greater Manchester. Participants were recognised for their time in line with GMPA's approach to engaging people with lived experience of poverty in our work.

The central purpose of the focus group was to obtain a better understanding of the participant's experience of poverty in their community, and their views on how local authorities can improve support, services, and programmes to reduce poverty.

### Confidentiality

To protect anonymity, the names of the participants are not disclosed in any of the direct quotations in this report.

### Limitations

It is also important to address the limitations of the report. This is small-scale research, and due to the short time frame of the research, we chose a small sample for each of the data collection methods. The findings may not capture a full range of insight into the strategic role local authorities can play in addressing poverty. This means other elements of importance may not have been captured.

Another important limitation to highlight is that most of the anti-poverty strategies chosen in the report are still in their very early stages and their impact has yet to be evidenced over the medium to long-term.

Despite these limitations, this report provides a much-needed review of local strategic approaches to poverty across the country and identifies elements of good practice that local authorities should consider when designing and implementing a local anti-poverty strategy. It contributes important evidence on the role local authorities and partners can take to address poverty. It has highlighted there is scope for further research in this area as the policy landscape and context that local authorities are working in continues to change rapidly.

## Analysis of anti-poverty strategies

In this chapter, we analyse the six case studies using the elements of a good anti-poverty strategy identified from our literature review. We then examine key aspects that emerged from the case studies as being important to maximise the effectiveness of the strategies.

### Prioritisation

*“We wanted to solve all the problems and we’ve kind of had to reconcile ourselves to focus on ... the areas where we could intervene and make a difference”.*

All the local authorities emphasised that their strategies had limited scope due to the wider political climate. To ensure that the strategies were realistic and feasible, the councils articulated clearly what they could do to make a difference. In addition, a number of the aims and actions set out in their strategies were linked to lobbying and influencing central government for long term change in policies and practices.

### Political and officer leadership

*“As an officer, you couldn’t go forward in the way that we have without having supportive political leadership”.*

*“From an officer perspective, it is very helpful having a named executive councillor with responsibility in terms of reporting but also having the political weight behind the strategy and commitment”.*

The six local authorities had political leadership on poverty, most councils had a cabinet/executive member with an explicit anti-poverty portfolio. They emphasised that this was critical to strategy development and implementation. The councils also reflected on the importance of senior officer leadership. Having high-level leadership was instrumental in giving the tackling poverty agenda a greater focus and increasing the willingness of organisations to engage with the councils.

### Lived experience engagement and co-production

*“We’ve found that it’s been most effective where we’ve worked through trusted intermediaries because sometimes people don’t necessarily want to speak to the local authority without an introduction from another voluntary group that’s working with them, supporting them”.*

*“Through lived experience engagement, what we established was that one of the big issues is that there is a lot of help out there for people, but people don’t necessarily know where to access it or it’s not clear to them how best to access it”.*

All strategies referred to lived experience engagement. There were varying forms of engagement from a consultation basis such as online surveys and focus groups run by the council to Poverty Truth Commissions (PTC) run by external organisations. All clearly identified the importance of having people with lived experience involved in the development of strategies and the majority of councils were focused on trying to improve and continue the relationship to ensure lived experience is embedded in the strategies.

Furthermore, an important point raised by some councils was that they felt it was more effective to have lived experience engagement run by external organisations such as voluntary and community organisations to increase participation as people are often highly conscious of councils.

### Reinforcing and aligning with existing strategies

*“A holistic approach is one of the cost-neutral things we can bring in, and it advantages the people being helped and the council who are able to get things sorted quicker. A joined-up approach helps to catch people who need help much earlier”.*

All the strategies demonstrated links to existing strategies and plans. The most frequently mentioned included economic, public health, and housing strategies. The councils described having a dedicated anti-poverty strategy ensures that poverty is everybody’s business and there is stronger clarity around responsibility within departments on specific actions to improve outcomes for those on the lowest incomes.

### Monitoring and evaluation

*“It’s quite challenging to pin down the metrics ... and also we recognise these don’t always show the full picture”.*

All the strategies outline how they are monitoring and evaluating the strategies to understand what works and what does not.

They were using a combination of quantitative and qualitative data to monitor the intended outcomes. Having a clear set of indicators was repeatedly referenced as being important but they are not set in stone and were emphasised as being seen as benchmarks. Some strategies highlighted that they were looking to upscale the use of qualitative data through engaging with external partners and people with lived experience of poverty as quantitative data does not always capture the full picture of the impact of local action to address poverty.

Most strategies included a mix of short and long-term monitoring and evaluation. Annual reviews, and progress reports were frequently cited, and they were published widely.

Some of the strategies were developing or were in the process of developing public-facing ‘evidence bases’ or dashboards that highlight selected statistics on local poverty to visualise the key issues and target interventions.

### Partnership working

*“So there wasn’t duplication of services in one area and a lack of services in another”*

*“We’ve got some amazing voluntary sector groups in the city, but they didn’t know what each other did, they weren’t able to support each other, we’ve got different people working on debt advice or loneliness or food support, but they didn’t have a mechanism to talk to one another... to share best practice, or to refer to one another either, when one has a better set of expertise”.*

All the local authorities recognised that they are not able to tackle poverty in isolation. They emphasised a strategic approach is important to share responsibility for addressing poverty and identify who is best placed to deliver support rather than duplicating efforts.

It increases accountability and scrutiny of what local action is being taken. Cross-council and multi-agency working were mentioned many times by the councils, both as key elements of the strategy design process and as elements integral to the delivery of the strategy. The value of the anti-poverty strategy was frequently noted as being in its ability to co-ordinate much of the work the councils were already doing.

## Key elements to emerge

Across the six case studies, the following elements emerged as being important to maximise the effectiveness of local anti-poverty strategies.

- Defining poverty and its drivers;
- Oversight and governance;
- Accompanying action plan;
- Focus on prevention, reduction, and mitigation of the effects of poverty;
- Adaptable and flexible; and
- Adoption of the socio-economic duty.

### Defining poverty and its drivers

Understanding the nature and determinants of poverty was important to all the strategies. Most of the strategies defined poverty using a relative understanding- poverty is identified as occurring at the point when a household's income is below 60% of the median after housing costs. The strategies also clearly identify the drivers of poverty that targeted action is structured around. The most cited drivers include low wages, housing affordability and quality, unemployment, job quality, job security, and lack of skills and qualifications. There was a focus on identifying 'what matters' to communities and how local authorities can influence change at a local level.

## Oversight and governance

All the local authorities had oversight and governance of the strategies. Some strategies have internal, such as working groups and committees made up of council officers, while others have internal and external governance, involving local strategic partnerships (LSPs) and boards working among partners in the region.

Responsibility for monitoring, scrutinising, making recommendations, sharing good practice, and liaising with local partners on the strategy were mentioned in all the strategies. All the councils described the importance of developing governance arrangements to provide strategic direction, facilitate better use of resources and increase transparency.

## Accompanying action plan

All the strategies had an accompanying high-level action plan. These outline specific actions related to the strategic objectives and themes, timelines, and target milestones and who is responsible for leading the delivery (council, external stakeholders, or lobbying and influencing the central government). The councils described the action plan as important to facilitate priority setting and increase transparency on how the council is making progress.

### Focus on prevention, reduction, and mitigation of the effects of poverty

The anti-poverty strategies were focused on balancing efforts to address the immediate effects of poverty and embedding preventive measures to address the long-term causes of poverty. The local authorities expressed that this is an ongoing challenge considering funding cuts, however identifying where local action is best targeted was necessary to maximise resource efficiency.

## Prevention

A key element of the anti-poverty strategies was a strong emphasis on actions that address the root causes of poverty to reduce and prevent poverty in the long term. The councils recognise that they do not have all the answers, but they are focused on maximising the power and influence they have to combat poverty. Common actions highlighted by the local authorities as a priority for poverty prevention and reduction include boosting jobs and skills, raising wages and employment standards, increasing the amount of affordable social housing, and improving households' financial resilience.

There were policies, initiatives, and areas that were particularly critical to the council's approaches. These included:

- Focusing on getting more money into people's pockets to boost household and financial resilience. It was vital to all councils that households should have access to advice-based support services to access the financial services, products, and debt advice that will allow them to achieve and maintain financial stability, avoid high-interest debt, and improve their overall financial situation.
- Focusing on inclusive economic growth through job creation and improving job quality through for example paying council staff the Real Living Wage and calling on local employers to do so.
- Convening partners across employers (public, private, and voluntary and community), training and employability providers, and government agencies to support place-based employment and skills commissioning.
- Councils were working to improve the level of take-up of benefits and tax credits to deliver financial gains for residents through partnership working with organisations such as Citizens Advice and developed council online platforms to provide guidance to help residents maximise their eligible benefit income.
- Increasing the supply of social and affordable housing through entering partnerships with private and community developers.

## Mitigation

While the local authorities are acutely aware of the need to invest in long-term solutions, the strategies emphasise the importance of providing targeted and effective crisis support for people facing an immediate financial crisis. The priority actions included in the strategies were focused on strengthening local welfare assistance schemes and maximising the accessibility of information, advice, and support services so that those in the greatest need can easily access support.

Councils provide local welfare assistance in a variety of forms including cash, vouchers, or assistance in-kind. However most local authorities stressed that there were working hard with partner organisations to take a cash-first and advice-first approach to the provision of local welfare rather than funding foodbanks or providing other forms of in-kind support. There was an emphasis that people who are experiencing a financial crisis should be given choice and control, all the local authorities were working to improve the offer of crisis support to maximise choice, flexibility and dignity and create greater efficiencies.

### Adaptable and flexible

*“It is a living breathing strategy, rather than a document on the shelf”.*

The local authorities highlighted the importance of the strategies not being set in stone. They emphasised they must be flexible to respond to frequent changes in circumstances. Most of the strategies had a duration of three years, and continual renewal was a recurrent theme to ensure the strategies were as responsive to local needs as possible.

## Adoption of the socio-economic duty

Salford has adopted the socio-economic duty and Rother District has put forward a motion to adopt it. They highlighted that it is a central element of a strategic approach to maximise impact on poverty, as it ensures all decisions taken by the council is assessed against the impact they have on people from low-income backgrounds. It complements and strengthens other policies, which are aimed at addressing socio-economic inequalities. They have drawn on our body of knowledge and best practice on the socio-economic duty, and the principles of adoption set out in our guide developed in partnership with several organisations on socio-economic implementation (GMIPA and Just Fair, 2021). The principles are supporting the local authorities to make poverty a strategic priority ([see adopt the socio-economic duty](#)).

# Chapter 4

## Case Studies

In this chapter, we explore the case study selection and conduct an in-depth detailed examination of the six case studies. We structure each case study using the following categories: context, scope and design, development of the strategy, delivering the strategy and monitoring and evaluation.

### Case study strategy

The six case studies have been selected based on three primary considerations.

Firstly, we aimed to ensure there was a geographical spread across the UK. Secondly, the strategies were assessed against the following criteria informed by the literature review to generate insights into what are the key elements of an anti-poverty strategy: *prioritisation; partnership working; political and officer leadership; lived experience engagement and co-production; reinforcing and aligning with existing strategies; and monitoring and evaluation*. Thirdly, the overarching population focus of the strategy had to be broad.

However, it must be said that there have been some constraints on case study selection. Due to the overall lack of local anti-poverty strategies in England, we were limited to a small sample, and from this sample, we choose the six case studies as being the most adequate and appropriate to answer the research question we have posed and the above considerations.

The key characteristics of the local authorities are presented below in figure 1.

**Figure 1: Case study selection**

Case Study	Region	Type of Council	Geographic Area	Majority Party	Child Poverty Rate (Relative AHC)	Unemployment Rate	Index of Multiple Deprivation: Rand of Average Score (1 = Most Deprived, 317 = Least Deprived)	Estimated % of Households experiencing struggle with food insecurity
					Average UK Child Poverty Rate is 27%	Average UK Unemployment Rate is 3.8%		
Salford City Council	North West England	Metropolitan City Council	Urban	Labour	32.5%	5.3%	18	9.6%
East Devon District Council	South West England	District Council	Rural	Independent	22%	2.7%	244	8.2%
Cambridge City Council	East of England	District Council	Urban	Labour	22.6%	3%	210	4.4%
Scottish Borders	South East England	Scottish Council	Rural	Conservative/Independent coalition	21%	3.4%	-	8.2%
Rother District Council	East Sussex, England	District Council	Suburban	Rother Alliance (mixture of Independent, Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green Party Councillors)	47.2%	4.2%	139	7.1%
Leicester City Council	East Midlands, England	Unitary Authority	Urban	Labour	38.2%	4.7%	32	11.5%

Note: These were the majority parties at the time the research was conducted in 2022.

Source for child poverty rate: Centre for Research in Social Policy (2022).

Source for unemployment rate: Office for National Statistics (2022).

Source for index of multiple deprivation: Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019).

Source for estimated % of households experiencing struggle with food insecurity: Blake, Whitworth and Moretti (2021).



## Salford City Anti-Poverty Strategy

### Context

Salford has high levels of poverty and deprivation across the city. It is the 18th most deprived local authority area in England (out of 317) and the third most deprived local authority in Greater Manchester (Salford City Council, 2019).

Salford City Council has a long tradition of anti-poverty work and is recognised as a leader in Greater Manchester for its pioneering approach to addressing poverty at a local level.

In 2016, Salford City Council's newly elected Mayor placed tackling poverty at the heart of his vision for 'a fairer and better Salford'. In response to growing hardship for many residents in Salford, the City Council announced, in 2017, its new anti-poverty strategy: No One Left Behind: Tackling Poverty in Salford. The strategy set out the following themes, around which collective action centres: *supporting people who are struggling in poverty now, preventing people from falling into poverty in the first place, and influencing the government and other national organisations to get a better deal for Salford people.*

In 2021, working with organisations including GMPA, the council refreshed its second four-year Tackling Poverty Strategy as one of the three interlinked strategies launched under the 'Salford Way' (the other two being the inclusive and green economy strategy and the equalities and inclusion strategy), a key part of the council's Great Eight Priorities. The aim of these strategies is to capture issues at a city-wide level, ensuring a coordinated approach at the full council level, and streamlining work to ensure a focus on tackling poverty.

The council feels it makes sense to have an overarching anti-poverty strategy that is dynamic and live. They highlighted when the strategy was refreshed, a major focus was on recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, however this year with the Cost-of-living Crisis the focus is also on strengthening the immediate response and support available to residents in the short term, alongside the long-term measures to tackle the root causes of poverty.

Whilst the council is acutely aware that there is no 'magic bullet' to tackle poverty at a local level, the strategy and its accompanying high-level action plan provide a clear agenda for actions to be taken, embedding an anti-poverty culture within the council, and putting those with lived experience of poverty at the heart of decision making.

### Scope and design

#### Vision

The Strategy sets out Salford's City Councils' vision "to make Salford a fairer and more inclusive place where everyone can reach their full potential and live prosperous and fulfilling lives free from poverty and inequality".

### Poverty definition and identification of the drivers of poverty in Salford

The previous strategy outlined Salford's definition of poverty. They primarily use median household income to measure levels of poverty - poverty is identified as occurring at the point when a household's income is below 60% of the median after housing costs.

However, they are aware of the limitations of this definition, and so they have developed their own definition informed by the Salford Poverty Truth Commission and Joseph Rowntree Foundation. They define poverty as "applying to anyone who is denied, through low income or lack of resources, the opportunity to participate fully in the life of the community and have quality access to education, healthcare and leisure activities, as well as the necessities of life including good housing and adequate food and clothing".

The previous strategy highlights the key causes and effects of poverty in Salford that have informed the priorities of the strategy. These include:

- Unemployment and underemployment
- Low pay
- Ineffective social security system
- Lack of skills and qualifications
- Household debt
- Poor physical and mental health
- High housing and living costs

### Target population

The strategy is aimed at reducing poverty for people of all ages and circumstances. However, a key element of the strategy is focused on empowering individuals and communities to recognise poverty as a societal rather than individual problem and ensure that they feel part of the solution. This also includes a recognition that certain groups do face a higher risk of poverty and initiatives in the strategy seek to reflect this and understand the unique intersectional issues facing different communities. They identify the following groups:

- People with a disability or suffering from ill health
- Lone parents, larger families, and carers
- Children and young people
- Older people
- Some ethnic minority groups (including refugees and asylum seekers)
- People who are unemployed
- People experiencing homelessness

### Funding

There is no single tackling poverty strategy budget; because the strategy works across all departments, funding streams are provided from all budgets relevant to the specific key actions set out in the strategy.

## Development of Strategy

### Partnership working

The strategies have been developed through extensive work with a number of local stakeholders both external and internal to the council. Salford's approach emphasises that partnership working is an ongoing relationship, they do not see organisations as having to sign up to the strategy because they see the strategy as city-wide. It is about making poverty everyone's business through the development and progression of the strategy. They keep it constantly under review so that they are continuing to develop networks, and as such, they do not require organisations to be involved from the beginning of the strategy. The stakeholders involved include the Salford Poverty Truth Commission, Salford Community and Voluntary Services (CVS), local housing associations, GMPA, and other VCSE sector organisations and council-delivered services.

Accompanying the strategies is a high-level action plan, and within that there are specific tasks focused on co-production and the development of the strategy to make sure it remains live. A key action for the Principal Policy Officer for Poverty and Inequality includes ensuring these actions within the plan are reviewed by key stakeholders both within and out with the city council to ensure a whole systems approach. For example, updating representatives on the implementation of specific initiatives within the strategy such as the socio-economic duty through the Salford CVS-facilitated VOCAL thematic forums.

### Anti-Poverty Taskforce

In 2017, to support the strategy, the council, and the Sustainable Housing & Urban Studies Unit (SHUS) at the University of Salford established the Salford Anti-Poverty Taskforce (University of Salford, 2020). This was created to improve the lives of citizens experiencing poverty and inequality by providing high quality academic research underpinned by co-production and co-creation with key stakeholders, including those with lived experience.

This work fed into delivery of the anti-poverty strategy to ensure that policies have the greatest impact and are relevant to the issues that residents in Salford are facing, with recommendations from the research projects being implemented and actioned. Publication of the research has also provided the opportunity to raise awareness and lobby for policy change at a national level. Successful projects included an analysis of the experiences and barriers facing Salford's young people not in employment, education, or training (NEET).

The council continues to work in collaboration with the University of Salford on anti-poverty issues, including a new three-year research project into underemployment.

### The role of lived experience

From the very beginning, the council felt it was crucial to focus on co-production and co-development with people with lived experience of poverty. In addition to engaging with people's feedback on policies which were already in place or due to be implemented. They emphasised to prevent it from being a tick-box exercise, they are constantly trying to improve and continue this relationship to ensure lived experience is embedded in the strategy.

The first Salford Poverty Truth Commission (PTC) was launched in July 2016, run externally as a partnership between Community Pride and Church Action on Poverty. It consisted of 15 people with lived experience of poverty and 15 people from businesses and public figures who came together to explore ways of addressing poverty.

Its recommendations have influenced key aspects of the Tackling Poverty Strategy. A key change included:

- A review of debt recovery/income collection systems: The PTC was instrumental in providing first-hand experience of how detrimental these processes can be to people's lives. As a result of this, the council transformed its debt recovery policies to ensure they are as sensitive as possible and do not create further hardship for vulnerable people. They use people's first non-payment of council tax as an early warning system, sending a personal letter/text offering support rather than an impersonal 'you owe us' letter. They have also stopped the use of enforcement agents when recovering debts from the most vulnerable residents who receive a council tax reduction. This change has had a positive impact on both residents and the council, which has seen an increase in revenue from council tax payments.

The second Salford PTC is currently ongoing, and the council emphasised that these would continue to be crucial to the development of future strategies.

## Priorities

Like the previous strategy, the focus of the city's collective efforts and resources is on the following three themes:

**Preventing people from falling into poverty:** Salford prioritises addressing the root causes of poverty, to achieve long-term sustainable poverty reduction. Some initiatives include:

- Becoming a Living Wage City. They have a task force, made up of public, private, and voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations which works to increase the number of businesses paying the Living Wage in Salford.
- Further developing and promoting the BetterOff Salford website: a platform that helps people find and apply for benefit entitlements and search for work opportunities. They also offer BetterOff coffee and chat drop-in sessions, providing face-to-face and online support to those facing a financial crisis.
- Delivering more homes to ensure people can afford to rent (private, social, and affordable) or buy in Salford. They are working with housing partners and have committed to 1,074 affordable homes and through the councils ethical housing company Dérive, they are committed to directly delivering an additional 3,000 affordable homes over the coming years.

**Providing targeted support for people struggling in poverty:** Salford's approach emphasises that whilst they are dedicated to preventing and reducing poverty, people are currently facing severe issues and as such, they require immediate assistance to cope with increasing financial emergencies in the aftermath of Covid-19 and the ongoing Cost-of-living Crisis. They are working to increase the support available to those who need immediate assistance. Some initiatives include:

- Strengthening and investing in Salford Assist - Salford's local welfare assistance scheme. This provides short-term emergency help for people experiencing financial hardship such as food, fuel, and council tax support.
- Increasing investment in the council's Welfare Rights and Debt Advice Service to ensure independent advice and representation on social welfare law (benefits and debt) to those facing a financial crisis or at risk of homelessness, as well as work with key partners including Adult Social Care, Children's Services, and mental health services where advice at critical stages contributes towards prevention outcomes. Since January 2022, the service has achieved gains of £4.6 million for people in the city.
- Utilising the Get back on track campaign, which provides help for people struggling to pay their council tax bill. Salford continues to invest in stopping council tax debt from escalating.

**Campaigning for long-term change in government policies and practices:** Salford stresses that whilst they are doing all they can with the powers and resources they have available to address poverty, the main drivers of poverty lie with the national government. They focus on influencing the poverty debate, working with key local stakeholders, other Greater Manchester local authorities, and the GMCA to ensure poverty prevention and reduction gets a much higher profile through continuing to build an evidence base and campaigning for change. Some of the campaigning and influencing work they are seeking to do includes:

- Campaigning for a reversal of welfare changes made over the past decade such as benefits cap, bedroom tax and two-child limit.
- Working with GMPA and other partners across Greater Manchester to call on the government to develop a new national strategy for tackling poverty.

## Delivering the strategy

The council wanted to make sure that there is also an action plan in place to deliver the strategy's key ambitions which is kept under review and continually updated. The action plan presents what actions are already being implemented or proposed to be implemented to tackle poverty, key outcomes and timescales and the lead officer who is responsible for driving the work forward.

## Responsibility

The council sees tackling poverty as being the responsibility of all council departments. They highlight that the existence of the strategy and adoption of the socio-economic duty has helped to embed a strong anti-poverty culture within the council ([see adopt the socio-economic duty](#)). To support the development of the strategy and action plan as well as developing networks within and outside of the council, they have a Principal Policy Officer for Poverty and Inequality.

## Leadership

There is political leadership within the council on tackling poverty it sits with the Lead Member for Inclusive Economy, Anti-Poverty and Equalities. They highlighted that having political commitment has enabled greater prioritisation of poverty throughout all work.

However, since activity on delivery of the strategy falls across a number of different service areas and cabinet portfolios, progress and key decisions on specific areas also continue to be reported to each Lead Member alongside the Lead Member for Anti-Poverty. All three strategies under The Salford Way are also subject to a biannual progress update which includes going through both an internal and external governance process.

## Socio-economic duty

The council has voluntarily implemented the socio-economic duty, informed, and influenced by our guide developed in partnership with several organisations on socio-economic implementation. They recognise it is an important mechanism to ensure that socio-economic disadvantage is embedded within all decision-making processes, across all council services. As part of its implementation, the council created a dedicated toolkit for the incorporation of the duty into the equality impact assessment process. A detailed framework was designed for elected members and council services, which highlighted best practise and guidance in using the duty. This was supported by an integrated training programme.

To support the implementation process, the council had a 'soft launch' period allowing them to explore how the duty could be best utilised to avoid it becoming a 'tick box' exercise, before following this up with an evaluation after six months. This evaluation is currently underway, with initial findings suggesting that the duty is complementing and strengthening work to reduce inequality of outcomes.

## Links to other strategies

The council has several other strategies that the Tackling Poverty Strategy aligns with and supports the delivery of. The key ones being the Inclusive and Green Economy Strategy; the Equalities and Inclusion Strategy; Salford's Homelessness Strategy; and the city's Locality Plan 2020-2025. This is in recognition that inequality is interlinked and that all parts of the system have a key role to play in tackling this issue. The council is working to make sure actions in each of the strategies are as integrated as possible with the anti-poverty work to achieve the most holistic and preventative approach. For example, within the action plan, there are key actions around the other strategies which involve the Principal Officer for Poverty and Inequality attending the working groups for these to keep updated on work that is being done and to see how it can be integrated for maximum impact.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The council recognises that integral to delivery is being transparent with how the strategy is working. The strategy itself highlights how it will measure its success, for example, by fewer young people who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET), an increase in average household incomes and wages, and an increase in the number of children deemed school ready.

However, the accompanying action plan sets out the key actions that underpin each of the strategic priorities with specific measurable outcomes/milestones. The council is focused on increasing the collection and integration of both quantitative and qualitative data to build a robust understanding of poverty at a localised level, and how national-level policies are reflected in the data and use this to inform service delivery. It sets out short-term (up to 12 months) and longer-term (over 12 months) targets. Key outcomes/milestones include:

- Increasing the number of accredited living wage employers in the city with reference to the Living Wage Action Plan to meet the target of 70 accredited employers by 2022.
- Continuing to regularly use all appropriate channels to encourage uptake amongst local people of all available support to help them avoid/combat poverty.
- Highlighting the rise in child poverty and the impact of this at both a local and national level, campaigning for a centralised strategy alongside GMPA that allocates sufficient resources and promotes better outcomes for children from low-income households.

The council emphasised that in light of the Cost-of-living Crisis, some metrics will most likely get worse, therefore they are making sure to upscale the evidence base of case studies. They are using these to keep under review how things can be done differently and how they can achieve more by utilising new initiatives and integration of data.

## The Salford Way: Integrated evidence base

The council is committed to being open and transparent about how the strategy is working, they have developed a public-facing, integrated evidence base, which uses core indicators from each of the three interlinked Salford Way strategies to show how the council is working across the priorities. It shows selected statistics on poverty in Salford such as earnings and income, living-wage employers, and child poverty levels, broken down into wards.

## Oversight and governance

The council has a range of mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the strategy which is both internal (with an anti-poverty operational group, that monitor, scrutinise, make recommendations, and share best practice) and external (it is governed by the Salford Health and Wellbeing Board, which works across the city partners). The evaluation is used to add other elements to the strategy as the wider situation changes, as well as measure the current impact of the strategy.

## Salford Health and Wellbeing Board

The Salford Health and Wellbeing Board has overall responsibility for monitoring and measuring the impact of the strategy and reporting progress through publishing an annual progress report for stakeholders and the wider public to view. The council highlighted that its role is important to the strategy as it provides an objective and expert point of support for the delivery of the key actions in strategy and ensures that actions being implemented at a practical level are streamlined with other relevant strategies such as Salford's Locality Plan 2020-25 to reduce social, economic and health inequalities.

## Rother District Anti-Poverty Strategy

### Context

Rother District Council is one of the five district and Borough Councils in the County of East Sussex in the South East of England. Rother is ranked 135th (out of 317) local authority for deprivation and contains fairly affluent areas that sit alongside pockets of significant deprivation. Rother now has two neighbourhoods among the most deprived decile (compared to one in 2019) both within Bexhill Sidley ward, and there are six LSOAs in parts of Sidley, Central Bexhill, and Eastern Rother that are among the most deprived 20% in England.

There are particular challenges facing the district which include:

- An ageing population: Rother has one of the oldest populations, 9.24% of Rother is aged 80+, almost double the national average of 4.96%. The proportion of over 65s is projected to increase by 20% by 2026 and 55% by 2041.
- Disabilities and long-term illness: Over 23% of Rother residents have a disability or long-term illness, which is significantly higher than levels nationally and in the South East. In addition, the percentage of the population who provide 50 or more hours per week of unpaid care is significantly higher than the national average.
- Housing tenure and affordability: The proportion of social housing in Rother is significantly lower than averages across the South East and nationally, and many residents have difficulty accessing affordable private rental properties.

In response to growing poverty levels in a number of localities in Rother, the council (led by the Rother Alliance, a coalition administration of independent, Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green Party councillors) committed to developing an anti-poverty strategy as part of the council's corporate plan 2020 to 2027. The council is realistic in its ambitions, as a district council it is limited in what it can do due to not only budgetary constraints but also because the main areas that can make an impact in addressing poverty are under the remit of East Sussex County Councils' or require national change.

Despite this, the council emphasised that the strategy and its accompanying action plan are part of its new approach to making positive changes on what it can control and increasing its influence to engage with others to make changes beyond what it can control.

The anti-poverty strategy is a five-year strategy from 2022 until 2027. The council described the strategy as being an important first step towards developing a more comprehensive response to tackling poverty locally. It is being used as a catalyst to improve existing ways of working and launch additional work across all key local stakeholders to improve outcomes for those living in poverty in Rother.

This case study provides variety among our other case studies because it has been formulated fairly recently, with the Cabinet approving the strategy in March 2022. As the strategy is in its early days, it has not yet been evaluated, but we have included it as an example of the measure's councils with limited scope and resources can take to address poverty.

### Scope and design

#### Vision

The strategy sets out Rother District council's vision, *"to work together to tackle the symptoms of poverty in order to reduce its impact and create a fair, healthy, prosperous, thriving and sustainable Rother, now and for future generations to come"*.

#### Poverty definition and identification of the drivers of poverty in Rother District

The council defines poverty in relative terms, explaining that "you are poor if you are unable to live at the standard that most other people would expect. A child can have three meals a day, warm clothes, and go to school, but still be poor because her parents do not have enough money to ensure she can live in a warm home, have access to a computer to do her homework, or go on the same school trips as her classmates. More than 2,500 children in Rother are living in poverty".

In the strategy, they emphasise that references made to poverty are to relative income poverty. They define households in Rother as living in relative poverty if their combined income is 60% or less of the average (median) household income in after housing costs.

Rother is home to significant health inequalities and the council recognises that poverty is one of the main causes of poor health and health inequalities. They are working to deliver the vision set out in the strategy through a health and environmental lens. Using the Health Foundation evidence hub, they have identified the main drivers of health inequalities as being fundamentally poverty related. The council is focused on addressing these drivers where possible with key local stakeholders. The drivers include:

- Lack of money and resources
- Unemployment, work quality, and job security
- Housing affordability and quality
- Inadequate transport
- Exposure to pollution and access to the natural environment
- Barriers to community cohesion and participation

#### Funding

The district faces significant budgetary constraints, and as such there is no dedicated budget for the strategy. The council stressed that whilst they are restricted in how much they can do, the aim of the strategy is to improve the coordination of resources rather than creating new interventions.

## Development of the strategy

### Anti-Poverty Task and Finish Group

In 2020, a cross-party Anti-Poverty Task and Finish Group (APT&FG) was set up by the Overview and Scrutiny committee, to investigate the causes and effects of poverty locally and make recommendations to the cabinet to inform future council policy. It appointed six members, who were supported by officers from the Corporate Core, Policy and Housing, and Community services. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee provided input into the review.

The Rother Alliance developed a series of proposals for the APT&FG. They fell into two categories: research and evidence gathering (to determine the level of poverty across the district and establish best practice to combat it) and strategy and actions (improving the council's existing services, implementing new schemes and initiatives, and establishing an effective anti-poverty strategy to deliver on the aims set out in the group).

The group also had a number of objectives, these include:

- Reviewing how to boost financial inclusion and access to financial products.
- Assessing the impact of the Council Tax Reduction Policy and discretionary housing benefit payments (DHP).
- Investigating the availability of different forms of advice and the affordability of fuel, food, and other provisions and the role of the council in supporting this.

The APT&FG held events in 2020 and 2021 to gather evidence from key local stakeholders both external and internal to the council to meet its objectives and develop the strategy.

The first event involved a range of partner agencies, who the APT&FG asked to summarise the services they offer, the gaps in service provision, and the service users' experience of poverty.

The council emphasised that the evidence-gathering sessions were important to the development of the strategy as they highlighted that there is a strong commitment from key local stakeholders to alleviate the symptoms of poverty. In addition, the sessions highlighted areas for improvement in the delivery of services by the council and their partners. The evidence-gathering sessions helped established the strategies' key aims.

## Partnership working

The strategy is a culmination of work done by the APT&FG, in collaboration with wider authorities, outside bodies, and the voluntary sector. This is to ensure that the aims are relevant, and the action plan is achievable with the resources available locally.

The strategy highlights that tackling poverty requires a commitment from all partners to joint working. The council has been given a commitment by voluntary, statutory, and business sectors to work to address poverty.

The strategy and action plan have been developed and are being delivered by the council in partnership with Rother Voluntary Action (RVA) through the Local Strategic Partnership (LSA). The council highlighted that the RVA's knowledge has been fundamental to the strategy as they have insight into what is happening on the ground, and they already coordinate much of the activity in the area which supports residents facing financial difficulties.

In November 2021, a multi-agency event was held by the council in partnership with RVA. The event reviewed the recommended objectives of the APT&FG and identified the aims and actions that would support the delivery of the strategy. RVA presented feedback and case studies following a series of consultations with local community groups from urban and rural areas of the district. The findings of the APT&FG, informed by the evidence gathering sessions, were reviewed, and condensed into a series of aims and actions, which have been captured in the strategy's action plan.

## Consultation

To identify any gaps for inclusion and gather further evidence of the potential impact of the strategy and action plan, the council consulted with a range of groups. The majority of the consultation took place via an online questionnaire from April to May 2022, however written and telephone consultation responses were also accepted. The groups who responded included:

- Users of community and support services.
- 25 local organisations including seven town and parish councils.
- 13 charities and voluntary agencies alongside three public sector organisations and two political parties (branches).
- Internal council departments such as the Planning Policy team.

## Priorities

The strategy highlights the following three aims for the council and community services operating in the Rother District to reduce levels of poverty:

**Coordination:** developing local strategic commissioning and operational structures to coordinate services designed to alleviate poverty. The evidence-gathering sessions identified a lack of coordination and duplication of services, leading to service users experiencing confusion because of the array of statutory, voluntary, and community services available.

**Access:** maximise the accessibility of services so that those in the greatest need can be reached. The evidence-gathering sessions demonstrated that there are gaps in service accessibility; Rother is predominantly rural which means it is challenging to deliver services due to poor internet access and support hubs situated in inconvenient locations.

**Promotion:** promote information, advice, and support to service users and professionals. The evidence-gathering sessions conveyed that there needs to be upskilling of council staff so that residents are provided with information and advice in a timely manner.

## Delivering the strategy

### Responsibility

To support the development and delivery of the strategy and action plan, it is being led by the council's head of housing and community service. However, the council emphasised that the strategy has been important in enshrining to council officers that every department must consider how their work is contributing to reducing poverty in Rother and the need for cross-departmental work.

### Leadership

A change in political leadership was central to the formation of the anti-poverty strategy, as councillors with first and second-hand experience of poverty brought with them a determination to tackle the issue. The anti-poverty strategy responsibility sits under the cabinet portfolio for housing and homelessness and there is a spokesperson for young person's/child poverty.

### Anti Poverty Strategy Steering Group (APSSG)

The multi-agency Rother APSSG works to deliver the aims and actions identified within the strategy and the action plan to ensure objectives remain achievable. The APSSG will provide periodic progress updates to the Rother LSP.

The council emphasised that the APSSG will develop and refine its objectives as it establishes itself, identifying gaps in service provision and areas where greater collaboration and coordination between services can support outcomes for residents.

### Socio-economic duty

Encouraged by our influence that adopting the socio-economic duty is a central element of a strategic approach to addressing poverty a motion was submitted in September 2022 for the cabinet and council to explore voluntarily adopting the socio-economic duty. To affirm the council's commitment to preventing and combatting hardship, alongside a Cost-of-living Emergency declaration.

### Links to other strategies

The council highlighted that delivery of the strategy is integrated with a range of existing strategies including its Housing, Homelessness, and Rough Sleeping Strategy, Local Plan and the Hastings and Rother Food Networks 'Food insecurity Strategy for Rother'.

Through the strategy, the council are seeking greater strategic alignment with wider health and well-being aims and objectives, including those of the East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board, as they recognise that poverty is both a cause and consequence of the poor health that is impacting on residents in the district.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The strategy is in its early stages and as such the council has not defined the specific measures that will be used to evaluate the impact of the strategy. The action plan currently sets out the actions which underpin each objective, the timeline for completing these and who is responsible for this. The majority of these are the responsibility of the APSSG, who are currently refining the action plan. Some of the key actions include:

- Delivering new Bexhill place-based Hub and new rural virtual Hubs and supporting existing service hubs with more targeted signposting.
- APSSG creating a 'street sheet' leaflet summarising services and where they are located to support greater accessibility.
- APSSG to develop a training resource video of local services for residents and frontline staff.

## Oversight and governance

### Rother Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

The council described the LSP as the 'logic vehicle' for supporting and monitoring the progress of the strategy action plan due to the strategy being embedded in partnership working. This also has the advantage of ensuring buy-in from high-level leadership in the area. The LSP's role is to promote the strategies objectives through the East Sussex Strategy Partnership, support the coordination of existing resources and influence future service commissioning through its networks.

The LSP will provide an annual report which will: detail the successes and progress made towards meeting the objectives, outline priorities to action for the year ahead, and look at the poverty challenges and responses from partners.

## East Devon District Anti-Poverty strategy

### Context

East Devon District Council is one of eight district Councils within the county of Devon in the South West of England. East Devon has strong economic growth and investment in the area has created employment opportunities in a variety of sectors such as hi-tech and bio-technology businesses. Despite this, a significant number of residents are affected by poverty due to a combination of low pay and the high Cost-of-living in the area.

In 2019 the council's housing and benefits team identified that there were worsening levels of poverty, with concentrations of poverty in particular communities. Below are key figures which depict the issues East Devon is facing:

- A quarter of residents in East Devon receive a weekly wage that, at £275.60, is only 65% of the average weekly pay (£426.10) in the district.
- East Devon has a higher proportion of part-time workers (37.5%) than the South West (36.3%) and the UK (32.4%).
- In 2019, the average lower quartile monthly rent was £650, while lower quartile average house prices were ten or more times the average lower quartile earnings.

The anti-poverty strategy is a three-year strategy from 2021 to 2024, which is accompanied by an action plan. The strategy is embedded in the council's plan for 2021 to 2023, where it is set out as one of the priority actions in the council's priority one: better homes and communities for all. The council recognises that they do not have all the answers and many areas are outside of their control or influence, nevertheless, they are committed to making sure the council leverages its power and influence where possible to make a difference to residents.

The council emphasises that the creation of the strategy has provided a clear framework for addressing poverty in East Devon and focuses on the areas the council does have the opportunity to improve and influence. It identifies which specific groups need support and the geographic areas which they need to be targeted.

### Scope and design

#### Vision

The council sets out its vision in the strategy, it states that it wants to ensure that:

- Nobody should get into poverty without immediate help from the council.
- Nobody should be in involuntary poverty longer than 2 years in East Devon.

#### Poverty definition and identification of the drivers of poverty in East Devon

The council accepts that there are several definitions of poverty, however, they refer to the most common measure, relative income poverty. They define it as *"a person or community that lacks the financial resources and essentials for a minimum standard of living; and where a household income is below 60% of the average"*.

The strategy outlines the causes and effects of poverty, combining the issues the Joseph Rowntree Foundation identifies with local knowledge through the poverty working panel informed by residents and key local stakeholders. The causes identified include:

- Low-paid, insecure jobs
- Low skills or education
- Ineffective benefits system
- High cost of housing, goods, and services
- Financial literacy
- Discrimination

### Development of strategy

#### Poverty Working Panel

A Poverty Working Panel was created by the council in 2020 primarily tasked with identifying how the tackling poverty/anti-poverty approach could be coordinated, improved, and captured in a corporate strategy document that improves the situation for households in East Devon. The Poverty Working Panel is chaired by the portfolio holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities and made up of elected members and officers.

The Panel focused on poverty-related to income and employment, debt and financial vulnerability, food, and nutrition, affordable warmth and water, affordable housing and homelessness, and health equality.

The Panel pursued nine lines of inquiry to develop the strategy, ranging from how best the council can coordinate partnerships to how could the strategy be cross-cutting and meaningful.

### Partnership working

Partnership working has been integral to the formation of the strategy. The council highlighted that it has worked closely and continues to work with a number of partners to ensure the strategy remains fit for purpose.

To pursue the lines of inquiry mentioned above, the poverty working plan gathered evidence to inform the development of their strategy. They considered examples of good practice, such as Cambridge City Council's anti-poverty strategy and asked internal and external stakeholders to give evidence on key issues. Over this period, they worked with the council's housing and benefits team and economic development team, as well as external organisations such as DWP, Citizens Advice, and Local Enterprise Partnership.

<sup>1</sup> See case study 4.



## Funding

The strategy does not have a specific budget of its own, instead the council is using pots of funding already allocated to services and general hardship funding. The strategy has not required a huge amount of additional funding, as it has pulled together work that the council has been doing for a number of years and is adding layers to it.

## Priorities

The strategy is underpinned by three themes, which are summarised below:

1. Addressing the causes and effects of poverty: The main purpose of the strategy is poverty reduction across East Devon. The council is seeking to balance ongoing efforts to address the effects of poverty with a further focus on preventative work in partnership with key local stakeholders both external and internal to the council.
2. Balancing direct delivery, partnership working, and influencing activity: The strategy seeks to outline actions that the council can deliver directly or in partnership with public, voluntary, and community partners. In addition, it highlights issues which require influencing and lobbying activity to bring about change and secure funding.
3. Building the capacity of residents and communities and facilitating community action and mutual support: The strategic approach is focused on building the capacity of residents and communities. The council are working with residents and communities to identify the solutions to poverty.

The Poverty Working Panel has developed five strategic objectives with lead services identified to work on specific core aims. The strategy and action plan that accompanies the strategy highlights the key activities that the council will take to achieve the objectives through direct service delivery, partnership working, and influencing and lobbying.

Below we outline the objectives and include a selection of some of the key activities under them:

### 1. Helping people on low incomes to maximise their household income and minimise their costs, building financial resilience and reducing indebtedness. Lead Service – Finance.

- Partnership actions: The council provides funding to voluntary and community groups for activities that achieve one or more of the priorities or actions listed in the strategy and action plan. The Action on Poverty Fund accepts applications for grants of between £500 to £5,000.

### 2. Strengthening families and communities, including supporting groups of people that are more likely to experience poverty, and community and voluntary groups working to combat poverty. Lead Service – Housing.

- District council actions: Reviewing the needs of the community and voluntary sector in building stronger communities and identifying where the Council can best provide support.

### 3. Promoting an inclusive economy, by raising skills and improving access to a range of employment opportunities for people on low incomes. Lead Service – Growth, Development & Prosperity.

- Influencing lobbying actions: Lobbying the Government on relevant economic policy issues and seeking to influence the strategic approach of the Local Enterprise Partnership.

### 4. Addressing the high cost of housing, improving housing conditions, creating affordable warmth, and reducing homelessness. Lead Service – Housing.

- District council actions: Developing new Council homes for rent and ensuring that rent levels are as affordable as possible. The Council has an ambitious programme to deliver at least 100 new council homes over 5 years subject to funding being available.

### 5. Improving health outcomes for people on low incomes, including access to good diet, health care, and ill health prevention. Lead Service – Environmental Health.

- Partnership actions: Supporting outreach advice services for residents experiencing mental health issues due to low income, debt, or addiction.

## Delivering the strategy

### Responsibility

Responsibility for delivering the strategy is shared across the council and partner organisations. The council emphasised that they cannot tackle poverty in isolation. The objectives of the strategy can only be achieved when the strategy has a strong commitment from assigned council leads and departments and works effectively in partnership with key local stakeholders.

The accompanying action plan comprises of 61 actions, some of which are subdivided, and others are shared by more than one council department. Certain actions will be developed and delivered in partnership with local stakeholders, while others will be delivered through lobbying government and other national organisations.

## Leadership

The council highlights that political commitment coming from the council lead, cabinet, and portfolio holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities (who has poverty as a named responsibility) has strengthened the strategy's reach. The strategy's objectives are linked to lead services and there is a strong commitment from the heads of the departments to deliver the key actions.

### Links to other strategies

The strategy cuts across all council services to ensure poverty is considered in every area of council delivery. The council emphasised that poverty is a cross-cutting issue and there are clear linkages and alignment with a number of strategies/policies including the public health strategy, housing strategy, corporate debt policy, and equality policy.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The action plan details completion dates, performance measures, and outcomes. Each lead service which has activities that link into the action plan will periodically review those items and report back to the Poverty Working Panel with updates on progress. Light-touch reviews will be made annually, while the official review of the strategy takes place every three years.

The action plan includes the following types of performance measures and outcomes:

- Data on where referrals for financial support have come from e.g., schools, local charities, support agencies, and foodbanks.
- Feedback from partner organisations.
- Number of residents receiving unemployment benefits, (with the aim of seeing a reduction in this figure over time).
- Number of new homes for rent provided annually on Council owned sites.
- Number of entries to Council-owned leisure facilities by people holding concession memberships.

## Social Resilience (Poverty) Dashboard

The council has created an East Devon dashboard of poverty indicators to provide visibility of locally relevant data, drawing on best practice from other councils and organisations. The council emphasised that this has been a key success of the strategy as it has given them a platform to fully understand the issues that they are facing. Issues can be visualised and contextualised, and information can be drawn from individual wards, enabling interventions to be targeted towards the most deprived areas. The dashboard is currently only available internally, but the council is working to make it available to the public.

### Oversight and governance

Oversight of the strategy is the responsibility of two bodies, the Poverty Working Panel and the strategic management team. The Poverty Working panel report back to the cabinet on the delivery of the strategy, while the strategic management team of chief officers also oversee delivery.

## Case Study 4

## Cambridge City Anti-Poverty Strategy

### Context

Cambridge City Council is a district council in the county of Cambridgeshire, in the East of England. Cambridge is a wealthy, fast-growing city with a strong economy and significant employment growth in the science and technology sectors. A study from Cambridge Ahead (2021) shows that companies that work in the knowledge-intensive industry accounted for 28% of employment and 38% of the total £18 billion turnover in Cambridge.

Nevertheless, Cambridge was identified by the Centre for Cities in 2017 as the most unequal city in the UK. There is a significant divide in the city- the top 6% of earners who live in Cambridge take home 19% of the total income generated by residents, while the bottom 20% of people account for just 2% of the total (Ferguson, 2020). A significant proportion of people are experiencing poverty due to low incomes, lack of skills and qualifications, and rapidly increasing housing costs. Poverty is concentrated in wards and neighbourhoods that are primarily in the North and East of the city.

Below we highlight key figures from the strategy which demonstrate that the city's prosperity is not shared by all:

- One in 10 people receive weekly pay (£162) which is less than 30% of the average weekly pay (£555) in the city.
- There is a low level of social mobility and outcomes are poor for young people from poorer backgrounds, with Cambridge having the fifth lowest score of any local authority for youth social mobility.
- In 2019, residents in the most deprived ward in Cambridge lived 11.6 years less on average than residents in the least deprived ward.

In light of this inequality, the council's vision 'One Cambridge - Fair for All' prioritises tackling poverty and social exclusion. The Corporate plan 2022-27 sets out the council's four key priorities, priority two 'tackling poverty and inequality and helping people in the greatest need' outlines the council's anti-poverty strategy and accompanying action plan for 2020 to 2023. The council's approach focuses on tackling both the underlying causes and immediate effects of poverty.

They have had two previous strategies covering the periods from 2014 to 2017 and 2017 to 2020, both strategies aimed to raise the standards of living for people in poverty and address the issues which lead to financial pressures. They highlight there have been improvements in a number of areas such as an increase in earnings for low-income households and building council-owned homes at an affordable rent.

However, the focus of the strategy's approach has changed over time and the revised strategy builds on learnings from previous strategies and the latest evidence on the nature of poverty in Cambridge. In particular, the council has recognised the need for a greater focus on preventative work in partnership with key local partners to address some of the root causes of poverty.

## Scope and design

### Vision

The strategy sets out the council's vision, *"we want to build a fairer Cambridge and help improve the standard of living for individuals and communities on a low income in the city"*.

### Poverty definition and identification of the drivers of poverty in Cambridge

The council defines poverty using the most common definition which is relative income poverty-where households have less than 60% of median income.

The strategy outlines the causes and effects of poverty, combining the issues identified by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation with consultation responses from key local stakeholders and residents. The causes identified include:

- Difficulty meeting basic needs such as food and fuel costs
- Digital exclusion
- Low level of skills or education
- Impacts of welfare reforms
- Lack of financial literacy

## Funding

The council emphasises that the availability of funding has been a challenge due to central government funding cuts which has meant discretionary funding is limited. The strategy is rooted in partnership working as the council recognises they need to work closely in partnership with local organisations and communities to develop creative solutions.

Therefore, the strategy primarily seeks to co-ordinate and re-focus city council activities so that it focuses on tackling poverty where possible. The council is funding the actions in the strategy by:

- Mainstream service budgets, through the council's mainstream services, either directly or in partnership with other organisations.
- Funding grants through the council's community grants and homelessness prevention grants to support voluntary and community organisations. For the period of the strategy, the criteria for grant funding are for projects that are working to address socio-economic disadvantage.

## Development of the strategy

### Partnership working

The previous strategies were developed through available data and evidence on poverty in Cambridge and extensive consultation with partner organisations and residents. The revised strategy has built on this evidence base, and the council has undertaken further consultation to develop a shared understanding of poverty, identify further opportunities for joint working and influence anti-poverty work in the city.

This has included:

- Engagement with residents at a range of community groups in Abbey, Arbury, Kings Hedges, and Trumpington (facilitated by Abbey People, North Cambridge Community Partnership, Hands on the Circle, and the council's community development team)
- A stakeholder workshop attended by representatives from 18 public, private, and voluntary sector organisations that support people in poverty
- Two workshops for council frontline staff who support residents in poverty and engagement with management teams in key council services (Community Services, Environmental Services, Housing Services, Planning, Repairs and Maintenance, and Revenues and Benefits)

## Lived experience engagement

The council highlighted that engagement with people with lived experience of poverty has been on a consultation basis, but the council is now moving to a model of co-production for the development and delivery of interventions associated with the strategy. The council has found engagement has been most effective when they have worked through trusted organisations as they understand sometimes people do not want to speak directly to the local authority without an introduction from an organisation working with them in a support capacity.

### Priorities

The strategy sets out three underpinning themes for the council's approach:

1. Combining ongoing efforts to address the effects of poverty, with a further focus on preventative work (in partnership with other organisations) to address some of the root causes of poverty. The council has evolved its approach; initially the council prioritised addressing the immediate effects of poverty, while they now have a greater focus on the causes of poverty.
2. Balancing direct council service delivery, partnership-working and influencing, and lobbying activity where it will have a greater impact. The council outlines its sphere of influence in relation to poverty. To ensure there is a clear understanding of the role everybody plays, the council is seeking to use the strategy to identify:
  - Which issues can be addressed by direct delivery by council services;
  - Which issues can be achieved through partnership working; and
  - Which issues require influencing and lobbying activity (where power lies with the central government) to bring about change and secure funding.
3. Building the capacity and resilience of residents and communities and facilitating community action. The council is focused on working collaboratively with residents, community groups, and voluntary groups to identify solutions to address poverty.

## Strategic objectives

The strategy sets out five objectives to reduce poverty over three years and 58 associated actions structured around the strategy's underpinning themes (city council actions, partnership actions, and influencing and lobbying actions).

We outline the five objectives and a selection of key activities that will be undertaken to achieve them:

### 1. Helping people on low incomes to maximise their income and minimise their costs.

- City council actions: Paying council staff at least the Real Living Wage, and ensuring contractors do the same.

### 2. Strengthening families and communities, including supporting groups of people that are more likely to experience poverty.

- There are concentrations of poverty in particular localities in Cambridge, the council is working with partner organisations to develop area-based approaches, building on the county council-led "Think Communities" approach and other multi-agency initiatives.

### 3. Promoting an inclusive economy, by raising skills and improving access to a range of employment opportunities for people on low incomes.

- Influencing and lobbying actions: The council will lobby the government on relevant economic policy issues and seek to influence the strategic approach of the Greater Cambridge Partnership and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, which is responsible for key economic strategies including the Local Industrial Strategy and the Local Transport Plan.

### 4. Addressing the high cost of housing, improve housing conditions, and reduce homelessness.

- City council actions: The council has an ambitious programme to deliver at least 500 new council homes over 5 years following £70m funding via the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Devolution Deal.

### 5. Improving health outcomes for people on a low income.

- City council actions: Providing a 50% reduction in entry prices at Council-owned sports and swimming facilities for people receiving benefits.

## Delivering the strategy

The action plan sets out the key activities that the council plans to undertake to help achieve each of the objectives. It highlights which actions will be achieved through direct service delivery, partnership working, or influencing and lobbying. It is a live document that is regularly reviewed and updated, with new activity added to respond to emerging issues relating to poverty in the city.

### Responsibility

From the outset, the council aimed to ensure the strategy was embedded across all key services. The council's action plan highlights different council services have a responsibility for key actions to achieve the strategic objectives such as revenues and benefits, housing services and community services. The strategy brings together work that is already the responsibility of services, but challenges services to take forward additional activities and projects where issues have been identified.

The strategy emphasises that the city council cannot deliver work on its own. Through the development of the strategy, they have identified opportunities for joint working, and they are working closely with key local stakeholders to deliver the actions set out in the strategy.

## Leadership

The strategy has high-level political support and leadership. The Assistant Chief Executive of the council leads on anti-poverty and there is an Executive Councillor for Equalities, Anti-Poverty and Well-being. The council highlights having an executive councillor with anti-poverty as a named responsibility provides council officers with a specific person to report to and supports political leadership on the council on the issue of poverty.

### Links to other strategies

The council highlights that poverty is well-established as a key issue for the council, the strategy is cross-cutting, and many of the council's services have contributed to the development and delivery of the strategy, either through delivering actions or through re-focusing existing services. The strategy is not intended to replace existing strategies, rather it exists to complement, strengthen, and add to the work council departments are doing to address poverty. In particular, the strategy has clear links to, and aligns with the following strategies: Housing Strategy, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and Local Plan.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The action plan sets out performance measures, expected outcomes and completion dates for the 58 actions structured around the five strategic objectives and underpinning themes. The performance measures relate to the expected outputs from the actions. Where projects are in the early stages of development, or it is difficult to identify tangible outputs they have highlighted clear project milestones that will be achieved by the completion date.

The action plan includes the following types of performance measures and outcomes:

- Increasing the number of Cambridge employers that have achieved Living Wage accreditation.
- Increasing the number of community days held in low income areas of the city.
- Increasing the number of additional apprenticeships created across the Greater Cambridge area.
- Increasing the number of new homes for rent provided annually on council owned sites.
- Repurposing the existing library card as a 'smart' universal passport to learning.

## Indicators for measuring poverty in Cambridge

Due to the difficulty in measuring levels of poverty at a local level the council has identified high-level indicators in the strategy that are used to measure poverty in Cambridge, structured around the five objectives of the strategy. The council highlights having a clear set of indicators is essential for them to monitor the combined impact of council and partner organisations actions on poverty, tracking changes in the local and national economy and measuring the effects of government policy on poverty.

Key measures include:

- Total number of people living in households claiming Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.
- Percentage of pupils receiving Free School Meals achieving Grades 9 to 4 in GCSE English and Maths.
- Gap in life expectancy between the least and most deprived areas in Cambridge.
- The percentage of households in Cambridge experiencing fuel poverty.

## Oversight and governance

Progress on the key actions and performance measures are reported to the Strategy and Resources Committee on a regular basis. The council produces a public facing annual progress report that updates on the delivery of the key actions.

# Case Study 5

## Leicester City Anti-Poverty Strategy

### Context

Leicester City Council is a unitary authority in the East Midlands city of Leicester. It has some of the most deprived communities in the country and is ranked the 32nd most deprived local authority in England (out of 317). Overall deprivation is primarily driven by deprivation in income, education, skills, and training:

- In Leicester, the average person earns £22,157 a year, a figure that has fallen by around £1,000 since 2013. In contrast, average earnings in England have risen by approximately £3,000 over the same period.
- 28% of Leicester's adult working population are residents in the 5% most deprived areas nationally. 52% are living in the 20% most deprived areas.
- A high proportion of residents in Leicester have no recognised qualifications, the percentage is 2.5 times higher than the national average.

When the City Mayor was re-elected in 2019, the Mayor's vision set out a number of pledges to fulfil ambitions to improve the city region. Under the 'A fair city' pledge was a commitment to 'fight against austerity' and develop an anti-poverty strategy in the first year of the new term. The development of the strategy was undertaken at the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020; however, publication of the strategy was delayed until early 2022 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The council highlights it is realistic in its approach to addressing poverty as many of the causes of poverty are driven by factors outside of local control. Nevertheless, the strategy is focused on enabling the council and its key partners to better understand the nature and impact of poverty on people that use their services to improve services and/or develop new ones.

We have chosen this case study as unlike the other strategies, the council did not want it to be a paper-based strategy. Instead, the council's anti-poverty framework and approach are on a microsite. The council emphasised that using a microsite allows for the strategy to be constantly updated as the national and local situation changes.

### Scope and design

#### Vision

The council sets out its vision in the strategy, *"our vision is that every citizen of Leicester is happy, healthy, engaged in their community and not held back by poverty and its impacts"*.

#### Poverty definition and identification of the drivers of poverty in Leicester

The council defines poverty using the relative poverty definition- if a household's income is less than 60% of the average. They emphasise while all people in poverty have a lack of money, poverty means different things to different people. They state *"you are poor if you are unable to live at the standard that most other people would expect. A child can have three meals a day, warm clothes, and go to school, but still be poor because their parents do not have enough money to ensure they can live in a warm home, have access to a computer to do their homework, or go on the same school trips as their classmates"*.

The strategy cites a Joseph Rowntree Foundation report that concludes poverty levels are driven by changes to four main factors: employment rate, earnings, benefits, and other incomes such as pensions and housing costs (JRF, 2016). The strategy is structured around the policy of some of these factors that can be influenced at a local level.

## Target population

It is important for the council to consider that poverty affects people in different ways. Leicester is home to a number of diverse communities, and as such services must be tailored to the appropriate community and their needs. The strategy is strongly aligned with the council's Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy 2018-2022 which requires all proposed service developments and changes to be assessed for their impact on groups of people with "protected characteristics". The strategy highlights the following groups that are at a higher risk of poverty in Leicester including children, social renters, home carers, the long-term sick or disabled, LGBT communities, women, ethnic groups, and older people.

## Funding

The strategy does not have specific funding due to budgetary constraints. Instead, the council is focusing on maintaining funding for existing strategies and plans that are already in place to reduce poverty and offering grants to local organisations. When the council is making any changes to programmes due to funding, they now need to look at poverty data to assess what service decisions should be made. The council emphasised the strategy is about developing what is already in the city and making it sustainable.

They have launched an Anti-Poverty Community Grants scheme which offers grants to local organisations to develop and design projects that align with one or more of the council's anti-poverty objectives and deliver specific benefits to groups living in Leicester who are more at risk of living in poverty. £250,000 funding will be available each year from 2022 to 2025, and they are running multiple rounds of application.

## Development of the strategy

To develop the strategy, the council spoke to over 500 people. They held a summit involving representatives from the council, NHS, advice agencies, voluntary and community organisations, and focus groups with people with lived experience of poverty. They used the engagement to understand the barriers people are facing living in poverty, gathered poverty data from a number of organisations, and mapped support services in the city.

## Partnership working

The summit with key local partners highlighted a number of issues that the strategy needed to focus on improving including:

- Lack of awareness about the anti-poverty work of the council: the microsite now contains details on current and future council policies and funding.
- Limited access to data on poverty levels in Leicester: organisations faced difficulties in accessing data to support bids and could often spend significant time looking for this data. The microsite now holds data across poverty indicators the council has access to, alongside data collected by other organisations. This ensures this data is easily accessible to VCSE groups.

## Lived experience engagement

The council held focus groups with people with lived experience of poverty to determine what residents felt an anti-poverty strategy should address and what schemes had been of benefit to them. One of the key findings that came out of the lived experience engagement was that residents felt there is a stigma attached to living in poverty, and they were hesitant to access services if they felt the language was 'demeaning' or 'belittling'. The council emphasised they are now more aware of the importance of using language that is empowering to residents rather than demoralising.

The council highlighted that the strategy could not have been developed without involving people with lived experience.

## Priorities

The council has developed an anti-poverty framework to better understand the issues people experiencing poverty in Leicester are facing. Below we outline a summary of the four-ring strategic framework:

- It begins with the key elements that need to be in place for people to live a comfortable life to a standard that we all should expect, these include food and clothing, homes and furniture, money, and advice.
- "Enablers" then surround key elements, these include access to advice and services, childcare and schools, and transport.
- The themes of health and well-being and jobs and skills are the next ring, which can only be achieved when basic needs are met, or support is provided from "enablers". The council emphasises that the absence of any of the inner sections of the framework will have a negative effect on an individual's health, well-being, and social environment.
- Surrounding the whole framework is "community", the council recognises the importance of support from a strong social and community network. The microsite is structured around the strategic framework's key elements and enablers, and each includes key findings from engagement with local partners and people with lived experience of poverty, as well as actions the council is taking, and its future intentions.

A selection of the key actions and intentions are:

- Homes, furniture, and utilities: commissioning advice services in the community that support residents to manage their bills and access emergency gas and electricity credit; and providing seed funding for a voluntary sector project to refurbish white goods for low-income households.
  - Food and clothing: promoting and working to increase the take up of healthy start and free school meals by eligible families; providing seed funding for a project to reuse school uniform items around the city.
  - Money debt and advice: investing in an online platform (Betteroff) to provide guidance to increase benefit take up and help residents maximise their eligible benefit income; implementing a payday advance system for council staff experiencing financial difficulties.
- The strategy has five objectives, which are grouped around prevention, crisis support, short, medium, and long-term actions, and national lobbying.

1. Identifying services that support Leicester's residents to avoid falling into poverty.
2. Ensuring crisis information and services are easy to access and meet the needs of Leicester's residents and the staff/volunteers in organisations that support them.
3. Improving support to people experiencing poverty in the short and medium term, increasing choice and independence.
4. Improving systems and the infrastructure of support in the longer term
5. Campaigning and lobbying for change at a national level to alleviate poverty in the long term.

## Delivering the strategy

### Responsibility

The council emphasises that tackling poverty is not something the council can do alone, a theme which is key to the design of the strategy. They have received city wide support from a variety of organisations, including those in the business sector, who have recognised that they have got an important role to play in supporting employees in a variety of ways.

## Anti-Poverty Partner Network

A key element of the strategy has been the formation of a network of anti-poverty partners. Partners who join the network commit to working towards the objectives of the strategy and submit their own action plan highlighting the work they are doing or plan to undertake and how they will measure impact to achieve the strategies objectives. The network is in its early days, but the aim is to create a city region that is full of organisations committed to combatting poverty and to strengthen collaboration between organisations. Once fully developed the council will publicise these actions to provide ideas for organisations that do not yet know how they can make a difference to addressing poverty. Partners will be asked to provide updates to the council on their progress to demonstrate impact.

## Leadership

The anti-poverty strategy has high level political support and leadership. The Deputy Mayor is responsible for social care and anti-poverty and leads on the development and delivery of the strategy. The council emphasised that the strategy could not have gone forward in the way that it has without supportive political leadership. This leadership has had the effect of unlocking doors for council officers and generating greater buy-in from external organisations.

### Links to other strategies

The council highlights that the strategy sits alongside and is underpinned by other strategies on the economy, climate emergency, health inequalities and Corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The strategy was launched in early 2022, and as such the council has not yet monitored its impact. The council will be using quantitative and qualitative data to monitor the intended outcomes as they emphasise that quantitative data does not always show the full picture.

The first evaluation will be asking partners about the impact the strategy has had on the work they do in the city, as one of the key elements of the strategy is the development of a partners' network and upskilling organisations to adapt to the changing picture of poverty. The council wants to understand if the strategy has enabled a better understanding of poverty and greater sharing of best practice among partner organisations. Additionally, it will consider whether the provision of easily accessible data has helped local organisations in their anti-poverty work.

### Oversight and governance

The council is forming a panel convened by council officers who will have oversight of the anti-poverty work across the city. They will be responsible for liaising with partners about anti-poverty work and assessing and accrediting new organisations and individuals who propose to deliver actions that meet the objectives set out in the strategy.

## Scottish Borders Anti-Poverty Strategy

### Context

The Scottish Borders is located in the South East of Scotland adjoining the border with England. The Scottish Borders face particular challenges due to its rurality, such as limited job opportunities and low incomes, restricted access to key services, an ageing demographic, and fuel deprivation. Below are key figures which depict the issues the Scottish Borders is facing:

- The dependency ratio is 70%, meaning that for every 1,000 people of working age there are 700 of non-working age. This is higher than the average in Scotland and is expected to increase.
- In 2021, the gross weekly full-time workplace-based wage in the Scottish Borders was £96 less per week than the average level for Scotland, making it the 2nd lowest of the 32 Scottish Local Authority areas.
- 29% of households are fuel-poor, equivalent to approximately 16,000 households. Of these households, 38% are older people and 51% live in social housing.

Of the six case studies, this is the only local anti-poverty strategy outside of England. We have chosen Scottish Borders as in Scotland there is legislation which requires Scottish local authorities and health boards to jointly prepare Local Child Poverty Action Plans detailing the activity they are taking and will take to contribute towards the Child Poverty targets set out in the Act ([see chapter one](#)).

However, the motivation for a dedicated anti-poverty strategy was that the council and different bodies such as the health board and housing associations were each trying to address poverty through different measures but there was no overall coordination. In September 2020, to bridge this gap three councillors brought a motion forward to the Scottish Borders council to develop an anti-poverty strategy and action plan.

The overarching strategy establishes a strategic framework to improve how the council and its partners collaborate to tackle the significant challenges associated with poverty reduction. The council emphasised that the Local Child Poverty Action Plan contains a wide range of actions that will contribute to achieving the outcomes set out in the strategy.

The council's anti-poverty strategy is not set in stone, the council and its partners will continually review what they do and change the strategy as circumstances require.

### Scope and design

#### Vision

The council sets out the following vision in the strategy: *"We want a Scottish Borders where no-one lives in poverty and where everyone is able to achieve their full potential.*

*We want the Scottish Borders to be a place where everyone can play their part in understanding that tackling poverty is everyone's responsibility. We believe that if we act locally, and in partnership, we can make a real difference.*

*We want this Scottish Borders Anti-Poverty Strategy to be pro-active, evidenced by real experience, and directed by need. Working with the people of the Scottish Borders, we aim to find solutions to poverty challenges which support them in a way that works best for them".*

#### Poverty definition and identification of the drivers of poverty in the Scottish Borders

The council uses the Joseph Rowntree Foundation definitions of poverty - *"Poverty is when your resources are well below your minimum needs"* and *"Poverty means not being able to heat your home, pay your rent or buy essentials (e.g., a winter coat for a child, a fridge) for you or your children."*

The strategy sets out the three key drivers of poverty as identified by the Scottish Government: income from employment, costs of living, and income from social security. In addition to these drivers, the Scottish Borders focuses on the following factors, which 'contribute' to or 'compound' poverty.

- Fuel poverty
- Housing poverty
- Food poverty
- Health and wellbeing
- Connections to family, friends, and community
- Digital exclusion

### Funding

There is no specific funding for the strategy, they have repurposed different forms of funding to support actions. This includes Covid-19 funding; in 2021/22 the council delivered an underspend which they directed into the reserves and are now releasing to support the Cost-of-living Crisis and strategy-related priorities. Cost-of-living Crisis funding has also been directed towards the strategy.



## Priorities

The strategy is underpinned by seven guiding principles. These include respect, resilience, person-focused, fairness, sustainability, shared, and communication.

The strategy is organised around six themes and eleven outcomes that the council and its partners are focused on achieving to help reduce poverty. The themes 'pockets, prospects, and places' have been structured around the Scottish Government's Child Poverty Strategy measurement framework while 'people', 'partnerships', and 'pathways' have been chosen based on what the council and its partners recognise as being important to address poverty (Scottish Government, 2014). The accompanying action plan is designed to meet the outcomes listed below:

- Maximising income and reducing out-going costs of households (pockets);
- Attainment and achievement for children and young people to enable them to reach their potential; households are sustaining employment and re-skilling to enable them to seek alternative employment; health inequalities are being reduced and wellbeing is being promoted (prospects);
- Everyone lives in warm, affordable homes; affordable, convenient transport; digital connectivity for everyone (places);
- Increase opportunities and empower people to fully participate in their communities to bring about change; tackling poverty is everyone's responsibility (people);
- Improve partnership working and networks to plan and deliver better services (partnerships): and
- Develop and implement pathways to support people to move from dependence to independence (pathways).

## Development of the strategy - Anti-Poverty Working Group

In 2020, the council approved a motion setting up an anti-poverty working group to develop a draft strategy and action plan. The working group agreed on a vision: "We want a Scottish Borders where no one lives in Poverty and we want everyone to be able to achieve their full potential and feel healthy, happy, and valued".

To develop the draft strategy, they took the following approach:

- Data and evidence gathering: the council examined and analysed relevant data and information on poverty in the Scottish Borders to understand the best approach to tackle poverty and identify where support is needed most.
- Partnership working: the council worked with key local partners including Citizens Advice Borders, Registered Social Landlords, Service Managers, the Third Sector Interface, and other voluntary organisations to ensure that appropriate issues were identified and included in the Strategy.
- Identifying best practice: Scottish Borders researched approaches that have been taken to tackle anti-poverty in other local authority areas.

The draft strategy was approved in February 2021. However, the council recognised that the draft strategy had been developed from a mainly internal perspective, and therefore to finalise the strategy and action plan they held public consultation with key local partners, communities, and other organisations.

## Partnership working

Involving people with lived experience of poverty was vital to finalise the development of the strategy and action plan. The council co-produced the consultation with organisations that are directly involved in supporting those in poverty. This helped the council to understand the most appropriate form of consultation and consider potential questions to identify further actions that could be included in the strategy. They emphasised that lived experience involvement is ongoing to inform decision-making and to ensure the appropriate actions are included in the action plan.

The 'inform' consultation was undertaken from March to May 2021 and involved two public surveys. One was designed in relation to the draft strategy and the other was to inform the council about residents' current lived experience of poverty compared to pre-covid.

A summary of the key findings of both surveys is detailed below:

- Respondents emphasised that the vision of the strategy could be more ambitious, with more of a focus on education, infrastructure, chronic health, climate change, housing, and transport.
- Respondents identified additional opportunities for the council such as promoting the Living Wage more widely.
- Compared to pre-covid, respondents were managing less well financially, while awareness of available support was low in some areas and travel was highlighted as an increasing issue.

The council also sought feedback from Scottish Border Community Planning Partners which includes a number of strategic partners operating locally such as NHS Borders, Scottish Fire and Rescue, Borders College, four local housing associations, and voluntary sector organisations.

The council highlighted that their engagement with partner organisations and the wider community had enabled them to better understand the issues residents are facing and the importance of joint working. It highlighted a widespread lack of awareness of available support among the local community, and people were unsure how to access the help available. The strategy has enabled Scottish Borders to better promote and raise awareness of the support available, making it easier for people to get the help they need.

Moreover, they found that there was a lack of coordination and duplication across organisations particularly those working on financial inclusion. The council has now set up a financial inclusion practitioners' group that meets quarterly to discuss best practice. They aim to identify any gaps in the provision of support and consider further opportunities for closer working.

## Delivering the strategy

The strategy is being delivered through the action plan. The action plan is structured around the themes of the strategy and desired outcomes and reflects the challenges and opportunities they have identified. They recognise that existing plans and strategies contribute significantly to meeting the outcomes, therefore they have been aligned to each of the outcomes set within the action plan. The council highlights they are measuring the impact of the actions taken for each outcome. The action plan is a live document and new actions are continuing to be developed as part of the work of the anti-poverty member's reference group.

## Responsibility

The council highlights that tackling poverty is everybody's business. There is widespread acceptance throughout the council that every department that has relevance to people's well-being has a responsibility to consider poverty. They emphasised that many of the actions in the action plan are already underway as part of service delivery carried out by the council and key local partners, such as multi-agency Community Assistance Hubs, Resilient Community teams, and the Scottish Border Community Planning Partners.

## Leadership

The strategy has cross-party support, with the council emphasising that anti-poverty has not been a point of contention but has always had support to drive work forward. There is an Executive Member for Communities and Equalities who has poverty as a named responsibility.

## Links to other strategies

The strategy highlights that there are key plans and strategies in existence that contribute to reducing poverty in the Scottish Borders. They outline eight that include: Child Poverty Report Action Plan 2021/22, Affordable Warmth and Home: Energy Efficiency Strategy 2019-2023, and Scotland's Public Health Priorities. They emphasise that the strategy is not intended to replace work that is already been done, but rather to coordinate and strengthen work that the council and its partners are currently doing.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The strategy outlines how its impacts will be monitored and evaluated. It highlights that the measurement indicators are not set in stone and work is continuing to develop an appropriate measurement framework.

They will monitor and evaluate in a variety of ways:

- The Covid-19 recovery matrix/index will be used as a baseline.
- Partners will provide updates as part of regular progress reporting of the action plan.
- Existing indicators in other plans and strategies will be reported where they relate to the action plan.
- A longer-term assessment of the impact of the strategy will be conducted. The council will focus on what has been done, how successful it has been, and what other possible plans and interventions could be added to the strategy. This will be used to make recommendations for future strategy development.

## Oversight and governance

### Anti-Poverty Members Reference Group

The members reference group has replaced the anti-poverty strategy working group. This has been set up to monitor the implementation of the strategy and action plan. It is made up of seven elected members of the council, appointed on a non-partisan basis. They also receive input from the council's partners and other organisations and individuals, including those with lived experience of poverty. They give guidance to officers and report to the council as necessary. This aims to ensure that the strategy remains appropriate to address identified current or emerging issues as well as being realistic and achievable. They meet on a quarterly basis (as a minimum) and an annual progress report is presented to the council.

## Focus group findings and implications

In this chapter, we present the findings from the lived experience focus group and we consider the implications this has for developing a good local anti-poverty strategy.

The findings below are presented according to the five main topics covered in the focus group: (i) the need for local anti-poverty strategies: what should the priority areas of concern be for local authorities; (ii) the impact of local anti-poverty efforts currently; (iii) suggestions on how local authorities can improve support, services, and programmes to reduce poverty and (iv) the barriers to participation in local decision-making.

### The need for local anti-poverty strategies: what should the priority areas of concern be for local authorities?

Participants highlighted that poverty is a restrictive and constraining experience. There was a significant focus on the difficulties in accessing support from local authorities and when they did receive support it failed to adequately meet their needs. These experiences were emphasised as being recurring and entrenching the poverty they experience.

## Theme 1 - Access to council services

Participants shared experiences of difficulty in accessing support from local authorities, in particular: money, debt, and benefits advice. A number of barriers were mentioned, but the majority of participants agreed that there is a lack of awareness about the support that local authorities offer. There was a sense that local authorities should be actively reaching out to support people rather than waiting for people to come to them.

*“You don’t get to know about [the support schemes] until someone tells you about it or someone’s claimed it already. The services that are there, they won’t tell you what you’re allowed to claim or access”*

Several participants indicated that when they had reached out to council services for support, they had experienced council staff being unaware of support available to people due to a lack of clear support structures.

*“I have, and know people who have, had many experiences where even people who worked at the council didn’t know what they could offer you because there were that many different things and they were in that many different places that they literally couldn’t connect you to what you needed because they didn’t even know about it”.*

Moreover, participants described local authorities’ strict eligibility criteria as a major area of concern as it prevents people from getting the support they need.

*“If it’s some sort of blanket policy of ‘this is what we’re doing for particular people in need’ there are certain people whose circumstances are going to preclude them from it”.*

*“The first question you get asked is whether you’re in social housing, and I’m not... If you’re in social housing the access to services is a whole different thing”*

Participants highlighted council staff are under great pressure due to organisational capacity, targets, and time pressures which they felt leaves local authorities “not on people’s side”.

*“[The council] offer all these things and they’re so scared to advertise them in case it’s used up fully so they don’t even let people know about these things in case the budget is used up completely for it”.*

*“I applied for the additional support, and they said that I didn’t fit the criteria when I did. It was just that the workers that work in the council are too overwhelmed, the caseloads are too big, they can’t give you the right help that they’re there to give you, they’re under pressure to meet targets and stick to policies rather than give the help that you need, so they’re under pressure. So, they try and help people but they put barriers in the way to exclude you”.*

These barriers contribute to a worsening experience of poverty and isolation from support.

### The impact of local anti-poverty efforts currently

Participants described experiences of poor treatment and discriminatory practices by local councils, which they were reluctant to engage with due to expectations of stigmatisation and rejection. Participants also highlighted there is a lack of coordination between local council services and external partners who are offering support in the local community.

## Theme 2 - Experience of stigma and discrimination

Participants reported feeling stigmatised by their local councils, they shared negative experiences of not being listened to, spoken down to, and receiving inconsistent support. These experiences reduced trust in the council and led to a lack of motivation to seek support as participants felt strongly that local councils had an “us and them”.

*“The shame of being in poverty, that stigma that’s attached to it, I think the council needs to break that down and not make people feel like they’re a worthless part of society or beggars or inferior.... They make you feel like you can’t get that help and that you’re begging”*

*“Of course, help is available, but in a contemptuous way, we need to sacrifice our self esteem to get that help”*

*“[The council services are] gaslighting residents to make them feel they are unworthy of support. Would need to build trust.”*

*“Some families and very especially single parent families are deeply concerned about revealing their state of poverty for fear of their children being taken into care because they cannot long provide for their children”*

## Theme 3 - A lack of coordination between a range of services

A lack of coordination between council services, national agencies, and external local partners was noted by several of the participants. They had experiences of information being lost, actions not being delivered, and being “bounced” between services. Participants reiterated the need for local councils to strengthen their collaboration with external partners to support coordinated action to address poverty in their local communities.

*“I certainly feel there needs to be a co-ordinated response, people working together. I mean I’ve heard a lot about people going from one agency to another and having to chase around to get answers to questions”*

*“I think councils could also benefit from communicating more closely with other poverty related agencies that are directly involved in providing any kind of support to those in poverty.”*

*“You can’t judge people on just a bit of paperwork so you need to go to them, you need to sit down with them, you’ve got to stop making them go to twenty different places, go to them and save them money and save you money and get the assessment done properly the first time so you don’t have to get them to do eight different assessments and send them down the road of suicide...”*

*“Councils should be coordinating initiatives to tackle poverty, but they don’t.”*

### Suggestions on how local authorities can improve support, services, and programmes to reduce poverty

When reflecting on how local authorities can improve support, services and programmes to reduce poverty, participants felt that short-term responses to poverty are insufficient. Instead, local authorities should focus on the root causes of poverty and how they can use their power to reduce poverty in the long term.

## Theme 4 - Focus on the long-term

Participants emphasised the need for local councils to have a long-term vision and invest in preventative measures to reduce poverty. They highlighted that emergency support provision is necessary, but this should not be the only measure taken by local authorities. Participants expressed that preventing and reducing poverty requires developing an economic vision that enables people on low incomes to be better connected with job opportunities.

*“I think preventative work should be the order of the day and whenever possible early intervention should be a top priority”.*

*“I think the most important thing is... to prevent rather than do the firefighting...”*

*“Handing out little pockets of money here and there doesn’t help in the long run so there needs to be solutions”*

*“It’s alright helping people out with the financial difficulty when they’re in financial difficulty but it’s maybe, need to be thinking about lifting people out of poverty and giving people meaningful work”.*

### The barriers to participation in local decision making

The participants highlighted local authorities should seek to develop long-term relationship-building and co-production methods with the communities’ policies impact. Instead of “talking shop”, there should be transparency about how the process of engagement leads to policy changes.

## Theme 5 - Meaningful co-production

Participants were keen to be involved in local decision-making, and they expressed local authorities should increase opportunities for communities to be involved.

*“What we really needed is for people to stop making decisions for areas where they’ve not lived. The council needs to speak to people who live there to actually understand what issues there are.”*

However, several participants described experiences of being involved in community initiatives with the aim of putting the voice of people with lived experience of poverty in council decisions and policymaking. They highlighted that while councils listened well, there were limited examples of how engagement had made a tangible impact on policy.

This was identified as a barrier to future engagement with councils as participants were concerned that their participation made no meaningful difference.

*“They always listen to you and all that but it’s like, they’re so up against it and they really do want to help, but it’s like going to challenge a government that’s not really there to help you anyway”.*

*“So, you feel like your voice is just falling on deaf ears because nothing’s changing”.*

Furthermore, participants felt that there were accessibility and inclusivity issues that were barriers to meaningful community engagement. They conveyed that community engagement was not representative of the communities they live in and led to the same participants being involved.

*“I’ve seen over time that they’ve just limited the amount of people they bring on so it’s really unequal, you know me sat in a two-hour meeting with the two Mayors and CEOs of companies and charities and it’s just me there with lived experience and my friend that I do it with”.*

Summary of themes for consideration

The findings from the focus group support and build on the existing literature about what a good anti-poverty strategy should include and raise a number of ideas about how local authorities can develop an anti-poverty strategy that is effective.

The overall themes accumulated in the focus group highlight that for local anti-poverty strategies to be effective local authorities to develop a person-centred approach. This means councils need to commit to ensuring that people with lived experience of poverty and those working on the frontline can shape the development, delivery, and implementation of anti-poverty strategies.

The findings indicated that anti-poverty strategies can be the vehicle to ensure there is a clear understanding in communities of support available

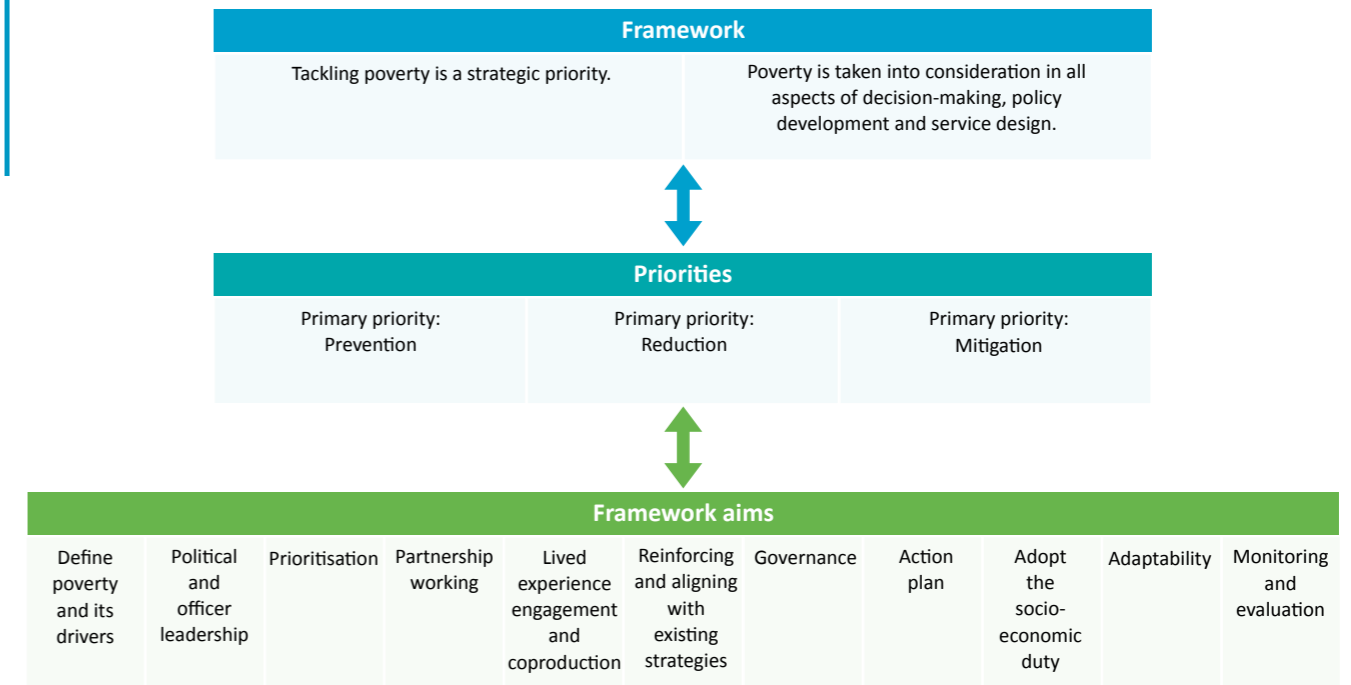
(theme 1). Local authorities have a duty to tackle the stigma associated with poverty, and anti-poverty strategies should challenge the stigma and set out actions for change (theme 2). Anti-poverty strategies must be developed in collaboration with key external stakeholders to ensure there is joined up working to support people in the most effective way (theme 3). The focus of anti-poverty strategies must be on developing long-term solutions to reduce and prevent poverty, whilst recognising the need to provide effective emergency financial support (theme 4). Finally, it is central that engagement with people with lived experience of poverty is focused on co-production rather than 'listening'. Participation should be meaningful and there should be mechanisms for measuring the efficacy and direct impact of voices of lived experience (theme 5).

Conclusion

In this final chapter, we bring together the key elements identified through the literature review and research findings and present a refined framework. We suggest the following framework which an anti-poverty strategy needs to have to maximise its effectiveness. This framework is intended to be of use to local authorities seeking to develop or refresh an anti-poverty strategy.

An anti-poverty strategy will only be successful if it is supported by the elements identified in this framework. All these elements are complementary and interdependent.

Chapter 6



Tameside Poverty Truth Commission (PTC)

Poverty Truth Commissions (PTCs) create a space to meaningfully bring together people with different experiences, knowledge, and power: within this space, people who have had the experience of living in poverty come together with senior civic, political, and business leaders on an equal footing. They seek to discover the answer to the question “What if people who struggled against poverty were involved in making decisions about tackling poverty?”

We ran the Tameside Poverty Truth Commission from October 2021 to November 2022; we published a report with the findings and recommendations, they closely aligning with the focus group findings (GMPA, 2022b). This has been an incredibly powerful process in Tameside and is already leading to significant change, including lived experience representation on key decision-making bodies.

The recommendations included:

- A Tameside Poverty Charter should be created, with a commitment to include involving people with lived experience of poverty in decision-making and providing poverty awareness training to frontline and other relevant staff. Organisations across Tameside should commit to this Charter.
- Poverty awareness training should be developed in Tameside with lived experience input, and including real stories of poverty, for staff in support services and relevant organisations.
- Organisations across Tameside should establish meaningful lived experience processes to influence decision making. A public directory should be maintained of these opportunities.
- Support services in Tameside should co-operate and better share information, to ensure there is “no wrong door” for accessing support.
- Support services in Tameside should provide skilled single points of contact to support people with complex needs, through effective referrals, not signposting. People living in poverty should not need to repeat their story.

## 1. Define poverty and its drivers

Local authorities need to develop a clear, agreed definition of poverty and its drivers. Creating a shared understanding of poverty is the cornerstone for action as it will enable both internal and external stakeholders to understand their role in tackling it and it is important to challenge negative perceptions of people living in poverty.

Although the concept of poverty is contested and there is no single definition that is universally accepted, there is a broad consensus that poverty is fundamentally about a lack of material resources with income as the best proxy measure (Work and Pensions Committee, 2019). Therefore, local authorities should define poverty using a relative understanding.

Townsend (1979, p.31) defines individuals and groups as living in poverty, “where they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged and approved, in the societies in which they belong”.

By adopting a relative understanding local authorities are acknowledging the need to take steps to ensure that residents have the things they need to participate fully in society and have a happy and fulfilled life. This will instil in stakeholders the importance of moving away from interventions that simply meet people’s basic physical needs, towards interventions that deliver more profound outcomes for individuals.

Local authorities can use the statistics available at a national level on the number of children living in relative low income by local area. Relative poverty is defined as children living in households where the income is 60% or less of the average (median) household income (after housing costs) (DWP, 2022). This should be supplemented with a broader range of national data that can be disaggregated locally.

However, it is fundamental that local authorities use a basket of indicators, that are locally relevant and practical. This means local authorities need to build a robust evidence base using a range of local, national, and partnership working information to tell the most detailed local story and identify where the biggest issues are. This must be done at the very start of the strategies development to set measurements for long-term planning and monitoring progress.

## Drivers of Poverty

It is important to clearly identify the main drivers that limit people’s ability to meet their basic needs and to participate fully in society. Poverty is largely about insufficient access to adequate financial resources, i.e., a lack of money.

Local authorities should focus on the three key drivers of poverty - income from employment, costs of living, and income from social security and benefits in kind (detailed in Fig 2). Although addressing these drivers requires action from the

national government, local authorities and key local stakeholders have a critical role in combating their influence.

Local action to address poverty needs to prioritise boosting household income and increasing access to financial resources. This is the most effective means of reducing poverty and preventing people from facing a financial crisis both in the short- and long term.

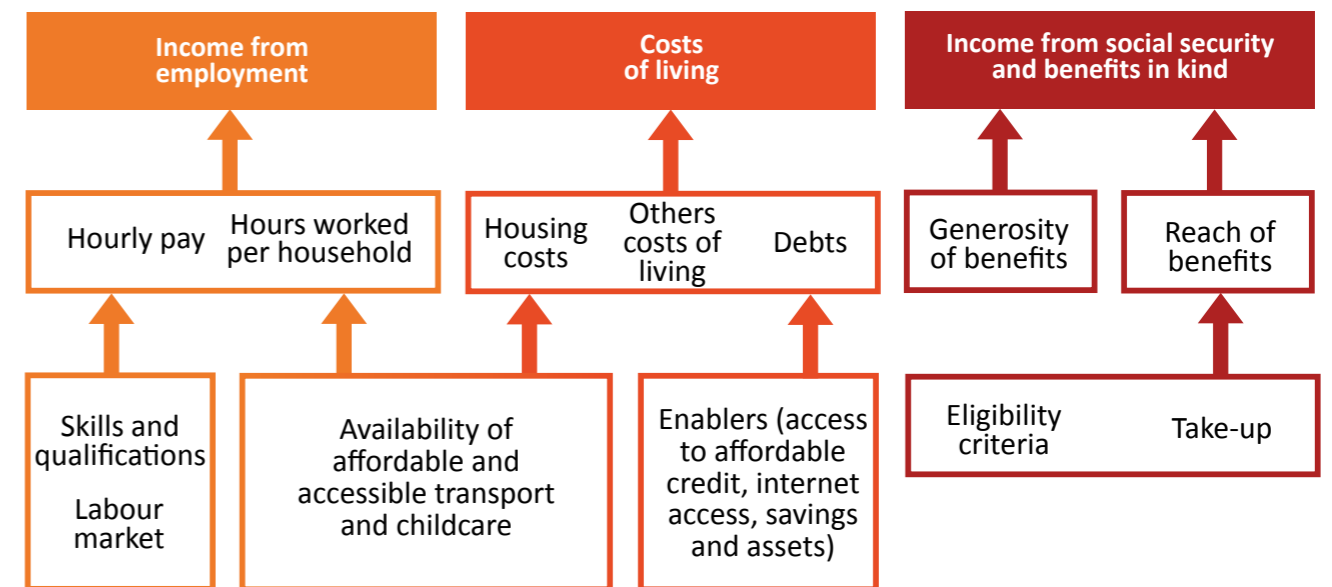


Figure 2: Drivers of Poverty (Adapted from the National Improvement Service).

Local authorities should use these drivers as the basis for assessing the actions required in their local area. However, local authorities should develop a comprehensive poverty profile to understand the nature of the drivers relevant to their area to ensure actions are targeting local needs.

### Recommendations

- Clearly define poverty in a way that recognises it is relative as well as absolute and that recognises poverty is largely about insufficient access to financial resources. This ensures there is a shared understanding and serves as a reference for efficient and effective solutions.
- Use a relative income measure as the headline indicator for measuring poverty but supplement it with a broader range of indicators.

- For clarity on the action required to make a difference, local authorities should focus on the three main drivers of poverty - income from employment, costs of living, and income from social security and benefits in kind. However, we encourage local authorities to develop a detailed local poverty profile that examines the key drivers of poverty in their area to understand the measures that are most relevant in their locality.

- Promote awareness of poverty and the effects of poverty and provide training to council staff.
- Work with partners and lobby the government to tackle stigma and discrimination against people living in poverty.

## 2. Political and officer leadership

For an anti-poverty strategy to be effective, political and officer leadership is crucial to drive ambition and ensure effective operational working, delivery of the intended outcomes of the strategy and strong communication with local communities on what work councils are doing to tackle poverty. Clear leadership that names poverty as a portfolio responsibility can help build cultural change across councils, and avoid poverty being included under the catch all of 'inequality'. This is essential to raise awareness and drive action to address poverty.

## 3. Focus on prevention, reduction, and mitigation

An anti-poverty strategy must have at its core objectives and actions that focus on preventing and reducing poverty. Strategies should adopt medium and long-term actions and prioritise objectives that are based on a long-term perspective. The case studies have focused on maximising household income, building inclusive economies, and delivering more social and affordable housing to improve long-term outcomes.

While it is critically important the focus of an anti-poverty strategy is on prevention and reduction, an anti-poverty strategy also needs to articulate how the council is supporting people in an immediate financial crisis. Local authorities need to strengthen their local welfare provision as at best they not only mitigate the immediate financial crisis but also help find sustainable pathways out of poverty.

Even though the future of local welfare assistance funding is uncertain, there are practical options that can help councils make full use of funding that is available to support people facing financial hardship. At GMIPA, we have worked with local authorities and their partners to maximise the effectiveness of local welfare assistance schemes to support people facing financial crisis. We have identified a number of proactive measures that local authorities can take that would immediately improve access to support and outcomes for residents in financial crisis (GMIPA, 2022c). These include:

### Recommendations

- Active committed leadership on poverty is required to drive change, coordinate strategic and policy responses, and provide a clear point of contact and accountability route for external stakeholders. Local authorities need to have a permanent senior officer and political leadership to address poverty as it is a long-standing issue and thus requires a high level of commitment to drive an anti-poverty strategy.

- A cash-first approach to local welfare provision. This approach maximises dignity, choice, and control for recipients of support. It reflects that lack of income is the primary cause of financial hardship and avoids the normalisation of VCSE lead 'in kind' crisis support.

- Schemes should be resident-focused, identifying a clear and sustainable pathway out of poverty rather than simply offering a one-off transactional piece of support.

- Partnership working both within the council and with external partners is vital to ensure there is awareness of local welfare assistance scheme provision and so that schemes sit within a wider, clearly identified support offer to financially vulnerable residents. Partnership working should be built upon the principle of 'cash first' so that agencies can work together to ensure people are accessing all the financial support that is available.

### Recommendations

- A medium and long-term perspective is needed that includes actions that prevent and reduce the root causes of poverty.

- Focus on mitigating the impact of poverty through strengthening local welfare assistance schemes. Local authorities and their partners need to take a cash-first and advice-first approach as the most appropriate and dignified forms of support for people facing, or who are at risk of financial crisis.

- Commit to multi-year ring-fenced local welfare assistance scheme funding to protect the most vulnerable from financial hardship.

## 4. Prioritisation

Local anti-poverty strategies should not look like 'shopping lists', councils need to recognise their limitations and include a focus on lobbying the central government for wider changes to address poverty.

A strategy should be prioritised to ensure implementation is feasible. It should clearly state what councils and local partners could and should achieve moving beyond general statements and move to clearer statements against which progress can genuinely be measured.

### Recommendations

- Clearly identify where local authorities, partners and stakeholders can have the greatest impact based on local evidence.

- Lobbying and influencing central government should be an essential aspect of a strategy.

## 5. Partnership working

An anti-poverty strategy will not be effective without local authorities working in partnership with external partners and communities. Local authorities need to engage with local stakeholders to clarify requirements and expectations on how best to work together to achieve the objectives set out in the strategy. This is essential to share best practice and avoid duplication in terms of policy and programmes being delivered and the investment of resources to support those most in need.

### Recommendations

- Establish anti-poverty partnership groups with local stakeholders to set out the strategic vision of an anti-poverty strategy and the nature of the role of partners in addressing poverty.

## 6. Lived experience engagement and co-production

Lived experience engagement is key to the development of an effective anti-poverty strategy, people with lived experience of poverty are best placed to challenge the existing ways of working and ensure that anti-poverty efforts are centred around the needs of the community. Effective engagement takes time, patience, planning and should be run by external partners, as local authorities are often not seen as a potential solution but as a danger.

### Recommendations

- Create the conditions needed for people to fully participate in the development process of an anti-poverty strategy that is meaningful and has a demonstrable impact.
- Develop community-based monitoring mechanisms for the strategy to ensure that policies implemented, and local concerns are translated into action.

## 7. Reinforcing and aligning with existing strategies

An anti-poverty strategy should not sit in isolation. Poverty is cross-cutting and is directly related to other strategies and plans that seek to improve the outcomes for those on the lowest incomes. An anti-poverty strategy should not repeat activity that other plans and strategies are doing, rather it should streamline and show how actions/policies are integrating with the whole of council activity. This will save valuable time and resources.

### Recommendations

- Tackling poverty needs to be incorporated in existing strategies rather than operating as 'ad-hoc' to existing commitments and services. There needs to be a strong focus on tackling poverty in corporate strategies, economic strategies, housing, and equality policies to ensure that this is a focus of everything councils do and aligns budgets, members' portfolios, and activities.

## 8. Governance

Good governance is necessary for an effective anti-poverty strategy. This should be both internal (for example a working panel or committee) and external (for example local strategic partnerships) to the council. They should be responsible for monitoring progress and overseeing the implementation of the strategy.

### Recommendations

- Anti-poverty strategies should be subject to both internal and external governance.

## 9. Action plan

Actions to deliver the aims and objectives of the anti-poverty strategy need to be kept under review, so the strategy should be accompanied by an action plan. This should set out current and future actions, timelines, and milestones, who is responsible for the actions (council, local stakeholders or lobbying/influencing the government). This should review progress on an annual basis. Councils need to report honestly on how they are performing against the targets and milestones, and action plans are important for refreshing the agenda.

### Recommendations

- Accompanying an anti-poverty strategy should be a high-level action plan to increase efficiency and accountability.



## 10. Adopt the socio-economic duty

To support the effectiveness of an anti-poverty strategy, local authorities should voluntarily adopt the socio-economic duty.

The socio-economic duty contained in Section 1 of the Act requires public authorities to actively consider the way in which their decisions increase or decrease inequalities that result from socio-economic disadvantage. Successive governments have chosen not to enact the duty and socio-economic disadvantage is often missing from equality impact assessments that include consideration of other protected characteristics.

In the absence of action at a UK government level, equivalent legislation has been introduced in Scotland (known as the “Fairer Scotland Duty”) and in Wales.

GMPA has been working with local and combined authorities to increase the awareness and voluntary adoption of the duty as a means of creating better outcomes for those with lived experiences of poverty. It has been positive to see some Greater Manchester councils (and a number of councils in other parts of the country) adopting the duty or in the process of doing so.

Adoption of the duty will deliver a number of benefits that will complement and strengthen an anti-poverty strategy:

- Improve outcomes for local people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.
- Support cross-organisational and cross-departmental working.
- Raise awareness of socio-economic inequalities within organisations and among partners.
- Ensure widespread organisational commitment to, and consideration of, socioeconomic inequalities.
- Support the participation of low-income residents in decisions that affect them, especially in the context of (proposed) cuts to services.
- Achieve greater consistency in practice and an increased likelihood of maintaining such consistent practice across political administrations and between changes of individual leadership and turnover of staff.
- Improve systematic approaches to equality impact assessments and assessments of policy and practice more broadly.
- Strengthen systematic data gathering and analysis, especially in the conduct of equality impact assessments, thereby strengthening accountability.
- Support the effective and efficient allocation of resources.

### What adoption of the duty means in practise?

In 2021, GMPA and Just Fair published a guide developed in partnership with several organisations for local authorities and combined authorities on socio-economic duty implementation.

In adopting the socio-economic duty local authorities should:

**Complete a meaningful impact assessment:** Formally incorporate poverty and socio-economic disadvantage, alongside the existing nine protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010, in equality impact assessments, equality plans, and the broader decision-making process and strategies.

**Use data effectively:** Use a range of relevant data, including quantitative and qualitative, to inform the implementation of the socio-economic duty and develop clear success criteria to measure the impact of the implementation.

**Have visible leadership:** Ensure that implementation of the socio-economic duty enjoys strong and visible commitment from senior leaders, as part of a broader cultural shift

that embeds the priority to tackle socio-economic disadvantage at all levels of decision-making within the organisation.

**Work in partnership with people with lived experience of poverty:** Recognise the value of engaging with people with lived experience of socio-economic disadvantage and commit to finding new and sustainable ways to incorporate diverse expertise in policymaking to achieve successful outcomes.

**Engage with key local stakeholders:** Collaborate with residents, civil society, and voluntary and community sector organisations to build awareness and understanding of the socio-economic duty and people’s lived experience of socio-economic disadvantage, facilitate participative consultation and develop strategies to tackle socio-economic disadvantage together.

**Ensure access to justice and monitoring impact and compliance:** Identify what works through monitoring and evaluation, skill-sharing and innovation and introduce mechanisms that can embed accountability for the implementation of the socio-economic duty within local authorities.

## 11. Adaptability

An anti-poverty strategy cannot “standstill”, for it to serve its purpose it should be viewed as adaptable, rather than a collection of actions that should be rigidly adhered to.

### Recommendations

- Anti-poverty strategies should be continuously reviewed to ensure that they are accountable and adaptable to the needs of local communities as circumstances change.

## 12. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are critical to understand whether the actions set out in the strategy are making a difference, they ensure the most effective and efficient use of resources and enable adjustments to be made where necessary.

This is by no means a simple and straightforward task and there is no ‘one size fits all’ approach to monitoring and evaluation but there are some aspects that are important. Monitoring requires careful planning to ensure it fulfils its purpose effectively. Local authorities should use a range of key local indicators that have been identified, a combination of quantitative and qualitative data, local knowledge, learning from other local authorities, and national data. However, whilst it is important to use quantitative metrics, numerical data on its own may not show the full impact of local actions. Hence, it is imperative that local authorities capture qualitative data, working with local partners and people with lived experience of poverty to understand what is or is not making a difference. Evaluation of an anti-poverty strategy requires a mix of light-touch annual reviews and longer-term impact reporting.

### Recommendations

- Identify a clear set of metrics against which progress in addressing poverty can be tracked. Work collaboratively with key local stakeholders to identify the data and evidence gaps and areas of duplication and seek to address these together.
- Develop a public-facing dashboard that highlights local poverty indicators to help understand the local population specific to poverty.
- Facilitate community and civil engagement in the monitoring and evaluation of the strategy. People with lived experience of poverty need to be asked how the impact of anti-poverty policies should be measured.

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# Agenda Item 8

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>BOARD</b>
<b>Date:</b>	9 March 2023
<b>Executive Member:</b>	Councillor Jacqueline North – First Deputy (Finance, Resources and Transformation)
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ilys Cookson – Assistant Director Exchequer Services
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>ENERGY BILLS SUPPORT SCHEME ALTERNATIVE FUND</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	<p>The Government announced that the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) (now the Department for Energy, Security and Net Zero), will work in partnership with Local Authorities to deliver alternative funding for help with consumers' energy bills.</p> <p>Details of funding and guidance for two schemes were released on 8 February 2023 and the first scheme with a go live date of 27 February and final guidance received on 24 February 2023 for the second scheme with an expected go live date of 06 March 2023. Since final guidance has been released there have been several corrections and clarifications notifications.</p>
<b>Recommendations:</b>	The Executive Cabinet be recommended to note that the Council delivers the Energy Bill Support Scheme Alternative Funding (EBSS – AF) payment in addition to the Alternative Fuel Payment Alternative Funding payment (AFP – AF).
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	The report supports the “Nurturing and Communities” and “Live Longer and Healthier Lives” Corporate Plan priority themes.
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	The government has instructed local authorities to pay a £400 one-off energy rebate to households who do not have a direct contract with a domestic electricity supplier and a £200 payment to those who use alternative fuels to heat their homes.
<b>Financial Implications:</b> <b>(Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer)</b>	The payment of the £400 one-off energy rebate to households who do not have a contract with a domestic supplier, and payment of £200 one-off energy rebate to households using alternative fuels in intended to be cost neutral to the Council, with all payments being fully reimbursed by Government. However, it should be noted, as set out in the report, that the administrative burden of undertaking this work is not yet fully clear. Whilst new burdens funding has been promised, this is usually notified and paid in arrears, with amounts being formulaic and based on a national calculation. There is therefore a risk that the cost of staff time involved in the delivery of this scheme is not fully covered by any additional funding.
<b>Legal Implications:</b> <b>(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	The scheme has been set up in accordance with the government Guidance It is important to ensure that there is robust risk management as set out in Section 6 of the report.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	The risks are set out in Section 6 of this report.

**Background Information:**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Karen Milner, Service Unit Manager — Assess and Pay and Income and Collection.



Telephone: 0161 342 5022



e-mail: [karen.milner@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:karen.milner@tameside.gov.uk)



## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In November 2022 a ministerial letter was sent to chief executives to advise of the government's intention for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) (now the Department of Energy, Security and Net Zero), to work in partnership with local authorities across Great Britain to deliver payments for help with consumers' energy bills.
- 1.2 For the majority of the population this support is being delivered direct by the Energy Bill Support Scheme (EBSS) as a £400 credit to electricity bills and as a reduction to the unit cost of gas and electricity and is delivered by energy suppliers. However, the government estimate that around one million households across the UK will miss out on the EBSS as they do not themselves directly contract with a domestic electricity supplier or use alternative fuels to heat their homes. They will instead qualify for assistance via the Energy Bill Support Scheme Alternative Fund (EBSS – AF) or the Alternative Fuel Payment Alternative Funding (AFP – AF) to be administered by local authorities. The scheme is underpinned by the Energy Prices Act 2022.
- 1.3 The government therefore require local authorities to deliver 2 energy bill support schemes, as follows:
- **Energy Bill Support Scheme Alternative Fund (EBSS – AF)**  
This is to be a £400 payment for households that do not have a direct contract with an energy supplier such as residents in park homes, care homes. This will be delivered from 27 February 2023 to 31 May 2023.
  - **Alternative Fuel Payment Alternative Fund (AFP – AF)**  
This is a £200 payment for households that use alternative fuels to heat their homes such as heating oil, biomass and LPG. This will be delivered from 06 March 2023 to 31 May 2023.
- 1.4 New burdens funding is to be available for the schemes, however, the amount and timescale for payment has not yet been determined by the Department for Energy, Security and Net Zero.
- 1.5 Final guidance was received on 23 February 2023 in respect of the £400 Energy Bill Support Scheme Alternative Fund (EBSS – AF) and 24 February 2023 for the £200 Alternative Fuel Payment Alternative Fund (AFP – AF) and amendments and corrections have been received in respect of both schemes since the guidance release.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) became the Department of Energy, Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) on 8 February 2023 and guidance and a grant determination letter for the Energy Bill Support Scheme – Alternative Funding was released the same day. The grant determination letter confirmed 80% of the funding would be paid to local authorities after 20 February 2023 and for Tameside this would be £638,000.
- 2.2 A grant determination letter in respect of the Alternative Fuel Payment – Alternative Funding was received on 24 February 2023 and which totals £44,000 for Tameside and will be paid to local authorities between 27 February 2023 and 30 June 2023. An amended grant offer letter was sent to all local authorities on 27 February 2023 however this does not change the overall amount awarded.
- 2.3 A total of £638,000 will be provided as 80% of the Energy Bill Support Scheme Alternative Funding will be paid as a lump sum. It is estimated that over 1,900 applicants may qualify for the £400 payment. Equally 80% of the grant for Energy Bill Support Scheme Alternative Fuel Payment-Alternative Funding will be paid in advance in respect of households in

Tameside that may use alternative fuels and who may qualify under the Alternative Fuel Payment Alternative Fund (AFP – AF), and it is expected that over 275 households may apply.

2.4 The scheme timetable as determined by government is detailed here:

**Table 1: Scheme Timescales**

<b>KEY DATES</b>	<b>EBSS – Alternative Funding £400</b>	<b>Alternative Fuel Payment – Alternative Funding £200</b>
Scheme 'go live'	27 February 2023	06 March 2023
Scheme closes to new applications	31 May 2023	31 May 2023
Final date for payments to be posted in local authorities financial systems	30 June 2023	30 June 2023
Final date for payments to be defrayed from local authorities bank accounts	7 July 2023	7 July 2023
Final date for scheme reconciliations to be sent to DESNZ	31 July 2023	31 July 2023
Post payment assurance works	01 August 2023 onwards	01 August 2023 onwards

2.5 The government will fully fund the scheme and grant payments to local authorities will be made Section 13 of the Energy Prices Act 2022. No household will be eligible to receive both payments.

### **3. ELIGIBILITY**

#### **3.1 Energy Bill Support Scheme – Alternative Funding (EBSS-AF)**

3.2 DESNZ state that applicants must meet the following criteria on the date of application in respect of Energy Bill Support Scheme-Alternative Funding:

The dwelling for which support is being claimed is the sole or main residential address of the applicant and who must meet the following criteria on the date of application:

- The household is responsible for paying for energy used in the dwelling as part of a service charge, rent or other arrangement, and may, through these charges increasing have the impact of increased energy bills costs passed on to them between 1 October 2022 and 31 March 2023
- The household is not eligible for or already receiving EBSS payments, either through the main EBSS scheme or the EBSS Alternative Funding, in whole or in part
- The household dwelling is not a business premises or other form of non-domestic premises, is used wholly or mainly for domestic purposes, with the exception of businesses whose main business activity is to provide long term residential accommodation (landlords, care homes etc.). Only households, and not the businesses themselves, may apply for EBSS Alternative Funding

3.3 The following are likely to be recipients of the scheme:

- Park home residents
- Housing association, social and private tenants, and leaseholders, supplied via a landlord with a commercial meter

- Partly and wholly self-funded care home residents (where they make any contribution to their costs, as opposed to NHS funded residents)
- Households in house boats on residential moorings
- Households on a private electricity network, for example those supplied by a heat network
- Off-grid households
- Traveller households on authorised sites • households in non-permanent /supported accommodation

The address must be permanent and EBSS – AF cannot be paid to temporary addresses.

3.4 If the premises contain more than one eligible household as defined in the guidance, for example care home residents, each of the households will be eligible for the payment. This does not include houses in multiple occupation (HMO) as they would only be eligible for one payment for the whole property in line with main EBSS scheme, rather than one payment per person.

3.5 Exclusions apply to eligibility such as premises that have already received payments automatically from their energy provider and further examples include second homes, seasonal workers in associated accommodation, students living in purpose built student accommodation, fully publicly funded (NHS) care home residents, houseboats without a permanent mooring.

#### **Alternative Fuel Payments – Alternative Fund (AFP-AF)**

3.6 DESNZ define eligibility for this scheme as being applicants meeting the following criteria on the date of application:

- The dwelling for which support is being claimed is the sole or main residential address of the applicant
- The applicant or household is responsible for paying for the alternative fuel(s) used in the dwelling as the household's main source of heating and may, through these charges increasing, have the impact of increased alternative fuel costs passed on to them between 1 September 2022 and 31 May 2023
- The household has not or will not receive a payment through the main AFP scheme and has not received a payment through the AFP Alternative Fund, in whole or in part
- The household dwelling is not a business premises or other form of non-domestic premises, is used wholly or mainly for domestic purposes, with the exception of businesses whose main business activity is to provide long term residential accommodation (landlords etc.). Only households, and not the businesses themselves, may apply for the AFP Alternative Fund.

These criteria apply to the address that is receiving payment.

3.7 The following are likely to be recipients of the scheme:

- park home residents.
- housing association social and private tenants, and leaseholders, supplied via a landlord with a commercial meter
- households in house boats on residential moorings
- households on a private electricity network, for example those supplied by a heat network
- off-grid households
- traveller households on authorised sites
- households in non-permanent/supported accommodation

3.8 All businesses and other non-domestic premises are excluded from directly receiving AFP-AF, except:

- Residents of businesses providing long term residential accommodation including landlords
- Farmers living in domestic farmhouses on a farm.

3.9 Exclusions apply to second and holiday homes because the dwelling must be the sole or main residence. The following groups are also excluded from the scheme:

- Students living in purpose-built student accommodation
- Seasonal workers living in associated accommodation
- Service occupiers – such as security, building caretakers, property guardians
- Households living in a dwelling on a business premises, unless eligible as described in point 3.9 above.

## **4 APPLICATION AND VERIFICATION**

4.1 Applications for the payment for both schemes will be made directly to BEIS (now DESNZ) through an application form accessible on the Government's website Gov.UK. DESNZ will undertake initial background and eligibility checks and verify the bank account into which the payment is to be made. Details will then be passed electronically to local authorities.

4.2 Telephone support will be available by the government to assist with form completion and, if required, they will complete the application on the applicants' behalf. Final applications must be made by 31 May 2023 on the Gov.UK portal and these will be sent to authorities by DESNZ on 2 June 2023.

4.3 Local Authorities are required to:

- Verify the applicant's address, where possible using existing records (Council Tax, adult social care records)
- Check the pre-verified bank account details match the name of the applicant
- Check scanned copies of documents provided by the applicant at the point of application ie driving licence, bank statement, benefits entitlement letter, utility bills, tenancy agreement, invoice from a care home etc. (for EBSS-AF applications only).
- Check that it is not a duplicate application
- Pay the applicant into their bank account

4.4 DESNZ have confirmed that local authorities may need to request additional information to verify a claim prior to payment, such as where an address on the application does not match the records accessible to the local authority. Checks must also be made that the property in question is not empty.

4.5 Any matter of complaint regarding a local authority validation should be directed to the government call centre, however if this cannot be resolved then the applicant will be directed to the local authority who should use their complaints process to address the issue.

## **5 ISSUES**

5.1 Although local authorities have made a number of representations to the former government department of BEIS regarding the timing of processing the applications, the timescales remain in place and processing is expected to take place during the busiest time of the year within the service.

5.2 The assessment of the EBSS payments is expected to commence on the 27 February for one scheme and 06 March 2023 for the other scheme. Year start Council Tax and Business Rates bills and invoices are sent out from 02 March 2023 onwards and which always generate a significant amount of customer contact. Added to this is the requirement from

central government to credit all Council Tax Support claimants bills with a one-off credit, plus a national Business Rates revaluation exercise (whereby rateable values have been re-assessed) customer contact is expected to be significant this year and resources need to be closely monitored to ensure they are deployed as effectively as possible to meet demand.

- 5.3 Exchequer Services will undertake the local authorities role using existing staff. DESNZ have suggested that 5 staff are required. However as at 01 March it is clear that an additional 2 members of staff will be required, to manage the overall schemes and to provide the data collection analysis required for the weekly reporting to DESNZ. It is also clear that colleagues from Adults Social Care, Audit, Financial Management, Policy and Communications, and Customer Services will need to be involved in implementing these schemes in addition to a processing team within Exchequer Services.
- 5.4 It is also clear from the extensive system guidance received that while the application numbers for EBSS, as currently estimated, are relatively small, the assessment approval process is expected to be complex and particularly where the Council do not hold records to support the assessment ie where an applicant resides in a care home, does not have a Council Tax account and self-funds all of their care.
- 5.5 Consideration has also been given to the method of payment as the Council Tax processing system cannot be used for the purpose as initially expected. All payments must be made via the Councils corporate financial system, Agresso, and which requires resource from Financial Management.
- 5.6 Local authorities must ensure the safe administration of the payments and that appropriate measures are put in place to mitigate against the increased risks of both fraud and payment error. Exchequer Services will work closely with Audit to undertake a risk assessment and mitigation process.
- 5.7 DESNZ require local authorities to reconcile all data and implement both pre-payment and post payment audit assurance processes to guard against the risk of fraud on a local and national level. Audit colleagues will be required to assist in terms of agreeing processes to guard against fraudulent claims and systems to determine management reporting as government require.
- 5.8 The government advised prior to the guidance being released that they would be undertaking a communication campaign on the EBSS payments, however guidance received suggests that local authorities should communicate the scheme using pre-determined messaging.

## **6 RISKS**

- 6.1 DESNZ have suggested that the scheme may be subject to scams and local authorities have a role to play in identifying these. It is unclear on the role of DESNZ in also identifying scams at the point of on-line application direct into the Gov.UK portal, however as with all work undertaken in Exchequer at the direction of central government, all payment is subject to checks on fraudulent payments as approved by Audit colleagues and so in that respect these two schemes are no different. Where a fraud is identified it is the responsibility of the local authority to lead in investigating the fraudulent activity and may refer the case to local Police and must initiate recovery of the grant paid in line with the Debt Recovery process detailed in the guidance. Information on any fraudulent activity must be notified to DESNZ.
- 6.2 There is a risk that demand cannot be met in terms of the proposed timescale. DESNZ have indicated that local authorities will be required to deliver the scheme between 27 February 2023 and at least 01 August 2023, after the scheme has closed and when post payment assurance works begins.

- 6.3 This is the busiest time of the year in any Revenues and Benefits Services where capacity is significantly stretched. Year start billing carries statutory timescales to be adhered to. To add to usual year start activities, in 2023 local authorities also have to address the outcomes of the Valuation Office 3 yearly Business Rates revaluation and which carries additional tasks and customer contacts as Business Rates bill can change significantly.
- 6.4 DESNZ expect local authorities to process each application received within 30 days. Given the competing demands on the service within the same timescale and the complexity of the checking process which is likely to require significant clarification, such timescales cannot be guaranteed.
- 6.5 The expectation for local authorities to verify addresses prior to payment is a concern as applications are to be received from residents of care homes and people who move addresses to and from other local authorities. This information may not be available to the local authority.
- 6.6 An alternative method of payment has had to be determined and implemented, as the Council Tax system cannot be used for this purpose, and alternative pre and post payment assurance and reconciliation is required.
- 6.7 It is a risk that the New Burdens funding does not fully cover the cost of the work in determining processes, devising training, undertaking the assessment process, reconciliation and reporting as well as funding the backlog created as a result of having 5 plus staff to work on the EBSS payments. The funding is not expected to fully cover the entire costs of administration, back filling posts and ongoing reconciliation and post payment assurance submissions long after the payments have ceased.

## 7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Central government have determined that Local Authorities are to assess and administer two energy payment schemes as follows:

### **Energy Bill Support Scheme - Alternative Fund (EBSS – AF)**

This is to be a £400 payment for households that do not have a direct contract with an energy supplier such as residents in park homes, care homes, houses of multiple occupation.

### **Alternative Fuel Payment - Alternative Fund (AFP – AF)**

This is a £200 payment for households that use alternative fuels to heat their homes.

- 7.2 Local Authorities will be required to deliver both schemes on behalf of central government from 27 February 2023 to 31 May 2023 for receipt of applications and with reconciliation commencing August onwards. Final guidance was received on 23 February 2023 for Energy Bill Support Scheme and 24 February 2023 for Alternative Fuel Payments Alternative Fund giving just days to prepare and train staff.
- 7.3 The government have determined the eligibility criteria and applications are to be made on-line via the Gov.UK portal. Applicants must upload necessary evidence on which to assess eligibility direct into the portal. The role of the local authority is to receive the applications from DESNZ and assess the application based on evidence provided verified against Council records and which may also include Adult social care records as well as Council Tax and Housing Benefit records. While the number of applications is expected to be relatively low, the verification of evidence provided in whole or in part is likely to be time consuming and complex.
- 7.4 Regular reports on applications processed and paid must be uploaded on a weekly basis to

DESNZ and reconciliation of payments is expected to commence in August 2023.

- 7.5 The risks in terms of timescales, preparedness, resources and funding, late receipt of guidance, is considerable. This additional work comes at the busiest time of year when annual year start billing of Council Tax, Business Rates and sundry debt invoices takes place, compounded this year by the national revaluation of Business Rates. The risks have been set out clearly by local authorities to DESNZ on a number of occasions.
- 7.6 Further risks have been identified in terms of fraud and error by both DESNZ and local authorities. New burdens funding has been confirmed, however no notice of the value or timescales has been provided, and any funding is unlikely to cover the total cost of providing the two new schemes and the resultant core business work that is not completed.
- 7.7 Other service areas across the Council will be required to provide support by way of verification, payments via the Councils financial system and auditing processes and payments.

## **8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

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# Agenda Item 9

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE CABINET</b>
<b>Date:</b>	29 March 2023
<b>Executive Member:</b>	Councillor Vimal Choksi, Executive Member (Town Centres, Communities)
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Julian Jackson, Director of Place
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>ASHTON PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY: PHASE ONE, MARKET SQUARE</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	The report provides a summary of the findings from the recent public consultation along with the final strategy for the delivery of the redevelopment of the Market Square and outdoor market in Ashton Town Centre utilising Levelling Up Funding.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p>That Executive Cabinet be recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) Note the work to date in preparing the proposal for Market Square and the outdoor market for Ashton Town Centre, including the key findings of the consultation and engagement to date;</li><li>(ii) To review and approve the final proposals relating to the redevelopment of Ashton Market Square and outdoor market (Phase One) Public Realm Strategy for Ashton Town Centre;</li><li>(iii) Approve to progress the detailed design based on the final strategy.</li></ul>
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	Key aims of the Corporate Plan are to provide opportunities for people to fulfil their potential through work, skills and enterprise and to ensure modern infrastructure and a sustainable environment that works for all generations and future generations. The interventions that will be supported by the proposed Ashton Mayoral Development Zone will deliver against these aims in the areas of job creation, modern infrastructure and a sustainable environment.
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	The proposed interventions will support the policy aims of the Council's Inclusive Growth Strategy 2021, Tameside Climate Change & Environment Strategy, the Council's growth priorities agreed at Council February 2020 and the draft Greater Manchester Places for Everyone joint development strategy.
<b>Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer &amp; Chief Finance Officer)</b>	<p>The report requests approval to progress to the final detailed design of the Market square public realm and outdoor market works in Ashton town centre.</p> <p>The related works will be financed via Levelling Up Fund capital grant funding awarded to the Council of £19,870,000 (total grant award). Within this sum, £11,200,000 is allocated to finance public realm improvements in the town centre.</p> <p>In addition to this sum the approved capital programme has a Council funded budget allocation of £4,251,000 for public realm</p>

works across the whole borough. A total budget allocation of £15,451,000.

The table below provides a summary of the capital schemes in Ashton town centre that will be financed by the Levelling Up Fund grant and Council funding within the approved capital programme.

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Levelling Up Fund Grant</b>	<b>Council Funding</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Public Realm Improvements	11,200	4,251	15,451
Ashton Town Hall Restoration	3,400	0	3,400
Remediation Of Former Interchange Site	5,270	0	5,270
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,870</b>	<b>4,251</b>	<b>24,121</b>

The total cost of the draft proposals for the public realm works to Market square and outdoor market area are estimated at £10,800,000 (section 3.2 refers). This cost will be updated during the final design of the scheme.

This cost is included within table 1 (section 5.1 of the report) together with existing public realm related commitments of £2,199,000.

The estimated total commitment sum to date of £12,999,000 will be financed via the public realm budget of £15,451,000.

The estimated balance of £2,452,000 will be required to finance any further works to the Market square and outdoor market area together with any related work to Albion Way which is subject to approval of a separate grant funding bid and subsequent report to Members.

The final design of the Market square and outdoor market scheme will also be subject to Member approval via a further report at a later date. The report will need to include details of the proposed capital works and related cost implications together with financing arrangements.

The report will also need to include details of the implications on the revenue budget of the Council. This will include (but is not limited to) the evaluation and impact of rent and service charge income levied on market stall holders and market ground kiosk tenants (including any VAT related implications) together with the financing of the future maintenance of the scheme.

**Legal Implications:  
(Authorised by the Borough  
Solicitor)**

As set out in the main body the report a consultation exercise has been undertaken to assist the council in developing the strategy in relation to the market.

This report provides Members with the feedback on the outcomes of the consultation which has been carefully considered by the project officers when reviewing the draft strategy.

Members as the decision makers must now in order that they can conscientiously take the feedback into account when finalising the strategy.

**Risk Management:**

A risk register for the project is in place and regularly reviewed. The main risks are summarised in Section Eight below.

**Background Information:**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Damien Cutting – Economic Growth Lead



Telephone: 07989425566



e-mail: [damien.cutting@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:damien.cutting@tameside.gov.uk)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On 27 October 2021 it was announced that the £19,870,000 Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid for Ashton Town Centre had been successful. The specific interventions proposed in the LUF bid were prepared in accordance with the requirements of the LUF and are critical to unlocking the comprehensive redevelopment of the Town Centre; supporting a coherent vision and completing of the final phase of Vision Tameside.
- 1.2 The Council has now commenced delivery of the Ashton Town Centre LUF programme in the context of an emerging wider strategic vision for Ashton Town Centre following the decision by Executive Cabinet on 24 November 2021. A Memorandum of Understanding with Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) was signed in February 2022, which has enabled the first payments of the grant to be drawn down by the Council. A further update was provided to Executive Cabinet on 9 February 2022. Progress on delivery of the Ashton Town Centre LUF programme and public realm works is reported quarterly to the Council's Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel.
- 1.3 The interventions supported by the LUF are critical to unlocking the comprehensive redevelopment of the Town Centre and integrating with other as part of a coherent vision, completing of the final phase of Vision Tameside. The enabling works will act as a catalyst for significantly accelerating delivery of the comprehensive transformation of the Town Centre and unlock its full potential.
- 1.4 A multidisciplinary team led by Planit IE were procured via STaR in January 2022 to prepare a strategy for the redevelopment Ashton Town Centre. The team include architects, cost specialists, engineers and market operations. The Public Realm Strategy will cover the whole of the town centre of Ashton however, given the successful Levelling Up Fund monies, Phase One of the strategy focuses on proposals for the redevelopment of Market Square and the outdoor market.
- 1.5 The Council has secured funding of £19,870,000 from LUF, of which £11,200,000 is identified for public realm works in the Town Centre for delivery by 31 March 2025. As the priority area of focus is to deliver works linked to Market Square, the public realm strategy and some of the design principles are primarily focused on this area and its immediate surrounds. However, the Public Realm Strategy includes proposals, strategies and design principles for the whole of the Town Centre. It will be important that Ashton Town Centre has a clear vision and plan in place in order to respond positively to future funding initiatives as and when they emerge in order to deliver these later phases of works.
- 1.6 Approval was granted at Tameside Council's Board meeting 19 October 2022, to consult on a draft proposal (Phase One) for Ashton Market Square and outdoor market for a period of four weeks. Alongside the draft proposals, a survey was issued and a consultation strategy set out the detail of who would be consulted, how people could have their say and included a series of meetings with key stakeholders including market traders in Ashton. A summary of the consultation findings are presented in Section Three of this report.
- 1.7 A wider public realm strategy for Ashton Town Centre will be prepared and will include further design principles for the public realm across the town. This Phase Two public realm strategy will ensure that a strategic approach is taken and will include proposals on how the town centre and its assets can be better connected to ensure visitors are able to access to town safely and efficiently. A further report on the Phase Two strategy will be submitted to the Council's Executive early summer 2023.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Overall, average occupancy of markets across the rest of the country has dropped significantly in the last 10 years. Both the National Association British Market Authorities (NABMA) National Markets Survey (2022) and Mission For Markets Survey (2018) report that occupancy of markets nationally is down by between 40-45%. The age profile of traders remains high. The Survey revealed that currently 47% of traders are in the 41-50 category and 41% of traders are in 51-60 category. Only 8% of traders are under 40. At the time of the last Survey 70% of traders were aged 50 or over.
- 2.2 The partial redevelopment of Market Square and the outdoor market was completed in 2015. The current outdoor market is made up of a total of 104 fixed market stalls and 8 kiosk facilities, some of which are split and have the potential to accommodate up to 14 businesses.
- 2.3 Ashton's outdoor market operates across 7 days through the week. Aligning with the national trend in market activity, Ashton market trader numbers have declined. Monday to Saturday, the general market operates at an average occupancy of 25% across the 6 days. This average occupancy is positively skewed due to the success of Tuesday's established, mixed market offer which tends to have an occupancy of up to 70%. Sunday's 'table-top' market has an average occupancy of around 90% across the year. In actual terms, the average occupancy on the outdoor market through the week (excluding Tuesday and Sunday) tends to be between 10-15%.
- 2.4 It is also worth noting that there is a programme of specialist markets which have the potential to grow and become more established through improvements works to Market Square. Recent youth markets in partnership with Tameside Council have also proved popular and such markets have experienced a growth across the country in developing social enterprise through markets.
- 2.5 The rest of Market Square lacks vibrancy, is an unappealing and unattractive for visitors to the area and the space has remained a poor state for a number of years. There are few opportunities for dwell and a lack of greenery that would encourage people to spend more time in the area. In addition, ground levels are uneven making access for visitors through Market Square, particularly those in wheelchairs and with other mobility problems difficult. Some events are delivered throughout the year including the annual Lantern Parade which attracts thousands of visitors to the area. There are some limitations to the scale and types of events which could be delivered in Market Square due to the existing configuration of the outdoor market and the lack of power and other utilities that attract event providers.
- 2.6 Market Square has experienced a number of anti-social behaviour incidents in recent years. Complaints related to intoxicated individuals consuming alcohol & other substances and causing a nuisance. Vacant market stalls provide weather protection and cover for these individuals making the area less desirable to visit throughout the day and night. Market traders have also experienced problems with anti-social behaviour to the extent that some close their business early. In October 2022, Council approved a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to prohibit activities linked to ASB. Feedback from speaking to local stakeholders including the Council's own Markets Team and Community Safety Team as well as the general public have noticed an increased police presence and fewer incidents of ASB. However, as the spring and summer months approach, this will require close monitoring.

## **3. PUBLIC CONSULTATION FINDINGS**

- 3.1 Pre-consultation was carried out including discussions with Council officers, key stakeholders, Ashton Town Team, Ashton market traders and with the local community at the Love Ashton event held in Ashton Market Hall on 12 March 2022. The report to Board in October 2022 included a Consultation Statement with a summary of comments received at the Love Ashton

event. All of the comments received were fed into the draft proposals and concepts that were subject to the recent formal public consultation.

- 3.2 The draft proposal for the redevelopment of Market Square (including Ashton outdoor market) were the subject of a full public consultation for a period of 4 weeks across November and December 2022. The draft proposals were costed and fall within the identified LUF budget allocated for the public realm in the town centre. The total cost of the draft proposals is £10,800,000 and includes the removal of all of kiosks and market stalls and replacing them with the construction of a large canopy (including a canopy attached to Market Hall) that included flexible market units to meet the needs of modern market traders. Costings for the draft proposal has been based on the Gold Standard of public realm delivery and include an annual 8.4% inflation allowance. The detailed design work will refine the design principles identified in the approved strategy which will also be subject to more detailed costings.
- 3.3 The Consultation Statement is included in **Appendix 2** setting out who would be consulted, how they could have their say, and which key stakeholders would be targeted to ensure a broad depth of responses.
- 3.4 Feedback from the consultation and engagement to date including the Love Ashton event in March 2022, identified the need for the delivery of significant improvements to the outdoor market and Market Square in Ashton is a priority for the local community in order to breathe new life into the town centre to develop a clear local picture and to gain an insight into issues, opportunities, and future aspirations for Ashton Market Square and outdoor market.
- 3.5 An online survey was issued alongside the draft consultation brochure. A total of 551 responses were received. Hard copies of the survey and exhibition boards were displayed and made available for completion at Ashton Library and Ashton Market Hall throughout the duration of the public consultation. In addition, Council officers discussed the draft proposals at meetings and workshops with key stakeholders including market traders, Tameside College students and staff, Tameside Owners and Drivers Association, and other Council services. Some stakeholder groups were contacted but did not reply or were unable to commit to a discussion. These groups will have an opportunity to speak to Council officers going forward responses will be fed into the detailed design work.
- 3.6 A public event was held in Ashton Market Hall on Saturday 26 November 2022 where local businesses, market traders and visitors to the town were able to speak to Council Officers and members of the consultant team about the draft proposals. Approximately 90-100 people were engaged at the event and provided some very useful and constructive comments and ideas that they wished to shape the final strategy proposals.
- 3.7 A full summary of the responses is included in the Consultation Statement. The below sets out some of the feedback received, how the feedback has been reviewed and analysed, and how the findings have fed into the final strategy proposals for Market Square and the outdoor market.
- 3.8 The responses to the consultation confirmed an overall support for the draft proposals. However, there were some concerns relating to the redevelopment of Market Square. The majority of the concerns in the recorded responses fell in the following four areas:
  - Concerns over losing Ashton's traditional outdoor market,
  - Queries as to why the Council were seeking to redevelop the outdoor market when a new market provision was delivered in the last 8 years,
  - Questions relating to the funding and why it wasn't being utilised for other purposes,
  - Concerns that the redevelopment will not improve the ASB issues and overall desirability of Ashton as a place to visit.
- 3.9 Some general objections/observation relating specifically to the premise and design principles for regeneration of Market Square identified in the draft proposals:

- Play area location is not the preferred location given the proximity of the taxi rank, pub spill-out, servicing and attracting antisocial behaviour,
- Proposed fixed structures such as cinema or music stand could quickly look obsolete as tastes change, obstruct eye lines and might lead to vandalism.
- High levels of homelessness,
- Safety and antisocial behaviour in areas with poor visibility - particularly in social spaces and along key strategic movement corridors.
- Proposals being out of step with the culture and economics around shopping and leisure with e-shopping and out-of-town retail,
- General state of neglect across the town, low quality offer, and high vacancy rates,
- Lack of things for children and teens to do, and perceived lack of safety - encourage college students to use the centre and local teens to visit more often,
- Lack of demand for a seven-day market and empty market kiosks
- Bird droppings becoming maintenance burden and deterrence for seating areas.

3.10 A number of sessions and workshops were held specifically with market traders, kiosk operators and Council officers. It is essential that market traders are engaged in the process of preparing the strategy and are identified as a key stakeholder going forward into the detailed design stage for Market Square and the outdoor market. Some traders and kiosk operators requested a need to retain a kiosk facility on Market Square as it was considered that the facilities suited the requirements of their business operation. Some kiosk operators also felt that the facilities were well positioned to attract trade through Market Square. Other concerns noted were linked to accessibility for deliveries and own cars to stalls could be impacted. Traders were concerned over the disruption and any adverse impacts that the redevelopment would have on their ability to trade as normal.

3.11 Despite the concerns of the local community and key stakeholders, there were a significant number of people in favour of the draft proposals and design principles. Many respondents understood that the opportunity to redevelop Market Square could be the catalyst for regeneration of the town centre. In addition, all market traders agreed that ASB is an issue and impacts their business negatively and along with the recent introduction of the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for Market Square, proposals for redevelopment could contribute to reducing incidents of crime in the area. Market traders, the local community and other key stakeholders had some valuable ideas and insight as to how they would like to see the improvements implemented into Market Square and the outdoor market that could also address some of the concerns outlined above. These included:

- Play should be more centrally positioned in Market Square,
- Retain a kiosk facility on Market Square,
- On site provision required for trade waste and site cleaning operation
- Buses to be rerouted back onto Wellington Road to improve accessibility for shoppers,
- More trees, planting, and seasonal interest,
- Retain and facilitate the Sunday flea market,
- Reduce market days to concentrate demand and supply over fewer days and increase the buzz of activity in Market Square on those days.
- Improved areas for seating
- More places to eat and drink in the square.

3.12 In respect of the suggestions and input into the strategy from market traders, there were a number of suggestions relating to the future operation of the market:

- Shelter and protection from the elements - especially westerly wind and rain, summer shade, free standing roof rather than awnings,
- Canopy could provide shelter for traders and shoppers,
- Clusters of operators such as food and drink could provide buzz and activity,
- Large van servicing access along Bow Street for market traders at key times of the day

- Storage for market traders,
- Access for people from public transport required from Wellington Road (bus routes along this road),
- Pop-up/temporary/seasonal events/offer in the Market Square.
- Lighting in the evening is critical to encourage a night time economy and more food and drink,
- Signage and wayfinding from key transport hubs
- Need to establish intimate spaces and curate atmospheres of 'hustle and bustle'
- Improve drainage capacity

3.13 If new kiosks are to be incorporated into the scheme, market traders would want to see a number of design features including:

- Kiosks need protection from the weather,
- Kiosks designed to meet the needs of food operators,
- In terms of size, 10ft by 10ft doesn't work for some uses. Different sized kiosks to suit different trader needs,
- Industrial quality of finishes needed for this use,
- Intimate space – overlooked if the kiosks all face inwards, under a canopy,
- Fixed kiosks to operate as a 'shop',
- Outdoor seating related to food stalls,
- Each unit would need own canopy.

3.14 The Consultation Strategy (**Appendix 3**) includes the full details of who Council Officers engaged with throughout the consultation period. The Consultation Statement (**Appendix 2**) includes the key findings of these meetings and workshops. Some of these included:

- Ashton ward member briefings,
- Briefing to Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel,
- Presentation of draft strategy at all four of Tameside Neighbourhood Forums,
- Interactive workshops with students at Tameside College and Ashton Sixth Form College,
- Tameside Owners and Drivers Association (TODA),
- Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM),
- Major land owners including the two shopping centre owners (Ladysmith and Arcades),
- Greater Manchester Active Travel team,
- Key Council services including senior colleagues from Planning, Markets, Greenspace, Community Safety and Highways.

3.15 A response submitted by the Chair of the working group focused on town centres which is a sub-group of the Council's Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel which met with senior Council officers on 23 November 2022. The Panel are supportive of the use of Levelling Up Funding in the redevelopment of Market Square and of the consultation process that has been followed. The Panel are keen that *"the project remains as bold as possible in supporting a wider pull factor. To create something that differentiates Ashton Market Square within the region"*. A full list of points raised by the Panel are included in **Appendix 4**.

3.16 As well as quantitative evidence gathering, an online survey was published via the Council's website with assistance from the Council's Policy and Communications teams. The survey was promoted via the Council's social media streams and a press release was issued. Hard copies were made available in Ashton Library and Market Hall. The full summary of the findings of the survey are included in the Consultation Statement (**Appendix 2**). Some of the detail on the demographics of respondents and key findings relating to people's views on the draft proposals are summarised below:

- Slight majority of respondents from Ashton although many were from neighbouring towns in the borough and across Greater Manchester,



- Almost 60% of respondents were residents in Ashton. However, there were a large number of people who were visiting the area (30%) and a number of respondents work in Ashton (15%),
- The majority of people visit during the week (26%), although a similar number of people (25%) said they only visit occasionally,
- A significant number of respondents visit in the daytime (94%) with very few people deciding to visit in the evening time,
- In terms of how people would like to see Ashton improved, 72% of responses want to see a reduction in ASB, 62% want the town cleaner and clutter free. Specialist markets, seating and street furniture and greener spaces also featured high on people's priorities,
- In terms of Ashton Market itself, respondents want to see more sociality shops and stalls, more places to sit and relax, more daytime activities and events, better parking, more places to eat, and evening entertainment,
- In terms of specific activities and events that people want to see on Market Square, 86% of responses were for seasonal markets. Other responses which scored high were food and beverage (58%), festivals (48%), family attractions (46%), concerts and live music events (43%), night/evening markets (40%).
- Respondents were asked which features of the draft strategy they agreed with. Tree planting/greenery, seating areas, street furniture, indoor/outdoor eating places, and improved lighting all scored high. In addition, over a third of respondents liked the idea of a canopy structure and had a similar response to the replacement of the existing stalls with a flexible market stall provision.

#### 4. ASHTON MARKET SQUARE / ASHTON OUTDOOR MARKET - FINAL PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The previous section outlines some of the key findings from the consultation undertaken on the draft proposals. All of the responses have been reviewed and analysed in order to help to shape the final strategy for the redevelopment of Ashton Market Square and the outdoor market. A vision, masterplan and set of design principles have been developed that will inform the next stage of detailed design work before the construction phase of the scheme commences in early 2024.
- 4.2 The final strategy can be viewed in **Appendix 1** and is centred on a vision where '*Ashton Market is the beating heart of the town. A modern market for everyone, a destination attracting locals and visitors, hosting a range of entertaining events.*' The proposal will result in the complete redevelopment of Market Square including the removal of all existing structures, market stalls, and street furniture. A new modern and flexible market square will be created using high quality materials, a level surface created across the square to improve accessibility and movement as well as the capability to delivery events of varying scales, new seating areas, tree planting, and greening including the installation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) to reduce surface run off, play, infrastructure to enable access to power. An Executive Summary of the final strategy is included in **Appendix 6**.
- 4.3 The most significant proposal is the installation of a large canopy structure for Market Square. From discussions with market traders and kiosk operators, the view is that Ashton should retain an outdoor market and that the kiosks increased footfall to Market Square. In order to build on the vision of a modern market square that future-proofs Ashton's traditional market offer, the large canopy installed will incorporate new kiosk facilities and market stalls to futureproof Ashton's outdoor market for future generations. In addition, the canopy could include a more diverse offer that including seating, an increased food and drink offer, events and leisure to encourage activity in the evening, all of which will be protected from the weather and so can be used all year round. Waste bins from traders and other storage areas will be incorporated into the final design. Some precedent examples of similar structures delivered in town centres from other towns are presented in the final strategy document however, the detailed design of

the structure, orientation, massing and materials will be subject to detail designs from a specialist architect appointed as part of a multi-disciplinary team.

- 4.4 A number of consistent themes and important considerations emerged across the various consultation sessions, which must be incorporated into the next stage of proposals, these include:

#### Public Realm

1. Propose informal play area to within the Market Square
2. Propose an arrival space beside the Town Hall
3. Visibility is fundamental to and from Town Hall and Market Hall from key streets
4. Signage with strong branding is required from and to the Town Hall and Market Hall from key streets and Ashton Interchange
5. Consider accessibility for less able persons – consider level changes and lighting
6. Incorporate heritage interpretation within public realm design
7. Create a sustainable urban drainage approach in response to local climatic conditions
8. Retain servicing access along Bow Street for traders
9. Propose cycle parking areas on the periphery of Market Square
10. Design intimate spaces in arrival spaces
11. Planting – current issue with trees and bird droppings by seated areas. Consider greening areas of the Market Square space (avoid grassed areas for maintenance – provide planted areas that are easy to maintain)

#### Kiosks

12. Propose around 6-8 kiosks under the canopy
13. Incorporate design recommendations/requirements from kiosk traders relating to; kiosk design, lighting, storage, waste and servicing (consider VAT requirement)
14. Consider how the kiosks work within the canopy (consider height of structure, key views towards heritage buildings, access to first floor level)

#### Canopy

15. Design into and factor in environmental conditions (south-westerly wind and rain).
16. Design space within canopy for ticketed events and security measures during night-time hours.

- 4.5 A number of precedent examples of similar schemes delivered elsewhere that have been successful have been reviewed and elements of these schemes have been incorporated within the final strategy and will inform the detailed design of the scheme whilst ensuring the delivery of a Market Square unique to Ashton.
- 4.6 Once cleared through a phased approach to construction, Market Square will become a level surface and high quality paving will be installed across the entirety of Market Square. Given the large size of Market Square, it has been vital for the design team to consider what features will be installed to create a vibrant space at all times of the day and week. New tree planting and greening (SUDS), seating areas for people to relax and spend time with others, interactive play features to encourage families, lighting to encourage activity after hours, and places for people to park their bikes in secure spaces. In terms of infrastructure, anchor points to enable flexible stalls to be positioned will be built into the ground, waste bins, power points will enable events and other activities to 'plug in' and operate from without the requirement to bring their own power sources, and other utilities that will encourage market traders and event providers to come to Ashton Market Square will also be considered as part of the detailed design work.

## 5. COSTINGS AND REVENUE IMPACT

- 5.1 Details of the costings related to this final scheme fall within the overall budget envelope for the public realm works to Market Square. As the detailed design of is progressed, the cost of various elements of the scheme may vary however, the final scheme will be delivered within the budget allocation for the scheme.

Table 1 provides a summary of the existing public realm funding and estimated commitments to date. The estimated balance will be required to finance the public realm works to Market Square and outdoor market together with any related works to Albion Way which is subject to approval of a separate grant funding bid and subsequent report to Members.

**Table 1**

	£'000	£'000
<b>Funding</b>		
Levelling Up Fund Grant	11,200	
Council - Capital Programme	4,251	
<b>Total</b>		<b>15,451</b>
<b>Estimated Commitments</b>		
Project Management	208	
Public Realm - Strategy	74	
Public Realm - Detailed Design	1,126	
Public Realm - Wellington Road / Harley Street	700	
Public Realm - Market Area Modifications	91	
Public Realm – Market Square & Outdoor Market Area (Estimate)	10,800	
<b>Total</b>		<b>12,999</b>
<b>Estimated Balance</b>		<b>2,452</b>

- 5.2 As the detail of the final scheme is not yet known, it is not possible to calculate the likely impact on Council revenue from the outdoor market of the scheme in terms of the construction phase of works as well as the potential revenue when the final scheme is complete.
- 5.3 A relocation strategy to decant market traders and kiosk operators will be required when the detail and phasing of the proposal is more refined. Protecting the income of the markets will need to be prioritised throughout the phasing and decant of traders to ensure the market continues to operate throughout the construction of the scheme. A further report to Executive Cabinet will follow later this year and will review the existing operations of markets across the borough.

## 6. PROGRAMME AND NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 A detailed programme of the works is included in **Appendix 5**. Timescales for delivery are very tight in line with the Levelling Up Funding agreement of works being completed in full by March 2025. Some of the key milestones are included below:
- Technical survey work: January 2023 – March 2023
  - Detailed Design: March 2023 – January 2024
  - Planning application process: – May – August 2023
  - Start of early physical works which could include the removal of redundant stalls and/or creation of temporary waste storage facility: May 2023
  - Procurement of contractor: February 2024

- Main construction phase: February 2024 – March 2025
- 6.2 Survey work is underway and will ensure that all the relevant evidence has been gathered to support the detailed design of the final scheme. Once the final strategy for the scheme has been approved, the detailed design will commence. The multi-disciplinary team will work to finalise a scheme that responds to consultation feedback received within the available budget envelope. Progress on this work will be reported to Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel on a quarterly basis. The detailed design of the project will take approximately 9 to 12 months. Market traders and other key stakeholders will be engaged and consulted during the detailed design of the scheme to ensure their needs are met and those of future market traders.
- 6.3 Draft proposals included a high level approach to the future of Ashton Market Hall as it would not be practical to consider the redevelopment of the outdoor market without considering opportunities for future-proofing the indoor market. However, the Levelling Up Funding will be utilised for Market Square and the outdoor market. Further funding will need to be identified to review the indoor market uses in full.
- 6.4 The recently established Ashton Town Centre Delivery Group will steer and support the preparation, development and implementation of the Phase One works and to deliver the vision of the plan. A Consultation Strategy for the detailed design approach to working with key stakeholders including market traders is included in **Appendix 6**.

## 7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Market Square and the market stalls continue to attract anti-social behaviour which in turn, deters people from visiting the area, new businesses from setting up in the centre of Ashton and a general overall negative perception of the town centre. Furthermore, the market stall structures detract from the visibility of key heritage assets in Ashton Town Hall and Ashton Market Hall, they are costly to maintain, have problems with drainage, and the ground levels where the market stalls are situated are uneven resulting in difficulties getting around for elderly people or those with mobility issues.
- 7.2 The overall decline in the viability and vitality in areas of Ashton town centre including Market Square are aligned with national trends of decline. The growth in online shopping and out of centre retail locations, the changing behaviour of shoppers, the change in demands of shoppers from their town centres, the evolution of traditional town centres and the global pandemic has resulted in a reduction in footfall, increased number of shop units and market traders and a general negative perception of some town centres, including Ashton. However, there are signs and evidence of a resurgence in some town centres. These centres have evolved and introduced a wide range of uses including food and drink, leisure and culture. It is vital that the regeneration of Ashton learns from what these more successful town centres have done to revive themselves and build on the unique character of Ashton and the local people.
- 7.3 Responses received from the public consultation as well as discussions with market traders demonstrated an overall support for the draft proposals and design principles identified within the draft masterplans. Whilst there are still some concerns with market traders in respect to the future of their business, the Council continues to liaise with market traders to ensure they are involved in the proposals as they become more defined.
- 7.4 Given the nature and multi-functionality of market squares across all towns, there are a number of competing demands, desires, needs and ambitions for different people as to what a modern market town should deliver. Whether it is a modern or traditional market, a diverse offer, events, culture, art, play, greenery or any other feature of a market square, there are competing demands from those who visit and utilise Market Square which must be balanced to ensure the successful delivery of a public square that is unique to Ashton, now and for generations to come.

7.5 Once approved, the detailed design on the final strategy will commence followed by physical construction early 2024.

## 8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 The main risks associated with the delivery of improvements to Market Square and the outdoor market are identified in the table below.

Risk Area	Detail	RAG Rating	Mitigation	RAG Rating
<b>Delivery</b>	Timescales for delivery against the funding agreement are extremely tight. Any delays to the detailed design work will impact on the start of the physical construction which could have an impact on completing the works in the agreed timescales.		The programme in <b>Appendix 5</b> demonstrates that whilst timescales are tight, the detailed design work will be completed towards the end of 2023 to enable construction to commence early 2024. Any slippages on the programme will be outlined by the Project Management Team.	
<b>Financial</b>	The detailed design of the scheme will enable more accurate costings to be calculated. As costs of materials and inflation continues to rise, this will need to be monitored throughout the programme.		There have already been some high level costings in regards to the draft proposals. Whilst some of the costings in regards to the different elements of the scheme may vary, the overall scheme will be delivered within the financial envelope identified for these works.	
<b>Financial</b>	The outdoor market is an income generating service in the Council. A reduction in the number of market traders for any period of time, could result in the loss of income for this service.		Construction of the scheme will be phased to minimise disruption to trading on the outdoor market. A market specialist has been appointed to support this work and will support traders and the Council to ensure any adverse impact to trading is minimised. Once completed, the scheme is likely to generate more interest and enquiries from traders resulting in an increased in income for the Council.	
<b>Planning</b>	Whilst the removal of stalls and kiosks will not require planning permission, the large canopy structure will.		Discussions with the Local Planning Authority have been carried out since the start of this work and will continue throughout the programme. The appointed architects will	

			liaise with the Council's Head of Planning in respect of the detailed design of the canopy and overall public realm scheme.	
<b>Programme</b>	Lack of resource capacity to undertake workstreams in line with expectations.		In addition to the appointment of a Project Manager for the scheme, a highly experienced multi-disciplinary team will ensure that the project meets programme timescales and key milestones. Internal resource has been identified to meet expectations.	

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

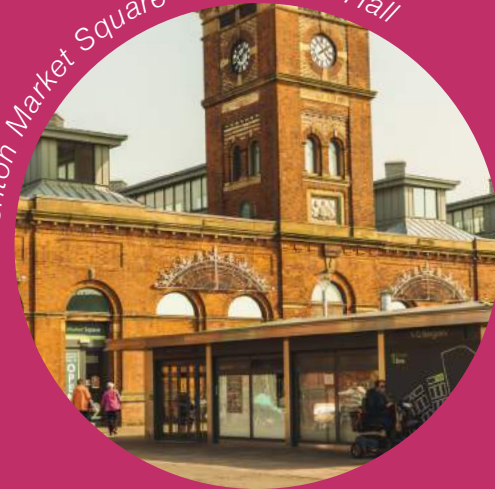
9.1 As set out at the front of the report.



# A Public Realm Strategy for Ashton-under-Lyne Phase 1 - Market Square

A catalyst for further regeneration

Ashton Market Square and Market Hall







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“ We are looking to create a fantastic town centre for Ashton-under-Lyne. ”

We are creating a plan to breathe new life into Ashton, to bring more shops, people, and homes, and create a healthier town centre for all people. ”



# Introduction

This Public Realm Strategy has been produced by Planit-IE on behalf of Tameside Council to devise a strategy to deliver improvements to the Public Realm within the Market Square at Ashton-Under-Lyne Town Centre.

Tameside Council has commissioned the production of a Public Realm Strategy for the Market Square in consultation with Stakeholders. This is a unique opportunity to consider the vision, heritage values and character of the Market Square within the context of the wider town centre. Environmental sustainability, diversity and inclusion, health and well-being, and accessibility are highly significant contributing factors in creating a sense of place and unique destination for Ashton Town Centre.

## Phase 1 Market Square

The Public Realm Strategy will focus immediately on the Market Square, Market Hall and connecting spaces. This is Phase 1 of an overall Public Realm Strategy for the Town Centre.

The Phase 1 Market Square Strategy will include strategic plans, along with guidance and design principles to support the delivery of the Market Square vision. Future phases include the Market Fringes, Market Hall and Market Hall canopy, and will form part of the detailed design stage, up to RIBA stage 2. These areas will be excluded from the Levelling Up Fund and delivered at a later stage.

In the future a comprehensive public realm strategy will also include Stamford Street Central, Old Street and St. Michael's Square. It will incorporate proposals for Wellington Road and extend to Katherine Street, Penny Meadows, Oldham Road.

## Public Realm Strategy themes

- Inclusive and accessible
- Townscape context
- Responding to heritage
- Connectivity and accessibility
- Sustainability
- Safer streets and spaces
- Culture and events
- Health and well-being
- Way-finding, lighting and signage
- Brand identity and public art

## People and place focussed

Our approach is place and people focused, we started by getting to know the place in which we are working, and the people who know it best

It is about building strong relationships, identifying the priorities, gaining insight from the people and understanding of the essence of the place. This has enabled us to define the objectives, aims and ambitions of an effective Public Realm Strategy.



## Catalysts for Change

There are actions happening to accelerate positive change in Ashton Town Centre that will support the economy and future growth of the town, here are the actions below:

### Ashton Mayoral Development Zone

The establishment of an Ashton Mayoral Development Zone will significantly raise the profile of Ashton and Tameside, helping to position the opportunities that exist for future funding, investment and Greater Manchester support.

### Mayor's Challenge Fund (MTF)

Proposals will be coordinated with concept designs for improved cycling infrastructure which have been developed under the Mayor's Challenge Fund. One of these projects is **Ashton Streetscape** (Albion Way and Wellington Road) which aims to achieve the following:

1. Segregated cycle tracks on both sides of the road.
2. A modified junction at the exit from the bus station and the Ashton retail park, to incorporate a new Cyclops arrangement, which provides segregated, signalised facilities for cyclists, to improve road safety for all road users.
3. Measures to slow and control vehicle speeds and provide enhanced priority for pedestrian users, potentially including a reduction in carriageway width, increased landscaping, different surfacing materials and the introduction of pedestrian crossing points.



### Levelling Up Fund 2021

The Council has gained further grant funding to continue this comprehensive transformation of the town centre and was successful in its £19.87m Levelling Up Fund bid to support the next stage of regeneration.

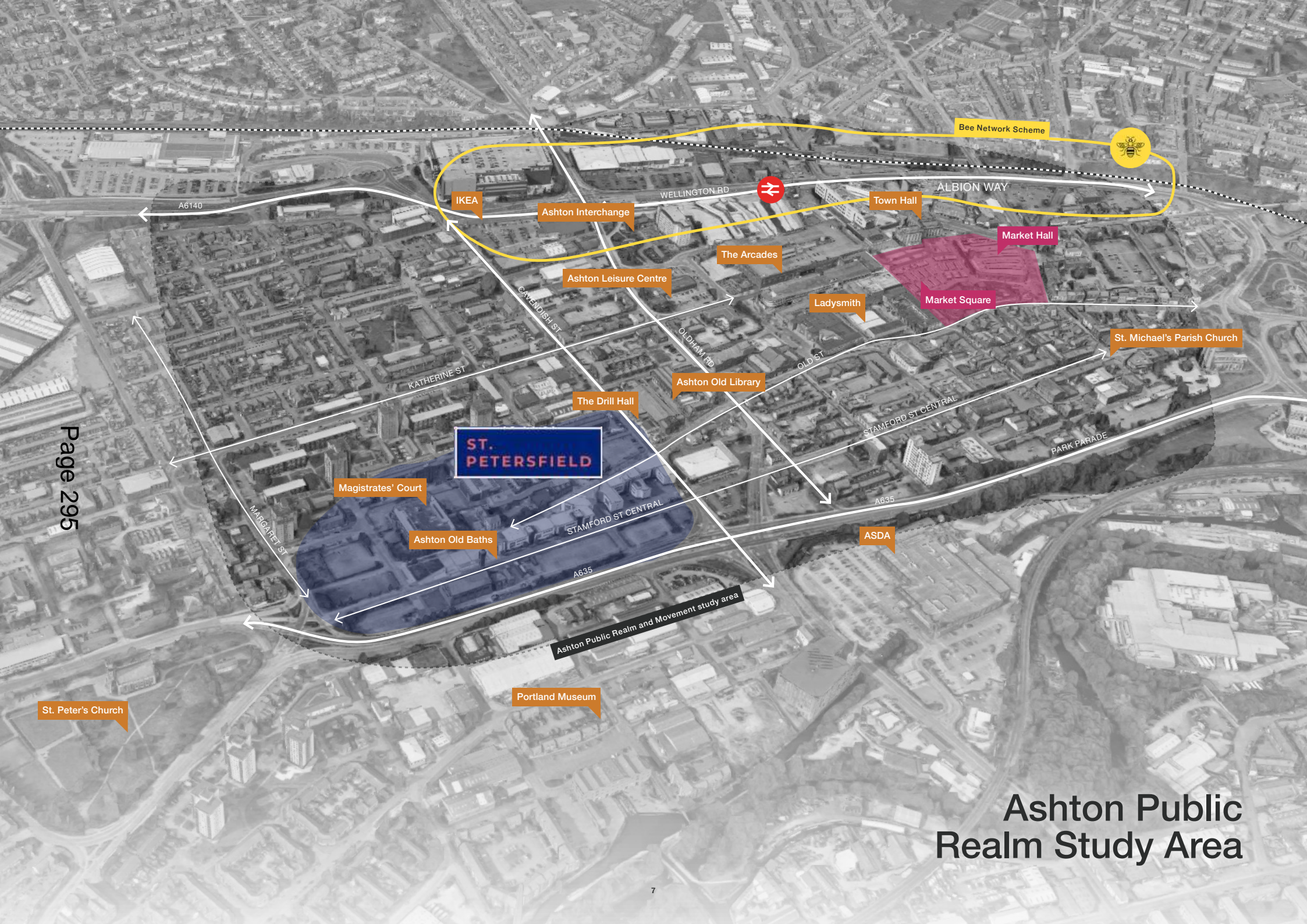
- A. Land remediation of the former interchange site
- B. Cycling and public realm improvements
- C. Restoration of Ashton Town Hall
- D. Further development of St Petersfield into a cutting edge business park for innovation and tech firms
- E. Residential, leisure and the delivery of a wider diversity of town centre uses with increased town centre living.

### Wellington Road Proposals

The Wellington Road and Albion Way proposals are currently progressing and construction has started on-site. The strategy and design principles for Phase 1 Market Squares will integrate into wider proposals underway.



Visualisation of Albion Way proposals



St. Peter's Church

Portland Museum

ASDA

# Ashton Public Realm Study Area

# A snapshot through time

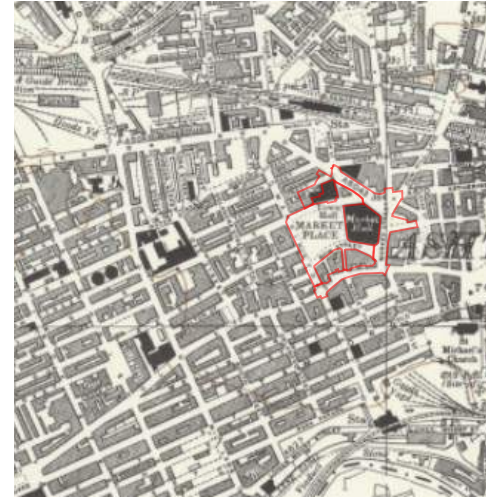
1824



In the early 19th century, Ashton started to develop from a village to a fast growing industrial town on the banks of the River Tame and the new ship canals.

The urban grain in the centre is dense with streets which are organised in a grid pattern. The town centre lays around the Church of St. Michael's, with the Market being relocated in 1828 into the present-time site.

1949 - 1970



Population growth has stalled and is around 50,000 inhabitants. The town expands in every direction towards the neighbouring towns.

The post-war era brought a great deal of modernisation and re-building in the town centre.

In the 1960s as part of Ashton's slum clearance programme, several rows of terraced houses were removed, leaving patches of vacant land in the town centre.

1850 - 1914



Rapid urbanisation resulted in wide expansion of urban fabric and further densification in the centre and along key roads. The Market Square becomes defined by development and by the construction of the Town Hall in 1840 and the Market Hall in 1867.

Construction of numerous terraced housing for workers as well as buildings for education and leisure, such as the Public Baths, Library and School.

1970 - now



Construction of the M60 to the west of the town and several connecting roads cutting through urban fabric.

Fragmentation of the dense town centre grain by the construction of parking lots and large retail and leisure centres such as the Arcades and the Ladysmith shopping centres, which has segregated the connection from Katherine Street into the Market Square.



Ashton was a small market town from medieval times until late in the 18th century.

The original market was held near the Old Cross, close to St. Michael's church.

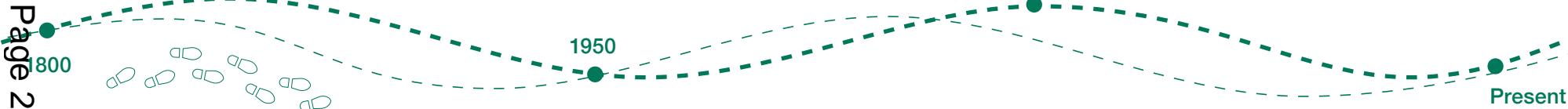


In 2016, a new design for Ashton Market Square was proposed where new kiosks and stalls were introduced.

These kiosks and stalls are valued by the market traders and liked by the public.

Unfortunately, in recent times the Market Square suffers from anti-social behaviour and decay, and the kiosks and stalls are no longer fit for purpose.

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Ashton's new town centre was planned by The Earl of Stamford. The street plan was laid in grids on top of fields, and many of the main streets were named after Stamford's family members.



The current Market Hall building was built in 1867. Trading took place inside the hall, as well as on the thriving outdoor market square. In 2004, the Market Hall was devastated by a fire, after which the market was rebuilt and officially opened in 2008 with its original exterior walls.



Unfortunately, in recent times the Market Square suffers from anti-social behaviour and decay, and the kiosks and stalls are no longer fit for purpose.

A new Market Square needs to draw out from the traditional market qualities and community spirit that are cherished by the public, and make it fit for modern day trading and outdoor activities.

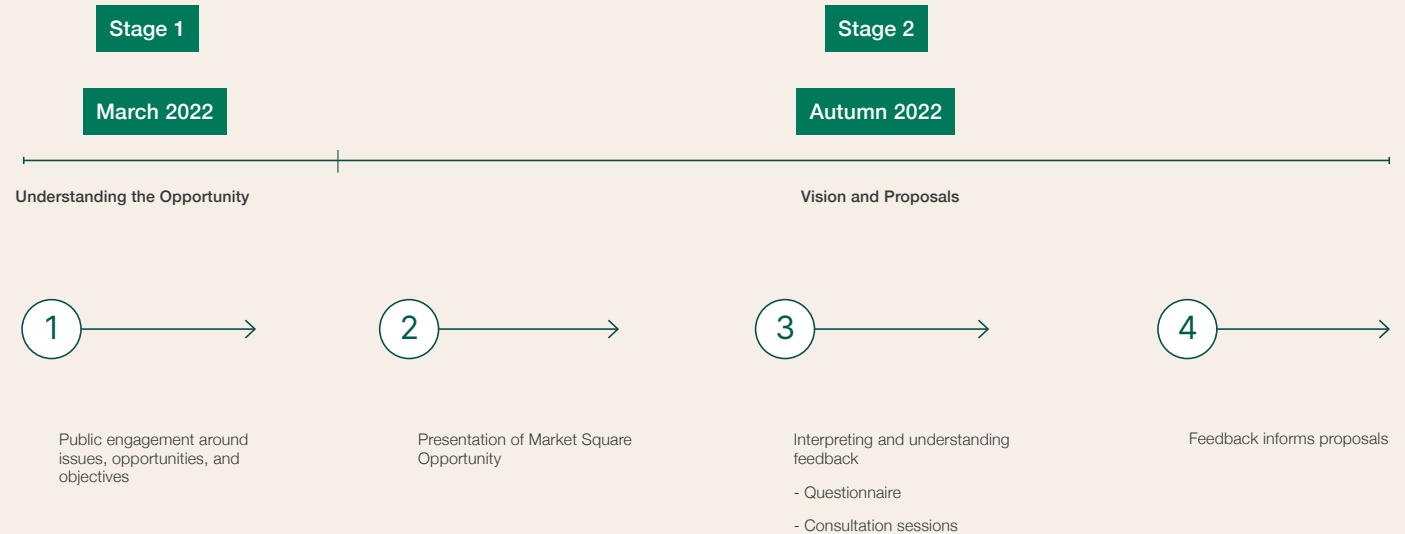
## Public Realm Strategy Consultation

A two stage programme of engagement and consultation has been undertaken to run alongside the Public Realm Strategy.

The key messages and outcomes have informed and shaped the design principles and proposals outlined within this Public Realm Strategy.

A consultation statement has been prepared to support the public realm strategy, for further detailed information please refer to the consultation statement. Two stages of consultation were undertaken as shown below.

The findings have provided the project team with a deeper understanding of the needs and aspirations of everyone involved. The feedback has underpinned and shaped the design ideas for the Market Square, Market Hall and Town Hall.





# Stage 1

## Love Ashton engagement

The Love Ashton engagement event took place on Saturday 13th March 2022, at Ashton Market Hall, the feedback has shaped our plans.

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council appointed Planit and Civic Engineers to undertake a Public Realm and Movement strategy for Ashton-under-Lyne Town Centre. We gathered the public's initial ideas and thoughts about how they wanted to see improvements in the town centre, the feedback has helped to shape our proposal.

### Key Messages

- Market square is characterless-missing the vibrant atmosphere from the past. It should be an attraction and destination rather than a cluttered space.
- Generally unkempt, with deteriorating materials, and lack of greenery.
- Market stalls are unattractive, impractical and in bad condition.
- Safety issues in the square, related to anti-social behaviour, poor lighting and visibility.
- Accessibility from public transport should be improved, as well as connections to St. Petersfield and the rest of Ashton Town Centre.

**Market stalls are unattractive and not practical**

**Make the area more of a community hub where meetings can take place forums and maybe even as a wedding venue.**

**Lack of greenery**

**Missing the once vibrant market stalls and atmosphere**

**Improve signage to the town**

**Residents need safe and attractive walks**



# Stage 2 Public Consultation

Consultation in Stage 2 focussed on the Market Square and took the form of workshops, briefings and meetings. The objectives of the consultation were to engage with key stakeholders and a wide variety of people and community groups to develop a clear local picture and to gain an insight into issues, opportunities, and future aspirations for Ashton Market Square and Market Hall.

The consultation went public with the Public Realm Strategy booklet, associated consultation boards for the public events and a questionnaire.

Following the public consultation of the Public Realm Strategy (Phase One - Market Square) in November 2022, a number of consistent themes and important considerations emerged which have been incorporated within the design principles.

**“We’d like to see a better variety of trees. Could we have some the same as those in Library Square in Manchester? They have startling spring blooms.”**

**“It looks great, Ashton needs the investment... Ashton is ready to improve, Stamford street could be something really special again”.**

**“It is to be hoped that the mistakes made in developing the current Market Square can be avoided and an amenity of which Ashton can be proud can finally be realised.”**

**“The plans would be enhanced by a lovely sunken garden, with plenty of benches and colour.”**

Feedback at Market Hall Event, Nov 2022



Market Hall Consultation Event, Nov 2022



A number of consistent themes and important considerations emerged across the various consultation sessions, which must be incorporated into the next stage of proposals and are summarised.

Page 301



# Key Messages

Consultation in Stage 2 focussed on the Market Square and took the form of workshops, briefings and meetings. The objectives of the consultation were to engage with key stakeholders and a wide variety of people and community groups to develop a clear local picture and to gain an insight into issues, opportunities, and future aspirations for Ashton Market Square and Market Hall.

The consultation went public with a Public Realm Strategy booklet, associated consultation boards for the public events and a questionnaire.

Following the public consultation of the Public Realm Strategy (Phase One - Market Square) in November 2022, a number of consistent themes and important considerations emerged which have been incorporated within the design principles.

The following key messages have been incorporated into the design principles and proposals, as shown on pages 29 to 45.

## Public Realm

- Play for all ages needed to attract all ages.
- Range of spaces to suit different needs, including safe spaces, quiet spaces, active spaces for play and recreation and a community hub, which should be free or cheap with passes (for students).
- Plenty of ideas for play related including Skateboarding provision for teenagers
- Provision needed for trade waste and site cleaning operation.
- Servicing access along Bow St for market traders at key times of the day
- Lighting in the evening is critical.
- Food and drink offer - night-time economy
- Mitigate westerly wind,
- Wayfinding and signage need improving
- Provision for Bike parking
- Accessibility for less able bodied and important pensioner trade
- Access for deliveries and own car to stalls
- Bus stop provision has been removed
- Outdoor seating for food stalls
- Access for people from public transport required from Wellington Road (bus routes along this road)
- Pop-up/temporary/seasonal events/offer in the market square.
- Mitigate westerly wind
- Need to establish intimate spaces and curate atmospheres of 'hustle and bustle', buzz.
- Improve drainage capacity
- Maintenance needs considering with provision and resources built in.

## Kiosks

- The needs of kiosk traders must be considered.
- Fixed kiosks are required which can operate as a 'shop
- Protection from the weather, consider own canopy
- Designed for food is required
- Different sized kiosks to suit different traders– carrier for storage. 10ft by 10ft doesn't work for some uses.
- Industrial quality of finishes is required
- Intimate space – overlooked if the kiosks all face inwards, under the canopy.

## Canopy

- Canopy no sides preferred for ease of cleansing and to minimise ASB Food and drink as a cluster along gallery side of canopy
- Storage to stop lots of unloading for market traders
- Outdoor seating for food stalls
- Shelter and protection from the elements - especially westerly wind and rain, summer shade - free standing roof rather than canopy

## Future Vision

The aim for Ashton Town Centre is to breathe new life into the town centre and attract investment, and prosperity for years to come.

Ashton Town Centre will be known for celebrating its unique heritage and distinctive identity. A compact, well-connected, and sustainable place.

The Market Square will be the beating heart of the town; a modern market and public space enlivened by events, cafe culture and a vibrant evening economy. A friendly and welcoming place for future generations to enjoy. A destination where people can socialise and relax.

Page 503



Diagram illustrating vision objectives

Our plans capture the essence of Ashton-Under-Lyne Town Centre by celebrating its history and unique assets. We have defined the opportunities and character zones to help shape a comprehensive vision for the future.

Page 304

- Key**
-  Linking Ashton with the River Tame and Canal green infrastructure
  -  Enhancing Ashton's cultural quarter and supporting the workforce
  -  An emerging commercial district (St Petersfield)
  -  Old Town Heart - creating a boutique retail offer, supporting the community and providing a high quality residential offer
  -  Town Centre living
  -  Extending the evening economy, enhancing the food and beverage offer
  -  Consolidating the retail and arrival area
  -  Identifying Ashton's heart
  -  Supporting Ashton's workforce
  -  Levelling Up Funding Zone Market Square to provide flexible spaces and events
  -  Key Spaces
  -  Key crossings
  -  Key streets
  -  Key linkages
  -  Key junctions

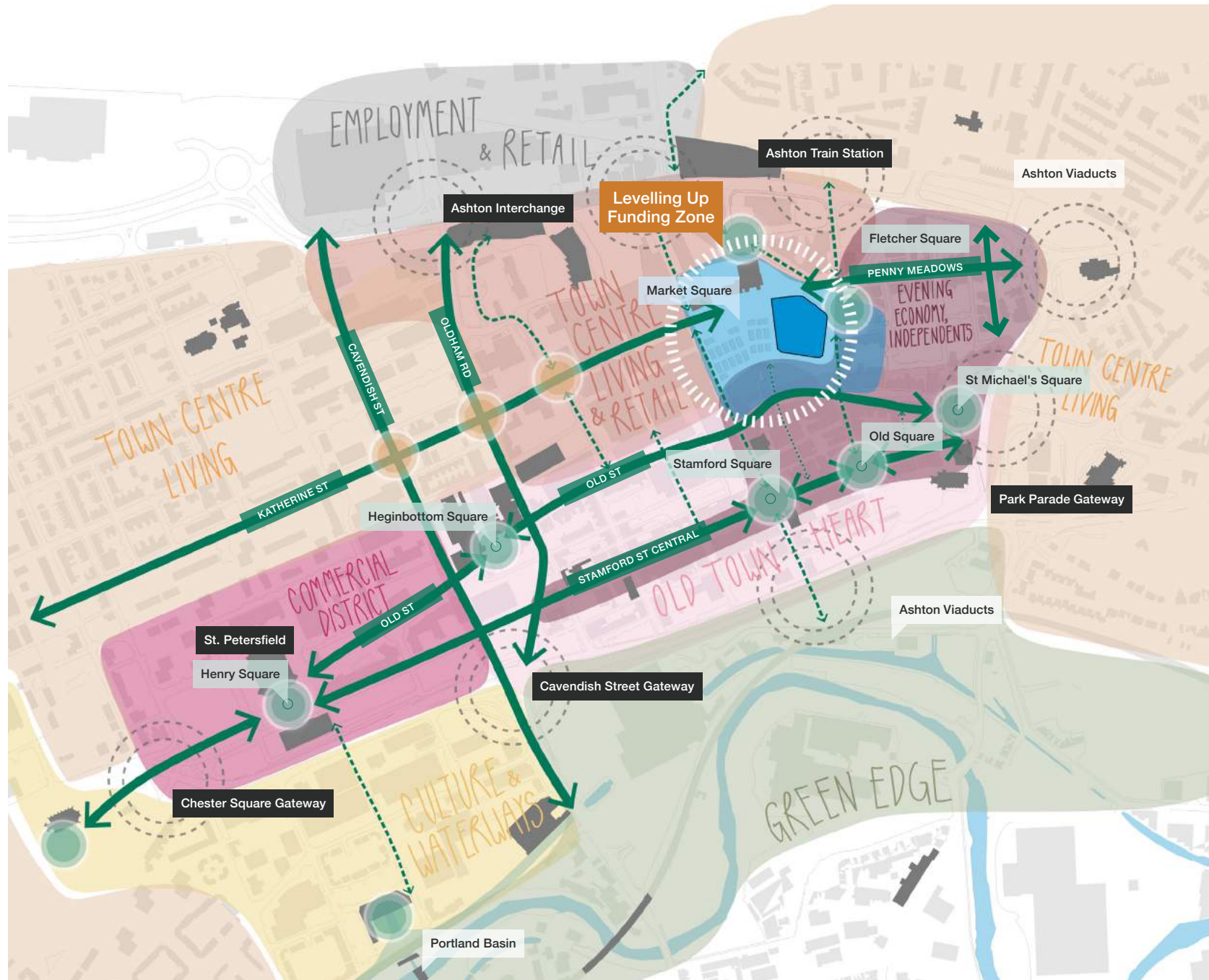


Diagram illustrating character areas and the overall vision

# Sustainability Ambitions

Ashton Town Centre will be a thriving and sustainable community for people living there today and for future generations, not just from an environmental point of view, and will include economic development, cultural diversity and social equity.

## Climate

A variety of principles will reduce carbon emissions. Improved movement and connections will encourage active modes of travel including a walking and cycling strategy.

Improving air quality and reducing pollution by creating a pedestrian priority zone, by reducing the amount of cars within the core of the town. An effective car parking and transport strategy will reduce carbon emissions and encourage walking and cycling. Cycle storage and electric vehicle charging points will support the strategy.



Grey to Green in Sheffield, a Sustainable Urban Drainage system which protects the local rivers from pollutants



Trees and planting in the streets to provide shading and absorb carbon emissions to create better air quality,

## Diversity and Inclusion

Part of the town centre vision is to create informal playful spaces that encourage children and adults alike to play and interact. A variety of activities and events within the Market Hall and Square will cater for a range of demographics.

## Environmental

A vital part of the Town Centre transformation vision is that of urban greening, planting street trees, and lower level shrubs to enhance aesthetics, help mitigate the effects of climate change and encourage biodiversity net gain.

## Economic

Active edges enliven the streets and attract new visitors, establishments and relaxation. Encouragement of dwell in the town centre will allow users to recharge, and carry on exploring, boosting the local economy. A programme of events will attract visitors and local people. A compact core will encourage social and economic community. Providing a range of community facilities within close proximity to support the economy.



Cycling is encouraged with cycle storage and dedicated cycling routes

## Social

A variety of seating opportunities are suggested to suit a wide range of users and encourage dwell by providing a variety of seating types and locations, all user groups can be catered for and encouraged to use and enjoy the spaces. Play and leisure facilities for children and teenagers will be provided for to allow for a vibrant mix and sense of community.



Improvements to Altrincham Market and the surrounding public realm has been a catalyst to attract a range of businesses to boost the economy

*Ashton Market is the beating heart of the town.*

**A modern market for everyone, a destination attracting locals and visitors, hosting a range of entertaining events.**







# The Study Area

The public realm strategy defines a long term vision for Ashton Town Centre. This document focuses on the Phase 1, Market Square as the first steps of regenerating the Town Centre.

The plan illustrates the area included within the Market Square Levelling Up scope with immediate plans for detailed design and delivery. To ensure a comprehensive design approach the areas that immediately surround the levelling up area will be designed to RIBA Stage 2. The time-scales for delivery will be confirmed at a later stage. The works outside Tameside One and Clarendon College are considered as part of the overall design of the Market Square.

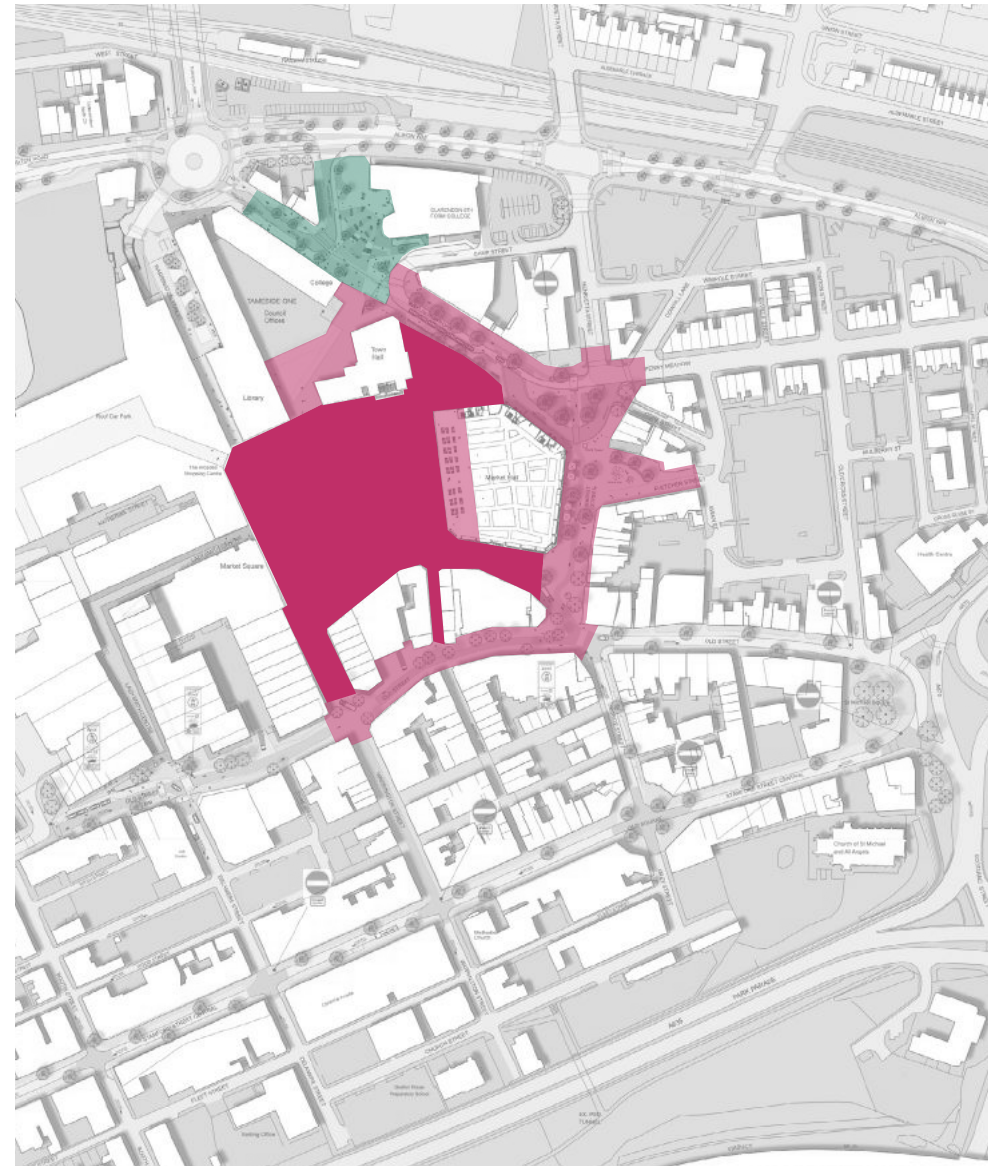


Diagram illustrating the Short term public realm interventions and the longer term interventions

- Market Square Levelling Up scope site boundary
- Works outside Tameside One and Clarendon College ('Clarendon Link') by Tameside MBC, 2022
- Detail design TBC past RIBA Stage 2

# Challenges and Opportunities

The regeneration of the Market Square presents an exciting opportunity for Ashton Town Centre as a new modern market town offering space for different types of events. Our plans consider the Market's strengths and weaknesses.

## Challenges and Opportunities

The Market Square includes the impressive Market Hall and Town Hall also. The public realm has the potential to enhance the market and the cultural and leisure offer in the town centre.

Revitalising the Market Hall to connect the inside with the outside Market Square will encourage footfall and create a space for a variety of events. The Grade II Listed Town Hall will be refurbished and its heritage celebrated. Activities will spill out into the Market Square and encourage footfall and future investment.

Tameside One College and Clarendon Sixth Form College are within easy reach of the Market. The proposal to regenerate of the Market as the heart of the town will encourage students, young people and adults to visit and spend time in Ashton.

1. Improve visual connectivity
2. Enhanced transport hub connections
3. Town Hall activity encourages footfall
4. Opportunity for play, for families and students
5. Generous Market Square size creates opportunity for events
6. Opportunity for ground floor uses to engage with the street / public realm
7. Re-orientate market stalls to simplify space
8. Improve anti-social behaviour
9. Potential to create defined entrance to Market Hall
10. Opportunity to enhance existing food offer inside and outside

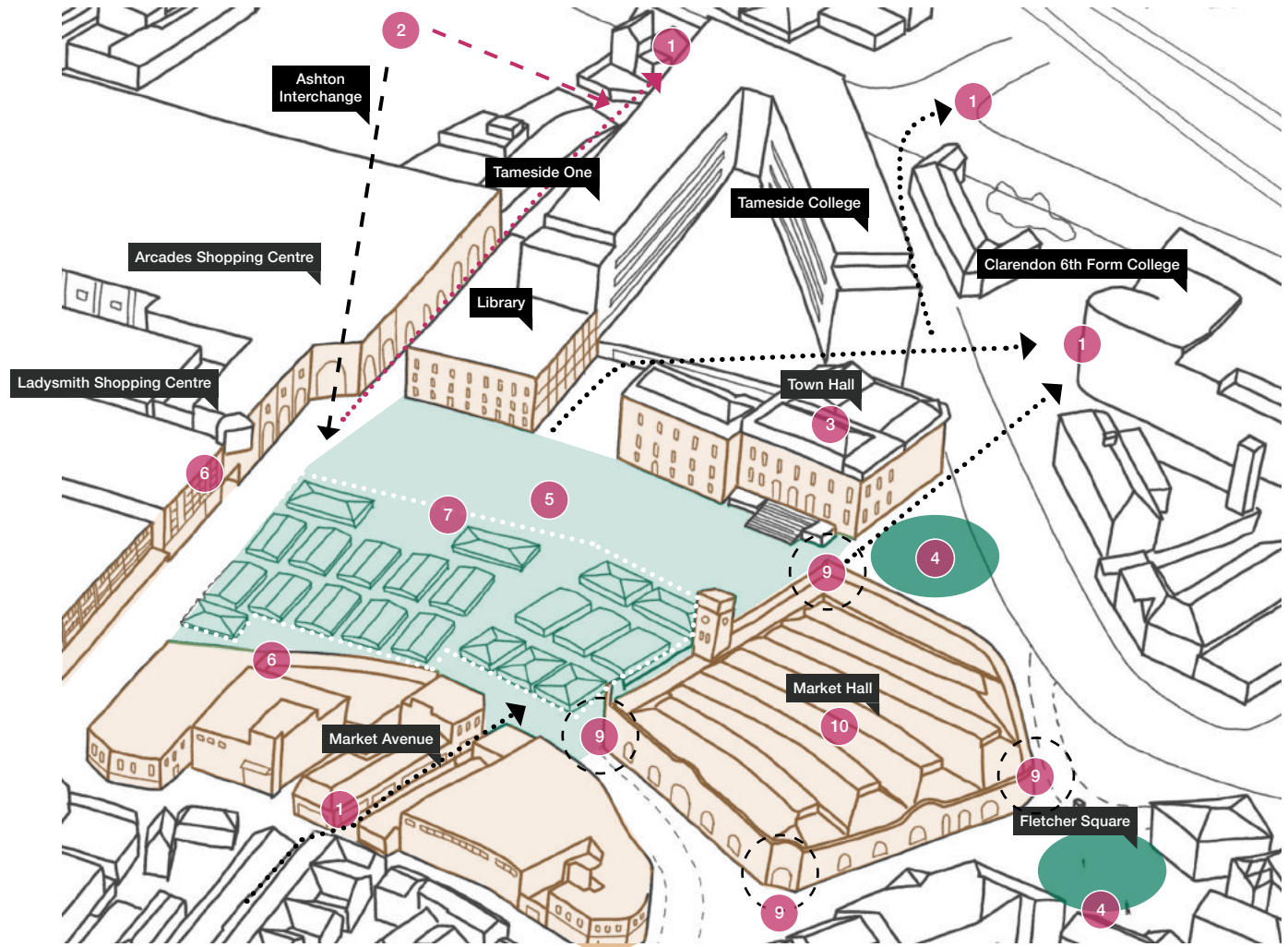


Diagram illustrating the key challenges and opportunities

## Key Considerations

- Improve and reduce visual impact of the stalls and kiosks, to open up the views and create a backdrop of the Town Hall and Market Hall buildings.
- Discourage anti-social behaviour by improving the quality of spaces and natural surveillance.
- Provide Seating and lighting in key locations and routes.
- Consolidate entrances to the Market Hall.
- Improve the Market Quarter's identity through signage, and wayfinding to key destinations.
- Remove clutter in the streets and spaces
- Add smart technology and innovative solutions for refuse.
- Provide green spaces and streets.
- Opportunity to manage people and cars (and emergency vehicles and servicing) with bollards

Page 309



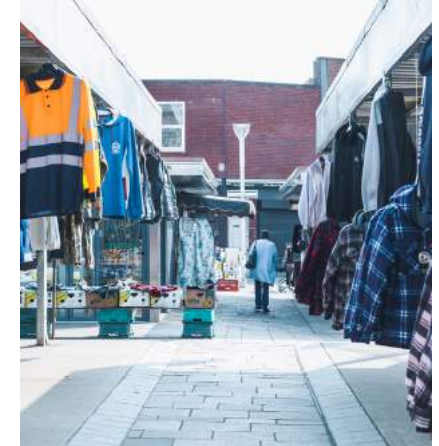
Numerous entrances to the Market Hall is confusing for visitors



Access to the Ladysmith Shopping Centre is hidden by stalls



Potential to improve the public realm to create a friendly and attractive route around the Market Hall



Limited visibility through market stalls and kiosks



Uses surrounding the market are not attractive to visitors discouraging dwelling time. Empty stalls are not and encourage anti-social behaviour



Street clutter and furniture restricts movement through the Market

# A Modern Market Vision



Active edges around the Market Square will encourage footfall and activity

The vision includes the following key design elements:

- A flexible space to support a programme of entertainment and cultural events to attract visitors into the town centre.
- Accessible. A robust and durable single unified surface to meet modern accessibility standards. Incorporate access and servicing requirements.
- A layout to encourage permeability of visitors through the space, considering connections to the surrounding streets.
- Increased outdoor informal seating, and dedicated seating areas for eating and drinking to support and enhance spill out from the market hall.
- Inclusive and welcomes everyone. Uses to meet the needs of all ages and incorporating interactive play elements.
- A new canopy to provide a designated under-cover area for markets to include flexible, durable market stalls and kiosks
- New trees and planting to create an attractive environment and improve air quality and carbon sequestration.
- Improved way-finding, street furniture and lighting for encourage safety and reduce anti-social behaviour.
- Public art to be incorporated to celebrate the heritage and story of Ashton.
- An improved waste management system, improved public toilet facilities, and designated storage for stallholders.

A welcoming high quality modern Market Square



Supporting the day and night time offer with outdoor, weather proof seating



Celebrate the Market Hall



Add attractive planting and trees, creating amenity to increase dwelling time in the square



Improve visibility, future proof connections and enhance legibility in the square



Facilitate walking and increase footfall



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Umbrellas with integrated lighting provide flexibility to assigned stalls for vendors.



Umbrellas with integrated lighting provide flexibility to assigned stalls for vendors.



Flexible, specialist stalls could be hosted in the Market Square

# Spatial Design Principles

The following diagrams illustrate the spatial moves that underpin the proposed options for the Market Square that inform a series of design principles for the Market Square as shown on pages 29, 30 and 31.

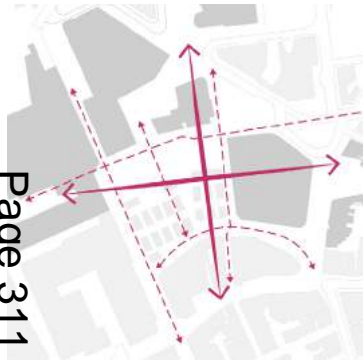
Page 311

**Key**

- Key landmark axis
- - -> Key route axis
- ▤ Prevalent wind
- ▨ Shady areas
- - -> Sun path
- Ashton Arrival
- ⋯ Pedestrian circulation
- Vehicular movement
- ▬ Frontages

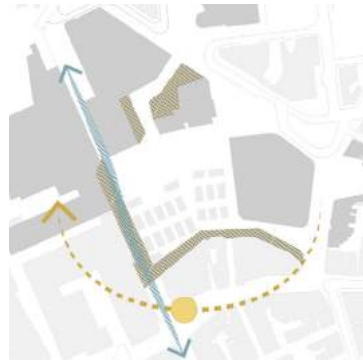
**Market Square spaces:**

- Canopy
- Flexible events space including informal play
- Town Hall spill out
- Market Hall canopy
- Arrival space
- Through route from Clarendon Sixth Form College and Tameside One



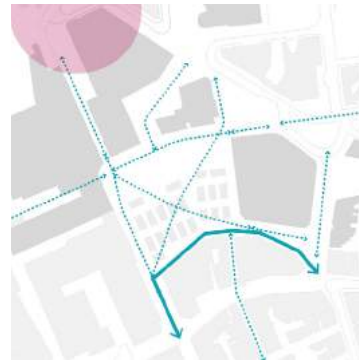
## Spatial Character

The Town Hall and Market Hall define a strong axis, influencing the Market Square's geometric layout. The geometry sets out clear zones within the space. The canopy will be positioned to retain these established axis, informed by the landmark heritage buildings.



## Weather Conditions

Spaces in front of the Town Hall and Market Hall benefit from sunlight, spill out and seating areas should avoid overshadowed areas. The prevalent wind direction funnels through Warrington Street and designs should respond to this. The weather proof canopy will be located in southern the overshadowed areas to maximise the sunshine in the north of the square.



## Access and Circulation

The current stall positions and orientation conflicts with the flow of movement and restricts permeability. The proposals will improve flow and circulation through the space. The canopy and kiosk layout will allow for permeability through it and allow east west and north south connections. Servicing access to the canopy and kiosks will be retained from Bow Street.



## Frontages and Uses

A variety of uses activate the frontages that surround the Market Square, shaping the character and function of the space. Uses are split between civic, retail and leisure. Design proposals will consider active frontages along main routes and spaces to positively contribute to the Market Square. The canopy position will allow for spill out from the Town Hall and Market Mall



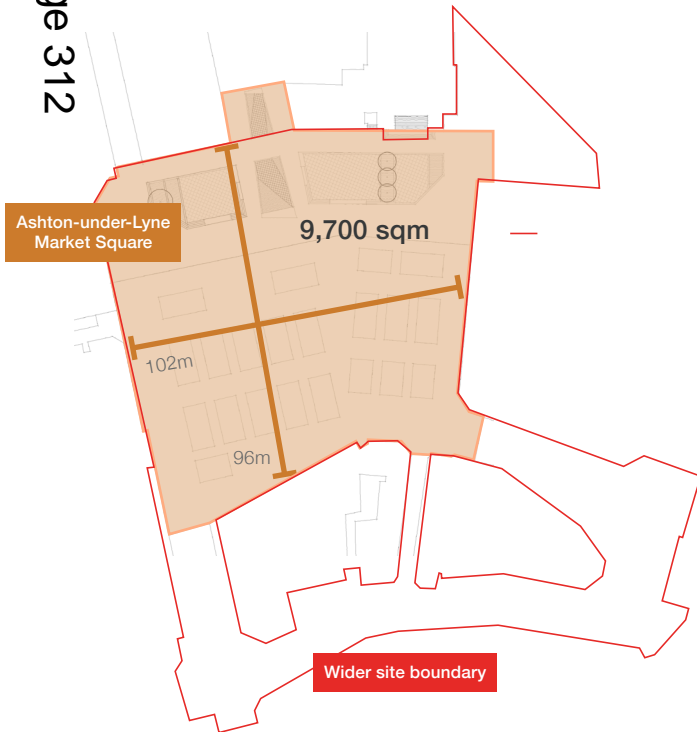
## Spaces

The Market Square will be designed to be a flexible space, consisting of zones that connect. A large space in front of the Town Hall will be reserved for events, with a series of connecting smaller spaces providing places to socialise, relax and play. A weather proof canopy will be located to retain the most appropriate position for flexible events.

# Understanding Scale

Scale plays a major role in influencing the life and character of the space. The following case studies demonstrate how the potential of public spaces can be maximised to create lively, vibrant places for everyone.

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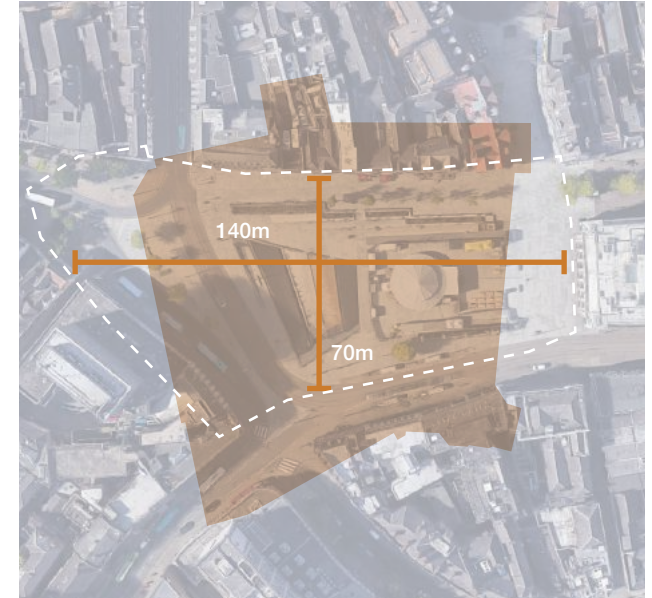
### Albert Square, Manchester



Area: 8,000 sqm



### Nottingham Old Market Square



Area: 13,338 sqm

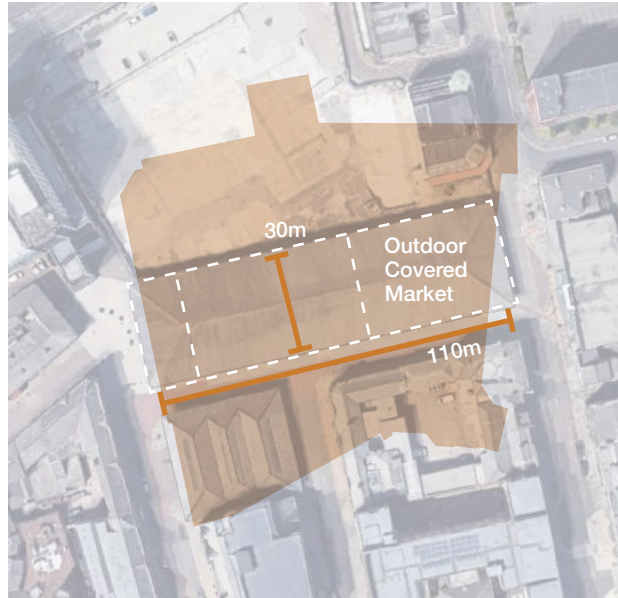


### Torvehallerne Norreport, Copenhagen



Area: 9,616 sqm

### Preston Flag Market



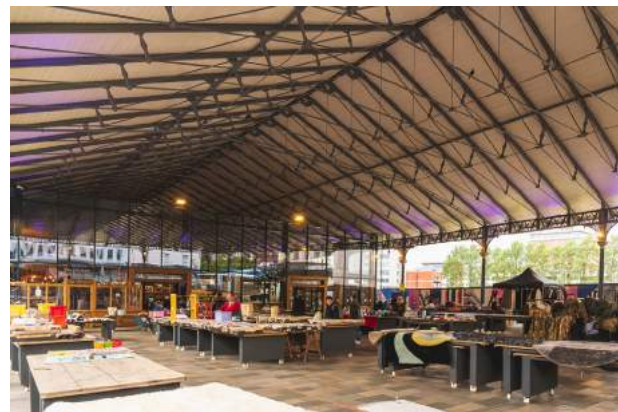
Area: 3,430 sqm

### Great Yarmouth Covered Market



Area: 5,504 sqm

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# Human Scale

Human scale is fundamental to the design of successful public spaces.

Spaces should be allowed for one person to retreat to, as well as areas large enough to comfortably accommodate busy and vibrant events, perhaps multiple types of events.

A distance of 1.5m allows for easy conversation and interaction between a small group of people whilst at a 30m distance we are still able to perceive facial expressions.

1 person



Crossrail roof garden, London

5 people



Harvard plaza, Massachusetts

50 people

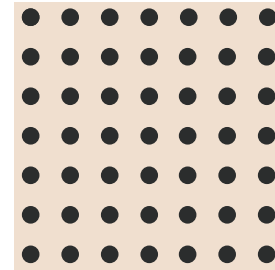


Kings Cross Granary Square

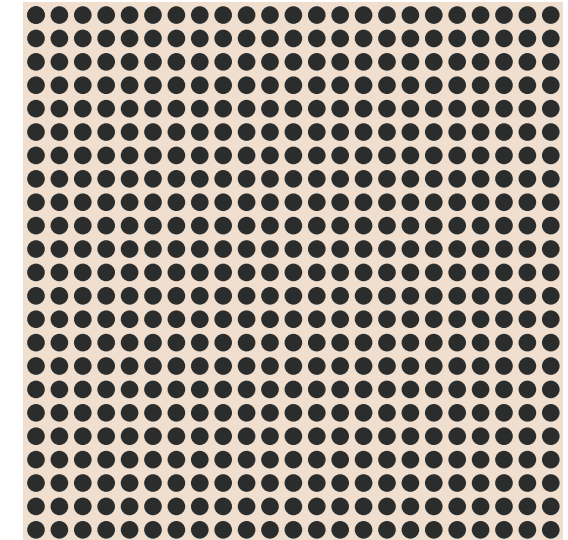
500+ people



Cambridge folk Festival,

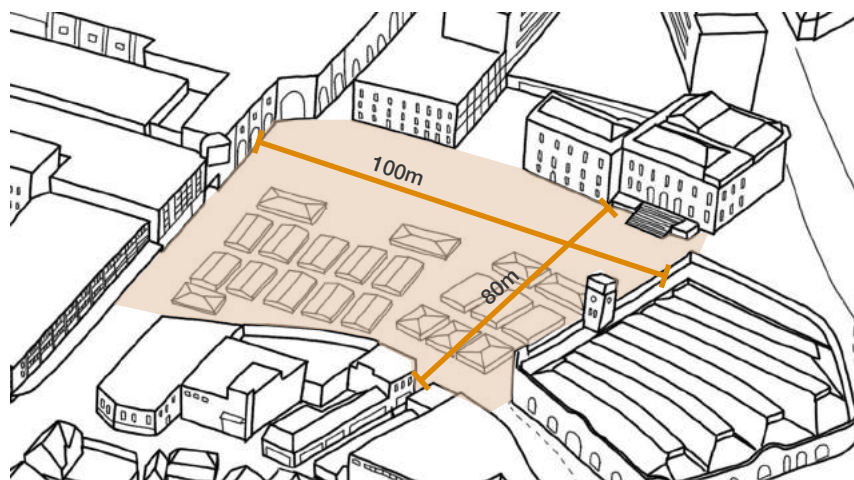


15x15m



30x30m

Ashton Market Square - 500+ people



100x80m



# A Programme of Events

A variety of events will be planned for the re-imagined Ashton Market Square including eating and drinking, crafts, culture and family fun throughout the year.

The programme of events will be designed to welcome all ages and demographics.

Page 315



An example of precedents for different types of events

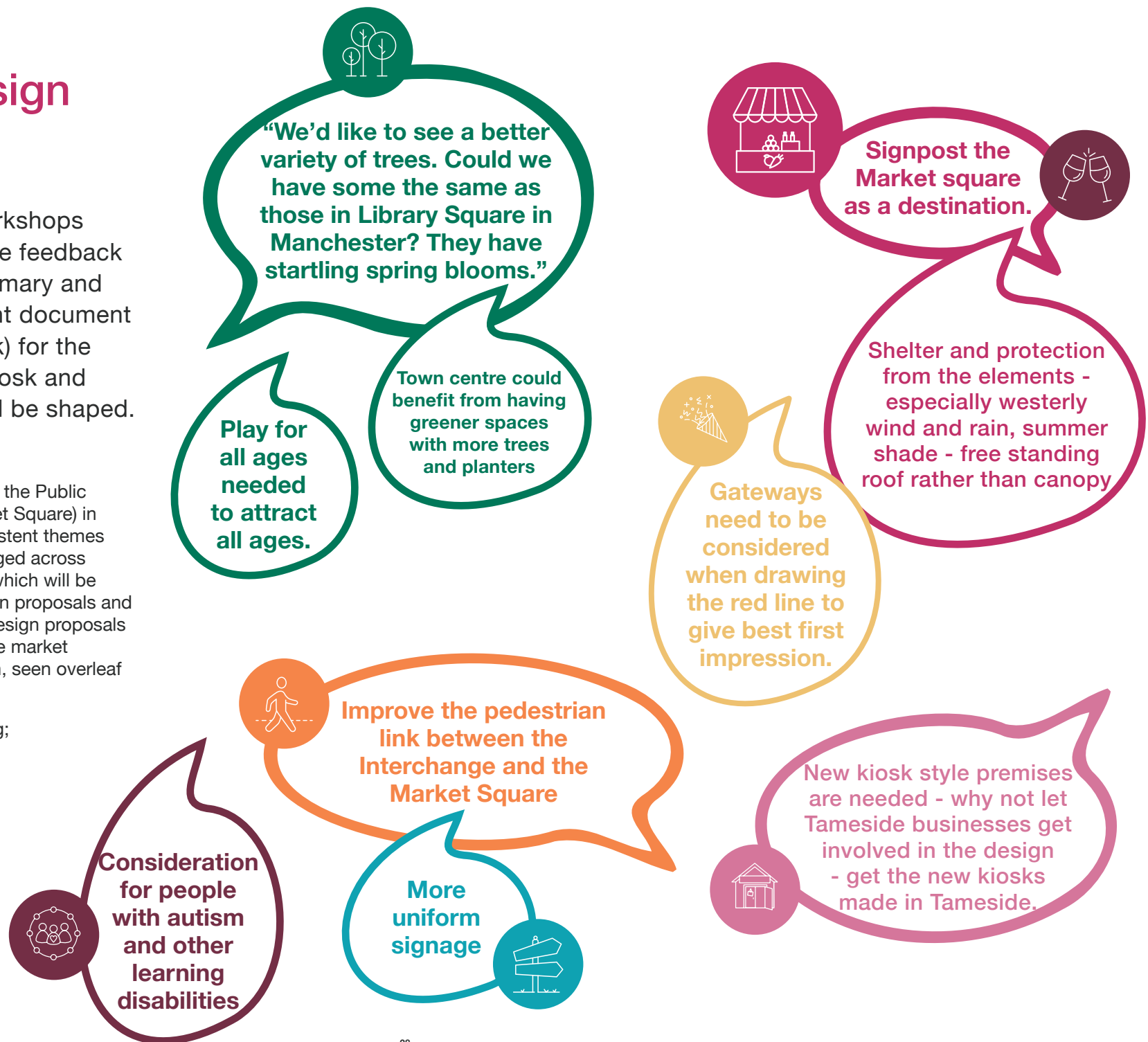
# Illustrative Design Principles

From the Consultation workshops undertaken for Stage 2, the feedback (see pages 8-11 for a summary and the Consultation Statement document for full detail and feedback) for the Market Square; canopy, kiosk and public realm proposals will be shaped.

## Consultation Key Messages

Following the public consultation of the Public Realm Strategy (Phase One - Market Square) in November 2022, a number of consistent themes and important considerations emerged across the various consultation sessions, which will be incorporated into the detailed design proposals and delivery. The emerging illustrative design proposals have been included in the illustrative market proposal and design proposals plan, seen overleaf and on the next pages.

The feedback included the following;



# Illustrative Design Proposals

The illustrative Market Square plan illustrates one way that the design principles could be brought forward. The plan illustrates the key design principles and guidance for the detailed design stages of the Market Square.

The illustrative plan is indicative and subject to further technical considerations, surveys and the detailed design process. The findings from the contextual analysis and feedback from the consultation have shaped the illustrative Market Square Plans.

The emerging ideas include;

## Public Realm

1. Informal play area within the Market Square
2. An arrival space beside the Town Hall which will announce the Market Square
3. Emphasise and retain views to and from the Town Hall and Market Hall from key streets and spaces
4. Signage with strong branding from key streets and spaces will guide visitors from and to the Town Hall and Market Hall
5. The public realm will be designed for less able persons – level changes and lighting will create accessible routes
6. Heritage interpretation will be incorporated into the public realm design
7. A sustainable urban drainage approach will assist in responding to local climatic conditions
8. Servicing access along Bow Street for traders will be retained
9. Cycle parking areas on the periphery of the Market Square
10. Intimate spaces will be designed into the public realm
11. Planting will be proposed within the Market Square, avoiding grassed areas, instead providing planted areas that are easy to maintain (consider current issue with trees and bird droppings by seated areas).
12. Spill out from the Market Hall to allow for seating and F&B.


















## Kiosks

13. Kiosks will be designed to be located underneath the canopy (exact location and number of kiosks will be determined at the detailed design stage).
14. Design recommendations/requirements from kiosk traders relating to; kiosk design, lighting, storage, waste and servicing (consider VAT requirement) will be incorporated into the detail design of the kiosks
15. Consideration to the height of the kiosk structure, key views towards heritage buildings, and access to the first floor level within the canopy will be designed holistically

## Canopy

16. Factor in environmental conditions (south-westerly wind and rain) within the canopy design
17. Space within the canopy for ticketed events and security measures during night-time hours will be designed into the canopy features.
18. Allow for movement and circulation through the canopy to enhance permeability.
19. The design will consider security at night-time and avoid anti-social behaviour.

Key

-  Main Market canopy structure
-  Canopy overhang
-  1 Market Kiosks (under canopy)
-  2 Market stalls (under canopy)
-  3 Temporary seating and market stalls for events with cover (large)
-  4 Waste and storage facilities for kiosk traders will be incorporated into the detail design of the kiosks
-  Flexible event space area
-  Proposed trees
-  Proposed informal seating area
-  Proposed cycle storage
-  Proposed lighting
-  Entrance to Market Hall
-  Active frontage to kiosk units
-  Active frontages
-  Passive Movement Zone
-  Key Views
-  South Westerly wind



Illustrative Market Square proposals plan (proposals are indicative and subject to further detailed design)

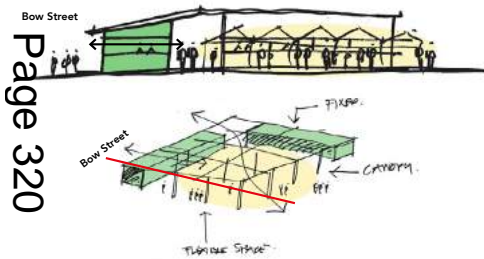


# Canopy Design Principles

The following pages are a series of sketch options of the potential plan, elevations and massing for the canopy structure within the Market Square, considering weather conditions, views and the historical context.

The design options follows consultation suggestions, as described on pages 10-14, to provide shelter and protection from the elements, improved accessibility, kiosks with spill out spaces for the night-time economy, and an intimate space overlooked by kiosks.

## Option 1



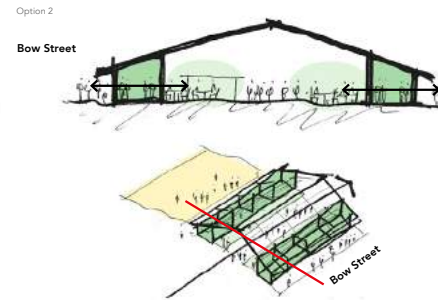
This option studies access to the Market Square from different arrival points. The canopy structure is composed of a low-sloped roof with two perpendicular rows of kiosks that face in and out of the canopy, enclosed on two sides the open space for stalls.



Views to the Market Hall are preserved, although visibility towards the Town Hall is limited by the kiosks.

The design of the canopy is permeable and allows for desire lines and paths through to the Square.

## Option 2



The canopy structure of this option consists of a pitched roof with kiosks on each side. Views and connectivity are enhanced through the slopes of the roof, highlighting the Market Hall.

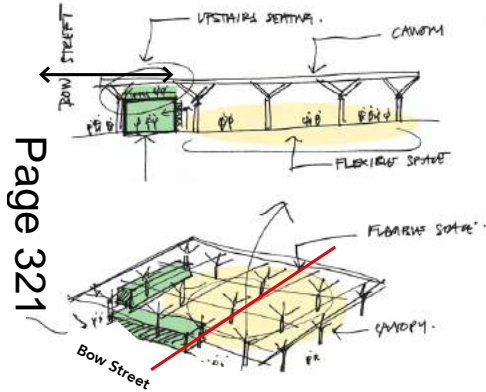


This options also provides a central atrium for spill out from kiosks.

Market stalls would not be accommodated underneath the canopy, and would not provide cover for the market traders.

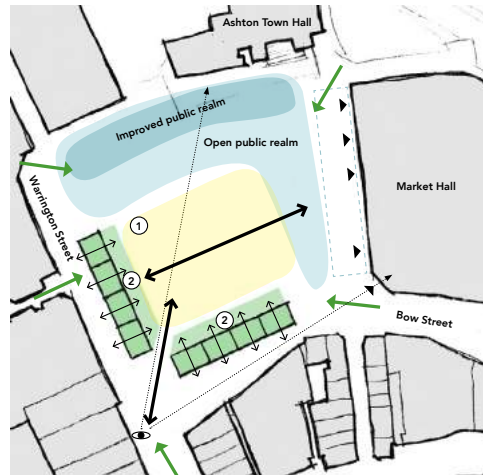
These options are part of an on-going process, and the final design on the canopy, kiosks and Market Square layout are subject to further detail design stages.

### Option 3



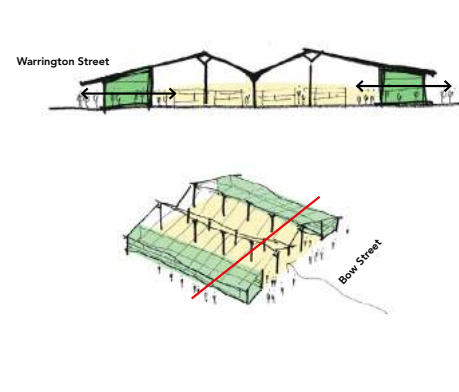
This option, derived from option 1, studies the possibility of enhancing views to both the Town Hall and the Market Hall.

The alignment of kiosks allows for stalls to be accommodated under the canopy.

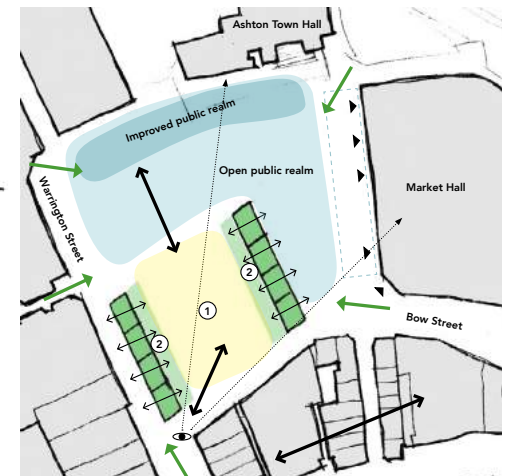


The design of the canopy is permeable and desire lines and paths through into the Square are possible. This would help improve connectivity and legibility, as well as creating a better relationship between the open public realm of the square and the relationship with both the Town Hall and Market Hall.

### Option 4



The canopy structure of this option consists of a double pitched roof with kiosks on each side. Connectivity with the public realm is enhanced, and it further allows for market stalls and spill out from kiosks to be accommodated underneath the canopy.



Kiosks on either side of the canopy create active frontages towards Warrington Street and the Market Hall but views towards the Market Hall and the Town Hall are limited by this layout.

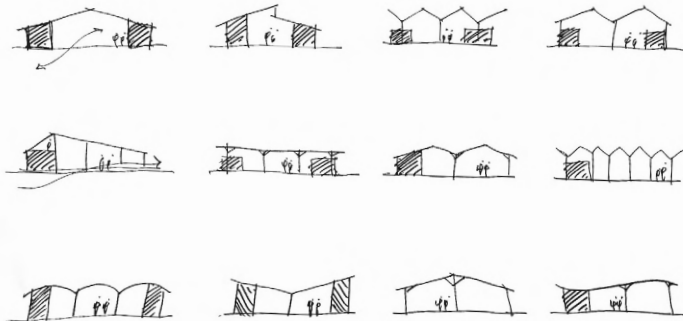
# Market Square

The design of the canopy needs to be sensitive to the surrounding buildings and context, including views from key streets and spaces. The following images show the different massing options, kiosk layout, and roof typologies that are being tested through the design development to address the context.

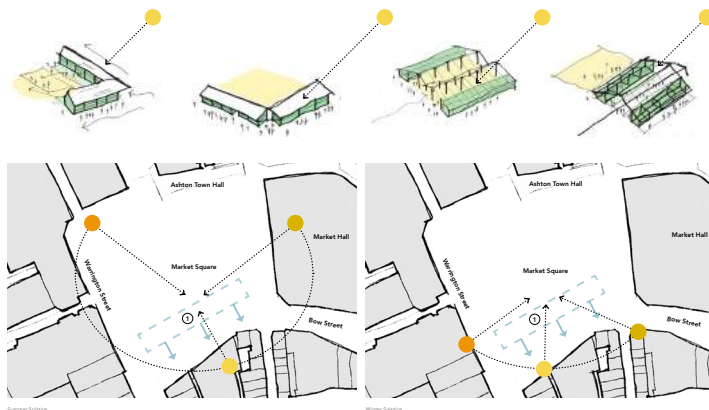
Weather analysis and sun studies are being carried out to provide a design solution that will successfully incorporate such considerations, as well as concerns raised in the consultation process, into the design of a weather-proof canopy.

Design and materiality of the canopy structure and kiosk must respect heritage and complement the Market Hall, Town Hall, and character of Ashton in a positive way.

Roof typologies  
Page 322



## Sun study



Constellations Bar Liverpool



House of Switzerland Pavilion



Grote Markt, Belgium



Balti Jaama Turg Market, Tallin



Yarmouth Covered Market



# The Kiosks

The kiosks will be located underneath the canopy structure for year-round protection. There is potential for the kiosks to work within the canopy, with first floor access.

Further consideration to the kiosks and their design will be required. These include elements that were highlighted during the consultation process and can be found in the consultation summary.

The considerations are as follows:

- Lighting strategy for the kiosks and stalls,
- Storage for market traders, included within the design of the kiosks and stalls, as well as provision for maintenance equipment storage,
- Design consideration of the kiosks and the waste management, including storing, disposing and collection of refuse,
- Power and utility facilities for kiosks, storage units and flexible space under canopy (for market traders/stalls and/or for flexible events under canopy),
- Servicing, including goods loading and unloading,
- Security, including potential to fully close canopy and kiosks outside of opening hours.



Lower market, Altrincham



Old Spitalfields Market, London



Kärda Central Square, Estonian island Hiiumaa



Borough Market, London



Shambles Market, York

# Public Realm

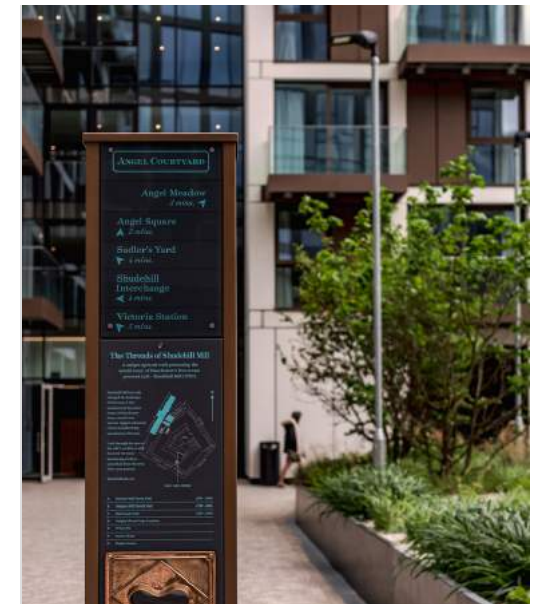
The redevelopment of the Market Square presents an opportunity to create better-connected, better-looking public spaces that build on Ashton's proud history and heritage, and provide a sense of consistency across the town centre.

The Market Square will be a space to host flexible events through the year. Proposals should include heritage interpretation, wayfinding and signage which is unique to Ashton.

Following the consultation process and comments from different stakeholders, there is potential to introduce attractive tree planting to create permeable wind breaks, and to create amenity through planted areas for seasonal interest which can further incorporate informal areas for seating and play.



A flexible open hard square where some permanent stalls are removed to host a variety of events



Potential for more stylised totems incorporating branding



Jaktgatan and Lövängsgatan, Stockholm



Hapa Collaborative Square, Canada



Curved seating with planted areas



Historical dates, text and imagery can be cut into paving and steps



Hertig Johans Torg Och Gata, Skövde, Sweden



Hertig Johans Torg Och Gata, Skövde, Sweden



Ede Market Square, The Netherlands



The Mall of Tripla, Fredikanterassi Square, Finland



Market place, Willich, Germany

# Brand Identity

Vibrant branding is pivotal to creating an attractive, successful and thriving market.

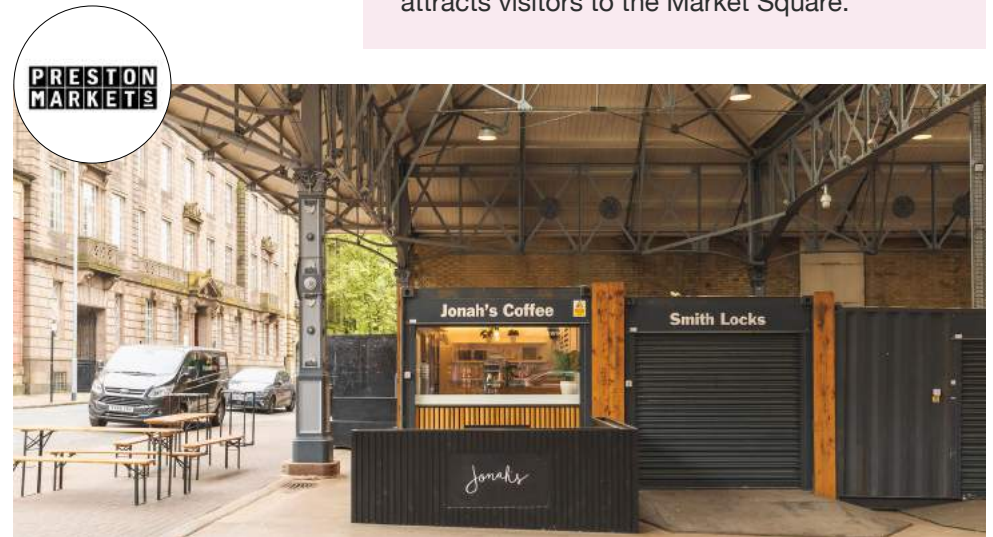
The adjacent images are all examples of successful UK markets where good branding has elevated their appeal to a wider audience.

Ashton Market Square is currently lacking branding and identity. There is potential to create an iconic logo and branding for the market and wider town centre which reflects the history of Ashton, that will give potential to create a market that is a destination venue.

This same logo can be utilised across all social media platforms and any marketing imagery used to promote the permanent and flexible stalls, as well as future events, drawing a wide audience to create a sustainable market town for Ashton-under-Lyne.



Warrington Market has created an attractive space in the town



Preston Market - simple and successful branding defines the upgrades to the market



Altrincham Market has transformed Altrincham into a vibrant town



Hatch - a popular temporary food market in central Manchester



Mackie Mayor - a thriving central Manchester food market and evening venue

A recommendation is to create a brand identity and tool kit to be implemented within the public realm design and marketing, to create a unique identity that captures the essence of Ashton and attracts visitors to the Market Square.

# Lighting

Lighting can alter the atmosphere of a place and create lively unique spaces.

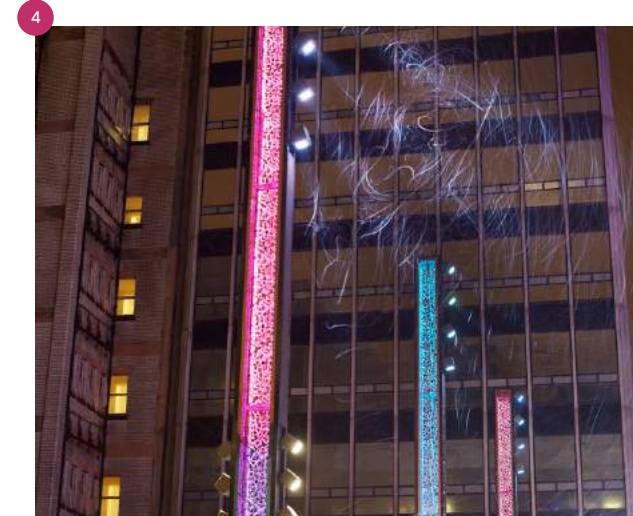
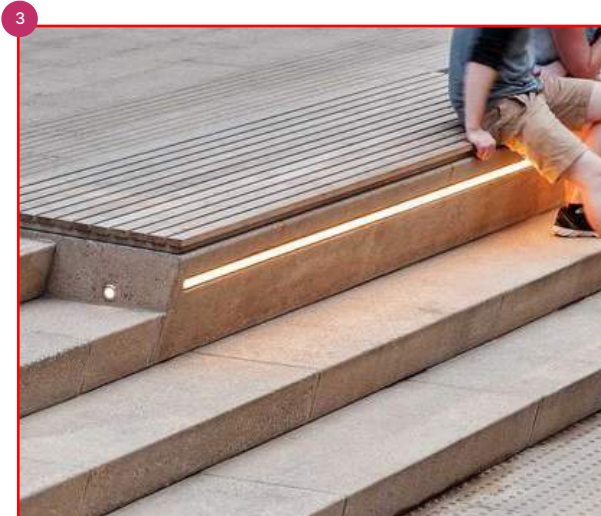
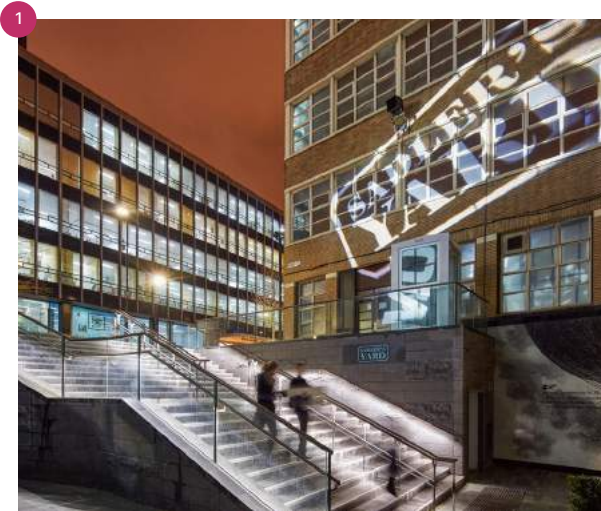
Although its primary purpose is night-time visibility for security and safety, successful street lighting takes into account the human users of the street, and curates a sense of place or atmosphere. The type, placement, and wattage of street lighting affects how a street is perceived and used.

Lighting design will celebrate the distinctive identity and history and draw attention to the uniqueness of Ashton. Lighting will animate the spaces and create a safe and vibrant environment at night-time.

Lighting at Ashton Market Square will:

Increase safety in high-use spaces and movement corridors, such as walkways and bus stops.

- Aid in geographic orientation, as people can use well-lit focal points as landmarks to help them find their way.
- Celebrate the distinctive identity and history of an area, for well-lit townscape details draw attention to the uniqueness of an area.
- Create a sense of intrigue and drama. Accentuate character and sense of place.
- Curate distinctive atmospheres and encourage particular uses.



1. Lighting illuminates buildings at night-time at Saddler's Yard, Manchester

2. Lighting on walls and floor surfaces creates safe spaces

3. Illuminated details, Chicago Riverwalk Expansion

4. Artistic interventions add colour and playful space, Saddler's Yard Manchester

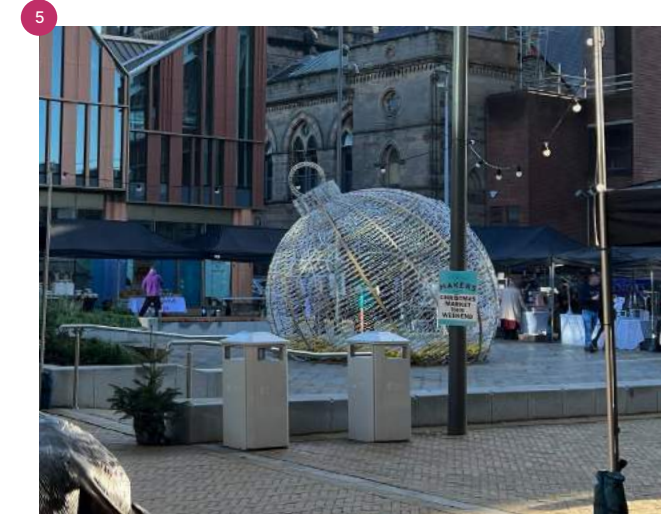
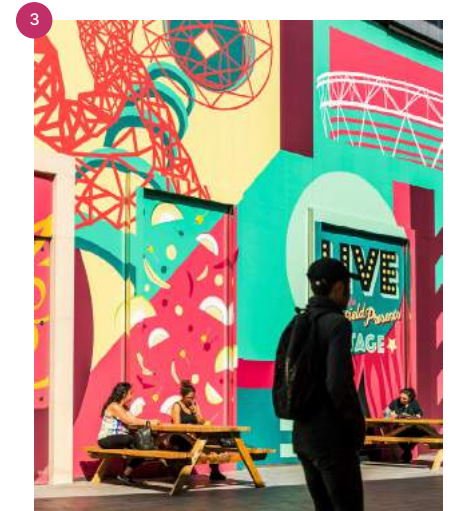
# Public Art and Heritage Interpretation

Through the regeneration of the Market Square, there is a need and opportunity to curate a positive image of place for Ashton Town Centre, celebrating cultural and heritage identity, accentuate local character and distinctiveness, and enliven the space with the use of public art and place branding.

Engaging with both artists and the community early in the planning process for public spaces is crucial to developing successful public art. There is an opportunity to build community cohesion and create a sense of community ownership.

Art and sculpture can help to develop a positive visual identity for Ashton, creating enriching experiences and sensory stimulation. Historical networks, including sculptures, statues and other public art could help create sense of arrival into the Market Square.

Exploration of neglected streets such as Market Avenue and Clarendon Sixth Form College Walk suffer from low footfall and a poor pedestrian experience, should be encouraged through the use of public art.



1. Landmark public art creates a sense of arrival at Altrincham Town Centre

2. Sculptural street furniture references heritage at Goose Green, Altrincham

3. Murals by local artists creates a fun environment to the rear of development to activate under utilised

4. Illuminated public references culture

5. Artistic interventions attracts visitors at Chester Market

# Way-finding

Understanding users is key to implementing an effective way-finding strategy at the Market Square.

It is important that improvements create a legible environment and enhance way-finding for people walking, wheeling, cycling and driving. It is important to encourage walkability, and to inspire exploration of the Market Square and the wider Town Centre. Way-finding can play a significant role in making the Market Square feel accessible reconnecting to the wider town and key movement nodes.

Way-finding should be curated through intuitive landscape, active building frontages, street furniture and features, landscape elements and materials, used to guide users through different areas of the space.

Consistent signage will guide people from arrival points and destinations. Good way-finding can encourage learning experiences; create a distinctive image for a place; and local pride by incorporating history or cultural details.



1. Way-finding and signage at Saddler's Yard, Manchester
2. Brand identity within way-finding at Cotton Field, Islington
3. Accessible Braille Navigation Charter Square, Sheffield
4. Map engraved into floor surface, The Strand, London.

# Street Furniture

Street furniture will be functional and durable meeting safety requirements. Attractive street furniture will create a welcoming environment encouraging people to dwell for longer in the Market Square.

Cohesion will be created with high quality and accessible street furniture that is consistent with the branding and offers various arrangements for people with different levels of mobility. Street furniture will be designed for the long term, it will fit with the heritage character and avoid off the shelf standard products.

Street furniture will include bike parking and incorporate playful and interactive elements.



Page 330

1. Cycle storage designed to be in keeping with the character, Altrincham
2. Seating and art could be combined with a playful element
3. Illuminated furniture and details, The Mall of Tripla, Fredikanterassi Square, Finland
- 4 Heritage interpretation incorporates public art and water to encourage play for children, Warrington



# Materiality

Ashton is rich in heritage and its unique character will inspire a palette of complimentary surfaces, materials and street furniture to create a consistent approach in the Town Centre. Contrast in specific areas will create interest and variety.

## Heritage Character

Ashton Town Centre and its Market Square consist of a variety of materials. The heritage buildings are predominantly red brick with stone detailing and occasional land mark buildings are made from stone such as the Town Hall. There are modern buildings framing the square to the east and south frontages, these are inappropriate and poor quality. The materials palette will avoid replicating these buildings.

Materials and structures within the Market Square proposals will consist of either similar materials or complimentary materials.

Market Square surface materials are mainly Porphyry flags tiles in red and grey. There are some areas of concrete slabs and tarmac, replicating this will be avoided in the proposals.

The market square includes existing high quality surfaces. To minimise waste and reduce embodied carbon emissions, materials will

be recycled or re-used where possible.

In order to fully understand the potential to reuse the existing tiles in the Market Square it is essential to understand the existing laying conditions, the depths of the unit sizes, and the ability to successfully lift the material without excessive breakages. A ground investigation is required to establish the existing situation.

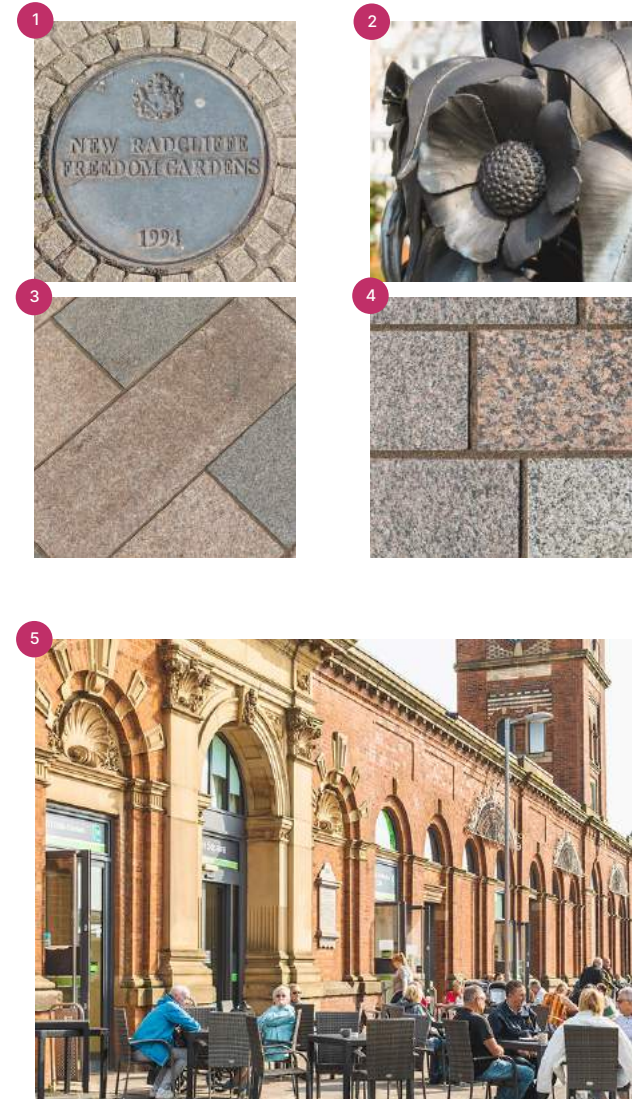
There are many considerations associated with the re-use of materials:

- Tiles could be damaged or broken due to kiosk fixings and the removal of stalls
- Ground conditions will need to be investigated.
- Method of laying tiles and incorporating new tiles.

Complimentary surface materials and patterns will allow for flexibility of materials and contingency associated with the re-use of materials.

There is potential to recycle broken surface materials and paving into unique street furniture elements, inviting local artists to design installations and usable street furniture, this could be incorporated in the surrounding areas of Ashton.

1. Existing inlays in paving highlights landmarks in the town centre
2. Existing sculptural elements create contrast with street materials
3. Existing paving materials by Ashton Old Baths
4. Existing paving materials by the Ashton Interchange
5. Market Hall consists of red brick and stone detailing



## Design Drivers

Materials and street furniture will include high quality, robust and sustainable materials to create an attractive environment that is durable. The materials palette will be informed by the design drivers below:

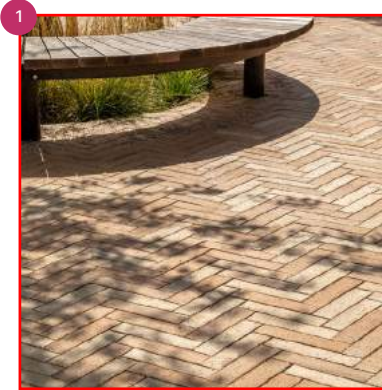
- Contextual character - Materials must draw on the historical and present day pallet of materials.

**Page 332** Cohesive - Creating a cohesive public realm that expands and enhances the quality of the existing area.

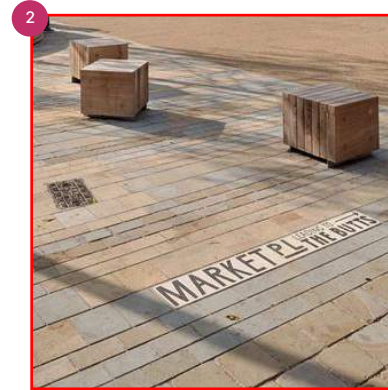
Inclusive and accessible - Ensuring that hard material selection and arrangement meets the needs of all users.

- Scale - Ensuring materials are of an appropriate scale and character for the use of the space or street.
- Durability - Material selection must be durable ensuring that each material is fit for purpose, easily sourced, has manageable maintenance regimes, meets all applicable B.S and E.N safety/quality standards.
- Sustainability - Credentials and carbon impact of the materials and products being used, in terms of manufacture and shipping/transportation.

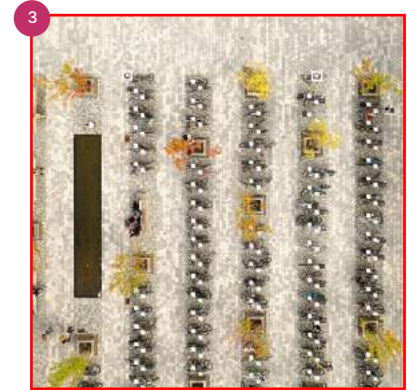
The specification of materials will be decided at detailed planning stages, costs and budgets will influence proposals. The following examples are inspiration for the selection.



Jyllinge Recreational Square



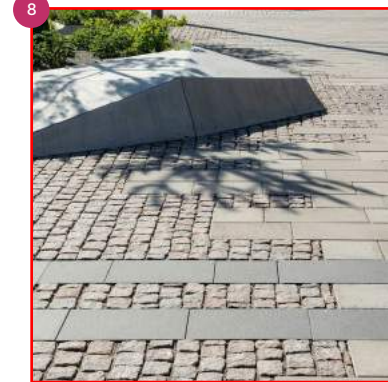
Reference to heritage engraved in surfaces



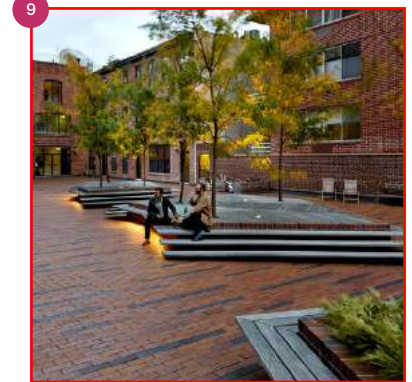
Marktplatz in Bünde, Germany



Kärđla Central Square, Estonian island Hiiumaa



Example of existing floor materials combined with new surfaces



Archipelago Courtyard, Brooklyn

The Market fringes are part of part of the overall vision for the future regeneration of Ashton Town Centre. A comprehensive approach to the design of the Market Square and the surrounding streets and spaces creates a future proof plan.

## Future phasing and delivery

The following pages describe the design principles and guidance for the future phases of regeneration and the market fringes. The following streets and spaces will form part of the detailed design stage, up to RIBA stage 2. These areas will be excluded from the Levelling Up Fund and delivered at a later stage.

- Wellington Square
- Clarendon Sixth Form College and Tameside One Walk
- Market Street and Fletcher Square
- Warrington Street
- Market Hall and Market Hall canopy.
- Market Avenue

The delivery of these streets and spaces will be subject to future funding opportunities.

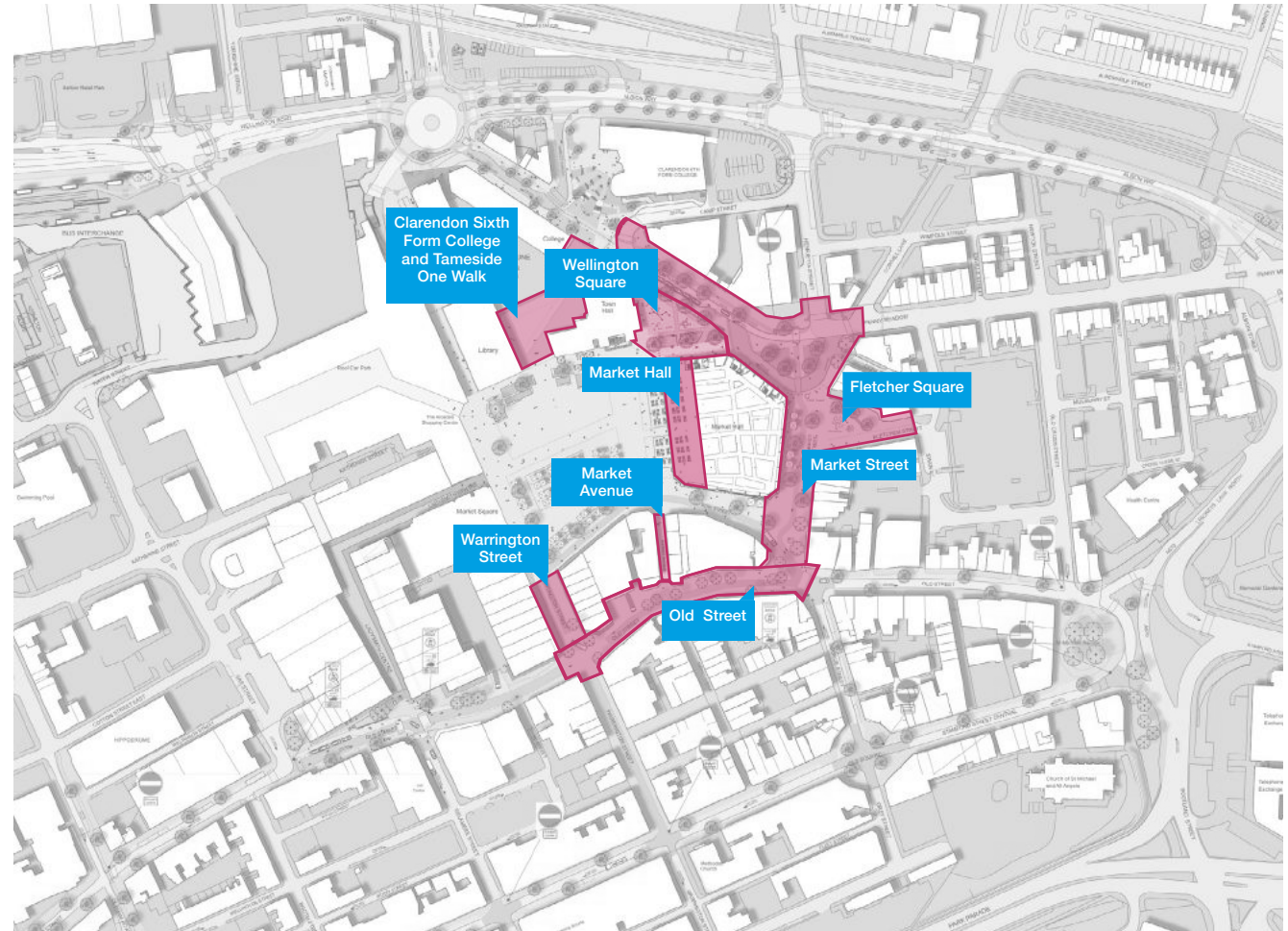
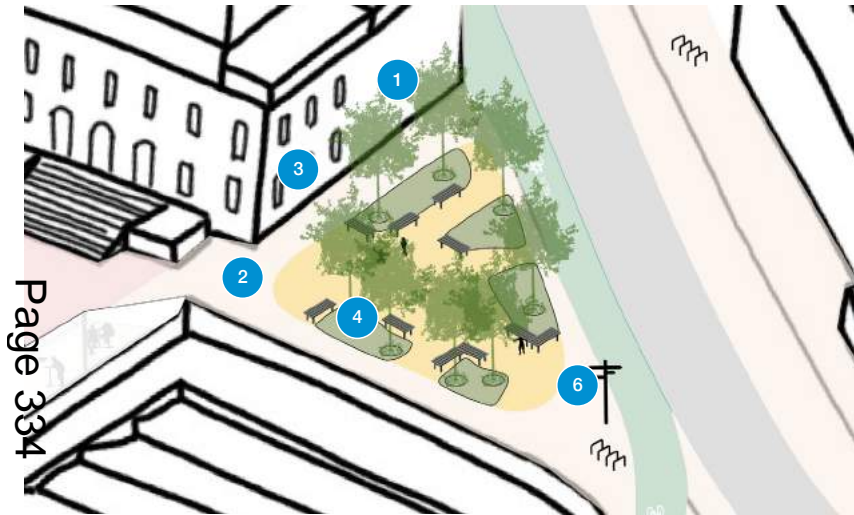


Diagram illustrating the Future Phases

 Future Phases, detailed design to RIBA Stage 2

# Wellington Square

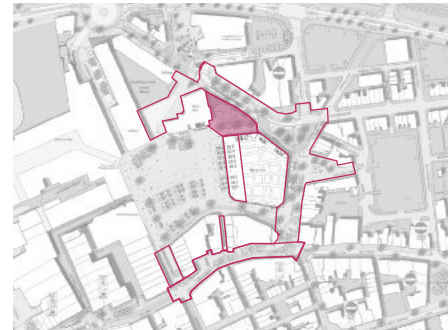
A key arrival space situated by the Town Hall and drop-off. It has potential to become a key gateway into the Market Square.



Wellington Square design principles

Wellington Square will complement the Market Square offer of a public, accessible and calm green space to dwell. Key qualities include:

1. Trees and planting to improve air quality and attract nature.
2. High quality design and materials to celebrate heritage buildings within the surrounding the area.
3. Buildings are orientated to provide natural surveillance to create a safe environment for all ages.
4. Seating is designed to surround the space to provide overlooking.
5. Penny Meadows and Wellington Road includes spaces where people can move around easily.
6. Signage and wayfinding reflects the identity of Ashton's Market Square and the town centre.



Location plan



Interactive sculptural elements provide interest and are informative, alongside seating



Attractive signage announces the space alongside attractive seasonal planting



Feature seating within planting offers a calmer environment

# Market Street / Fletcher Square

Fletcher Square is a historic space which connects the east of Ashton Town Centre with the Market Hall and Market Square, through Swan Street. It has potential to be an intimate arrival space with informal play and spill out from surrounding uses.

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Informal, incidental and interactive play element



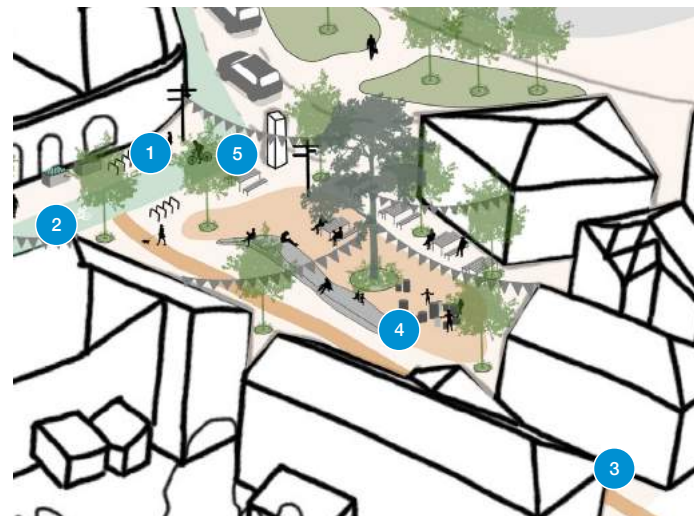
Location plan



An attractive route with planting and pedestrian and cyclist priority



Tree-lined, pedestrian and cycling route with cycle parking and planting



Market Street and Fletcher Square design principles

Market Street comprises incidental spaces which can complement Market Square. Key qualities include:

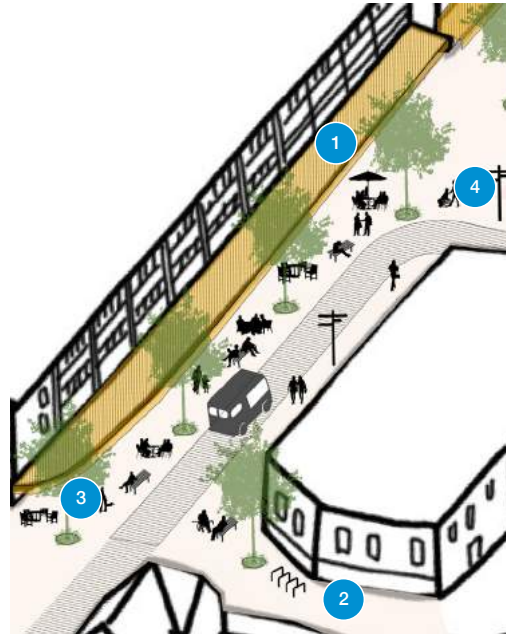
1. A flexible open space for seasonal events around the Market Hall which complement activities in the Market
2. A cycle route through Market Street creates a critical north-south connection through the town centre
3. A pedestrian route to Swan Street connects the east of Ashton with the Market Quarter, incidental seating and art murals create an attractive route
4. Opportunity for spill-out spaces in Fletcher Square from the surrounding buildings
5. An avenue of trees on Market Street with high clear stems creates an attractive cycle and pedestrian through-route
6. High quality materials used and re-used within the spaces to create attractive streets and spaces

# Warrington Street

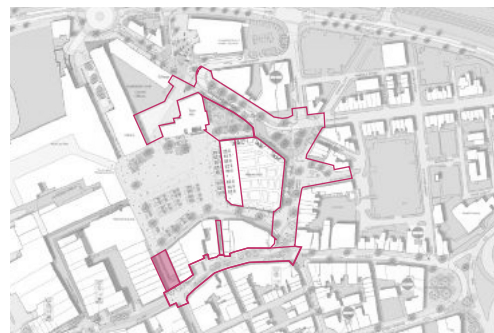
Warrington Street is a key north-south pedestrian connection in Ashton Town Centre.

Warrington Street, a pedestrianised street, is a key link between Market Square, Stamford Street Central and the transport interchange.

Improvements to the public realm are proposed, creating a lively and inviting atmosphere for residents and visitors alike. Spill out from food and beverage and other businesses provides amenity for shoppers; attractive pavement, street art, lighting, and installations lighten up the atmosphere and create an inviting environment.



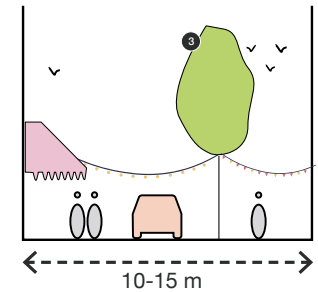
Warrington Street design principles



Location plan

1. Proposed new and existing uses animate the edges, spilling into the streets.
2. Highlighting and celebrating the historic significance of Old Street through public realm proposals and with attractive art installations.
3. Proposals illustrate integration of green elements - such as trees or green walls, improving biodiversity and walkability.
4. Signage and wayfinding reflects the identity of Ashton's Market Square and the town centre, linking the surrounding context to the heart of Ashton, the Market Square and Hall.

Warrington Street  
- a conceptual aspiration of the potential for the area, designs are subject to further detail analysis



Example of a pedestrian priority street with tree planting and spill out from shops



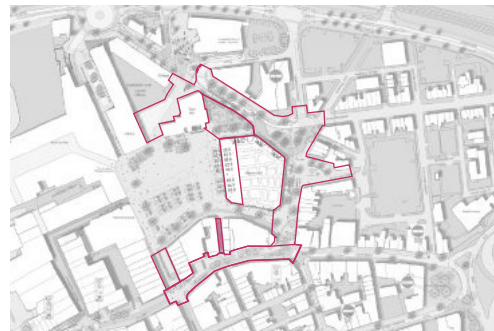
An example of a tree lined, single surface, pedestrian priority street with vehicular access

# Market Avenue

Market Avenue, a fully pedestrianised street and precursor of the modern day-arcade, is the key link between Market Square and Stamford Street Central.

Spill out from food and beverage and other businesses provides amenity for shoppers; attractive pavement, street art, lighting, and installations lighten up the atmosphere and create an inviting environment.

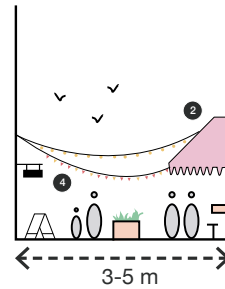
With new and existing uses animating the edges and spilling into the streets, the lanes and Market Avenue should seek to create an inviting, human-scale route into the heart of the Market Quarter whilst encouraging dwell-time in a cosy and sheltered environment.



Location plan

Highlighting and celebrating the historic significance of Market Avenue as a commercial arcade, creating spaces to dwell for shoppers with attractive art installations and seating arrangements.

Introducing attractive lighting ie. in trees and string lined lights, improves feelings of safety and create an inviting atmosphere during night-time.



Market Avenue - a conceptual aspiration of the potential for the area, designs are subject to further detail analysis



Art installations provide shade and create a pleasant atmosphere for pedestrians in a shopping area in Liverpool



Photograph of Market Avenue



Photograph of Art sculptures in Market Avenue



George Street at the intersection with Old Square

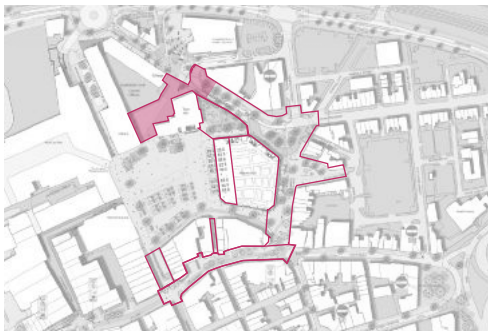


# Clarendon Sixth Form College and Tameside One Walk

The through route between the back of the Town Hall and Tameside One has potential to become an intimate space that provides people with seating and green amenity.

This pedestrian through route provides access for students, visitors, shops and Tameside council from Tameside One. Due to its secluded location, there is potential to introduce lighting and bring activity to animate the area during night-time and increase safety.

There is opportunity to introduce wayfinding, and public art to animate the streets and to create historical references, celebrating the heritage of Ashton.



Location plan



Lighting strategy in Rochdale Riverside creates a fun, safe, walkable environment



Example of a pedestrianised square with seating, planting and cycle parking. Art murals on blank façades create a vibrant backdrop to the square and opportunity to create historical references



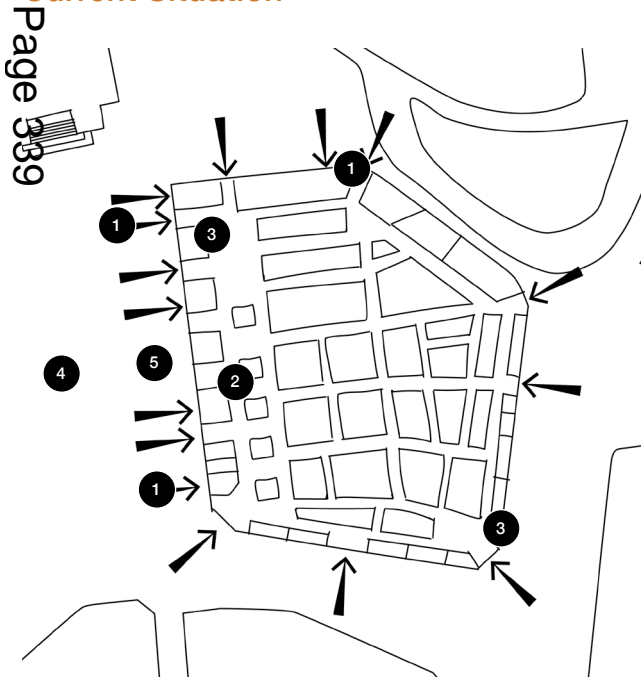
Street art and murals animate a street in New Zealand



# Market Hall

A key heritage asset, the proposals celebrate the history of the Market Hall. Creating visual connections into the hall and improving dwelling areas in and around the building will allow for an improved relationship between the indoor and outdoor activities. The Market Hall will benefit from this relationship with the improved Market Square.

## Current Situation



Current Internal Layout Plan

The market hall will be reviewed subject to further studies and will be considered as part of future phases.

The key considerations to the existing Market Hall, include:

1. Multiple entrances make wayfinding and circulation in internal market more complicated than necessary.
2. Toilets and stalls are adjacent to the main facade blocking the building's historic views
3. Few existing opportunities for eating and seating next to food and beverage offer
4. Market Hall activities are currently segregated from the Market Square
5. Outdoor seating is currently dependent on weather conditions.



Heritage assets from the Market Hall are hidden behind plaster and stalls



Informal seating from existing food and beverage vendors depend on weather conditions



# Future Phases



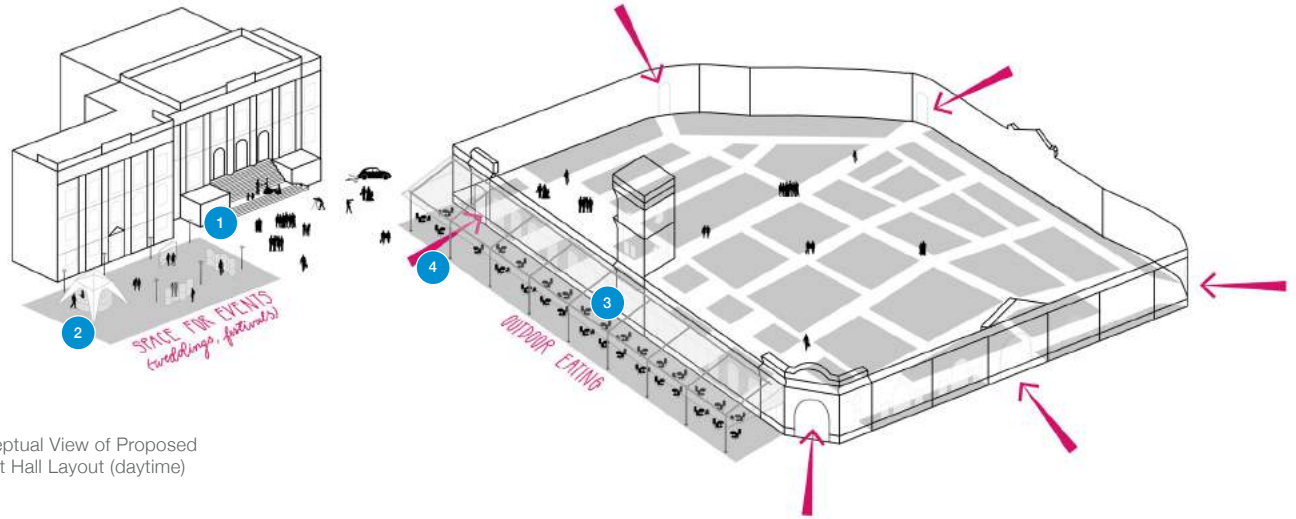
Canopy provides flexible, weather-proof amenity for eating and drinking. Glasped elements provides visual connections towards the internal Market Hall in Preston



Indoor layout provides seating arrangement for food and beverage offer in Spitalfields Market, London

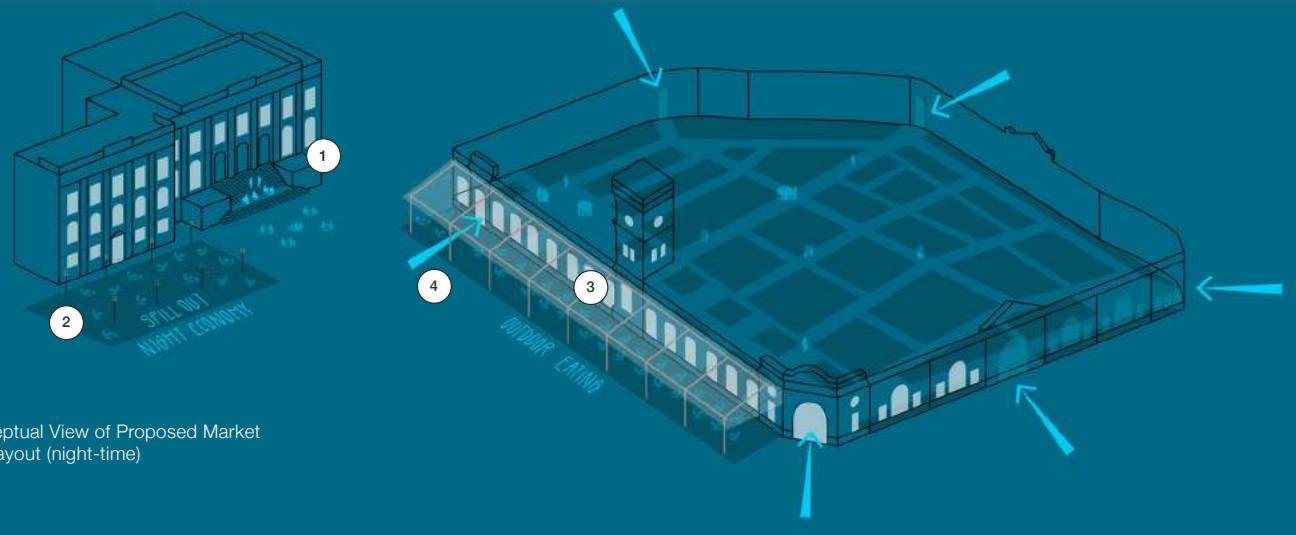


Opportunity to create an attractive frontage along the Market Hall edge which creates interest through the day and night



Conceptual View of Proposed Market Hall Layout (daytime)

1. Celebrating the heritage of the Town Hall and Market Hall, enhancing the relationship of these assets and boosting local economic activity.
2. Flexible space for events during day and night by the Town Hall, including; a variety of events, weddings, and exhibitions. Potential night time uses such as spill out from food and beverage, events, communal dinners, etc.
3. Improvement of indoor/outdoor relationship between the Market Hall and Square. Glazing allows for views in and out of the building, and animates the square during night time hours.
4. Consolidate and enhance key entrances which will be available on the front of the Market Hall towards the Market Square, to serve outdoor/indoor seating areas.



Conceptual View of Proposed Market Hall Layout (night-time)

## The Public Realm Strategy

### Phase 1 - Market Square

The Public Realm Strategy will focus immediately on the Market Square, Market Hall and connecting streets and spaces. This is Phase 1 of an overall Public Realm Strategy for the Town Centre. The aim of the Phase 1 Market Square Strategy will include strategic plans, along with guidance and design

### Phase 2 Ashton Town Centre

In the future a comprehensive Public Realm Strategy will also include Stamford Street Central, Old Street and St. Michael's Square. It will incorporate proposals for Wellington Road and extend to Katherine Street, Penny Meadows, Oldham Road.

**The ambition is that the improvements to Phase 1 Market Square will be a catalyst for the future regeneration of Ashton Town Centre, attracting investment to deliver the Ashton Town Centre Vision**

## Engagement and Continual Feedback

The consultation process has been important to gather views and opinions that have shaped the design principles described in this public realm strategy for Phase 1 Market Square and to ensure that the most appropriate scheme comes forward for the community and the surroundings.

Two stages of consultation, with both the public and stakeholder groups have been undertaken. The findings have been gathered and analysed to draw out the key messages to inform the design principles described in this document and the emerging detailed design proposals.

The process will not end here and engagement will be an ongoing process throughout the detailed design stage to ensure that all ideas are incorporated at every stage.

As part of next stage detailed design we will be liaising with traders and markets team around establishing a new operational model for the new scheme. This will be picked up as part of the next stages of work and ongoing dialogue.

## Next Steps

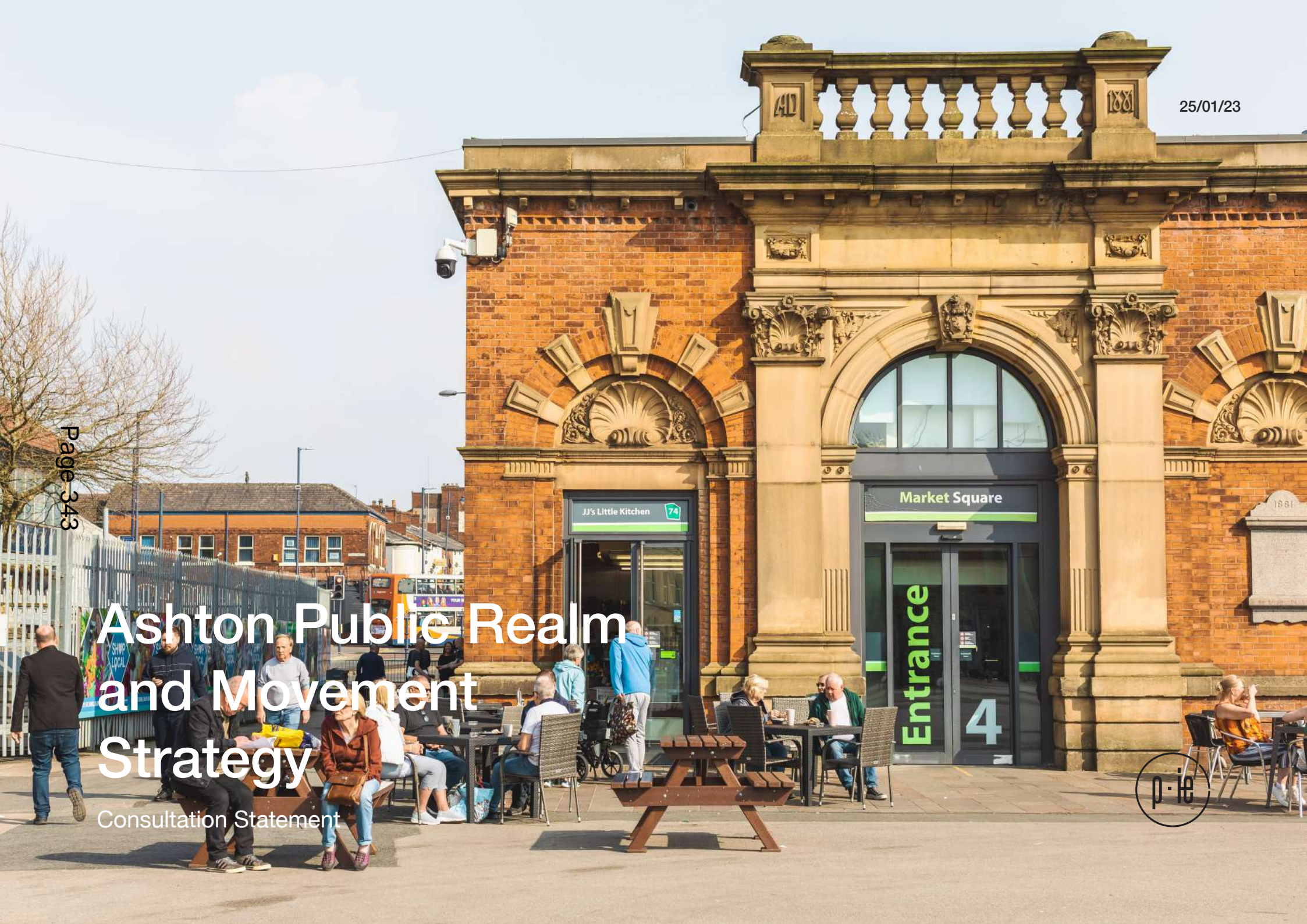
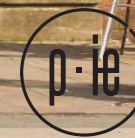
The following describes the process and timescales for the detailed design and delivery of Phase 1 Market Square:

- Public consultation: November/December 2022
- Consultation analysis: December 2022
- Preliminary works January 2023
- Approved Public Realm Strategy: March 2023
- Detailed Design Stage begins: April 2023
- Detailed Design Approval: November 2023
- Early Market Square works commence: November 2023
- Delivery of main Market Square works: Winter 2023 – ending March 2025



# Ashton Public Realm and Movement Strategy

Consultation Statement





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## Introduction

This Consultation Statement has been produced in support of the Public Realm Strategy for Ashton-under-Lyne.

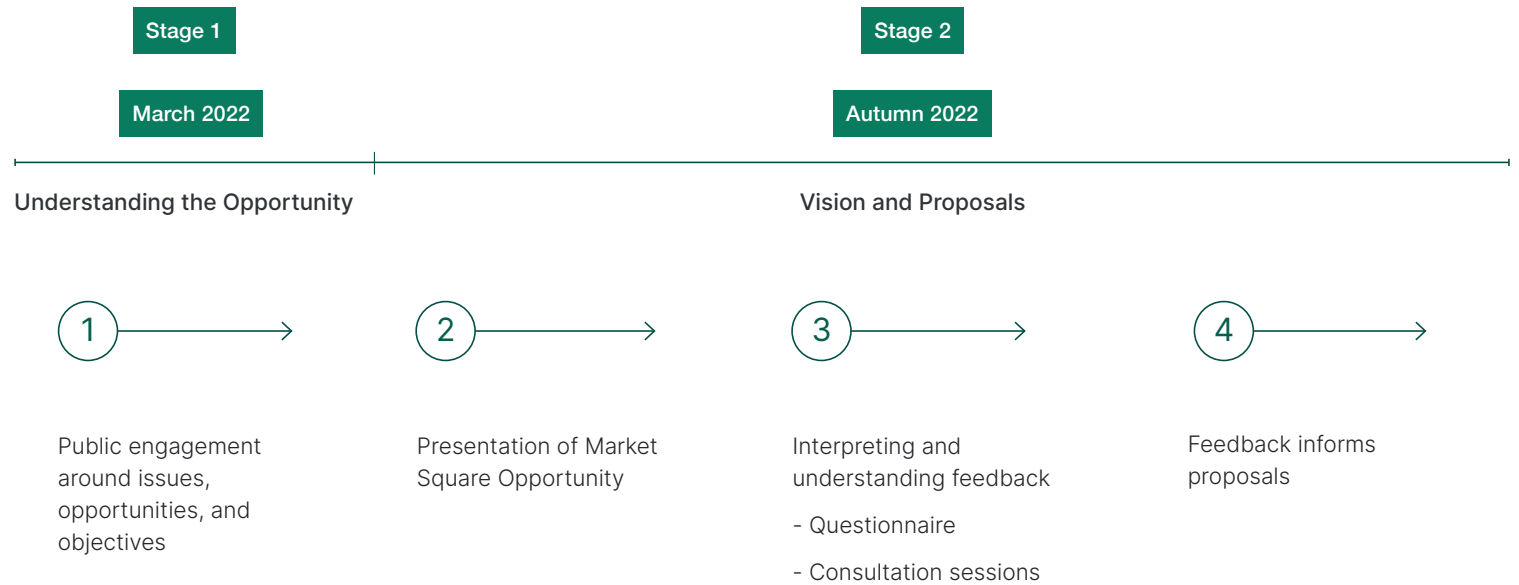
Consultation from March 2022 and the Stage 2 engagement sessions which included; stakeholder workshops, a 4 week public consultation with sessions and a questionnaire. These findings will help the project team to discount or support the design of the Market Square, Hall and Town Hall, and the key design ideas to consider for detail design.

A two stage programme of engagement and consultation has been designed to run alongside the Public Realm Strategy. The project team are nearing the end of the Public Realm Strategy, so it is important at this stage to take stock of the responses to the emerging proposals and ideas so far and to assess how emerging issues and ideas are being received by stakeholders and the wider community.

This document presents the findings of the Stage 1



Throughout the preparation of the Public Realm Strategy a comprehensive consultation process has taken place.





# 01 Stage 1 March 2022

# Love Ashton Engagement

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Planit-IE and Members of Tameside Council talking to the public



Residents reviewing the engagement boards

TMBC have appointed Planit and Civic Engineers to undertake a Public Realm and Movement strategy for Ashton-under-Lyne Town Centre.

This is to create a thriving Town Centre for Ashton-under-Lyne through collaborative design approaches, seeking to breathe new life into the town centre public realm, in turn attracting inward investment to create a prosperous town centre for years to come.



Input on the engagement boards - 'Functions of Space'



Input on the engagement boards - 'Physical Interventions'

# Objectives of the Strategy

To create a public realm strategy that is memorable and unique for Ashton. This requires a holistic approach that takes into consideration a wide variety of factors to create a comprehensive, but simple solution for Ashton town centre.

These objectives will influence the final Ashton Public Realm and Movement Vision and aim to create:

A town that is  
**Functional and accessible**



A town that is  
**Connected**



A town to  
**Enjoy in the day and night**



A town that has  
**Healthy and beautiful green spaces with planting**



A town with  
**An identity**



A town that  
**Instigates further regeneration**



A town with  
**A high quality market space**



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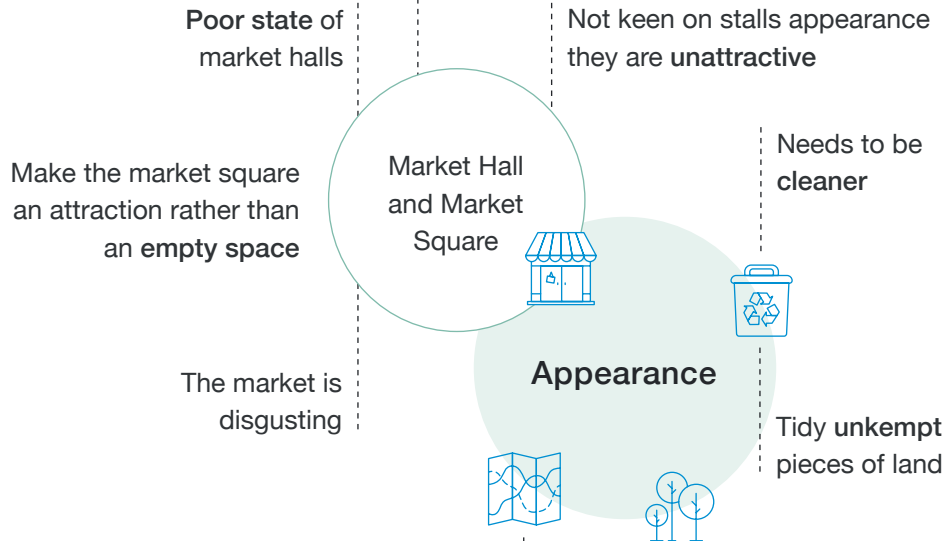




All derelict closed building to be made attractive maybe a false/ fake (? – not legible) either material, metal or wood design on front how it could look. When occupied, so looks more attractive and appealing.



Ashton market is all galvanised steel no character and too much concrete



Aerial view too much concrete - so grey, depressing and no character

Quick fixes – green spaces, lighting and cleanliness

Need to condense all the small silos of the little areas i.e. Stamford street, penny meadow, market avenue...





Bus station drives footfall straight into the Arcades SC with many never venturing into the square

Bus stops returned to back of market hall. Able bodied students given pedestrian zone at the expense of less able bodied bus users i.e. – further to walk, more roads to cross and uphill on Henrietta Street.

Too much concrete by our new bus station which by the way is too small half of the buses do not have a space

Coaches not allowed in bus station yet the bus station is empty most of the time so plenty of room

Improve public transport to Stamford Street



Bus Station

Safer and better walking routes

Forgotten 'Old Town', larger investment in Albion Way



Lack of movement in the 'Old Town'

Transport/  
Accessibility

Accessibility from public transport



Taxis



Parking

Too much car traffic in the centre of Ashton

Free 1 hour parking

Disabled parking closer to town

Taxis not in the right place

Taxi rank





Ashton town hall needs due care and attention

This building (Town Hall) used to symbolise Ashton town and its heritage

Where is the history/ heritage of the town



Ashton Town Hall

Town Hall needs updating and opening up - what is going in there?

Hippodrome – More theatre and events in Ashton again



Theatre

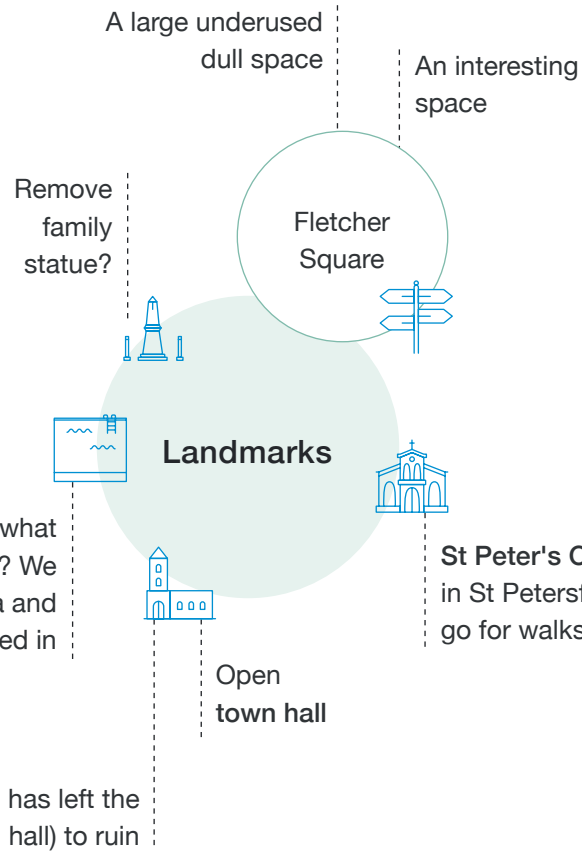
Culture

The theatre once an important place (Charlie Chaplin played here) is being left to rot

Saturday market was once busy and interesting now it is empty and lifeless

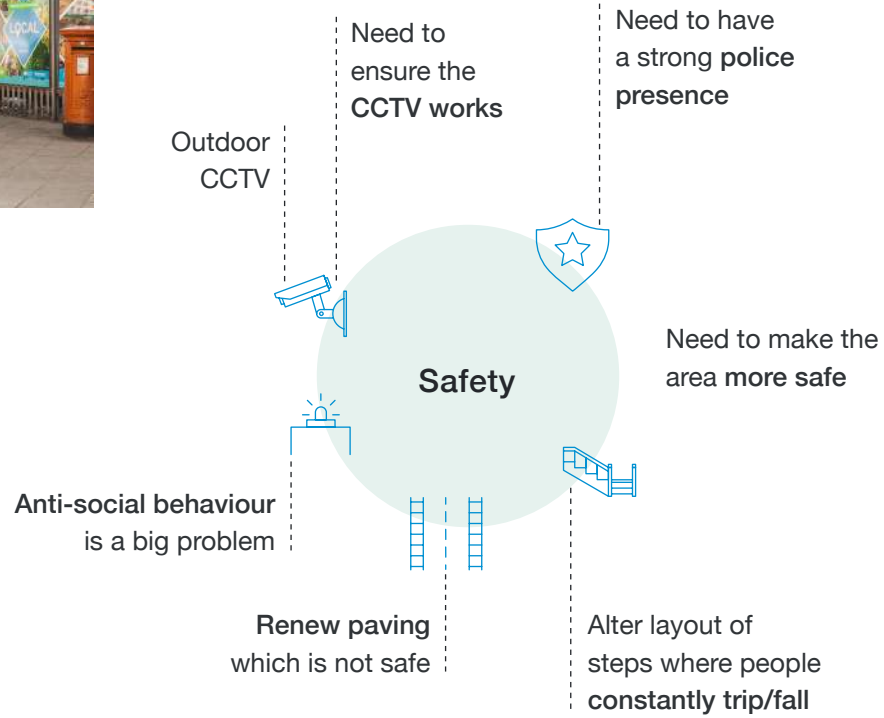








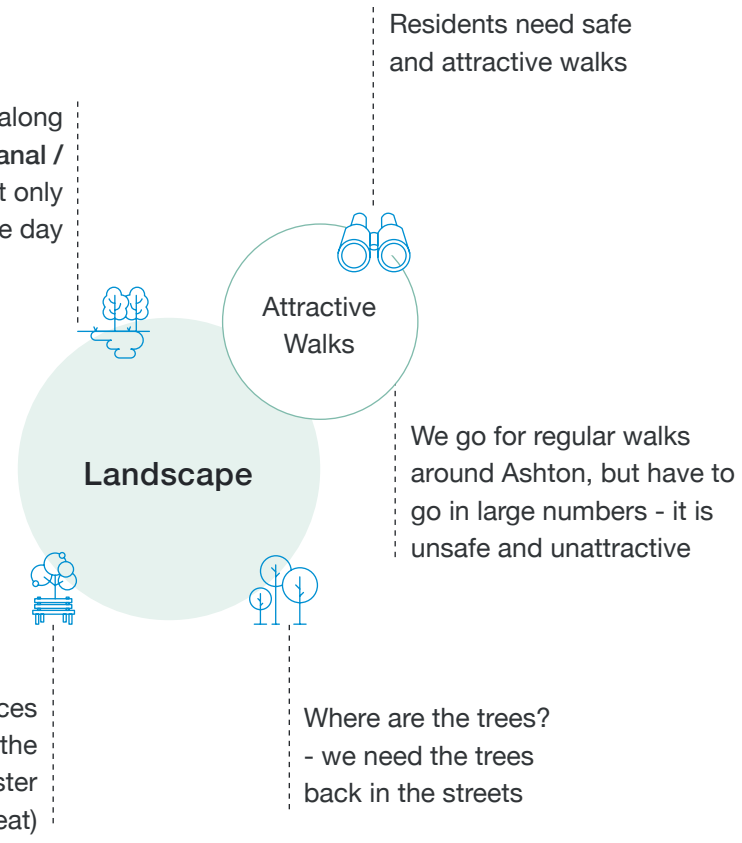
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Walks along the canal / river but only during the day

Residents need safe and attractive walks



Attractive Walks

Landscape

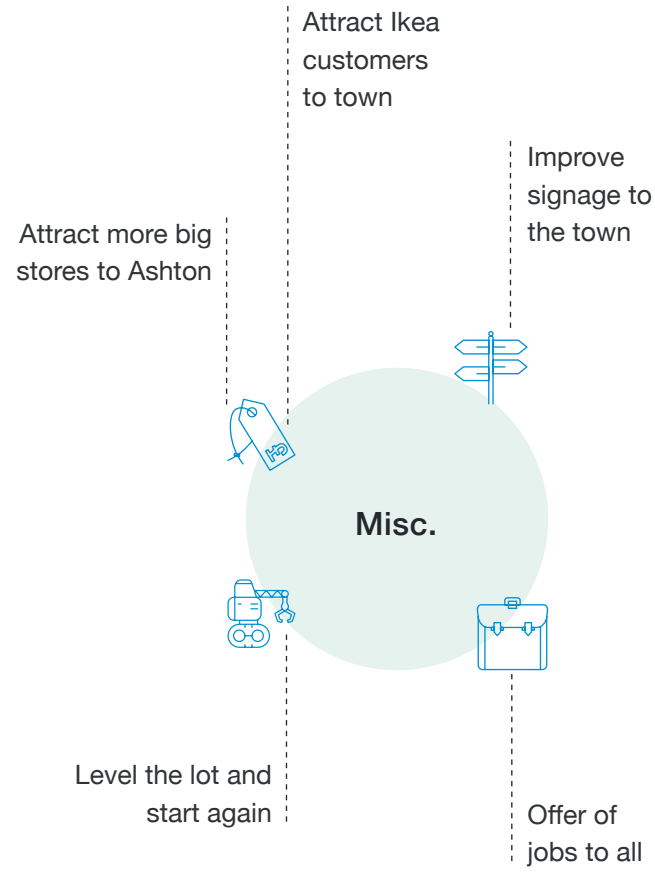
We go for regular walks around Ashton, but have to go in large numbers - it is unsafe and unattractive

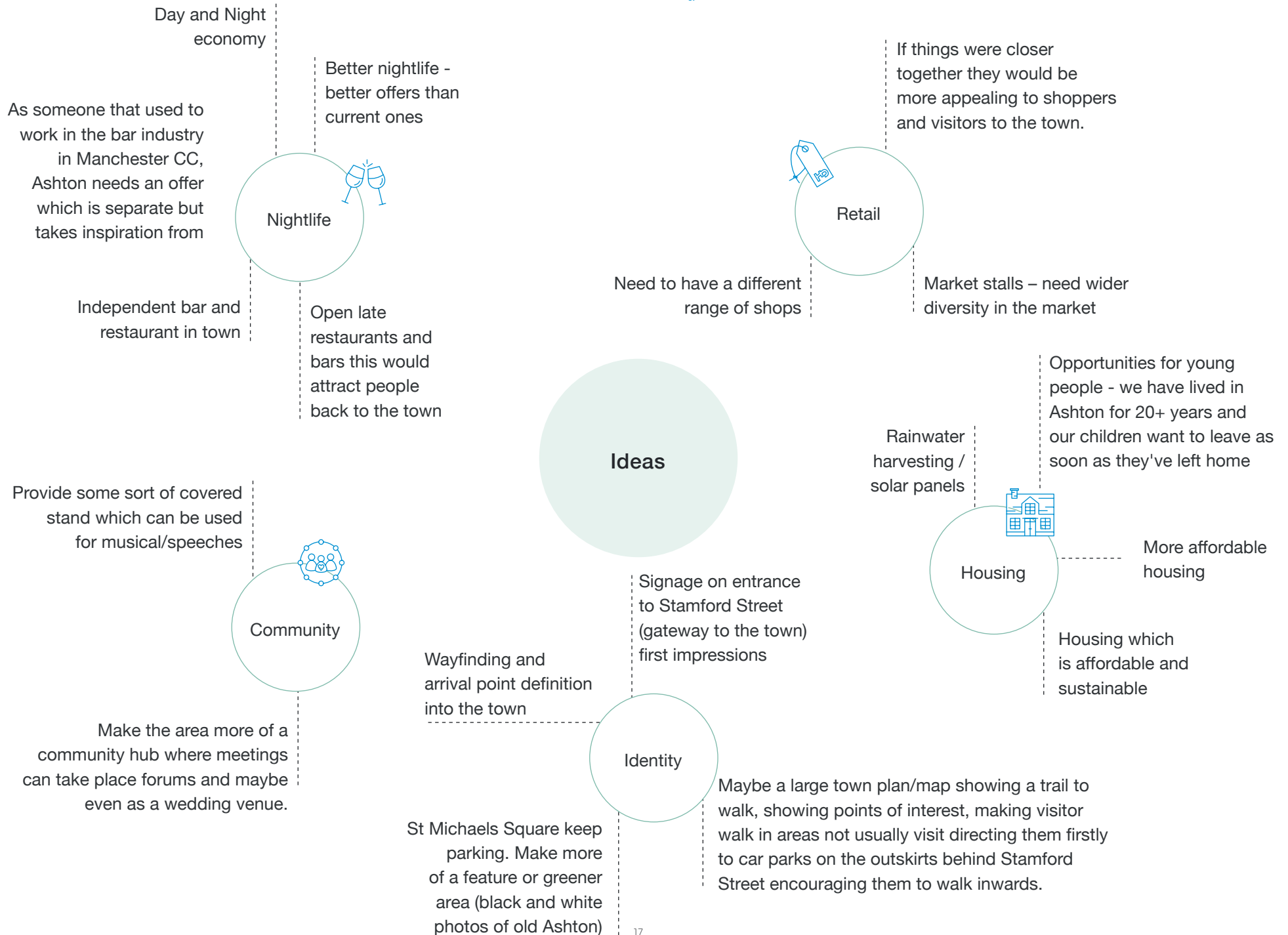
Picnic places - lacking at the moment (Chester Zoo is great)

Where are the trees? - we need the trees back in the streets

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551  
questionnaire  
responses

# 02 Stage 2 November 2022

## The Consultation

Consultation in Stage 2 focussed on the Market Square and took the form of workshops, briefings and meetings. The objectives of the consultation were to engage with key stakeholders and a wide variety of people and community groups to develop a clear local picture and to gain an insight into issues, opportunities, and future aspirations for Ashton Market Square and Market Hall.

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The consultation went public with a Public Realm Strategy booklet, associated consultation boards for the public events and a questionnaire.



Stage 2

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## Public Consultation



As part of the engagement process, the project team carried out public consultation drop-in sessions in the Market Hall. Ashton residents raised some objections and concerns, and contributed suggestions.

### Objections to:

- Re-doing the market square which was only recently done, and the perceived waste of money that could be better spent
- Losing the outdoor market
- Investment being focussed on Ashton rather than distributed to other areas in need of investment across Tameside
- Not convinced that investment in the market ground will have the desired uplifting effect on the town centre

### Tameside Resident

*"I object to anymore money being wasted on Ashton [...] What about the rest of tameside."*

### Concerns over:

- Play area location in relation to taxi rank, pub spillout, servicing and attracting antisocial behaviour
- Proposed fixed structures such as cinema or music stand could quickly look obsolete as tastes change, obstruct eyelines and might lead to vandalism.
- High levels of homelessness.
- Safety and antisocial behaviour in areas with poor visibility - particularly in social spaces and along key strategic movement corridors.
- Proposals being out of step with the culture and economics around shopping and leisure with e-shopping and out-of-town retail
- General state of neglect across the town, low quality offer, and high vacancy rates.
- Lack of things for children and teens to do, and perceived lack of safety - encourage college students to use the centre and local teens to
- Lack of demand for a seven-day market and empty market kiosks
- Bird droppings becoming maintenance burden or deterrent for seating areas

### Ashton Resident

*"Not so long ago a lot of money was spent on the market [...] the market ground is uneven and terrible to walk on [...] what a waste of money that was!"*

*No amount of money spent on the market area will make it more attractive to shoppers. The centre is full of 'non shops' such as pound shops, betting shops etc all the decent shops have gone to out of town."*

Suggestions to:

- Move play more centrally in the square
- Retain kiosks on market ground
- Provision needed for trade waste and site cleaning operation.
- Buses to be rerouted back onto Wellington Road. Thereby needing a crossing between the college buildings.
- More trees, planting, and seasonal interest
- Retain and facilitate the Sunday flea market
- Reduce market days to concentrate demand and supply over fewer days and increase market square activity and buzz on those days.
- Specify temporary outdoor furniture to ensure quality of environment - Could be leased/rented from the Council?

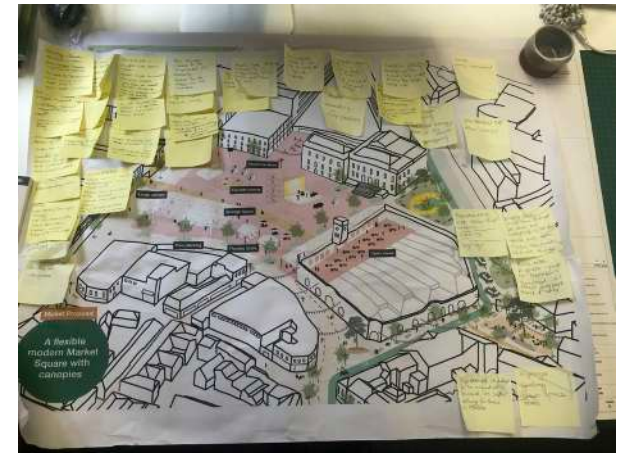
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Ashton Resident

*"The plans would be enhanced by a lovely sunken garden, with plenty of benches and colour."*



Public consultation in Ashton Market



Responses to emerging proposals

Ashton Resident

*"We'd like to see a better variety of trees. Could we have some the same as those in Library Square in Manchester? They have startling spring blooms."*

Ashton Business Owner

*"It looks great, Ashton needs the investment... Ashton is ready to improve, Stamford street could be something really special again"*

Ashton Resident

*"It is to be hoped that the mistakes made in developing the current Market Square can be avoided and an amenity of which Ashton can be proud can finally be realised."*



Paulownia trees in spring bloom, St Peter's Square, Manchester



## Market Traders and Kiosk Traders

Market and Kiosk traders were consulted on proposals to understand what would work best for their businesses.

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Responses to emerging proposals

### Concerns over:

- Access for deliveries and own car to stalls
- Bus stop provision has been removed
- Too far to walk with shopping
- Accessibility for less able bodied and important pensioner trade

### Suggestions to:

- Shelter and protection from the elements - especially westerley wind and rain, summer shade - free standing roof rather than canopies
- Need large van servicing access along Bow St for market traders not all day only at key times of the day
- Storage to stop lots of unloading for market traders
- Access for people from public transport required from Wellington Road (bus routes along this road)
- Pop-up/temporary/seasonal events/offer in the market square.
- Lighting in the evening is critical
- Food and drink offer - night-time economy
- Mitigate westerly wind
- Signage and wayfinding from key transport hubs
- Need to establish intimate spaces and curate atmospheres of 'hustle and bustle', buzz.

- Improve drainage capacity

### Kiosk Design:

- Kiosks need protection from the weather
- Kiosks designed for food – required
- 10ft by 10ft doesn't work for some uses - Different sized kiosks to suit different trader needs– carrier for storage
- Industrial quality of finishes needed for this use
- Intimate space – overlooked if the kiosks all face inwards, under the canopy
- fixed kiosks to operate as a 'shop
- Need own canopy
- Kiosks need protection from the weather

### F&B:

- Food and drink as a cluster along gallery side of canopy
- Cafes along market frontage
- F&B at the rear end of the Market Hall (near Market Street edge)
- Option to place the F&B at the back of the Market Hall
- Outdoor seating for food stalls

# Tameside College

The engagement work that had been undertaken to date had revealed a long list of aims, objectives and aspirations for Ashton. Whilst all of these objectives will be important to the future success of the project, not everything can be delivered at once. The purpose of this activity was to collectively determine the priorities for the project and to consider how these might be delivered.

The Prioritisation Game helped establish where the most important and shortest term opportunities were for the Market Square and Ashton Town Centre. The workshop was split into two groups of up to 10 students from Tameside College. The results are discussed on the next page..

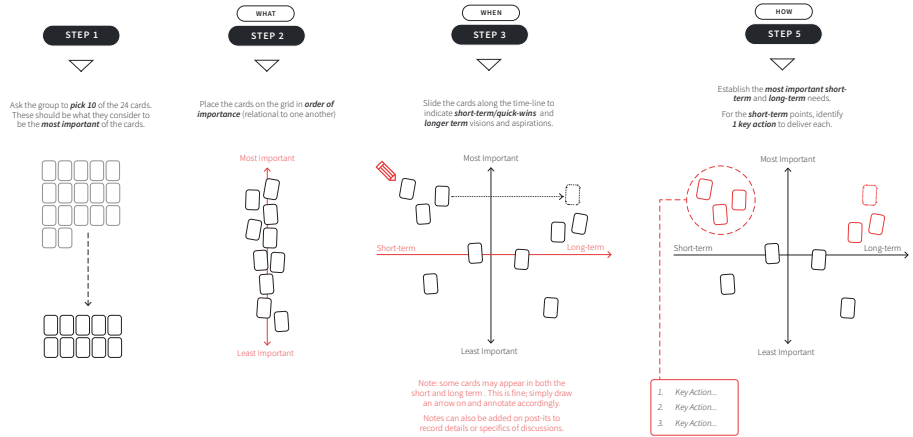
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## ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE MARKET SQUARE: PRIORITISATION GAME INSTRUCTIONS

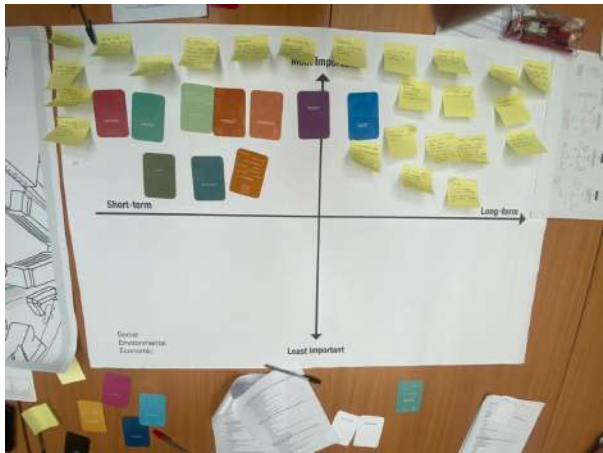
**THE CARDS\***

1. Commercial Viability	7. Local Character / Identity	13. Eco-friendly / Sustainable Principles	19. Inclusivity
2. Local Business	8. Retail	14. Retention of Heritage Buildings	20. Access and Connectivity
3. Green Space / Wildlife Habitat	9. Play and Recreation	15. Community Spaces	21. Outdoor events
4. Housing	10. Job Creation	16. Charitable Organisations	22. Nighttime Economy
5. Arts and Culture	11. Car Parking and Traffic Solutions	17. Access and Connectivity	23. Advertising and Marketing
6. Educational Uses	12. Public Space	18. Health and Wellbeing	24. Make your own...

\*These are based on previous engagement outcomes



Group 1



Group 2

Students from Tameside College gave valuable insight into Ashton from a youth perspective.

#### **Inclusive Spaces:**

Students spoke of the broad range of religions and ethnicities which make up the Ashton community, not all of which are represented in the town centre. Students felt there is a lack of inclusivity and provision for youths. They complained of no place to go, a lack of social spaces or amenities where they can socialise.

College finishes in the evening when everything is closed. Safety and security was raised as an issue, including inadequate lighting. They felt judged for loitering at certain times, and that there is a lack of seating and opportunities for them to dwell comfortably. They called for a range of spaces to suit different needs, including safe spaces for girls, quiet spaces, active spaces for play and recreation, and a community hub, which should be free or cheap with passes (for students).

#### **Celebrate Heritage:**

Students were proud of the heritage buildings and rich history of Ashton, but felt it was under-celebrated. They suggested that the industrial heritage needs to be reflected through regeneration, and that more could be done to celebrate Ashton's history, including promoting Portland Basin Museum.

#### **Social Issues:**

It was felt strongly that Ashton suffers from pronounced social issues which affected the experience of the town centre, including a visible drug and homelessness problem, and gang culture which needs to be tackled.

Suggested solutions to these problems were discussed, and there was agreement that regeneration of the town centre is important for job creation which can help to alleviate these social issues.

Students complained that there was a lack of choice and variety for work, with most jobs in retail. They hoped for a better variety of work options.

#### **Need for Regeneration:**

Students felt that the edges of the town required significant attention, and that this should be a priority. They complained of too much car parking with much of it derelict, such as Lady Smiths, and that it attracts anti-social behaviour and drug users.

#### **Promoting Active Travel:**

Students advocated for better provision for active travel to boost health and wellbeing and increase sustainability, including increased pedestrianisation around the market to promote walking. They complained of not enough cycle storage and not in right place, with safety a concern and a lack of trust in leaving bikes locked up.

#### **Bring it to Life:**

Students felt the town centre was lacking vibrancy. They complained that the townscape lacked visual and architectural interest, that it's all grey and would benefit from some colour, better lighting, more greenspace and wildlife habitat.

They suggested an emphasis should be placed on Food and drink / Outdoor events / Night time economy / Arts and culture, and attracting smaller local independent business back to town.



Student engagement workshop, Ashton Old Baths



## Greenspace Team

Tameside Council's Greenspace team contributed practical considerations for design, management and maintenance of the public realm.

### Inclusive design

- Skateboarding provision for teenage offer
- Plenty of ideas for play related including QR code offer
- Youth services have a bike track that could be brought to site for use during and after market hours.
- Play for all ages needed to attract all ages.
- Seating to encourage college students to use centre (stop 5/6 groups standing around which other people might find intimidating)

### Safety

- Is CCTV and lighting being considered within the scheme for night use and safety?
- Sight lines need considering

### Maintenance

- Maintenance needs considering with provision and resources built in.
- No Grass (maintenance issues) turns to mud in winter.
- Trees (Chinese Privet grows to 5m high) can be grown in containers but moving around not good idea as plants are prone to die off if their environment is changed.
- Canopy no sides preferred for ease of cleansing and to minimise ASB
- Outdoor gym equipment has maintenance and health and safety issues attached.
- Enforcement needed on private land owners/ developers around visual impact of sites.
- Build in annual deep clean going forward.
- Provision needed for trade waste and site cleaning operation.
- No point improving the centre when periphery looks like a building site/top.
- No communal planting areas on square (issues with ownership) maybe look at provision in partnership with the college for herb beds on the mezzanine

### Public realm considerations

- Gateways need to be considered when drawing the red line to give best first impression.
- Consistency across scheme same materials etc.
- Large statement pieces rather than lots of small installations
- Whole site needs to be considered to maintain continuity, standard and best use of area.

### Environmental/Climatic considerations

- Wind breaks need considering
- Drainage including SUDS needs looking at. Run off in such a large area will be large.

### Street furniture considerations

- Wayfinding and signage need improving
- Provision for Bike parking



## Tameside Owners and Drivers Association

Tameside Owners and Drivers Association submitted a formal response to the consultation, which raised important considerations regarding transport strategy and placemaking.

*"The taxi trade provides public transport to all sectors of the community including vulnerable persons [...] we are on occasions the only form of public transport available.*

*Extending the taxi rank would provide daytime shoppers with better accessibility, and at night-time assist in preventing antisocial behaviour by dispersing crowds quickly and efficiently, especially when hosting events in the Market Square."*

### Objections to:

- Positioning of play area/'park' in relation to taxi rank, pub spillout, servicing and attracting antisocial behaviour.

### Concerns over:

- Previously been assured at trade meetings that there were plans in the pipeline to extend this rank and move it closer to the Town Hall.

### Suggestions to:

- Move play more centrally in the square
- Extend the taxi rank into the former compound area and closer to the town hall to increase capacity, mitigate rank overspill to help facilitate flexible event uses in the square.



Taxi rank and compound site, Wellington Road



Consultation materials showing play area at compound site, Wellington Road





## Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel Meeting

Tameside Council's Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel submitted a formal response to the consultation, which highlights important considerations for the ambition of proposals, how to ensure good footfall, good governance of the project, and how to ensure success beyond delivery.

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### Ambition

- Remain as bold as possible in supporting a wider pull factor. To create something that differentiates Ashton Market Square within the region.
- Maximise the use of environmentally friendly and sustainable methods, actively reducing the carbon footprint and for this to be an exemplar project in Tameside for materials and renewables.

### Footfall

- Members are keen to ensure that work is undertaken to understand what will lead to greater use and footfall, and what mix of uses will work best.
- Need for extended use of the square outside of trader and shop opening times.
- Potential to create a more structured approach to accessing the square with entry and exit that supports footfall to traders and businesses, whilst maintaining the ease of movement to wider public services and the college.
- Signpost the Market square as a destination.

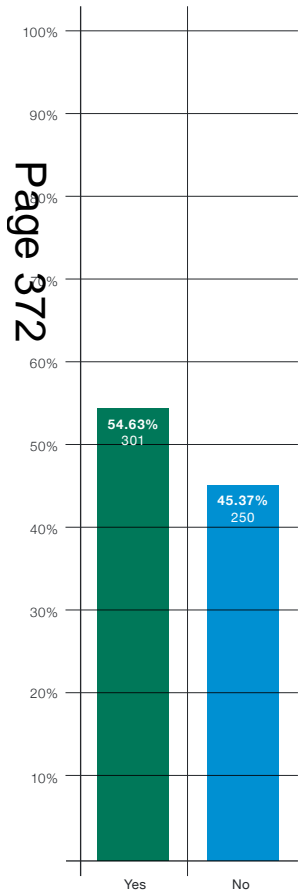
### Governance

- Continued and progressive methods of dialogue and engagement with key stakeholders is key to the success of the project.
- Potential option to establish - Ashton Market Square Advisory and Delivery Panel - for the duration. To include representatives of the Council, Elected Members, Market Traders, Businesses and the Town Team. To promote transparency and deliver key messages and updates at agreed intervals.
- The importance of effective costing, delivery timetables and transparency of communication throughout the length of the programme with key stakeholders. In order to work for all, the project needs to be informed by all.

### Beyond Delivery

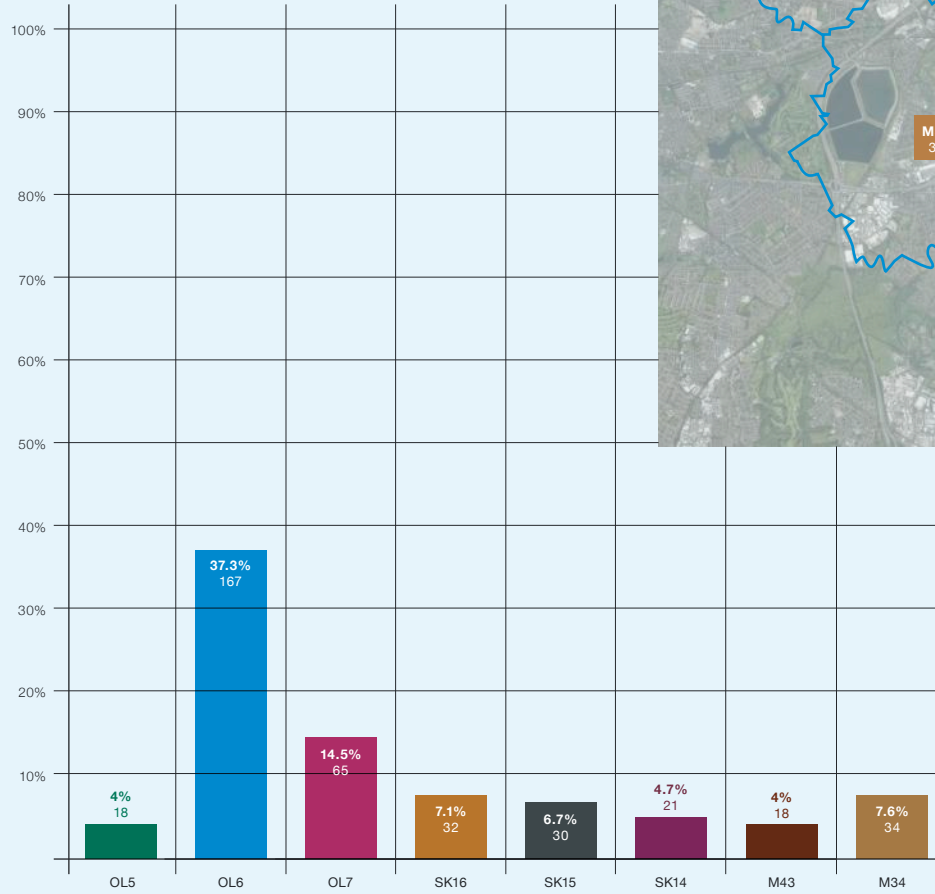
- Members are keen for proposals to consider future expansion of public realm and accessibility to the market square from all available public transport locations and car parks.
- Future maintenance strategy and long-term financial commitment is needed for Town Centres, beyond LUF investment and one-off monies.

# Q1 Do you live in Ashton?

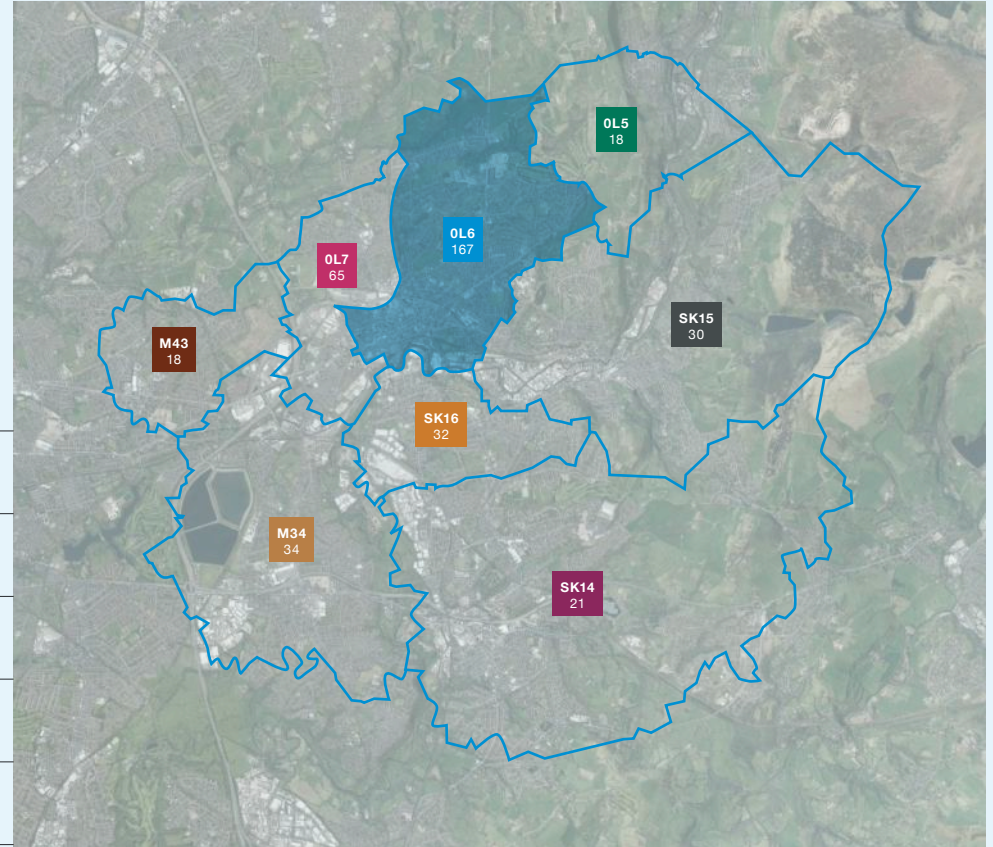


ANSWERED 551  
SKIPPED 5

# Q14 What is your postcode?



ANSWERED 448  
SKIPPED 108

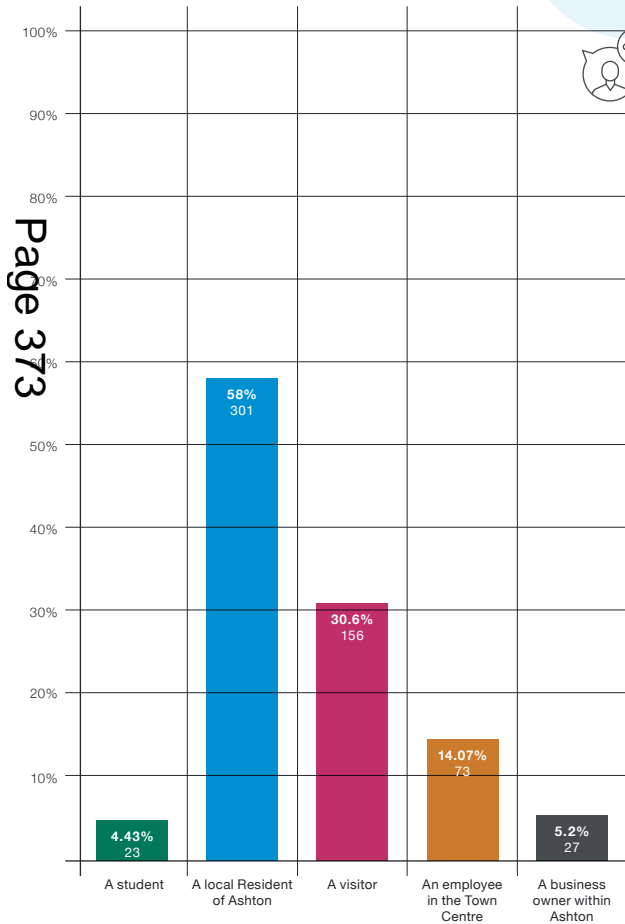


## Q2

# What is your interest in Ashton Market Square? Are you...



**31**  
stated they visit Ashton often

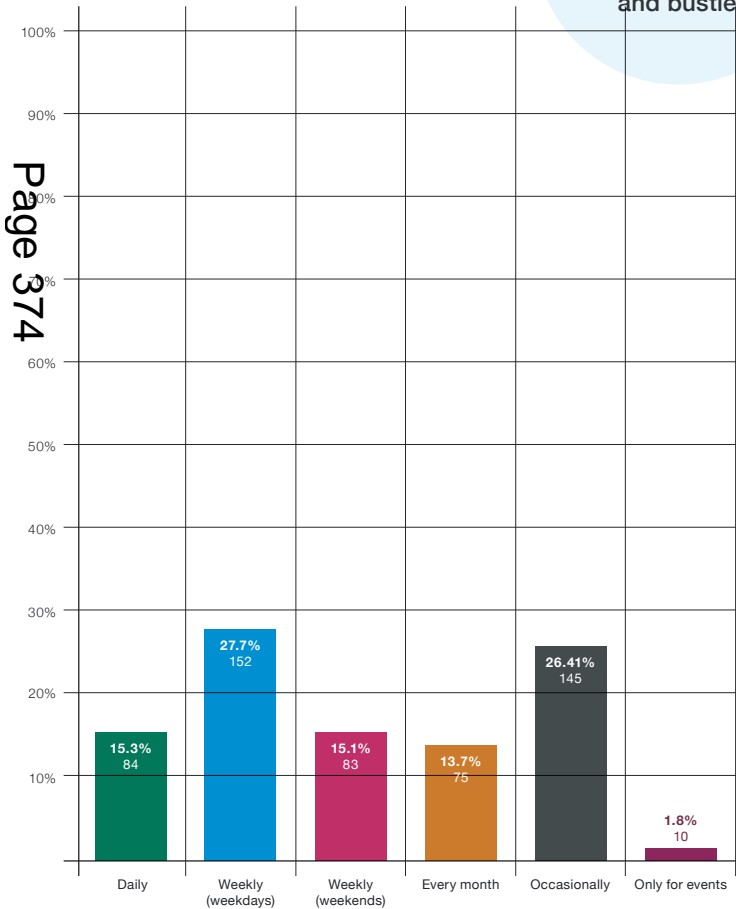


ANSWERED 519  
SKIPPED 37

### Q3

## How often do you visit Ashton Market Square?

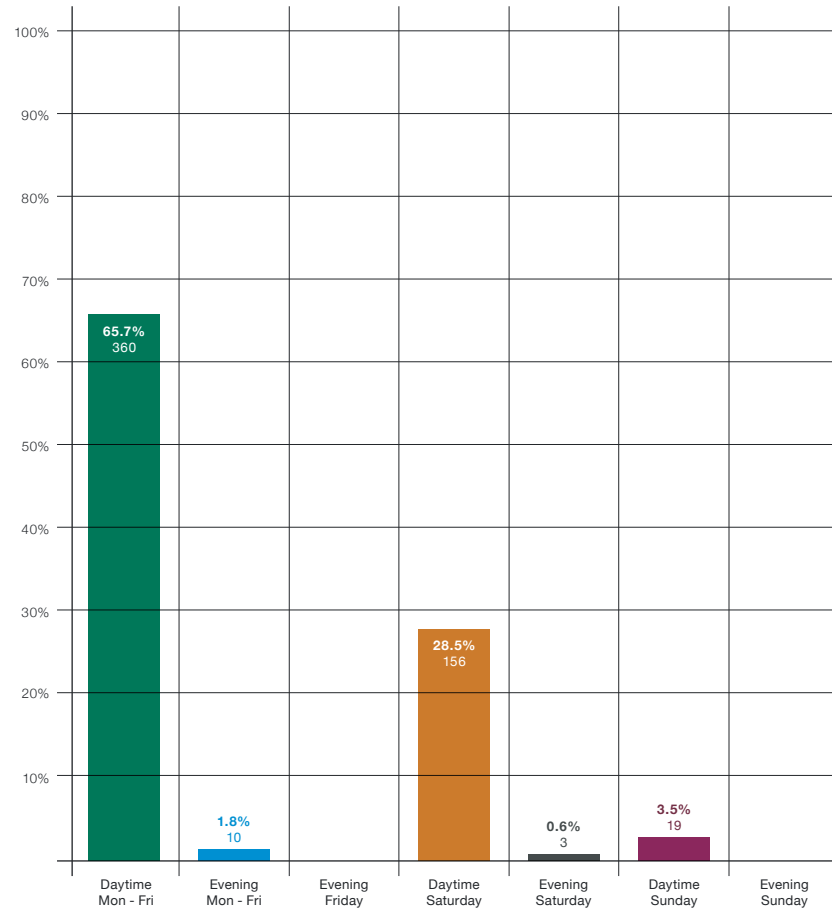
My favourite thing about Ashton is the indoor market and the hustle and bustle



ANSWERED 549  
SKIPPED 7

### Q4

## When do you usually visit Ashton Market Square?



ANSWERED 548  
SKIPPED 8

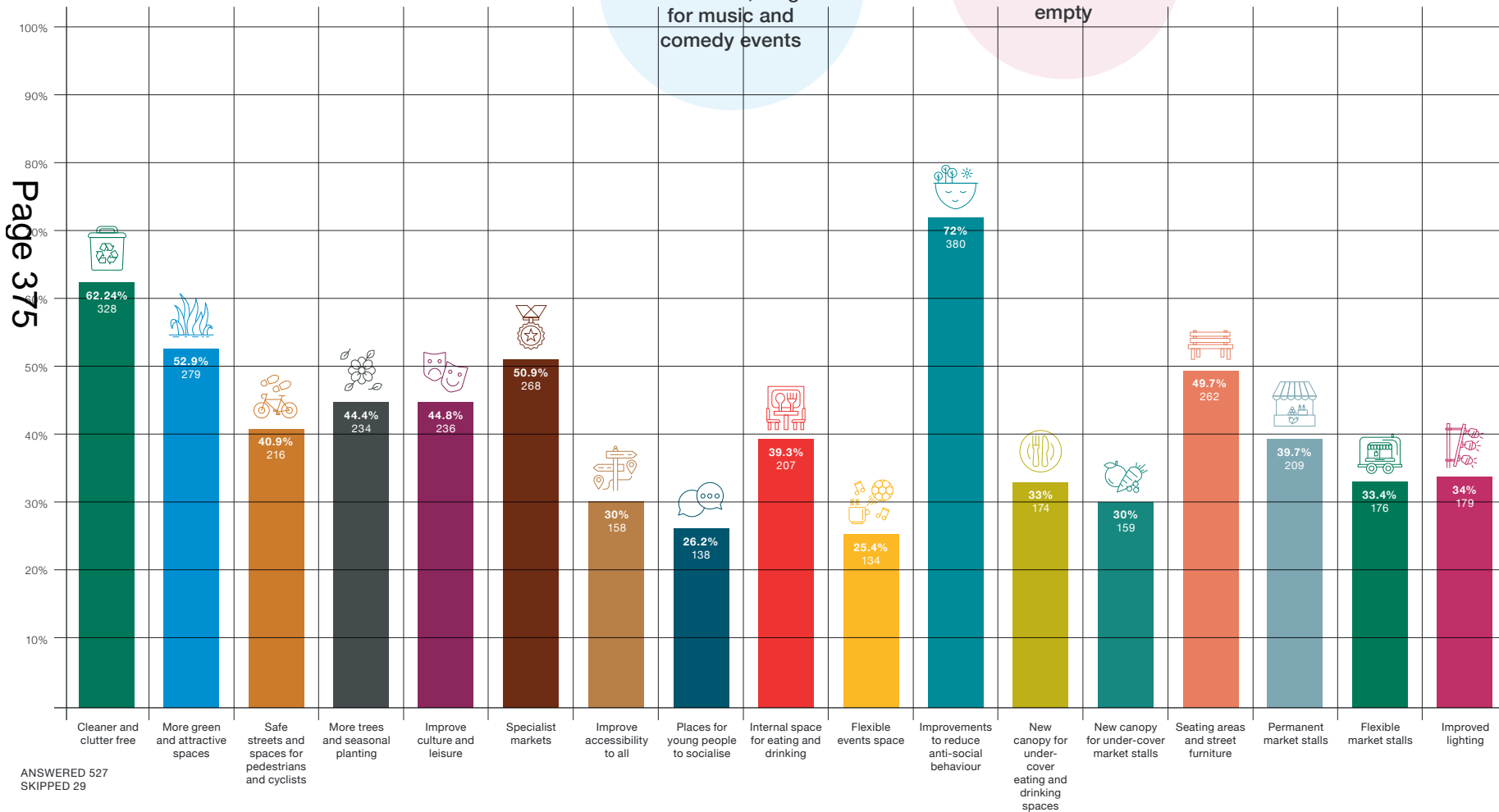
# Q5 How would you like Ashton Market Square to be changed?

People seem frustrated about previous projects which haven't been completed in Ashton therefore have little positivity for future endeavours. They have mentioned Altrincham Market, Stockport Market, Bury Market and HATCH as places they visit more often than their local Ashton Market.

Consideration for people with autism and other learning disabilities

Sporting activities, interactive events, seasonable family attractions, stage for music and comedy events

Ensure the space is well used - it currently feels uncomfortably empty



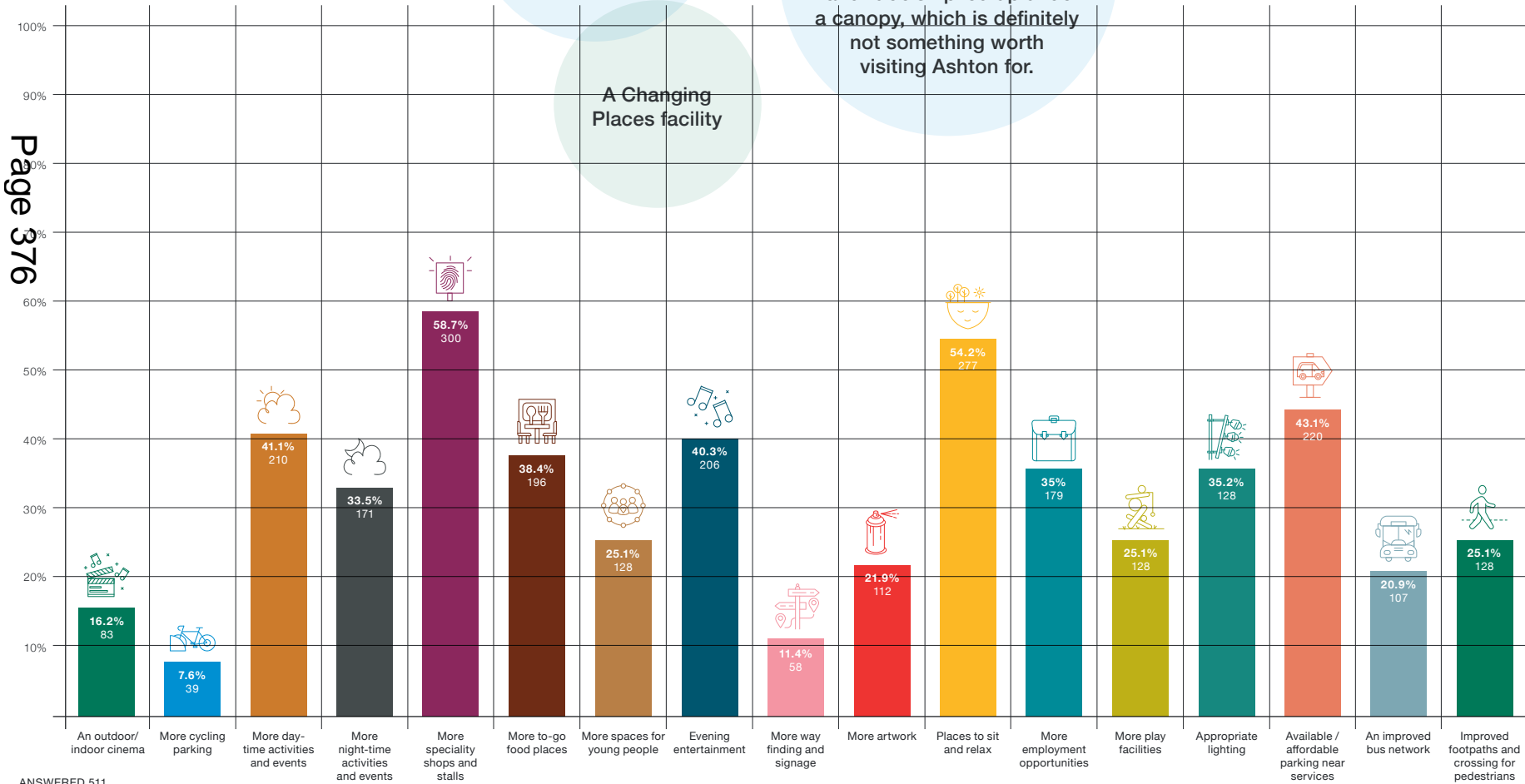
ANSWERED 527  
SKIPPED 29

# Q6 What do you think is missing from Ashton Market Square?

Re-open the hippodrome theatre and cinema - happy times spent there with family and friends

Some quality control as to what market vendors are selling and setting up. The majority of vendors are now selling second hand rubbish piled up under a canopy, which is definitely not something worth visiting Ashton for.

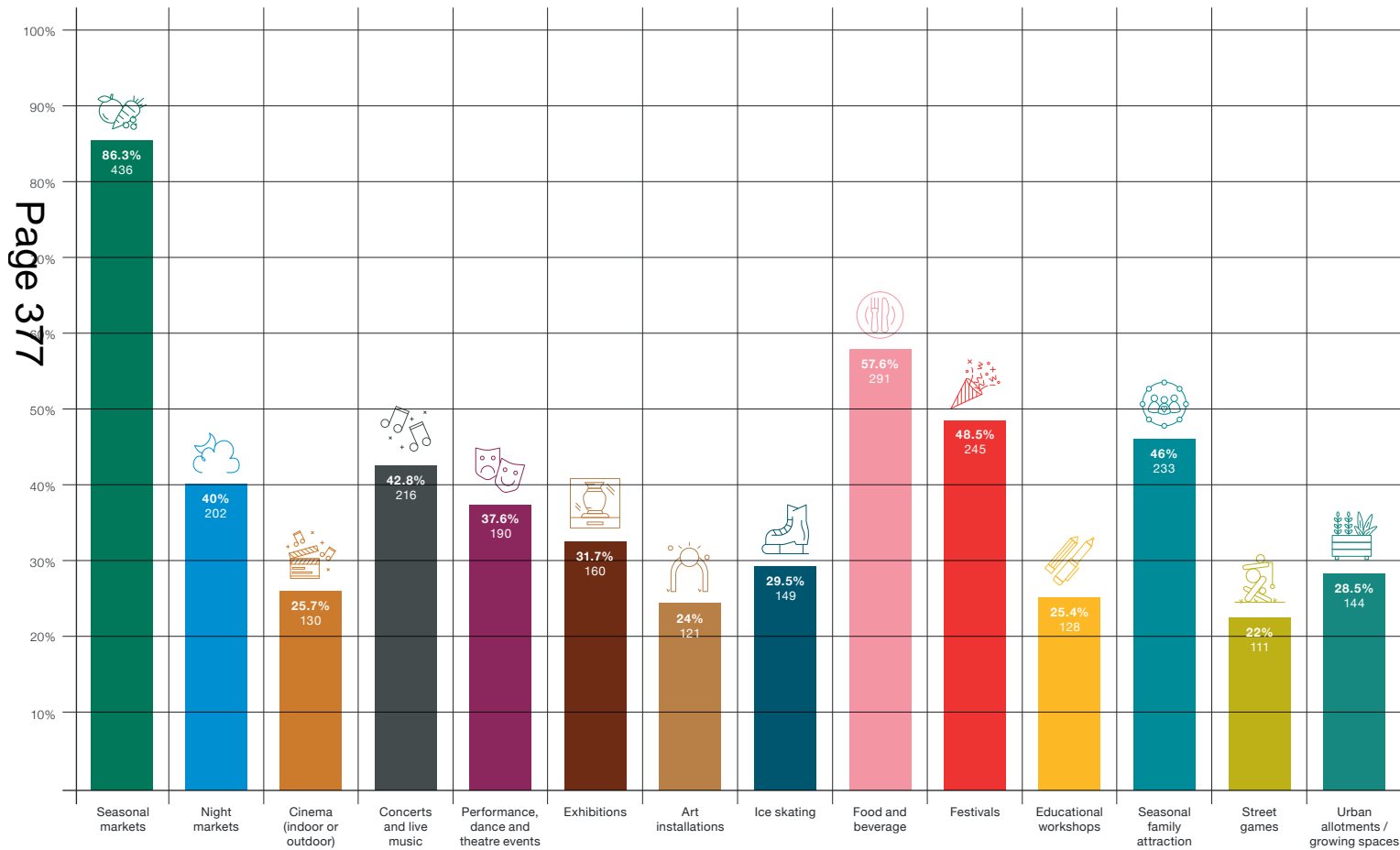
A Changing Places facility



ANSWERED 511  
SKIPPED 45

# Q7

## What kind of events/activities would you like to see in Ashton Market Square?



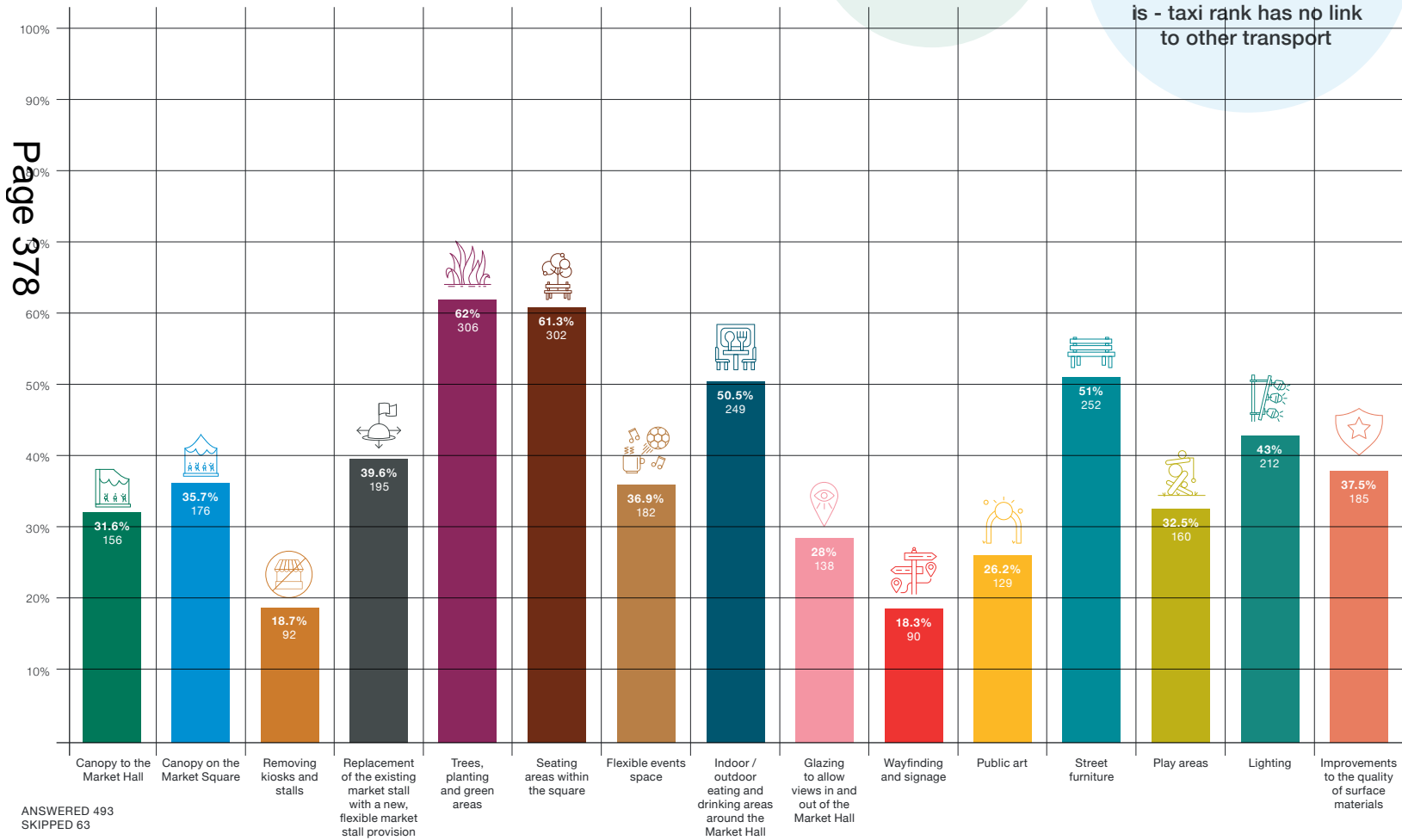
ANSWERED 505  
SKIPPED 51

# Q8

## Looking at the consultation material, which features of the draft proposal for the market square do you agree with?

An 'escape to freight island' sort of venue would be great & make a fortune!

Coherent transport hub linking tram / bus / taxis / bike hubs with Market Sq - at moment new arrivals have no clue where centre of Ashton is - taxi rank has no link to other transport

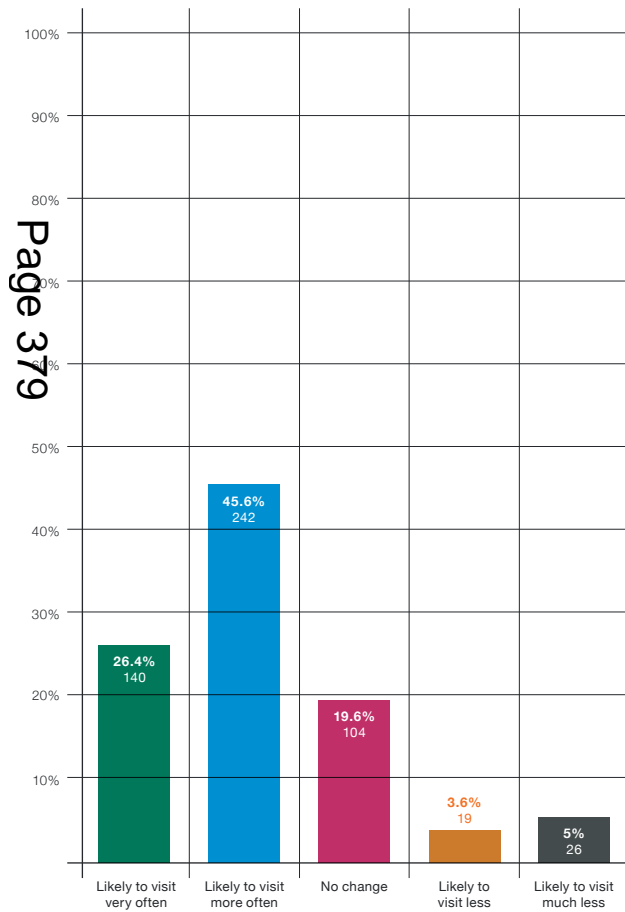


ANSWERED 493  
SKIPPED 63



## Q9

How often are you likely to visit the Ashton town centre if the changes to the Market Square were implemented?



ANSWERED 531  
SKIPPED 25

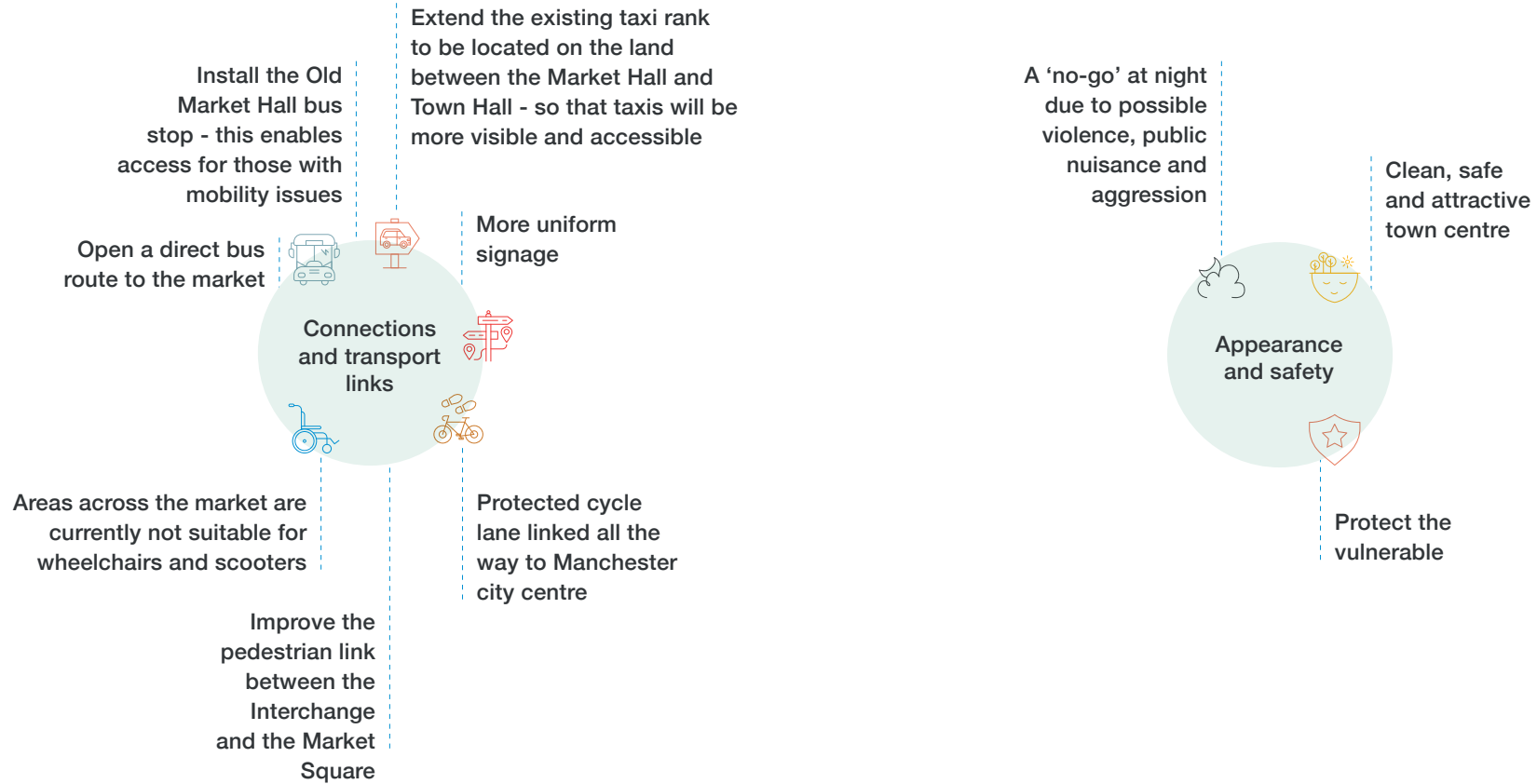
# Q10

## Please use this space for any other feedback, ideas or suggestions.

These will help us to shape the project as it progresses.

*"Give us something to be proud of"*

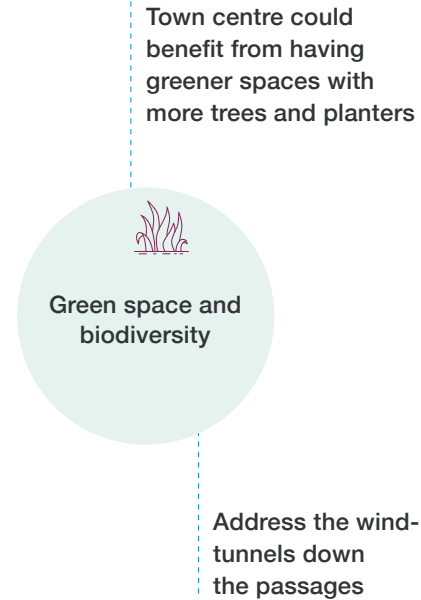
Page 380



*"Small businesses will be integral to the success of the town going forward."*



*"I would definitely visit more in the evening if more things were going on"*



*"New kiosk style premises are needed - why not et a Tameside businesses involved in the design - get the new kiosks made in Tameside."*

## Key considerations

A number of consistent themes and important considerations emerged across the various consultation sessions, which must be incorporated into the next stage of proposals and are summarised;

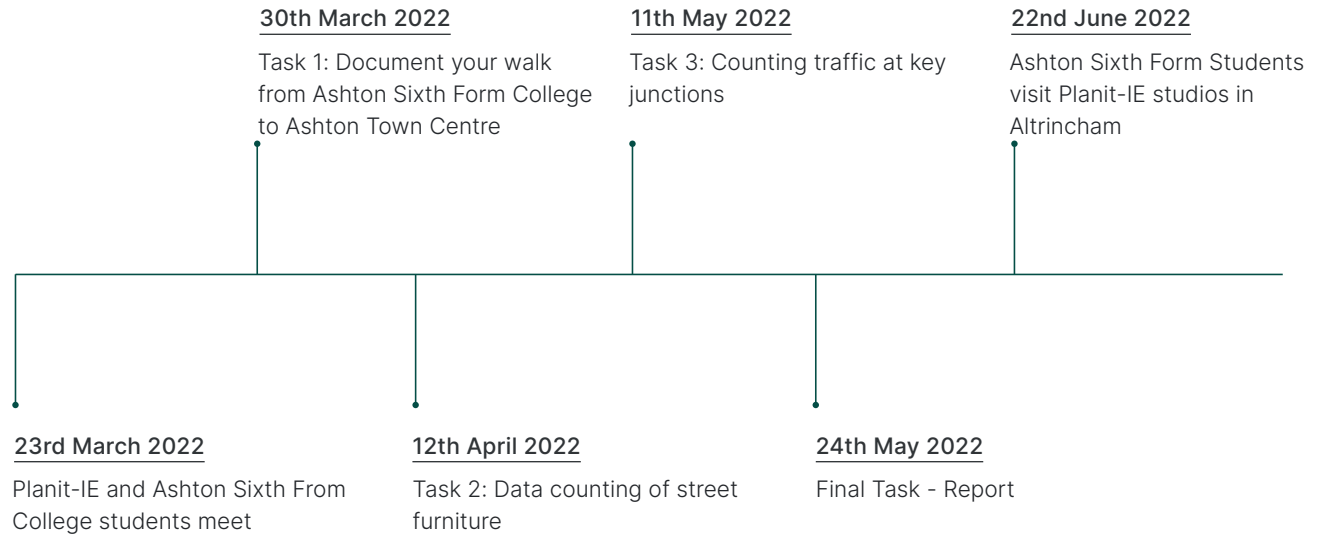
- Review location of play area within the Market Square.
- Consider the current, significant antisocial behaviour issues in design.
- Consider safety and inclusive design for children, youth, girls and minority groups.
- Consider the needs of students/teenagers and invite their active use of the town centre.
- Accessibility for less able-bodied and review location of public transport on Wellington Road.
- Review of taxi rank location and size in relation to sustainability, placemaking and transport strategies.
- Review flexibility of kiosks and market days in relation to overall programming of the square.
- Incorporate design recommendations/ requirements from kiosk traders relating to kiosk design, storage and servicing.
- Factor in environmental conditions to the design, particularly westerly wind and rain.
- Devise an F&B strategy.
- Incorporate heritage interpretation within design of the public realm.
- Devise strategy for long-term management and maintenance of proposals beyond delivery timescale.
- Review sustainable urban drainage approach in response to local climatic conditions, which are likely to intensify.
- Establish a governance strategy to ensure project transparency and good communication between stakeholders and Tameside Council.

# Social Value



## Ashton Sixth Form College Work Experience

As part of the commission for the Public Realm and Movement Strategy for Ashton, taking part in social value activities with local facilities was important in the process. A six-part engagement with local AS-Level Geography students at Ashton College informed the strategy work.



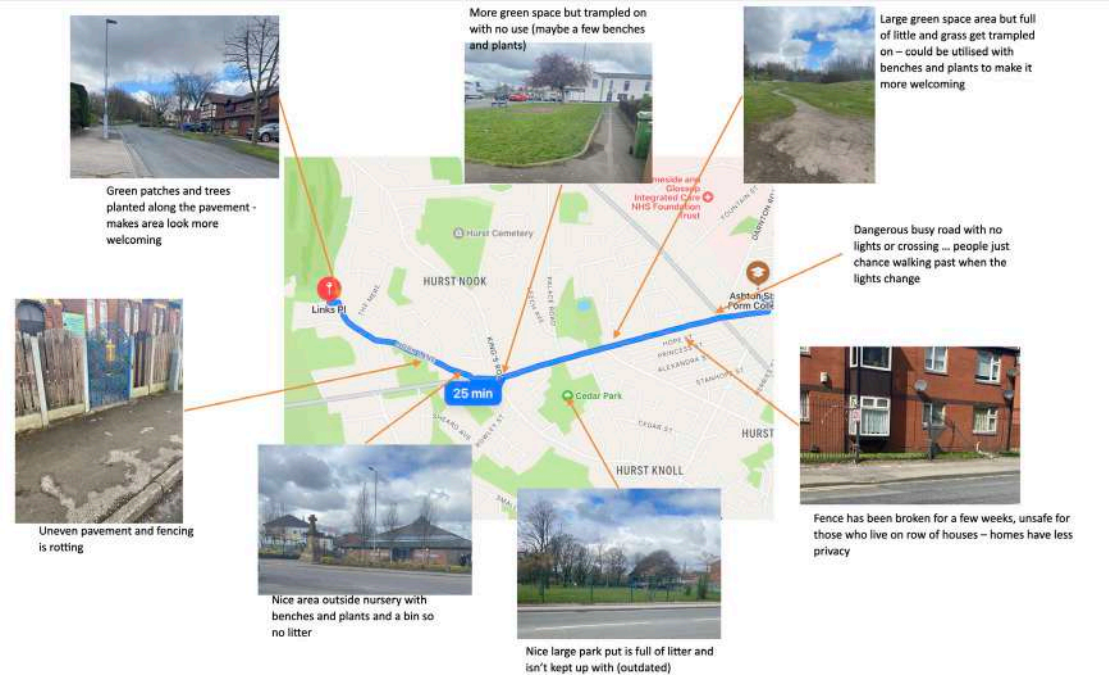
# Task One

## Purpose

Understanding the length, time of day, mode of travel and appearance of the journey for students from their home to Ashton Sixth Form College.

## Outcome

On the following pages Students 1-5 have illustrated and documented their journeys. From Task One's documentation and insight we can identify the problem sites within their journey and areas of opportunity e.g. spaces for dwelling and enjoying the sun. This analysis helps inform the public realm strategy proposals.



### Student 1

Overall, it was clear that from my route to college (around 25 minute walk) there was significant lack of green spaces and bins which contribute to large amounts of litter being left on the pavements. It was also clear that even though there was some green spaces, they were not being used efficiently meaning they are being walked on by the public and become an 'eye sore' for the local community. This could be improved by utilising green spaces already in place and adding pathways, gardens and/or benches which will attract the community to use these areas rather than walk past or over them. This could also increase community engagement in Ashton.



**Student 2**

Every college day, I take the 346 Stagecoach service from Hyde into Ashton, stopping at Glebe Street to embark on an approximately 10 minute walk at a steady incline to Ashton Sixth Form. From Glebe Street, I walk across the pedestrian crossings to near where Armstrong's Office Furniture is; I continue to stroll towards to the Penny Meadow junction where in which lies an island between several sides of traffic with some greenspace for local residents to perhaps walk their dogs. However, this greenspace is not the most appealing space for someone to use- for instance, the fact that on all four corners of the island there is a busy road which may be difficult to escape in the event of someone being threatened by street crime.

Despite the presence of litter bins, these seem to have insignificant effect since litter is often discarded on the grass or the pavement. Pedestrians often feel uneasy about using the crossing from the Penny Meadow island at Neal Avenue since there is not a traffic light to direct when pedestrians can safely cross the two lanes of traffic before reaching a small traffic island.

Upon crossing at Mossley Road, I continue walking across the same pavement, crossing at small crossings such as at the industrial park and at Tesco Express. When at the convenience store at Mossley Road, I turn right to walk down Curzon Road which then leads me directly to Ashton Sixth Form College. Curzon Road- a residential street- is often covered in litter from college students using the convenience store for snacks and it could be suggested that improvements to the street's bins need to be made in order to accommodate for the litter.

After finishing a college day, I tend to stick to the same route as outlined before although when near to Armstrong's Office Furniture, I sometimes use the Cricket's Lane shortcut if I believe I may be late for my bus home at the Penny Meadow Bus Stop. I usually only use this shortcut during a well-lit day since I am wary of the potential dangers that come with taking this route.





### Ashton's Memorial Gardens

Whilst this garden is usually pleasant to pass, I regularly see it not being used by local residents.



### Street landscaping near Crickets Lane

This street landscaping provides a boundary between the commercial building of Armstrong's Office Furniture, some terraced houses and the A670.



### Discarded waste on the side of the road

We could may be view this is as a sign that local residents do not feel invested or have pride in the area that they live in.



### Penny Meadow green space

In the Spring, this green space is usually nice to walk down alone, however if there is anybody in the communal sitting area, I tend to avoid this green space to walk on the pavement instead. It's shame because it is quite sweet to see daffodils and greenery in a deprived urban area.



### Dangerous Penny Meadow crossing

This crossing with a large island in the middle between two lanes is unpleasant to walk on. Many pedestrians report that this crossing is unsafe, saying that they would want to see a pedestrian crossing nearby so the mostly young people using this crossing do not fear being hit by a car walking to or from college.

After the first set of difficult roads to cross, there is another very wide road, and traffic in all directions. You can see these people just go, and cars have to wait for us, which is obviously not very safe.

Problem continues when you make it across the first part of the road, the middle crossing still has traffic in all directions and very wide/busy.

Closest bus down to Ashton from college- helps busy roads be less people busy which is probably safer.

I do think the park area in between is nice instead of all road, but no one goes in here often other than to walk through.

Problem roads: very wide and difficult to cross. Traffic from all directions, including buses and large trucks.

These issues could be more problematic for the two schools nearby, as although unsafe for adults/ us at college, even worse for school children.

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**Student 3**

For me, my journey to college is fairly simple. When I get the 348 bus from Stalybridge to Stamford street in Ashton, the route is easy and I feel not much could be improved. However, my regular journeys to Ashton are where more issues lie. On the journey from college to Ashton town centre, the main issues are the roads. Some of the 'crossings', notably Mosley road and the junctions with Neal ave and Beaufort road. These crossing places are extremely wide, with cars coming from up to 4 or 5 directions.

This is especially dangerous at peak times, such as 3-4 when schools and colleges finish. I think this road would be specifically hard for younger children, even when with an adult, as there is multiple nurseries and primary's schools nearby, along with the 2 colleges in close proximity.

I think these issues are quite important, as safety is a major concern. When in Ashton town centre, it is not particularly appealing, and I think there is no real purpose to go, other than a practical reason such as going to buy something specific.

However, I think that there is more of an appeal for older people, as I would say pensioners are the main demographic of Ashton town centre. I personally think the market hall could be more "special" as I feel it used to be more of the focal point of the city centre. The bus station, since its renovation, is very easy to use and has good connections to the rest of Manchester and surrounding areas.

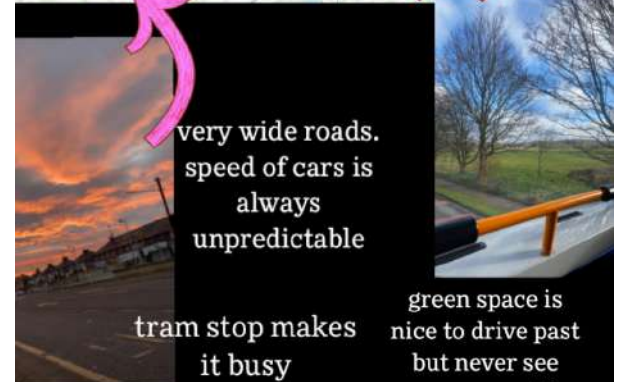
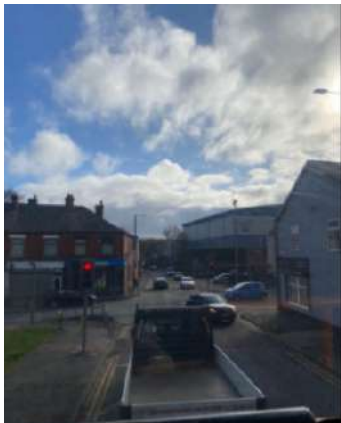
**Student 4**

Every morning I take the 231 Stagecoach bus from Clayton Hall which then drops me right outside college on Darnton Road for me to then attend. However on my journey home I take a different route. From college, I walk into Ashton town centre, which is an approximate 10-15 minute walk. I then get the 216 Stagecoach bus from the service interchange which then drops back off at Clayton Hall bus stop and I finish my journey by walking the remainder home.

My journey to and from college is fairly straightforward. However, walking through Ashton and into the town centre on my way home is where I feel there are some particular areas in need of attention.

For example, the roads are extremely hectic at the average time of finishing college (4pm) with cars approaching from numerous directions due to the wide roads with various stopping islands in the middle. For me, this is a concern especially as there are primary schools in close proximity along with two colleges. It's extremely difficult to cross these roads and I have witnessed many students struggling to do so on a daily basis. Ashton town centre has a great sense of community with music playing as you walk through, despite particular areas looking slightly worn-down and derelict. A final point to focus on, is the outdated advertisements located at the crossroads at New Market Road with a company car that has been dominated by overgrown weeds etc. This could be considered an eyesore to the public, especially as it's a very popular route for everyday commutes, and public transport, as my bus also takes this route. However, overall there are many green space areas for people to enjoy whilst on the journey to and from college which looks appealing to the public.

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### Student 5

1. Green space (island) – this area could be seen as an integral part of the Ashton community despite its benign significance upon first glance however, after observing this area since the last meeting I have seen a wealth of activity and opportunity to socialise on the benches and grass/gravel paths. This almost acts as a way to deter people from walking near the main road. Furthermore, throughout last year the community has taken great of the wild/planted flora (suggesting green space with social amenities acts as the pride of the community or even a space for people to built community ties, much like an allotment) suggesting that if we were to replicate the much needed green space within Ashton town centre in similar ways we could see an improvement in environmental quality (which is one of the seven domains of inequality).

2. This is a major pedestrian road hazard due to the width of the road itself. This area takes approximately 7-10 seconds to cross which is quite long especially silly when there is no safe way to cross (zebra crossing, traffic lights etc). Additionally, in this area the cars all have right away and so there is no clear place to safely cross, thus putting the lives of people at risk possibly from dangerous driving or even careless behaviour when crossing the road. Over the two years I have been at college I have seen many people struggle to cross this intersection as cars very rapidly come towards you as they pull off from a main road.

3. In my opinion this area has great pedestrian flow and great traffic control. The traffic lights don't cause much congestion throughout the day other than rush hour (approximately 17:00-18:30) and during the mornings as I am coming into Ashton from Failsworth (8:00-9:00). Although the pedestrian flow is somewhat optimal these key hours of commuting cause degradation in terms of environmental quality (air pollution) and possibly stress levels (although this hasn't been directly correlated with chronic symptoms of stress) there is reason to believe this is true.

4. This area is around the residential inner town centre regions and reflects one of many similar states. Many of these rows are littered with rubbish and in this case is prone to industrial tipping and fly tipping. Opportunist crimes such as these are damaging the spirits of the community as there is a sense of dismay for their shared environment, which is simply not true for the majority (the minority commits environmental crimes in these residential areas).

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# Task Two

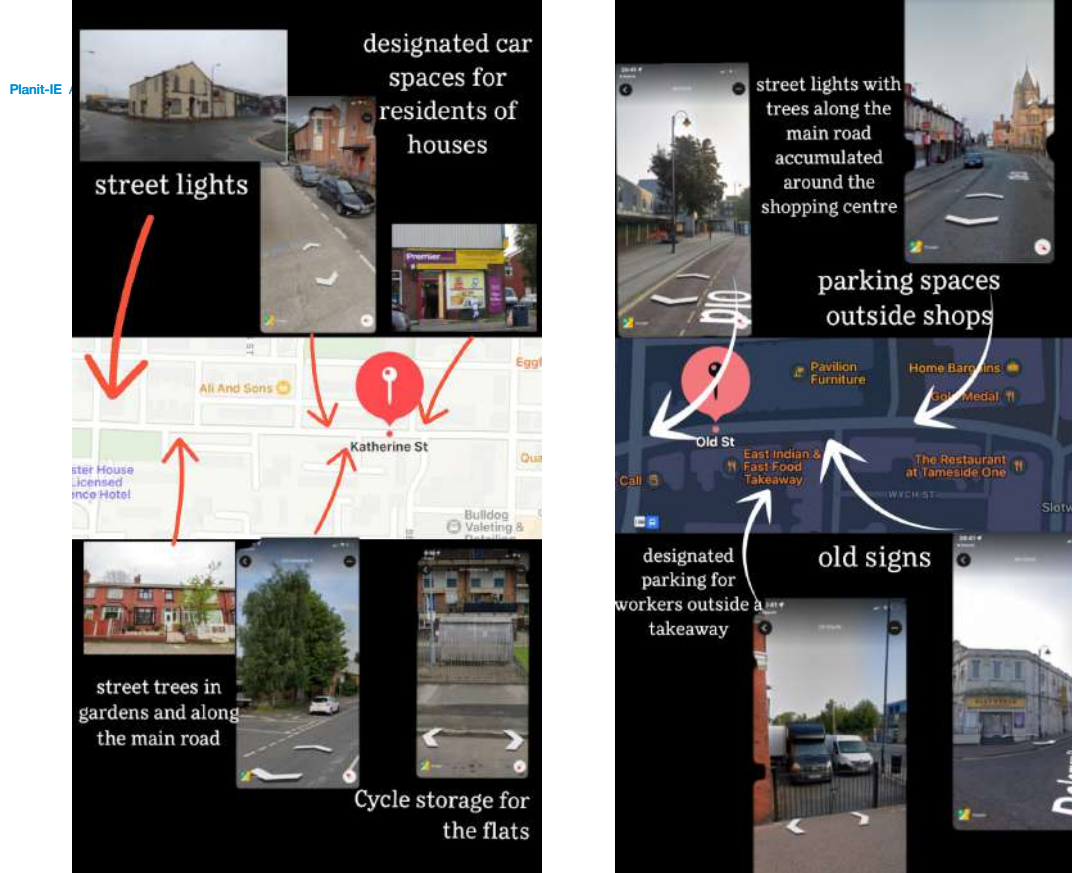
## Purpose

Data counting of street furniture in two groups in specific streets and spaces. Taking note of the;

- Number of cycle storage / parking places
- Number of on-street parking spaces – along streets (how many parking spaces along the street)
- Number of wayfinding signs (to help you navigate around the town centre, directing you to other places in Ashton)
- Number of street lights
- Number of sculptures in the street / Art Installations / Murals on the Wall
- Number of benches / seating areas
- Number of loading bays
- Number of taxi ranks
- Number of street trees

## Outcome

On the following pages Groups One and Two documented their findings. From Task Two's insight we can identify the streets and spaces which require more thought and consideration for planting, benches and cycle parking etc.



## Group One

Street furniture	Katherine Street	Old Street	Market Street
Street trees	23	12	15
Benches	-	-	-
Taxi parking	1	0	1
Cycle storage	1	0	0
On-street parking	100	0	10
Wayfinding / signage	5	3	3
Art installations	0	2	2
Loading bays	4	3	3
Street lighting	15	7	4

**Group Two**

Street furniture	Percentage of total street furniture items
Street trees	18.6%
Benches	12.6%
Taxi parking	0.6%
Cycle storage	2.6%
On-street parking	32.6%
Wayfinding / signage	4%
Art installations	2.6%
Loading bays	2%
Street lighting	24%

"The results of this task were fairly expected, and the main finding/ issue was the lack of way finding signs, especially to main points such as the train station. Throughout the town centre, signs were few and far between, and some were fairly unclear/ unreadable. Although Ashton is easy to find your way round, especially because I don't think people who don't live near, ever come to Ashton, if improvements in Ashton did turn the town centre into more of a 'destination', there is few signs to direct people. However, I think this is an easy fix during renovations, as signs can be placed in key locations to ease movement around the centre."

Student 3

"I specifically was tasked at counting car parking spaces, bicycle parking and wayfinding signs. My findings were that there were plenty of car parking spaces (32.6% of the street furniture on the five streets happened to be car parking) with some occupied as we surveyed on a Sunday afternoon. Only 4% of the street furniture items were wayfinding signs which suggests that pedestrians use the centre of Ashton regularly enough to know where they need to go without the need of wayfinding signs to guide them. Perhaps an increase in safe and secure bicycle parking or storage would encourage cycling in Ashton which could have the potential to carbon reduce emissions from cars since Ashton's air quality does need to improve (Ashton has a PM2.5 concentration is 2.2x higher than the WHO annual air quality guideline value according to IQAir.com)."

Student 2

"It was clear that Market Square was the only location that was focused on when designing this area. This meaning that other areas ,especially Wellington Street, are neglected causing them to be areas which would generally be avoided by the local community. Because of the features that Ashton is lacking, this may cause individuals to travel through Ashton rather than it being a destination location. If a number of art installation, street trees, benches and other forms of visually pleasing vegetation where added (for example community gardens), this may make Ashton a more attractive area, causing community interaction to increase."

Student 1

Street furniture	Market Square	Stamford Street	George Street	Market Street	Wellington Street
Street trees	8	1	0	19	0
Benches	12	0	0	7	0
Taxi parking	1	0	0	0	0
Cycle storage	4	0	0	0	0
On-street parking	15	34	0	0	0
Wayfinding / signage	3	1	1	0	1
Art installations	1	0	0	3	0
Loading bays	1	1	0	0	1
Street lighting	22	3	5	4	2

# Task Three

## Purpose

Movement analysis in two separate groups at specified key junctions for 30minutes - 1 hour, recording the time of day and a tally count of cars, cyclists and pedestrians. And using online tools understanding traffic data; what are the peak times for traffic through the week.

## Outcome

On the following pages Groups One and Two documented their findings. From Task Three's insight we can identify the amount and type of traffic in and around Ashton. Identifying the junctions which are causing the highest amount of congestion and pollution will help with the public realm strategy to determine methods to reduce reliance on cars and provide public transport which will ease congestion.

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We used two physical counters to count pedestrians and cars. And an online counter to count cyclist.

Katherine street Oldham road junction had lots of cars and buses, but crossing were safe as each section of the road had red/green men. It was very well laid out for pedestrians with good routes around the junction.

The IKEA junction is very busy as the data shows, but again it is easy to cross due to lots of red/green men crossings.

Again for the Henrietta street junction, it is easy to cross as there is a pedestrian crossing.

The station crossing was the most difficult to cross as there is cars from 3 directions but no

### Group One

Junction	Cars	Pedestrians	Cyclists
Katherine Street (Katherine St and Oldham Rd junction)	556	68	6
IKEA (large cross roads junction to the corner of IKEA)	113	216	2
Station (Road parallel to Albion Way and Turner Lane, down the side of the main train station)	298	17	1
Hen Street (junction of Albion Way and the side road, Henrietta St)	224	23	1

## Group Two

### Memorial Gardens Junction (opposite the Crickets Lane clinic)

Time observed	Cars	Vans	Taxis	Buses
15 minutes	139	27	11	8
Est. 1 hour	556	108	44	32

### Penny Meadow Junction (opposite the funeral directors)

Time observed	Cars	Vans	Taxis	Buses
15 minutes	128	21	8	8
Est. 1 hour	512	84	32	32

"During my trip to count and assess traffic at various junctions, we found that the majority of vehicles are cars and buses, especially near Katherine street which, is a key bus route towards Manchester.

Despite the busyness of the IKEA junction, Katherine street, Henrietta street and the train station, pedestrians are able to easily move around, as the crossings are well laid out with red/green crossing symbols, as well as the noises and beeps for visually impaired pedestrians. Although it can take some time to cross the junctions, especially IKEA as there is around 5 different points to make it to the other side, I believe there are few elements that could be improved as it is safe, if you follow the crossings and their symbols. Personally, I prefer to wait longer at crossings because it is safe, but many people do 'chance' the roads. The only road/junction (which I surveyed) that was hard to cross, is parallel to the train station. This road does not have a designated crossings or red/green symbols, and with traffic coming from 3 directions, can be difficult to cross. Due to this being a key crossing point for onward journeys from the station to the town centre, Ikea/Sainsbury's/ Marks and Spencers, the bus station and the short row of shops on the way to Ikea (Oldham Road.) I believe this is an easy fix with a crossing aid such as red/green man, as there is already traffic lights.

Student 3

"From the data collected at the Junctions at Penny Meadow and Memorial Gardens, this suggests to us that the main mode of transport throughout Ashton is cars on both junctions, it also shows us that there were little to no cyclists and that motorcycles were rarely spotted. This could suggest that we need to focus on making cycling more attractive to the community within Ashton and provide some forms of incentives (for example more bike storage facilities that are accessible – we know they are in short supply from Task 2). This would also decrease the carbon emissions produced in Ashton which would overall benefit air quality and Ashton's carbon footprint."

Student 1



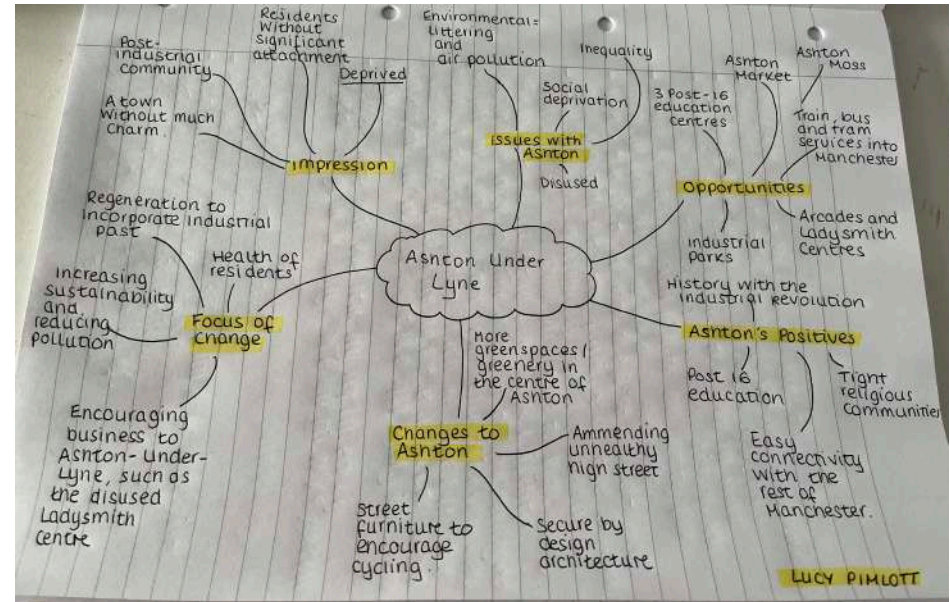
# Task Four - summary findings

## Purpose

A summary of all the tasks set and the main findings for each student, in the form of;

- A mindmap
- A 'mental map' / memory plan / map
- Written summary of each task

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# Focus of Change

# market, outdoor and indoor hall  
• I really think it could be brought back to its 'former glory' eg. a go to place or 'foodie' reputation like Altrincham

## Change

- outdoor market  
↳ just walked past
- indoor market  
↳ could be made a destination eg. 'foodie' ref.
- outdoor square  
↳ currently just concrete

ashton final summary

## Positives

- market attracts older generation  
↳ could be made even better
- Bus station has good lines and investment seems worth while - bus, tram, train, taxis
- Practical shops eg. supermarkets

## Impression

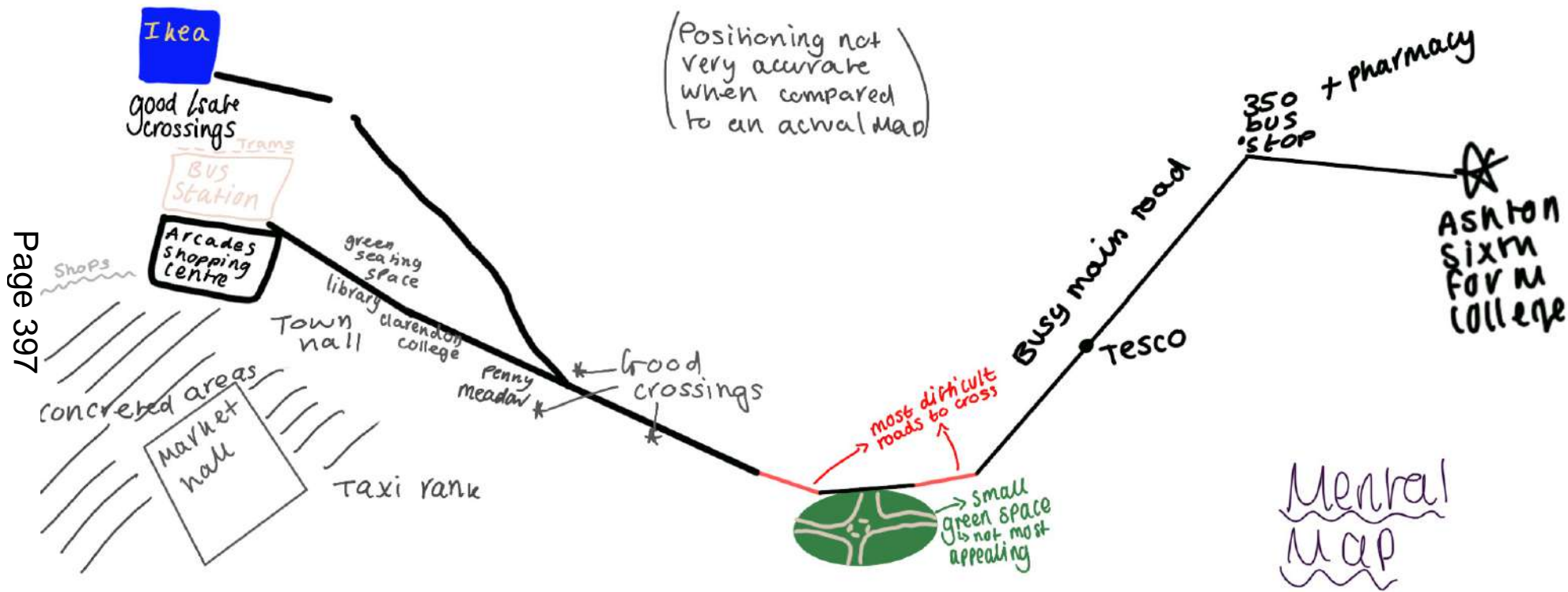
- outdated
- not particularly appealing
- Bad reputation
- Could be made nicer
- a bit rough • litter
- good travel links into Manchester.

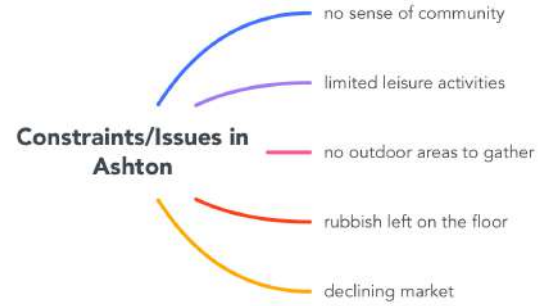
## Issues

- crime reputation
- run down shops / buildings
- few appealing 'gathering' / sitting spaces
- declining town centre / market

## Opportunities

- Market hall and town centre could be made more of a 'destination'
- Green spaces that are appealing and feel safe
- more visually attractive centre spaces
- updated / renovated shopping areas.





**Where do you think the focus of change should be for Ashton?**



# Core Findings

Engaging with the students revealed some rich insight into the physical and social elements of Ashton. Key themes emerged which are indicators of place quality and should inform priority areas for investment and intervention.

## Care and maintenance

- Poor upkeep and management contributes to a sense of neglect.
- Issue of littering, notably from students using convenience stores and takeaways.

## Natural space

- Lack of and poor quality greenspaces. Many seen as functionless, left-over spaces.
- Opportunity to build on existing community action and involve residents in the management of community green spaces to foster better sense of ownership and a more resilient and meaningful stewardship of the public realm.

## Identity and belonging

- Ashton town centre currently caters to a limited, older demographic, not representative of the diversity of Ashton.
- Need to attract a range of demographics and age groups to the town centre, and capitalise on the student demographic who currently frequent the town centre after college, but are poorly provisioned for in terms of amenities.

## Streets and spaces

- Lack of public realm design consideration for key streets and spaces beyond Market Square e.g. Wellington Street.
- Need to think beyond core space and how ancillary spaces are crucial to curating a range of environments that support the core.

## Feeling safe and Social interaction

- Students report discomfort and a perceived lack of safety in some spaces.
- The most effective way of combating unsafe spaces is through activation and natural surveillance.
- Public realm interventions are opportunities to maximise the potential for community formation and sociability.

## Traffic and parking

- Predominance of cars as modal choice negatively impacts on place quality, particularly with primary roads creating barriers to active travel.
- Excess of surface parking within town centre negatively impacts on place quality, creating urban voids and car-dominated secondary streets.

## Moving around

- Pedestrian desire lines are not designed into highways infrastructure, which prioritises the car.
- The result is a 'car is king' culture twinned with difficult and dangerous crossings - particularly those connecting a number of schools, colleges and nurseries with the town centre.
- Convoluted and unintuitive pedestrian crossing infrastructure, and a prevalence of pedestrians 'chancing it' at unmanaged crossing points, with clear safety issues.
- Wayfinding is less of an issue since Ashton predominantly attracts local and repeat visitors who are familiar with the town's layout.
- More important to invest in improving the pedestrian experience and safety; and in quality ancillary public spaces and key streets.
- Low rates of cycling is compounded by a lack of cycle infrastructure.

Leeds  
+44 (0)113 824 6413

Liverpool  
+44 (0)151 363 1230

London  
+44 (0)207 253 5678

Manchester  
+44 (0)161 928 9281

Standish  
+44 (0)145 360 7080



Channel	Activity	Target Audience	Timing			
			w/c 7/11	w/c 14/11	w/c 21/11	w/c 28/11
<b>Online</b>						
Live web page www.tameside.gov.uk/ashtontowncentre	Information on the consultation documentation with a link to the survey. (This will be updated following the survey close as a general overview and update page)	All	X	X	X	X
Social media messaging and regular updates and monitoring of interaction on corporate channels, including business facing channels on; LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram	Regular messaging circulated and linked to news articles and main page on the website daily.  Information sent with toolkit for all key partners including housing Association and groups, AgeUK, Action Together, Active Tameside, GC Business Growth Hub and GM Chamber	All	X	X	X	X
MP to publicise via social media	Issued via Twitter 25th November 2022	Tameside Council staff			X	
Leader's Stakeholder Weekly briefing	Information sent to Leaders contacts and stakeholders	Key stakeholders, partners and councillors	X	X	X	X
Chief Executives Weekly Brief	Information and web link	Tameside Council staff	X		X	X
LiveWire - online monthly staff newsletter	Article to encourage staff to complete the survey	Tameside Council staff		X		
<b>Offline</b>						
Press Release	Proactive press release to local, regional and national contacts to announce the launch of the survey	Local, regional and national press and public	X			
Ashton Ward Members	Presentation of market square proposals to group followed by Q & A's session.	Local Ward Members	X			
Market Traders/Town Team	Drop in event 17th November	Ashton Market Traders		X		
Market Hall Public Consultation Event	Local event in the Market Hall for everyone to view the draft proposals and discuss any issues or ideas local people have. Saturday 26th December 10:30am - 3:00pm	Local Community			X	
Market Traders Session - Kiosk Operators Only	1st December 2022, 4:30 - 5:30pm	Tameside Council Staff				X
Scrutiny Panel	Presentation of market square proposals to group followed by Q & A's session - 23rd November 2022.	Local Members and Senior Council Officers			X	
Tameside College	Direct session led by Planit IE to engage local students identified as a key demographic in the town. Monday 5th December, Ashton Old Baths	College students and members of staff				X
Jonathon Vickerstaff, Secretary Tameside Owners and Drivers Association (TODA)	Meeting held 25th November 2022	Taxi Drivers			X	
Youth Council	Engagement session - awaiting a response. Chased	Identified stakeholder group			tbc	
Blind and Deaf Team	Engagement session - awaiting a response. Chased	Identified stakeholder group			tbc	
Open Space Society	Engagement session - awaiting a response. Chased	Identified stakeholder group			tbc	
People First	Engagement session - awaiting a response. Chased	Identified stakeholder group			tbc	
Faith Groups	Issued to Diversity Network. Cllr Allam to provide contact details.	Identified stakeholder group			tbc	
Emergency services	Rob Froggat, GMP contacted to arrange a meeting.	Identified stakeholder group			tbc	
Stakeholder engagement sessions	See full outline plan of meetings provided by Planit	Key stakeholders, partners and councillors	X	X	X	X
Resident and public Engagement Sessions	In person sessions at The Market Hall	All			X	X
Tameside Community Champions	Weekly round up, plus daily WhatsApp group message	Residents and local community	X		X	

Neighbourhood Forums	Attendance and presentation of consultation document at all four Neighbourhood Forums	Tameside Councillors	X	X	X	
All other available shared channels and partner networks including GP surgeries	Emailed information for dissemination through relevant channels	All	X	X	X	X
Correspondence to PEN participants	Email correspondence to encourage and highlight survey and participation	All	X		X	
Discover App	Feature across all towns	Residents/visitors and app users	X	X	X	X
Communications Network including social housing providers	Email information with toolkit	All				
Schools, Colleges and Learning Providers Network	Email issues to all secondary school and college providers	All		X		
Tameside Means Business Newsletter subscribers	Email addressed to 2,500 businesses to encourage participation in the survey	Businesses	X		X	
<b>Other External Media and Publications</b>						
Tameside Reporter Manchester Evening News Tameside Correspondent About Tameside Tameside Radio BBC Radio Manchester HITS Radio	Articles and press release as well as member interviews and briefings where requested.	All	X	X	X	X

Additional channels will be added on an ongoing basis



**Councillor Vimal Choksi**  
Executive Member  
Towns & Communities

**Julian Jackson**  
Director of Place

**Chair of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel**

**Councillor Yvonne Cartey**

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

Email: Yvonne.cartey@tameside.gov.uk  
Phone: 0161 342 2199  
Ask for: Paul Radcliffe  
Date: 5 December 2022

Dear Councillor Choksi,

**Ashton Market Square Consultation**

I write on behalf of the Council's Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel. At a meeting of the full Scrutiny Panel on 20 September 2022, members received an overview of the Tameside Town Centres Framework and wider investment proposals.

In line with priorities set within our work programme, a separate working group will carry out activity linked directly to Town Centres. Members will also take account of the delivery timetable and phases to determine the timeliness of such oversight. The working group met for the first time on 23 November 2022, with a session focused on the Ashton Market Square consultation.

The Scrutiny Panel wishes to submit a formal response to the consultation. This letter therefore aims to provide a summary of collective discussion points and to express any issues and concerns raised by panel members both at the meeting and from subsequent conversations. I would be extremely grateful if on receiving this letter you are able to take the appropriate action to record the collective response. I hope that a response of the Scrutiny Panel can be referenced in future reports and may support wider governance in terms of stakeholder engagement and feedback used to inform decision making in this area.

At a national level, town centres are facing a number of significant challenges. Notwithstanding, Tameside's town centres remain a crucial asset and component to the future economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the borough. It is therefore very pleasing to hear that Tameside Council is utilising £10.8 million of the national Levelling Up Fund (LUF) to redevelop Ashton's Market Square as part of the wider Public Realm Strategy.

The overarching Town Centre Framework can act as a strategic umbrella and identify common themes, subtle nuances, bespoke planning and direction for Tameside across all town centres. Creating a clear and tangible link between strategy and delivery is very important and Scrutiny asks that attention is placed on the pace of delivery over the next 2 years.

There is an ongoing and evolving need to understand the complexity of town centres and the potential for generating a diverse local offer for retail, housing, events and leisure. Building on Tameside's heritage and improved connectivity, the investment can act as a catalyst to rebrand Ashton Market Square as a resource to communities and visitors. A vibrant and active town centre can help breathe life into a place and its people.

I have listed some of the main points below, which are to be viewed as individual responses from members, under the collective of Tameside Council's Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel.

- Investment and improvement in Ashton Market Square is welcome. Members are supportive of the consultation process and proposals to improve the outdoor market offer and public realm, including the creation of a flexible town square that will aim to enhance the area as a visitor destination in its own right.
- Creating an environment that is attractive, accessible, inclusive and safe remains of the utmost importance. Consultation responses can allow for greater understanding of what connects people to a place and identify any existing barriers.
- Ashton Market Square needs to be a modern and fit for purpose space that delivers a diverse mix of uses. The extent of adaptations is dependent on the future ambition, commitment and connection between the indoor and outdoor markets.
- While important to maintain local heritage of the site, members are keen to ensure that the Council's ambition for the project remains as bold as possible in supporting a wider pull factor. To create something that differentiates Ashton Market Square within the region.
- Members are keen to ensure that work is undertaken to understand what, in addition to the current offer and mix, will lead to greater use and footfall. Future functionality for parts of the space appear somewhat vague and it is hoped that significant attention can be placed on facilities, lighting and extended use of the square outside of trader and shop opening times.
- Ashton Market Square is a very large space and members feel that while future options for events and general greening of the area is welcome, this may not avoid potential infrequency or underutilisation of space for periods of the year.
- There is currently a large number of access points to the market square, outdoor and indoor markets. Potential to create a more structured approach to entry and exit that supports footfall to traders and businesses, whilst maintaining the ease of movement to wider public services and the college.
- That Ashton Market Square development seeks to maximise the use of environmentally friendly and sustainable methods, actively reducing the carbon footprint and for this to be an exemplar project in Tameside for materials and renewables.
- That continued and progressive methods of dialogue and engagement with key stakeholders is key to the success of the project. Potential option to establish - Ashton Market Square Advisory and Delivery Panel - for the duration. To include representatives of the Council, Elected Members, Market Traders, Businesses and the Town Team. To promote transparency and deliver key messages and updates at agreed intervals.
- The importance of effective costing, delivery timetables and transparency of communication throughout the length of the programme with key stakeholders. In order to work for all, the project needs to be informed by all.

- For future consideration regarding expansion of public realm and accessibility to the market square from all available public transport locations and car parks. To signpost the market square as a destination.
- That a future maintenance strategy and long-term financial commitment is needed for Town Centres, beyond LUF investment and one-off monies.
- Engagement with Scrutiny remains a priority as development phases emerge across Tameside's town centres.

Following completion of the consultation, I am keen to ensure the working group remains suitably updated on key findings. Moving into 2023, Scrutiny will seek assurances on how responses have fed into the final plans, to review progress and the potential for any learning to inform future consultation and delivery phases.

If further clarity is needed on any of the above points, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

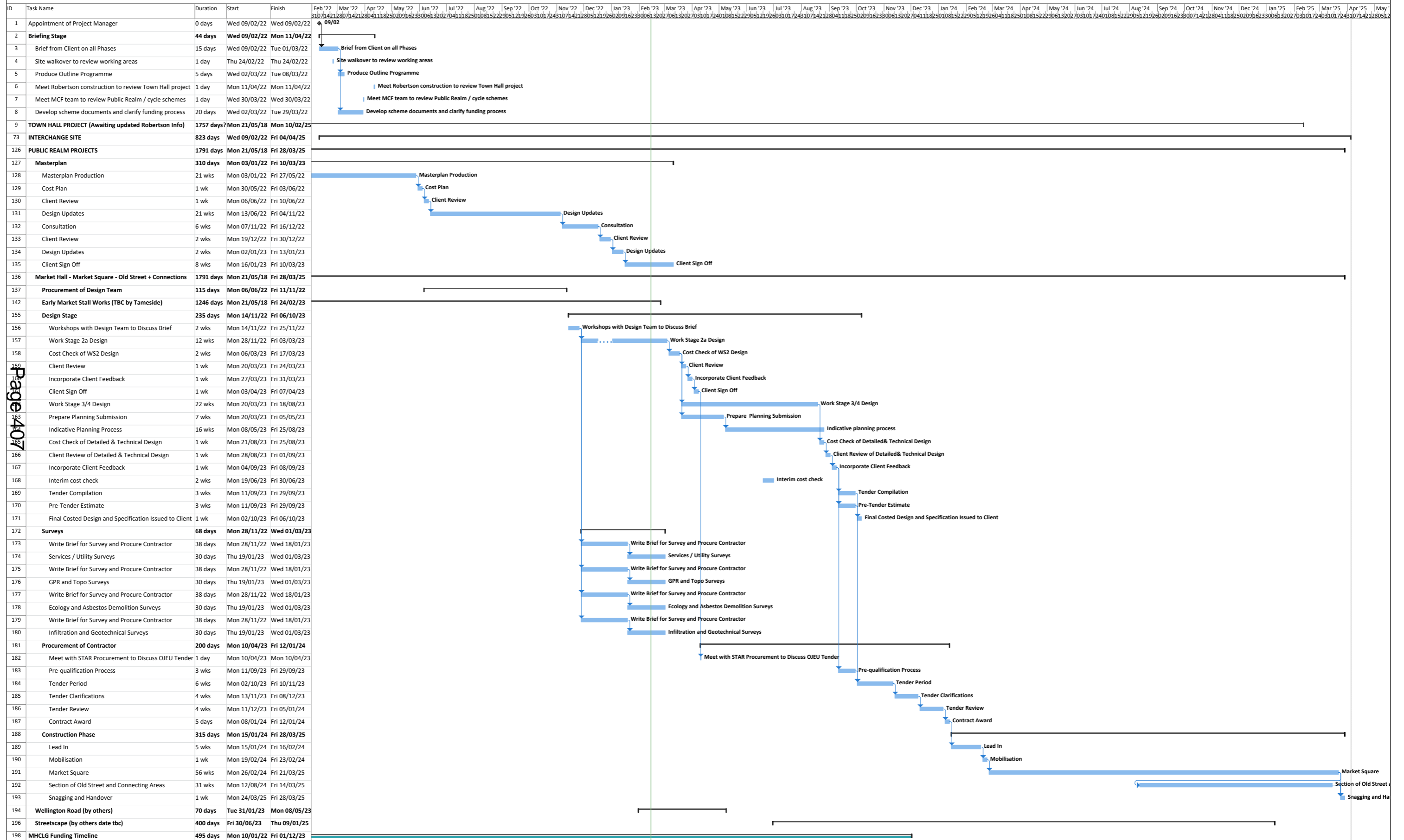
**Councillor Yvonne Cartey**

**Chair – Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel**

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ASHTON TOWN CENTRE  
INITIAL DRAFT LUF PROGRAMME - COMPLETION MARCH 2025



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# A Public Realm Strategy for Ashton-under-Lyne

## Phase 1 - Market Square

A catalyst for further regeneration

Ashton Market Square and Market Hall



# Introduction

This Public Realm Strategy has been produced by Planit-IE on behalf of Tameside Council to devise a strategy to deliver improvements to the Public Realm within the Market Square at Ashton-Under-Lyne Town Centre.

Tameside Council has commissioned the production of a Public Realm Strategy for the Market Square in consultation with Stakeholders. This is a unique opportunity to consider the vision, heritage values and character of the Market Square within the context of the wider town centre. Environmental sustainability, diversity and inclusion, health and well-being, and accessibility are highly significant contributing factors in creating a sense of place and a unique destination for Ashton Town Centre.

## Phase 1 Market Square

The Public Realm Strategy will focus immediately on the Market Square, Market Hall and connecting spaces. This is Phase 1 of an overall Public Realm Strategy for the Town Centre.

The Phase 1 Market Square Strategy will include strategic plans, along with guidance and design principles to support the delivery of the Market Square vision. Future phases include the Market Fringes, Market Hall and Market Hall canopy, and will form part of the detailed design stage, up to RIBA stage 2. These areas will be excluded from the Levelling Up Fund and delivered at a later stage.

In the future a comprehensive public realm strategy will also include Stamford Street Central, Old Street and St. Michael's Square. It will incorporate proposals for Wellington Road and extend to Katherine Street, Penny Meadows, Oldham Road.

## Public Realm Strategy themes

- Inclusive and accessible
- Townscape context
- Responding to heritage
- Connectivity and accessibility
- Sustainability
- Safer streets and spaces
- Culture and events
- Health and well-being
- Way-finding, lighting and signage
- Brand identity and public art

## People and place focussed

Our approach is place and people focused, we started by getting to know the place in which we are working, and the people who know it best

It is about building strong relationships, identifying the priorities, gaining insight from the people and understanding of the essence of the place. This has enabled us to define the objectives, aims and ambitions of an effective Public Realm Strategy.





## Catalysts for Change

There are actions happening to accelerate positive change in Ashton Town Centre that will support the economy and future growth of the town, here are the actions below:

### Ashton Mayoral Development Zone

The establishment of an Ashton Mayoral Development Zone will significantly raise the profile of Ashton and Tameside, helping to position the opportunities that exist for future funding, investment and Greater Manchester support.

### Mayor's Challenge Fund (MTF)

Proposals will be coordinated with concept designs for improved cycling infrastructure which have been developed under the Mayor's Challenge Fund. One of these projects is **Ashton Streetscape** (Albion Way and Wellington Road) which aims to achieve the following:

1. Segregated cycle tracks on both sides of the road.
2. A modified junction at the exit from the bus station and the Ashton retail park, to incorporate a new Cyclops arrangement, which provides segregated, signalised facilities for cyclists, to improve road safety for all road users.
3. Measures to slow and control vehicle speeds and provide enhanced priority for pedestrian users, potentially including a reduction in carriageway width, increased landscaping, different surfacing materials and the introduction of pedestrian crossing points.



### Leveilling-up Fund 2021

The Council has gained further grant funding to continue this comprehensive transformation of the town centre and was successful in its £19.87m Leveilling Up Fund bid to support the next stage of regeneration.

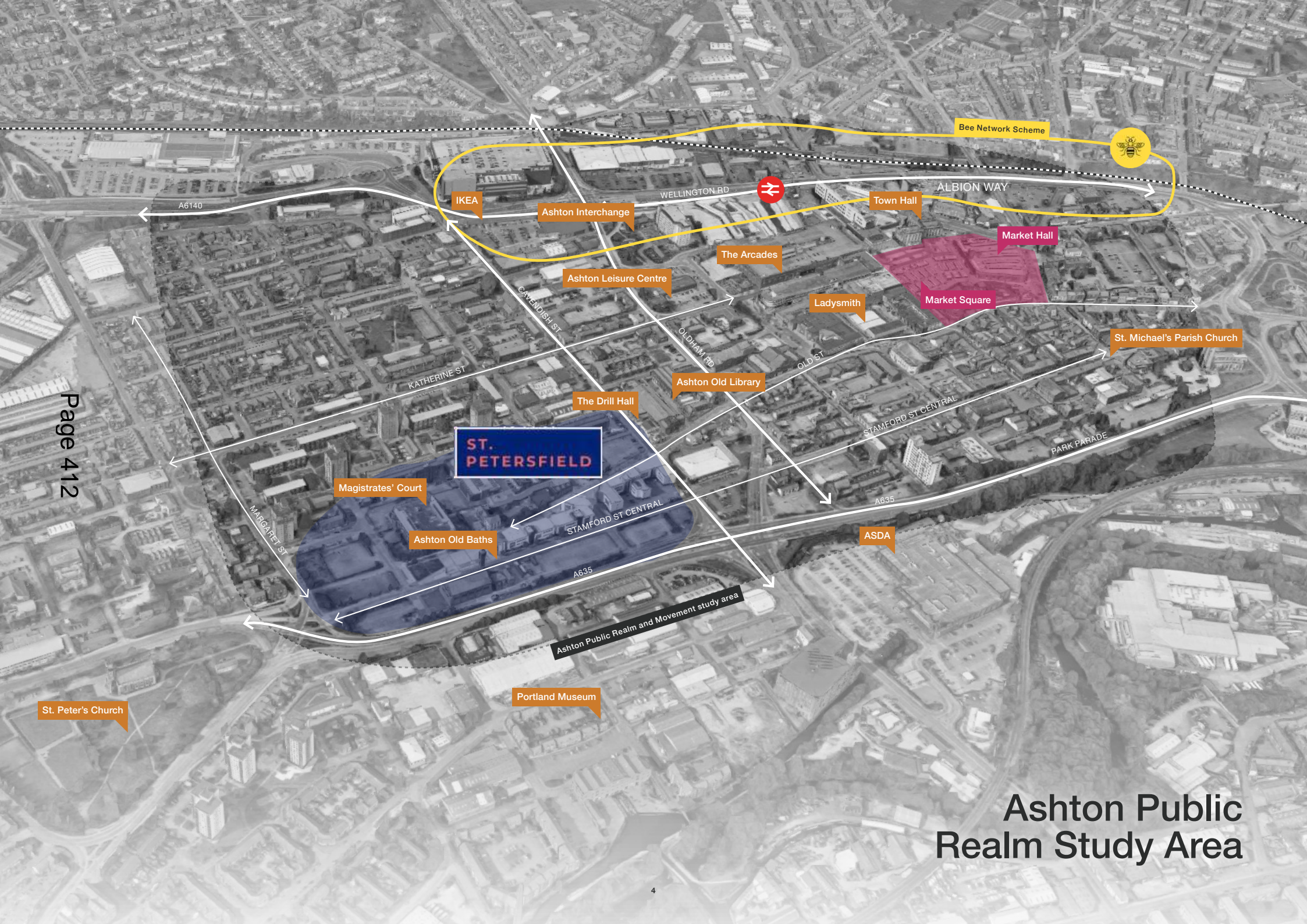
- A. Land remediation of the former interchange site
- B. Cycling and public realm improvements
- C. Restoration of Ashton Town Hall
- D. Further development of St Petersfield into a cutting edge business park for innovation and tech firms
- E. Residential, leisure and the delivery of a wider diversity of town centre uses with increased town centre living.

### Wellington Road Proposals

The Wellington Road and Albion Way proposals are currently progressing and construction has started on-site. The strategy and design principles for Phase 1 Market Squares will integrate into wider proposals underway.



Visualisation of Albion Way proposals



# Ashton Public Realm Study Area

# Stage 1

## Love Ashton engagement

The Love Ashton engagement event took place on Saturday 13th March 2022, at Ashton Market Hall, the feedback has shaped our plans.

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council appointed Planit and Civic Engineers to undertake a Public Realm and Movement strategy for Ashton-under-Lyne Town Centre. We gathered the public's initial ideas and thoughts about how they wanted to see improvements in the town centre, the feedback has helped to shape our proposal.

### Key Messages

- Market square is characterless-missing the vibrant atmosphere from the past. It should be an attraction and destination rather than a cluttered space.
- Generally unkempt, with deteriorating materials, and lack of greenery.
- Market stalls are unattractive, impractical and in bad condition.
- Safety issues in the square, related to anti-social behaviour, poor lighting and visibility.
- Accessibility from public transport should be improved, as well as connections to St. Petersfield and the rest of Ashton Town Centre.

**Market stalls are unattractive and not practical**

**Make the area more of a community hub where meetings can take place forums and maybe even as a wedding venue.**

**Lack of greenery**

**Missing the once vibrant market stalls and atmosphere**

**Improve signage to the town**

**Residents need safe and attractive walks**

Love Ashton Event



Love Ashton Event



# Stage 2 Public Consultation

Consultation in Stage 2 focussed on the Market Square and took the form of workshops, briefings and meetings. The objectives of the consultation were to engage with key stakeholders and a wide variety of people and community groups to develop a clear local picture and to gain an insight into issues, opportunities, and future aspirations for Ashton Market Square and Market Hall.

The consultation went public with a Public Realm Strategy booklet, associated consultation boards for the public events and a questionnaire.

Following the public consultation of the Public Realm Strategy (Phase One - Market Square) in November 2022, a number of consistent themes and important considerations emerged which have been incorporated within the design principles.

**“We’d like to see a better variety of trees. Could we have some the same as those in Library Square in Manchester? They have startling spring blooms.”**

**“It looks great, Ashton needs the investment... Ashton is ready to improve, Stamford street could be something really special again”.**

**“It is to be hoped that the mistakes made in developing the current Market Square can be avoided and an amenity of which Ashton can be proud can finally be realised.”**

**“The plans would be enhanced by a lovely sunken garden, with plenty of benches and colour.”**

Feedback at Market Hall Event, Nov 2022



Market Hall Consultation Event, Nov 2022



A number of consistent themes and important considerations emerged across the various consultation sessions, which must be incorporated into the next stage of proposals and are summarised.

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# Key Messages

Consultation in Stage 2 focussed on the Market Square and took the form of workshops, briefings and meetings. The objectives of the consultation were to engage with key stakeholders and a wide variety of people and community groups to develop a clear local picture and to gain an insight into issues, opportunities, and future aspirations for Ashton Market Square and Market Hall.

The consultation went public with a Public Realm Strategy booklet, associated consultation boards for the public events and a questionnaire.

Following the public consultation of the Public Realm Strategy (Phase One - Market Square) in November 2022, a number of consistent themes and important considerations emerged which have been incorporated within the design principles.

The following key messages have been incorporated into the design principles and proposals, as shown on pages 29 to 45.

## Public Realm

- Play for all ages needed to attract all ages.
- Range of spaces to suit different needs, including safe spaces, quiet spaces, active spaces for play and recreation and a community hub, which should be free or cheap with passes (for students).
- Plenty of ideas for play related including Skateboarding provision for teenagers
- Provision needed for trade waste and site cleaning operation.
- Servicing access along Bow St for market traders at key times of the day
- Lighting in the evening is critical.
- Food and drink offer - night-time economy
- Mitigate westerly wind,
- Wayfinding and signage need improving
- Provision for Bike parking
- Accessibility for less able bodied and important pensioner trade
- Access for deliveries and own car to stalls
- Bus stop provision has been removed
- Outdoor seating for food stalls
- Access for people from public transport required from Wellington Road (bus routes along this road)
- Pop-up/temporary/seasonal events/offer in the market square.
- Mitigate westerly wind
- Need to establish intimate spaces and curate atmospheres of 'hustle and bustle', buzz.
- Improve drainage capacity
- Maintenance needs considering with provision and resources built in.

## Kiosks

- The needs of kiosk traders must be considered.
- Fixed kiosks are required which can operate as a 'shop
- Protection from the weather, consider own canopy
- Designed for food is required
- Different sized kiosks to suit different traders– carrier for storage. 10ft by 10ft doesn't work for some uses.
- Industrial quality of finishes is required
- Intimate space – overlooked if the kiosks all face inwards, under the canopy.

## Canopy

- Canopy no sides preferred for ease of cleansing and to minimise ASB Food and drink as a cluster along gallery side of canopy
- Storage to stop lots of unloading for market traders
- Outdoor seating for food stalls
- Shelter and protection from the elements - especially westerly wind and rain, summer shade - free standing roof rather than canopy

## Future Vision

The aim for Ashton Town Centre is to breathe new life into the town centre and attract investment, and prosperity for years to come.

Ashton Town Centre will be known for celebrating its unique heritage and distinctive identity. A compact, well-connected, and sustainable place.

The Market Square will be the beating heart of the town; a modern market and public space enlivened by events, cafe culture and a vibrant evening economy. A friendly and welcoming place for future generations to enjoy. A destination where people can socialise and relax.

Page 417



Our plans capture the essence of Ashton-Under-Lyne Town Centre by celebrating its history and unique assets. We have defined the opportunities and character zones to help shape a comprehensive vision for the future.

- Key**
-  Linking Ashton with the River Tame and Canal green infrastructure
  -  Enhancing Ashton's cultural quarter and supporting the workforce
  -  An emerging commercial district (St Petersfield)
  -  Old Town Heart - creating a boutique retail offer, supporting the community and providing a high quality residential offer
  -  Town Centre living
  -  Extending the evening economy, enhancing the food and beverage offer
  -  Consolidating the retail and arrival area
  -  Identifying Ashton's heart
  -  Supporting Ashton's workforce
  -  Levelling Up Funding Zone Market Square to provide flexible spaces and events
  -  Key Spaces
  -  Key crossings
  -  Key streets
  -  Key linkages
  -  Key junctions

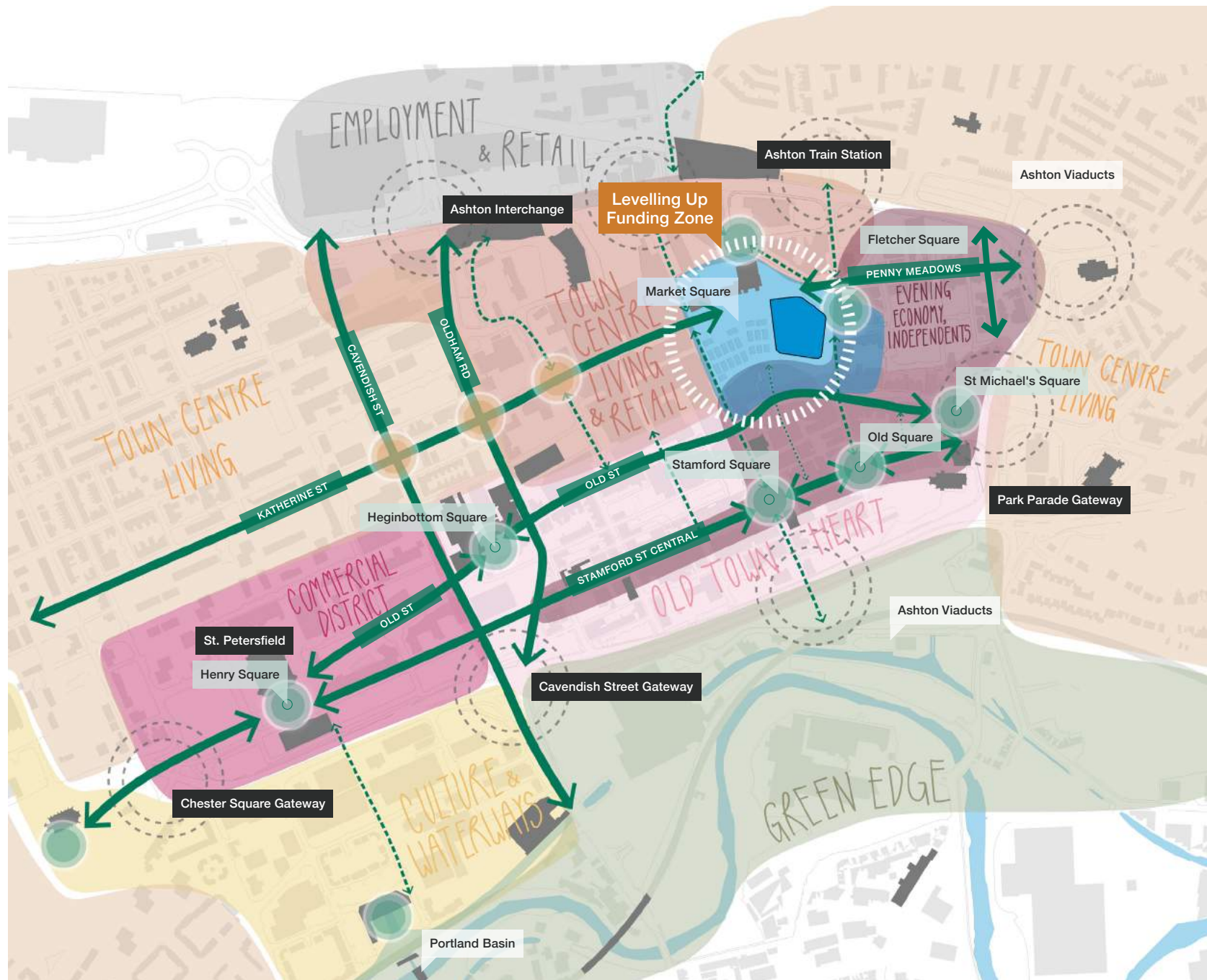


Diagram illustrating character areas and the overall vision



*Ashton Market is the beating heart of the town.*

**A modern market for everyone, a destination attracting locals and visitors, hosting a range of entertaining events.**



# A Modern Market Vision

The vision includes the following key design elements:

- A flexible space to support a programme of entertainment and cultural events to attract visitors into the town centre.
- Accessible. A robust and durable single unified surface to meet modern accessibility standards. Incorporate access and servicing requirements.
- Increased outdoor informal seating, and dedicated seating areas for eating and drinking to support and enhance spill out from the market hall.
- Inclusive and welcomes everyone. Uses to meet the needs of all ages and incorporating interactive play elements.
- A new canopy to provide a designated under-cover area for markets to include flexible, durable market stalls and kiosks



Active edges around the Market Square will encourage footfall and activity

A welcoming high quality modern Market Square



Supporting the day and night time offer with outdoor, weather proof seating



Celebrate the Market Hall



Add attractive planting and trees, creating amenity to increase dwelling time in the square



Improve visibility, future proof connections and enhance legibility in the square



Facilitate walking and increase footfall

Page 420

A layout to encourage permeability of visitors through the space, considering connections to the surrounding streets.



Umbrellas with integrated lighting provide flexibility to assigned stalls for vendors.



Umbrellas with integrated lighting provide flexibility to assigned stalls for vendors.



Flexible, specialist stalls could be hosted in the Market Square

# Illustrative Design Proposals

The illustrative Market Square plan illustrates one way that the design principles could be brought forward. The plan illustrates the key design principles and guidance for the detailed design stages of the Market Square.

The illustrative plan is indicative and subject to further technical considerations, surveys and the detailed design process. The findings from the contextual analysis and feedback from the consultation have shaped the illustrative Market Square Plans.

The emerging ideas include;

## Public Realm

1. Informal play area within the Market Square
2. An arrival space beside the Town Hall which will announce the Market Square
3. Emphasise and retain views to and from the Town Hall and Market Hall from key streets and spaces
4. Signage with strong branding from key streets and spaces will guide visitors from and to the Town Hall and Market Hall
5. The public realm will be designed for less able persons – level changes and lighting will create accessible routes
6. Heritage interpretation will be incorporated into the public realm design
7. A sustainable urban drainage approach will assist in responding to local climatic conditions
8. Servicing access along Bow Street for traders will be retained
9. Cycle parking areas on the periphery of the Market Square
10. Intimate spaces will be designed into the public realm
11. Planting will be proposed within the Market Square, avoiding grassed areas, instead providing planted areas that are easy to maintain (consider current issue with trees and bird droppings by seated areas).
12. Spill out from the Market Hall to allow for seating and F&B.


















## Kiosks

13. Kiosks will be designed to be located underneath the canopy (exact location and number of kiosks will be determined at the detailed design stage).
14. Design recommendations/requirements from kiosk traders relating to; kiosk design, lighting, storage, waste and servicing (consider VAT requirement) will be incorporated into the detail design of the kiosks
15. Consideration to the height of the kiosk structure, key views towards heritage buildings, and access to the first floor level within the canopy will be designed holistically

## Canopy

16. Factor in environmental conditions (south-westerly wind and rain) within the canopy design
17. Space within the canopy for ticketed events and security measures during night-time hours will be designed into the canopy features.
18. Allow for movement and circulation through the canopy to enhance permeability.
19. The design will consider security at night-time and avoid anti-social behaviour.

Key

-  Main Market canopy structure
-  Canopy overhang
-  1 Market Kiosks (under canopy)
-  2 Market stalls (under canopy)
-  3 Temporary seating and market stalls for events with cover (large)
-  4 Waste and storage facilities for kiosk traders will be incorporated into the detail design of the kiosks
-  Flexible event space area
-  Proposed trees
-  Proposed informal seating area
-  Proposed cycle storage
-  Proposed lighting
-  Entrance to Market Hall
-  Active frontage to kiosk units
-  Active frontages
-  Passive Movement Zone
-  Key Views
-  South Westerly wind



Illustrative Market Square proposals plan (proposals are indicative and subject to further detailed design)





# The Kiosks

The kiosks will be located underneath the canopy structure for year-round protection. There is potential for the kiosks to work within the canopy, with first floor access.

Further consideration to the kiosks and their design will be required. These include elements that were highlighted during the consultation process and can be found in the consultation summary.

The considerations are as follows:

- Page 424
- Lighting strategy for the kiosks and stalls,
  - Storage for market traders, included within the design of the kiosks and stalls, as well as provision for maintenance equipment storage,
  - Design consideration of the kiosks and the waste management, including storing, disposing and collection of refuse,
  - Power and utility facilities for kiosks, storage units and flexible space under canopy (for market traders/stalls and/or for flexible events under canopy),
  - Servicing, including goods loading and unloading,
  - Security, including potential to fully close canopy and kiosks outside of opening hours.



Lower market, Altrincham



Old Spitalfields Market, London



Kärda Central Square, Estonian island Hiiumaa



Borough Market, London



Shambles Market, York

# Public Realm

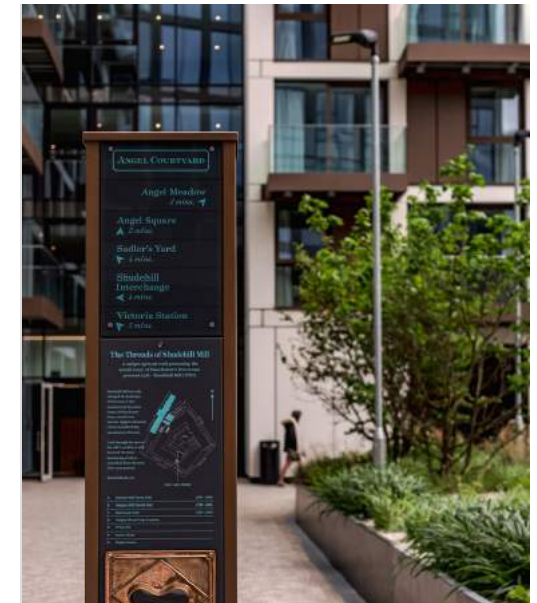
The redevelopment of the Market Square presents an opportunity to create better-connected, better-looking public spaces that build on Ashton's proud history and heritage, and provide a sense of consistency across the town centre.

The Market Square will be a space to host flexible events through the year. Proposals should include heritage interpretation, wayfinding and signage which is unique to Ashton.

Following the consultation process and comments from different stakeholders, there is potential to introduce attractive tree planting to create permeable wind breaks, and to create amenity through planted areas for seasonal interest which can further incorporate informal areas for seating and play.



A flexible open hard square where some permanent stalls are removed to host a variety of events



Potential for more stylised totems incorporating branding

Page 425



Jaktgatan and Lövängsgatan, Stockholm



Hapa Collaborative Square, Canada



Curved seating with planted areas



Historical dates, text and imagery can be cut into paving and steps

The Market fringes are part of part of the overall vision for the future regeneration of Ashton Town Centre. A comprehensive approach to the design of the Market Square and the surrounding streets and spaces creates a future proof plan.

## Future phasing and delivery

The following pages describe the design principles and guidance for the future phases of regeneration and the market fringes. The following streets and spaces will form part of the detailed design stage, up to RIBA stage 2. These areas will be excluded from the Levelling Up Fund and delivered at a later stage.

- Wellington Square
- Market Street and Fletcher Square
- Warrington Street
- Market Avenue
- Clarendon Sixth Form College and Tameside One Walk
- Market Hall and Market Hall canopy.

The delivery of these streets and spaces will be subject to future funding opportunities.

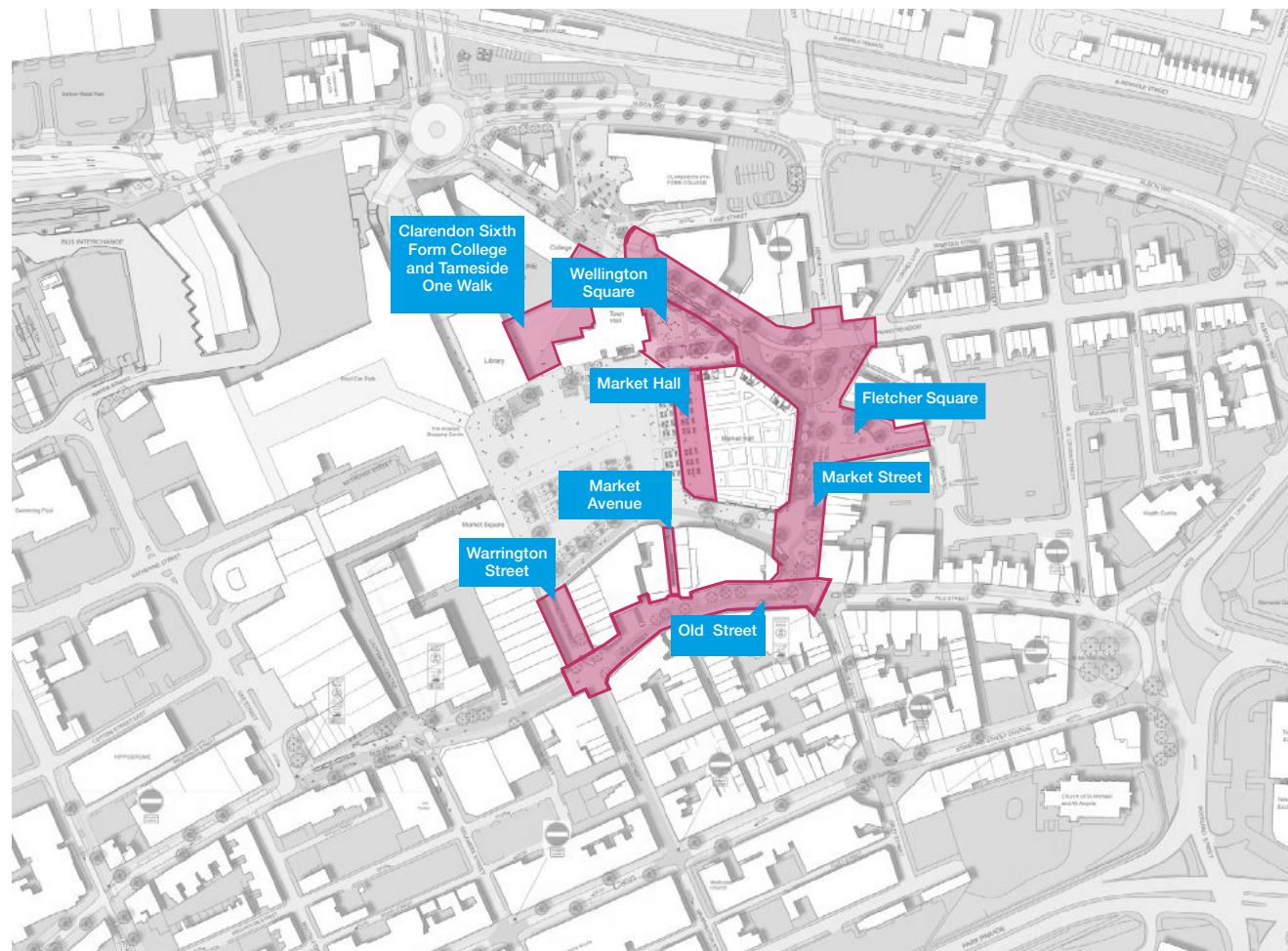


Diagram illustrating the Future Phases

 Future Phases, detailed design to RIBA Stage 2



## The Public Realm Strategy

### Phase 1 - Market Square

The Public Realm Strategy will focus immediately on the Market Square, Market Hall and connecting streets and spaces. This is Phase 1 of an overall Public Realm Strategy for the Town Centre. The aim of the Phase 1 Market Square Strategy will include strategic plans, along with guidance and design

### Phase 2 Ashton Town Centre

In the future a comprehensive Public Realm Strategy will also include Stamford Street Central, Old Street and St. Michael's Square. It will incorporate proposals for Wellington Road and extend to Katherine Street, Penny Meadows, Oldham Road.

**The ambition is that the improvements to Phase 1 Market Square will be a catalyst for the future regeneration of Ashton Town Centre, attracting investment to deliver the Ashton Town Centre Vision**

## Engagement and Continual Feedback

The consultation process has been important to gather views and opinions that have shaped the design principles described in this public realm strategy for Phase 1 Market Square and to ensure that the most appropriate scheme comes forward for the community and the surroundings.

Two stages of consultation, with both the public and stakeholder groups have been undertaken. The findings have been gathered and analysed to draw out the key messages to inform the design principles described in this document and the emerging detailed design proposals.

The process will not end here and engagement will be an ongoing process throughout the detailed design stage to ensure that all ideas are incorporated at every stage.

As part of next stage detailed design we will be liaising with traders and markets team around establishing a new operational model for the new scheme. This will be picked up as part of the next stages of work and ongoing dialogue.

## Next Steps

The following describes the process and timescales for the detailed design and delivery of Phase 1 Market Square:

- Public consultation: November/December 2022
- Consultation analysis: December 2022
- Preliminary works January 2023
- Approved Public Realm Strategy: March 2023
- Detailed Design Stage begins: April 2023
- Detailed Design Approval: November 2023
- Early Market Square works commence: November 2023
- Delivery of main Market Square works: Winter 2023 – ending March 2025



<b>Report to:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE CABINET</b>
<b>Date:</b>	29 March 2023
<b>Executive Member:</b>	Councillor Vimal Choksi, Executive Member (Town Centres, Communities)
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Julian Jackson – Director of Place
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>DRAFT HYDE TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	The report provides an update on the Hyde Town Centre Masterplan including the results of the initial fact finding exercise. The report seeks approval to undertake a full public consultation exercise on the draft masterplan for Hyde for a period of 4 weeks following the Elections in May 2023.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p>That Executive Cabinet be recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) Note the findings from the fact finding exercise that have been used to feed into the draft Masterplan for Hyde Town Centre,</li><li>(ii) Review and approve the draft proposals including vision and design principles in the draft Masterplan,</li><li>(iii) Approve the consultation on the draft Masterplan for Hyde for a period of 4 weeks following the Elections in May 2023,</li><li>(iv) Approve that the estimated remaining non-recurrent Council reserve balance of £125,000 (as set out in table 1, section 6.2) previously allocated to the Place Directorate to support town centre masterplanning, be utilised in 2023/24 to progress the regeneration of Hyde Town Centre, subject to further governance setting out what will be delivered within this budget envelope.</li></ul>
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	The proposals support the key aims of the Corporate Plan to ensure modern infrastructure and a sustainable environment that works for all generations and future generations. The proposed measures shall contribute to delivering corporate priorities – housing, economic growth and employment opportunities
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	<p>The proposals support the policy aims and delivery of the Council’s Inclusive Growth Strategy (2021). In light of the recent impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic and the generally poorly performing town centres, the regeneration of Tameside’s town centres is essential for a range of social and economic reasons in order to create sustainable communities and thriving and vibrant town centres. The recommendations of this report will assist with the delivery of this objective and will bring in new people, inward investment, businesses and jobs.</p> <p>The proposals support the adopted Carbon Reduction and Environment Strategy 2021-2026. The focal points of the Strategy are all very much relevant to town centres and include Greenspace &amp; Biodiversity, Homes Workspaces &amp; Council</p>

Buildings, Influencing Others, Reducing Consumption & Producing Sustainably and Travel & Transport. The recommendations of this report will assist with the delivery of these areas of focus and will ensure that town centre regeneration has sustainability at the forefront of any proposals related to new developments.

**Financial Implications:**  
(Authorised by the statutory  
Section 151 Officer)

The report provides an update on the Hyde town centre masterplan with a recommendation to approve consultation on the draft proposals.

The following table provides a summary of the sources of funding relating to the regeneration of Hyde town centre together with the remaining balances available.

	<b>Evergreen 3 Grant</b>	<b>One Public Estate Grant</b>	<b>Council Reserve</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Funding	225.0	100.0	125.0	450.0
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Town Centre Masterplan	43.3	43.2	0.0	86.5
<b>Balance</b>	181.7	56.8	125.0	363.5

The Council balance of £125,000 is retained within a reserve, with a recommendation to utilise in 2023/24 to progress the next stages of the masterplan proposals following consultation. This will be subject to a further report to Members that will provide additional details on the proposed use of the funding and outcomes that will be delivered.

The Council funding and One Public Estate grant is allocated as equivalent match funding to the Evergreen 3 grant in accordance with Evergreen grant conditions. This grant needs to be expended by 31 March 2023. Any additional commitments that are funded via Evergreen 3 prior to this date will reduce the remaining balances of Council funding and One Public Estate grant as set out in the table.

The outcome of the final proposals for the town centre will be subject to a robust business case and report to Members at a later date that clearly sets out the financing arrangements and any related impact on the Council revenue budget.

**Legal Implications:**  
(Authorised by the Borough  
Solicitor)

This report provides details of the initial consultation undertaken as a fact finding exercise and sets out proposals for a further consultation specifically on the master plan.

The consultation is intended to obtain feedback from all relevant parties which will then be given careful consideration when finalising the strategy and submitting to Members for approval.

**Risk Management:**

A risk register for the project is in place and regularly reviewed. The main risks are summarised in Section Eight below.

**Background Information:**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Damien Cutting – Economic Growth Lead



Telephone: 07989425566



e-mail: [damien.cutting@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:damien.cutting@tameside.gov.uk)

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Hyde Triangle is identified as an area for growth within the Tameside Inclusive Growth Strategy and is one of the Greater Manchester Growth Locations. Hyde Triangle which includes Godley Green, Hattersley and Hyde Town Centre will ensure that these major drivers for change support the wider regeneration of the town centre.
- 1.2 There have been a number of studies undertaken in Hyde around current and future uses of the Town Centre in recent years but there is an identified need for a town centre masterplan to provide a strategic vision supported by an overarching spatial and development framework. The interventions that will be identified through the masterplanning process, are critical to unlocking the comprehensive redevelopment of the Town Centre.
- 1.3 The Hyde Town Centre Masterplan will support delivery of the Tameside Corporate Plan, Tameside Inclusive Growth Strategy and both regional and national priorities helping to secure much needed investment in the Town Centre.
- 1.4 A procurement exercise was completed via STaR utilising an open tender process on The Chest portal. Following this process GL Hearn and Hemingway Design were selected as the consultant team for the masterplan.
- 1.5 The whole Hyde Town Centre redevelopment is a 15 to 20 year programme with short term, medium term and long-term goals that will holistically deal with the Town Centre and the surrounding area that feeds it. The interventions that will be identified through the masterplanning process, are critical to unlocking the comprehensive redevelopment of the Town Centre.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Council was recently successful in achieving a grant award of £225,000 via the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (Evergreen Round 3) which needs to be expended by 31 March 2023. The use of GM Evergreen funds of £225,000, with match funding of £125,000 from the Investment, Development and Housing (IDH) budget and £100,000 secured from the One Public Estate (OPE) programme, was approved for Hyde by Tameside Council Executive Cabinet on 29 September 2021. Of this funding £100,000 was identified for the preparation of the Hyde Town Centre Masterplan with the remainder to support the repurposing of the former library building on Union Street.
- 2.2 As an aside but of direct relevance to the masterplan, a report to Executive Cabinet in June 2021, identified that Hyde Town Centre had been identified as one of the 70 local authority areas that would be able to access government support through the High Street Task Force (HSTF) programme. The report agreed that the Council would formally participate and engage in the programme and the first stage of support from HSTF included an initial diagnostic which was undertaken earlier in the year offered under the banner 'Unlocking Your Place Potential'. The appointed Task Force Expert also participated in the selection process for the appointment of GL Hearn and Hemingway Designs. The next stage includes a Place Workshop on 2 February 2023 will bring together key stakeholders to collectively consider how to improve the town centre. Feedback will contribute to the masterplan proposals.

## **3. MASTERPLAN APPROACH**

- 3.1 The consultant team are working towards a comprehensive masterplan that will ensure that all aspects of regeneration is considered. This will include working collaboratively with the local community and key stakeholders so they are able to shape the proposals for Hyde.

- 3.2 The fact finding stage has come to an end and the baseline assessment completed, the findings will feed into draft proposals and a vision for the town which will be subject to a formal consultation period early in the New Year.
- 3.3 In terms of the approach, the consultant team are following the below methodology:
- Understanding the site - The first stage of the methodology was to gain a comprehensive understanding of the town and its community. This was undertaken with site visits, reviews of policy and adopted strategies and desktop data collation. This work has been completed.
  - Speaking to the community (a 'thunderclap') – A survey was issued online to gauge the understanding of the local community as to what they perceived to be the issues they have in the town and how they would like to see the town improved. This stage has now completed and findings of this exercise are detailed in **Appendix 2**.
  - Draft Masterplan Executive Summary (Vision, Objectives, Draft Proposals) – **Appendix 1** includes the draft masterplan which is subject to full consultation.
  - Option Testing – Based on feedback from the public consultation, the consultant team will explore and prepare a range of outline proposals that will achieve the project objectives. These option testing presentations will be a condensed version of the final masterplan.
  - The Masterplan - The final masterplan will contain a set of robust proposals that are based on the findings from the previous stages and the stakeholder's needs and aspirations. The proposals will have been shaped through rigorous testing and consultation.

#### 4. HEADLINES FROM THE FACT FINDING EXERCISE

- 4.1 As a result of extensive promotion and awareness raising, the fact-finding questionnaire had 1,254 responses. A public drop in event took place at a vacant unit at the Clarendon Shopping Centre, Hyde. There were approximately 250 people of all ages and backgrounds who visited to share their views. A summary of some of the points that were raised at the event include:
1. Celebrate and utilise Hyde's historic buildings,
  2. Improve the market square increasing planting, greenery and public furniture,
  3. Improve the market offer including more stalls and a better offer,
  4. Create more traffic free areas,
  5. Improve the appearance of the town centres shop fronts and buildings,
  6. Improve the cultural offer, events and activities,
  7. Encourage more small independent businesses to establish in the town by offering incentives including reducing business rates,
  8. Introduce free parking.
- 4.2 In particular, there were four common areas identified for improvement which emerged from the results analysis:
1. Hyde Market Square – improvements to the square and public realm were needed including more seating and greenery to encourage people to spend more time there. Further animation of the square also required to animate the space including a better quality market and events.
  2. Traffic measures - traffic calming and/or pedestrianisation of spaces around the market place. The area outside the Town Hall was identified as a place that could integrate the town better in terms of moving around.
  3. Heritage and public buildings – buildings of heritage should be celebrated. Hyde Town Hall identified as a building that could be utilised more, particularly for community events. Union Street Library and vacant bank buildings were also identified as in need for occupancy. Some examples of uses of these buildings included arts, cultural and community events.

4. Building and shop front improvements – A shop front improvement strategy would help to improvement key frontages around the town centre. The Clarendon Shopping Centre appeared as a building needing frontage improvements.

4.3 Other key points include:

- 90% of the respondents felt an improved food and beverage offer was needed.
- Few respondents felt Hyde had an interesting range of shops.
- Few places within the town centre to socialise.
- Only 3% of people responded positively to the existing outdoor market offer while the indoor market view was slightly improved at 22%.
- Approximately 1/3 of local residents use the town centre more than once a week.
- Approximately 30% of town centre visitors only visit the supermarkets and 20% only visit the Clarendon Centre.
- Around 1/4 of the responders visit the entire town centre.
- 80% of responders only visit the shops and only 20% to eat, drink or socialise during the day this drops to 13% in the evening.
- 62% of responders spend an hour or less in the town centre while only 12% are likely to stay in the town centre for more than 2 hours.
- The towns outside of Tameside that featured prominently as a go to destination were Stockport and Glossop. Responders cited independent shops, cafes, restaurants, nightlife and the atmosphere as the main reason.
- In respect of general comments on the town centre, a limited offer, lack of character, poor/scruffy appearance, the dominance of takeaways, lack of night-time economy and a perception that the town centre did not feel safe were referenced.

4.4 As well as the online survey, a number of workshops and meetings have been held with key stakeholders in the town. Some of these groups include:

- Hyde Together Community Interest Company (formerly Hyde Town Team),
- The Martin Property Group, Clarendon Shopping Centre owners,
- Clarendon Shopping Centre Management,
- Hyde Town Centre Taskforce workshop,
- Greater Manchester Police,
- Community Rail Partnership,
- Local developers,
- Hyde POP Community Interest Company,
- Diversity Network,
- Diversity Matters North West,
- Local mosque representatives.

4.5 Internally, discussions have been held with local ward members and with key senior colleagues from the Markets Team, Housing, Employment and Skills, Planning, Greenspace, Highways, and Estates.

## 5. DRAFT HYDE TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

5.1 The previous section outlines some of the key findings from the fact finding exercise carried out. All of the responses have been reviewed and analysed in order to help to shape the draft masterplan for Hyde Town Centre. A vision, set of design principles, development opportunities, public realm and highway improvement areas are included in the draft masterplan.

### **Vision**

5.2 The vision for Hyde Town Centre is mapped out to provide a future path for growth and regeneration. *Hyde Town Centre will become be a desirable place to live, socialise and shop. It will be a thriving hub for daily urban life. Cultural resurgence is at the heart of the*



*masterplan and this will define the area's future reinforcing its distinctive character, allowing Hyde to flourish and find its own identity within the context of Greater Manchester and the North West.*

5.3 The vision will be underpinned by a number of design principles:

1. The Town Hall can be re-purposed to be a vibrant cultural hub for Hyde and the wider borough. The newly pedestrianised areas around it create a flexible space for its activities to spill out.
2. The markets are re-located to new, high quality facilities in a prime location on Market Place.
3. Market Square will become a flexible, high quality public realm environment suitable, for markets and events.
4. Re-imagined shopping area creates a welcoming shopping and residential area, with wide tree lined streets connecting all areas of the town centre.
5. Considering the rationalisation and relocation of parking areas creates high quality development sites for the town centre to grow into with a new diverse offer.
6. Improved public realm and traffic calming creates safe, welcoming pedestrian routes from key public transport facilities.

#### **Masterplan Framework**

5.4 The illustrative masterplan shown in the draft document demonstrates how areas of development and public realm intervention will come together as a holistic strategy.

5.5 The development framework describes the principles of regeneration, land use, development and improvement that should be met by projects within the town centre to ensure that the vision and objectives are realised.

5.6 Options have been tested by the consultant team and a 'baseline option' has been identified for the purpose of the illustrative masterplan. Notwithstanding this a series of potential options has been proposed with multiple scenarios for many of the proposed development areas. Further details of these options can be found in Section 7 of this document.

5.7 Detail on the Masterplan Framework is included in the Executive Summary Draft Masterplan (**Appendix 1**) and broadly includes:

- A summary of the fact finding exercise,
- An overview of the current performance of the town,
- Contextual analysis and opportunities,
- A vision for Hyde, and
- Key visuals relating to the vision for Market Square and Market Place, and
- Phasing & next steps.

## **6. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

6.1 On 29 September 2021, Executive Cabinet approved that £125,000 of the additional non-recurrent revenue budget allocated to the Place Directorate to support Town Centre Masterplans, alongside a further £100,000 of One Public Estate (OPE) Funding be utilised as match funding against the Evergreen 3 grant funding secured via GMCA for use by 31 March 2023.

6.2 Table 1 provides a summary of the remaining balances available. It is recommended that this remaining budget is utilised in 2023/24 to progress delivery strategy work associated with the Town Centre Masterplan and identified regeneration sites. In addition to the work completed to date this will support the business cases/submissions to future external funding and provide the initial investment required to unlock the full potential of Hyde Town Centre.

Value for money will be secured through the procurement process utilising STaR procurement.

**Table 1**

	<b>Evergreen 3 Grant</b>	<b>One Public Estate Grant</b>	<b>Council Reserve</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Funding	225.0	100.0	125.0	450.0

**Expenditure**

Town Centre Masterplan	43.3	43.2	0.0	86.5
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**Balance**

181.7	56.8	125.0	363.5
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**7. NEXT STEPS**

7.1 The Council will undertake a formal consultation on the draft masterplan for a period of four weeks. A Consultation Strategy (**Appendix 3**) includes details of how the Council will consult on the draft masterplan along with a list of targeted groups and key stakeholders.

7.2 A summary of the next steps include:

- Consultation on draft masterplan: May 2023 for a period of 4 weeks.
- Review of comments and responses from consultation: June 2023
- Seek approval at the Council's Executive Cabinet to adopt the Hyde Town Centre Masterplan: August 2023. This will ensure the masterplan acts as a material consideration in the planning application process for any proposals submitted in the area.

7.3 The recently established Hyde Town Centre Delivery Group will steer and support the preparation, development and implementation of the masterplan and to deliver the vision of the plan.

**8. CONCLUSION**

8.1 The overall decline in the viability and vitality in areas of Hyde town centre including Hyde market are aligned with national trends of decline. The growth in online shopping and out of centre retail locations, the changing behaviour of shoppers, the change in demands of shoppers from their town centres, the evolution of traditional town centres and the global pandemic has resulted in a reduction in footfall, increased number of shop units and market traders and a general negative perception of some town centres, including Hyde. However, there are signs and evidence of a resurgence in some town centres. These centres have evolved and introduced a wide range of uses including food and drink, leisure and culture. It is vital that the regeneration of Hyde benefits from best practise in more successful town centres have done to revive themselves and build on the unique character of Hyde and the local people.

8.2 In respect of Hyde market, the continued decline of the market has not only an adverse impact on Council revenue streams but also in the overall vitality and viability of the market and the across the town. The additional study to be carried out will provide a robust position in respect of the current operation of the market and will provide actions as to how the market in Hyde could be revitalised.

8.3 Responses received from the fact finding exercise demonstrate that whilst there is local pride in Hyde. People want to see improvements to the town and for Hyde to become a place where there are good quality services and a diverse offer for everyone throughout the day and night time. The draft masterplan aims to identify interventions in order to ensure a step change in the regeneration of Hyde.

## 9. RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 The main risks associated with the preparation of a masterplan for Hyde town centre are identified in the table below.

Risk Area	Detail	RAG Rating	Mitigation	RAG Rating
<b>Delivery</b>	Timescales for delivery of the masterplan against the funding agreement are extremely tight. Any delays to the programme could have an impact on completing the works in the agreed timescales.	Yellow	The programme in <b>Appendix 4</b> demonstrates that whilst timescales are tight, the masterplan will be delivered in line with the timescales of the funding agreement.	Green
<b>Financial</b>	The market is an income generating service in the Council. Any reduction in the number of market traders for any period of time, could result in the loss of income for this service.	Red	A further study will be commissioned that will review the existing market function including and review the current financial position as well as future options associated with delivering a market in Hyde.	Yellow
<b>Planning</b>	Planning permission likely to be required relating to any major proposals associated with the shopping centre.	Yellow	Third parties will be advised to undertake pre-application advice with the Local Planning Authority at the earliest opportunity.	Green
<b>Programme</b>	Lack of resource capacity to undertake workstreams in line with expectations.	Yellow	A highly experienced multi-disciplinary team will ensure that the project meets programme timescales and key milestones. Internal resource has been identified to meet expectations.	Green

## 10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 As set out at the front of the report.

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# LET'S TALK ABOUT HYDE!

Masterplan For Hyde Town Centre  
Executive Summary - Draft 2023

# What is Happening in Hyde?

**We are looking to create a fantastic town centre. We are creating a plan to breathe new life into Hyde.**

HemingwayDesign and GL Hearn have been appointed by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council to deliver a strategic masterplan that sets out an ambitious vision for the future of Hyde Town Centre.

Our masterplans are much more than spatial planning and urban design, especially in towns like Hyde where destination marketing and events, will be essential to placemaking and ensuring it stands out from other competing towns.

“Hyde is now presented with an opportunity to radically rethink the purpose of the town centre and how it will serve the local community. Your ideas will help to shape the plans and improve the area you live, shop and visit with friends and family. ”

The masterplan will provide the catalyst that will get the town centre back to its former glory, support the growth of local businesses, provide the right infrastructure, deliver quality spaces and places and set the groundwork that encourages the right type of future development and investment to come forward.

This document gives you an understanding about the ideas that we are exploring for improvements to the town centre.

Hyde's local culture must be celebrated within the masterplan, celebrating the area's uniqueness & promoting a strong identity which sets it apart from its competitors.



Hyde Town Hall is a key asset in the heart of the masterplan area.



# Hyde Today

**The regeneration of the area presents an exciting opportunity to rethink Hyde Town Centre as a new modern market town reflecting the need & wants of the local residents & wider community.**

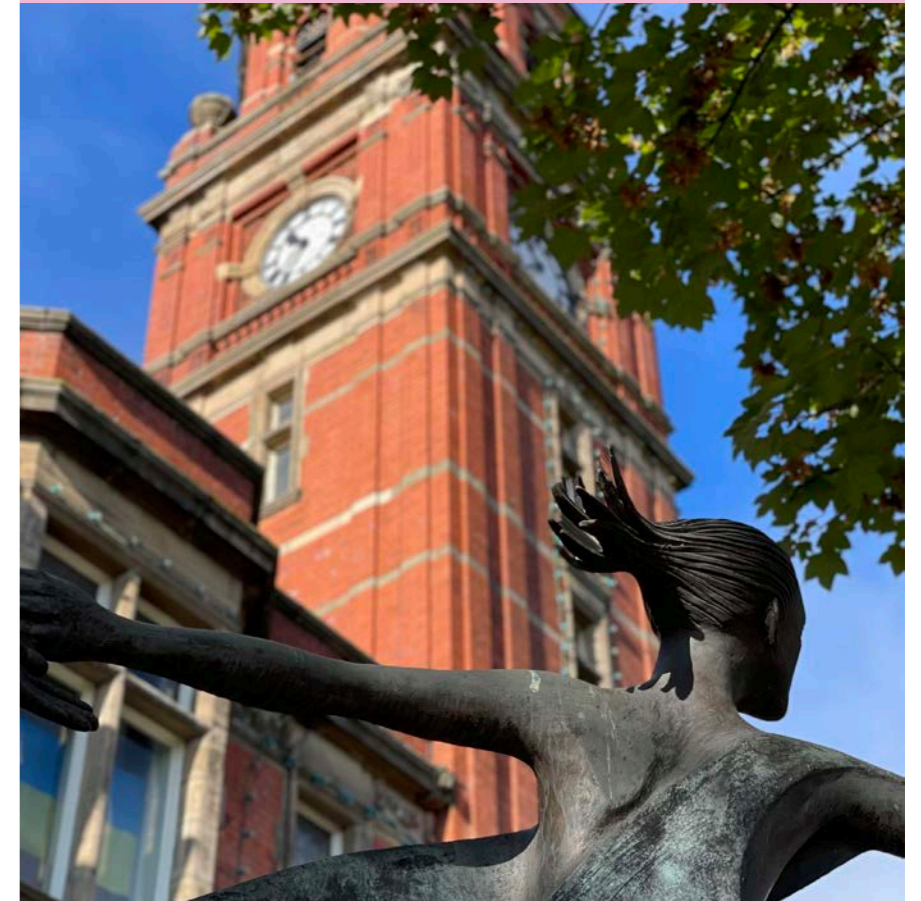
Page 44  
Our developing proposals consider the areas strengths and weaknesses. Building on the existing positives whilst challenging some of the areas negative influences.

The masterplan area has a number of positive characteristics, notably: a number of notable

historic buildings, strong cultural scene; a large town centre square; areas of green spaces close to the town centre core and the historic street frontages of Market Street and Market Place which help to define key routes and spaces.

Unfortunately, there are also a series of identifiable negative influences on the character of the town centre, these include: large “big box” building forms which are out-of-scale with the historic town centre; underused buildings and assets in key locations, a proliferation of surface car parking at key arrival points which leads to a visual dominance of vehicles and traffic-dominated environments and a busy road network surrounding the town centre core, which creates barriers to pedestrian movement, cutting off areas of the town centre.

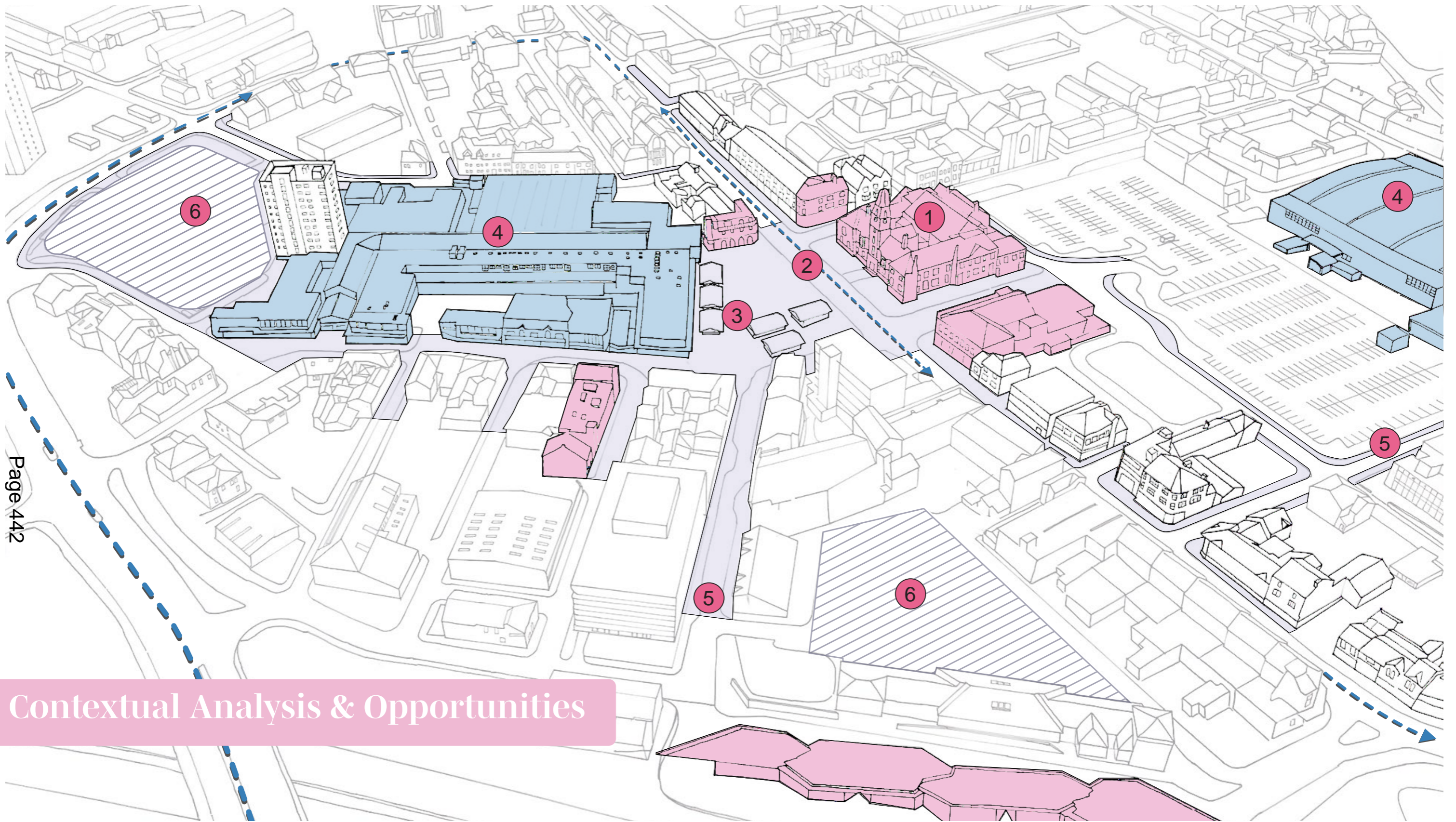
**The Town Hall is a fantastic building and asset for Hyde, but it is underused, and has no real community focus.**



**Town Hall building currently separated from the rest of the town centre by Market Street**



**Market stalls reduce flexibility of the square and block views of the area's retail frontages**



## Contextual Analysis & Opportunities

1. The Town Hall is a key asset for the town centre, though underused it must be a focal point for regeneration of the area.
2. Busy Market Street separates core areas of the town centre
3. Fixed market stalls reduce the flexibility of the square, block views through the area and are a potential source of antisocial behaviour.
4. 'Big box' forms in the town centre dominate and block pedestrian movement through the area, especially when closed.
5. Pedestrian and cycle routes from both the bus station and train station must be improved into the town centre.
6. Opportunities for development in areas creating welcoming gateways or improved parking facilities, setting the tone for an attractive, vibrant and green town centre, inviting people to explore.



# You've Said, We've Listened

## The first phase of our engagement was completed in January with a fantastic level of response!

Over 1500 people took part in our initial fact-finding exercise with over 1300 online questionnaire responses and 200 people attending in person events including the 'Pop Up Shop' event in the Clarendon Centre. Your feedback is important and has shaped our plans.

Page 4/3

### Your Key Priorities:

- Improvements to Market Square including increasing planting/greenery & public furniture.
- Celebrating and utilising historic buildings such as the Town Hall for cultural and community uses
- Improving the market offer
- Improving the cultural offer including more (a better range of) town centre events and activities
- Creating more traffic-free areas
- Improving shop/building front appearance
- Encouraging more small, independent businesses to establish in the town centre with incentives including reduced business rates
- Improving connections and links with the bus station and train station.

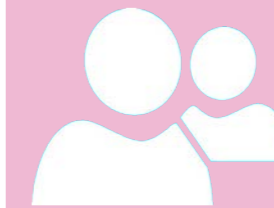
*The Town Hall is lovely and would be nice if this was opened more to the public*

*More greenery, maybe even 'Incredible Edible' areas where herbs, etc. can be grown*



*Market Square - make it a more attractive space to hang out and socialise, and a more usable/inviting space for community activity, events, festivals etc...*

*Pedestrianise Market Place making way for outdoor seating in the summer*



Thank you for your feedback so far, it has helped to shape our ideas and plans.



*The market area is just a big open space of nothing, considering it used to be the heart of the town. There is potential to make this an attractive spot again with a rich and varied collection of events*

# What is our vision for Hyde?

## A cultural resurgence is at the heart of the masterplan and this will define the area's future.

The feedback from the first phase of our engagement has been considered and has shaped the vision, development principles and early designs for key areas of the town centre.

The vision for Hyde Town Centre is mapped out to provide a future path for growth and regeneration. Key design principles are set out to guide new development, strengthen Hyde's USP and deliver this vision.

These design principles come together to help diversify the town centre and create new reasons to visit, improve the environment in the town centre, enhance and celebrate the areas culture and heritage.

The emerging masterplan includes the following key design elements:

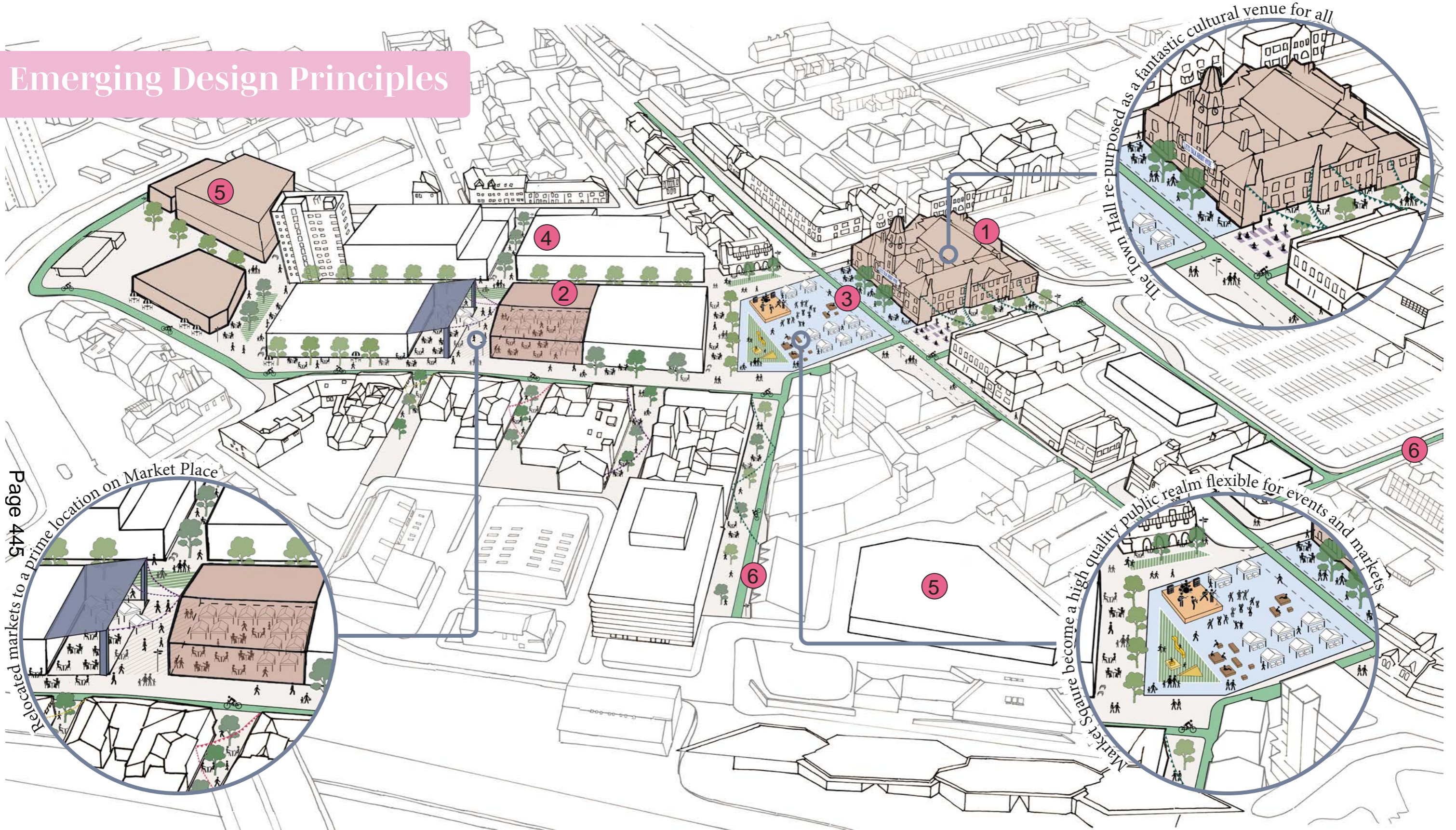
- Re-purposing the Town Hall and the adjacent market square as a regionally significant cultural destination. Creating a flexible space to support a programme of entertainment and

cultural events to attract visitors into the town centre.

- Pedestrianisation of key areas of the town centre, creating a safe, attractive public realm.
- Enhancing connectivity across the town centre, providing wider access to more sustainable and healthy ways to travel, creating a walkable/ cycle friendly town.
- Re-development of the Clarendon Shopping Centre, helping to improve permeability of visitors through the town centre and considering it's offer and how it interacts with the neighbouring streets.
- Relocation of the existing indoor and outdoor market facilities into new, flexible units on Market place, diversifying their offer within a prime location.
- Consider key development sites within the town centre to create attractive gateways into the area and diversify the town centre offer.

**“Hyde Town Centre will become be a desirable place to live, socialise and shop. It will be a thriving hub for daily urban life. Cultural resurgence is at the heart of the masterplan and this will define the area's future reinforcing its distinctive character, allowing Hyde to flourish and find its own identity within the context of Greater Manchester and the North West.”**

# Emerging Design Principles



1. The Town Hall can be re-purposed to be a vibrant cultural hub for Hyde and the wider borough. The newly pedestrianised areas around it create a flexible space for it's activities to spill out.
2. The markets are re-located to new, high quality facilities in a prime location on Market Place.
3. Market Square will become a flexible, high quality public realm environment suitable, for markets and events.
4. Re-imagined shopping area creates a welcoming shopping and residential area, with wide tree lined streets connecting all areas of the town centre.
5. Considering the rationalisation and relocation of parking areas creates high quality development sites for the town centre to grow into with a new diverse offer.
6. Improved public realm and traffic calming creates safe, welcoming pedestrian routes from key public transport facilities.

# Opportunities for Market Square & Market Place

Flexibility for event activations



Increasing greenery and planting for biodiversity



Generous public realm that encourages social interaction



Activity spilling on to the square / active frontages



Improved setting for heritage buildings inc. Town Hall



Play elements



Pop-up retail space



Temporary/meanwhile shopfront improvements working with local creatives



# Opportunities for Town Hall Cultural Hub



Concerts/performances



Film Screenings



Wellbeing & community events



Creative workshops



Weddings/celebrations



Co-working facilities



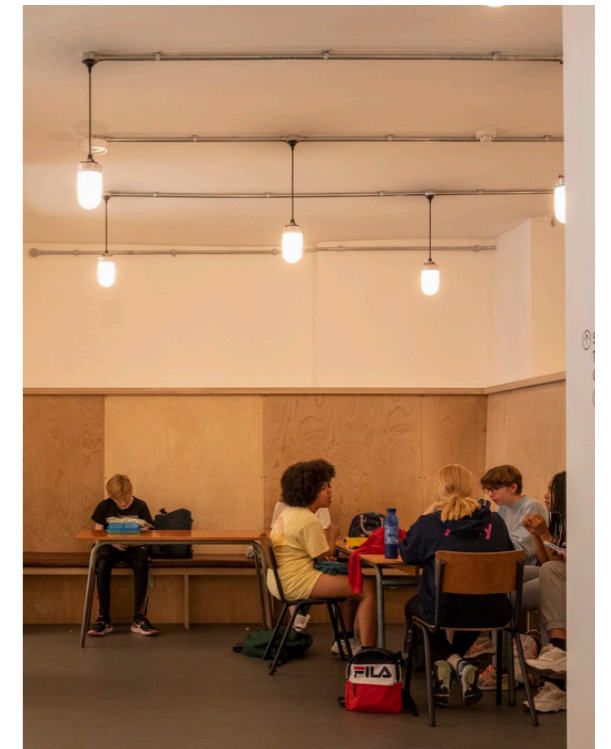
Private offices & meeting spaces



Creative workshop/studio space



Public facing cafe



Hang-out space for young people

# What is next for the masterplan?

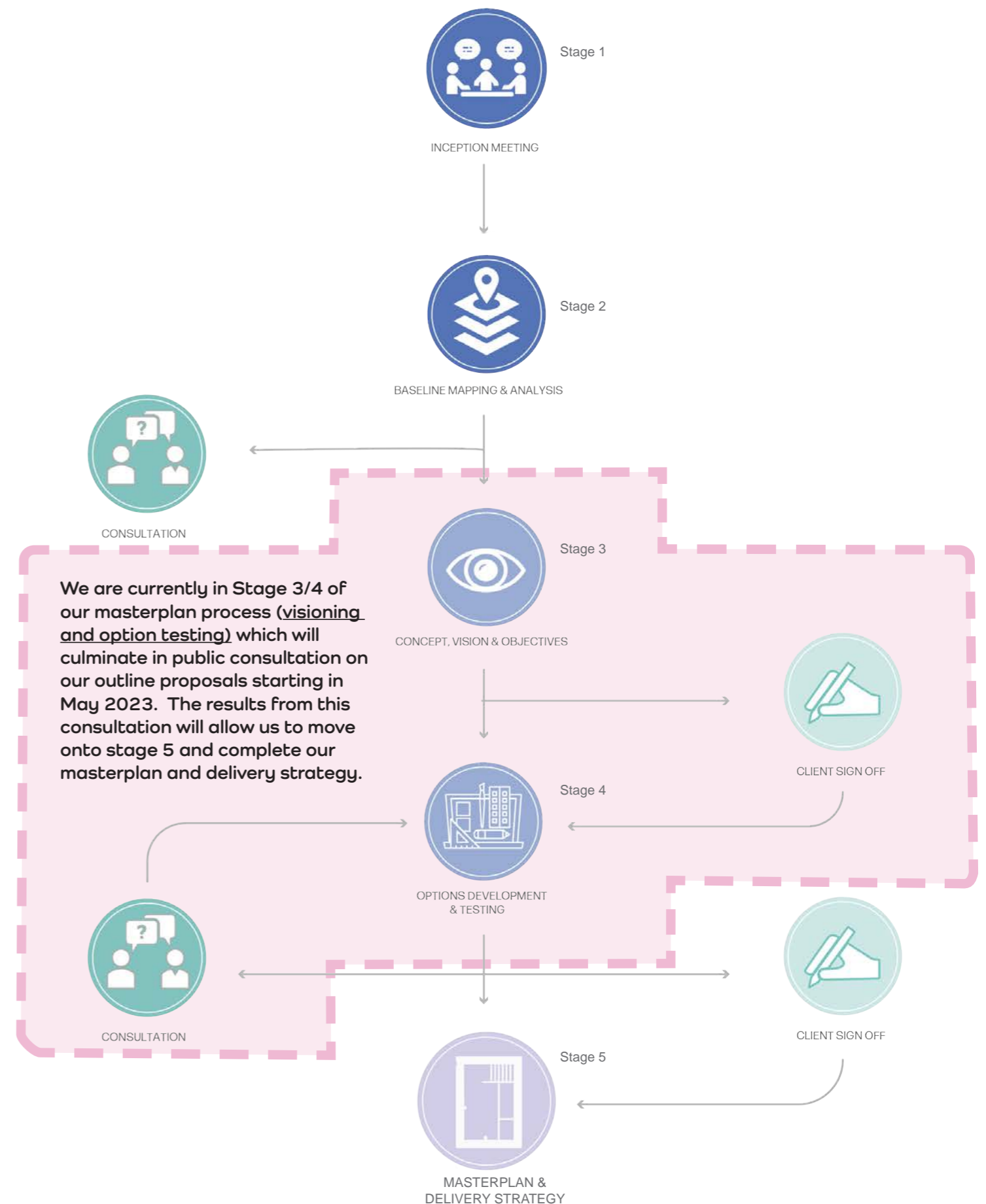
**This Masterplan will provide a vision and set of objectives to guide new developments, public realm improvements and smaller scale projects which will work together to transform Hyde.**

Masterplans are of no value unless they can be delivered. Grand ideas are no more than that if they are not viable or cannot be funded. The masterplan is being developed with this very much in mind.

Given the scale and ambition of the emerging proposals, alongside the level of investment that is required to achieve the vision, the delivery of the proposals identified within our masterplan will be phased over many years.

To take the masterplan proposals forward a delivery strategy will be prepared alongside the main report that includes:

- Programme and phasing;
- Funding and finance;
- Delivery mechanisms;
- Policy interventions; and
- Next steps and actions.



# We Still need your help!

**Your continued views and opinions are important to us as we shape our masterplan proposals. Phase 2 of our engagement will be direct consultation on the emerging proposals. Giving you the opportunity to comment on the exciting ideas.**

**Page 4/9**  
This consultation period will run for 4 weeks from the beginning of May to give people time to consider and comment on the ideas included in the strategy.

It will again be accessible both online and in person at drop in events where our team are excited to go through our proposals with you.

Your comments and ideas at this stage will then be incorporated into our final masterplan document.

## Contact Details

Other ways you can obtain more information and give your views:

### By email:

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx@tameside.gov.uk

### By post:

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Tameside One  
PO Box 317  
Ashton Under Lyne  
OL6 0GS

### By phone:

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

### In attendance:

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Let us know what you think of the draft proposals. We look forward to hearing your comments

## Next Steps

- Public consultation: May 2023 for a period of 4 weeks
- Draft Masterplan Submission: August 2023
- Adopted by Council xxxxxx 2023

Looking at the consultation material, do you agree with the emerging designs for the town centre? Is there anything you would change?

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# **LET'S TALK ABOUT HYDE!**

**Public Survey Results\_January 2023\_V1**

**Over 1500 people have taken part in our initial fact-finding exercise, contributing to shaping the future of Hyde town centre.**

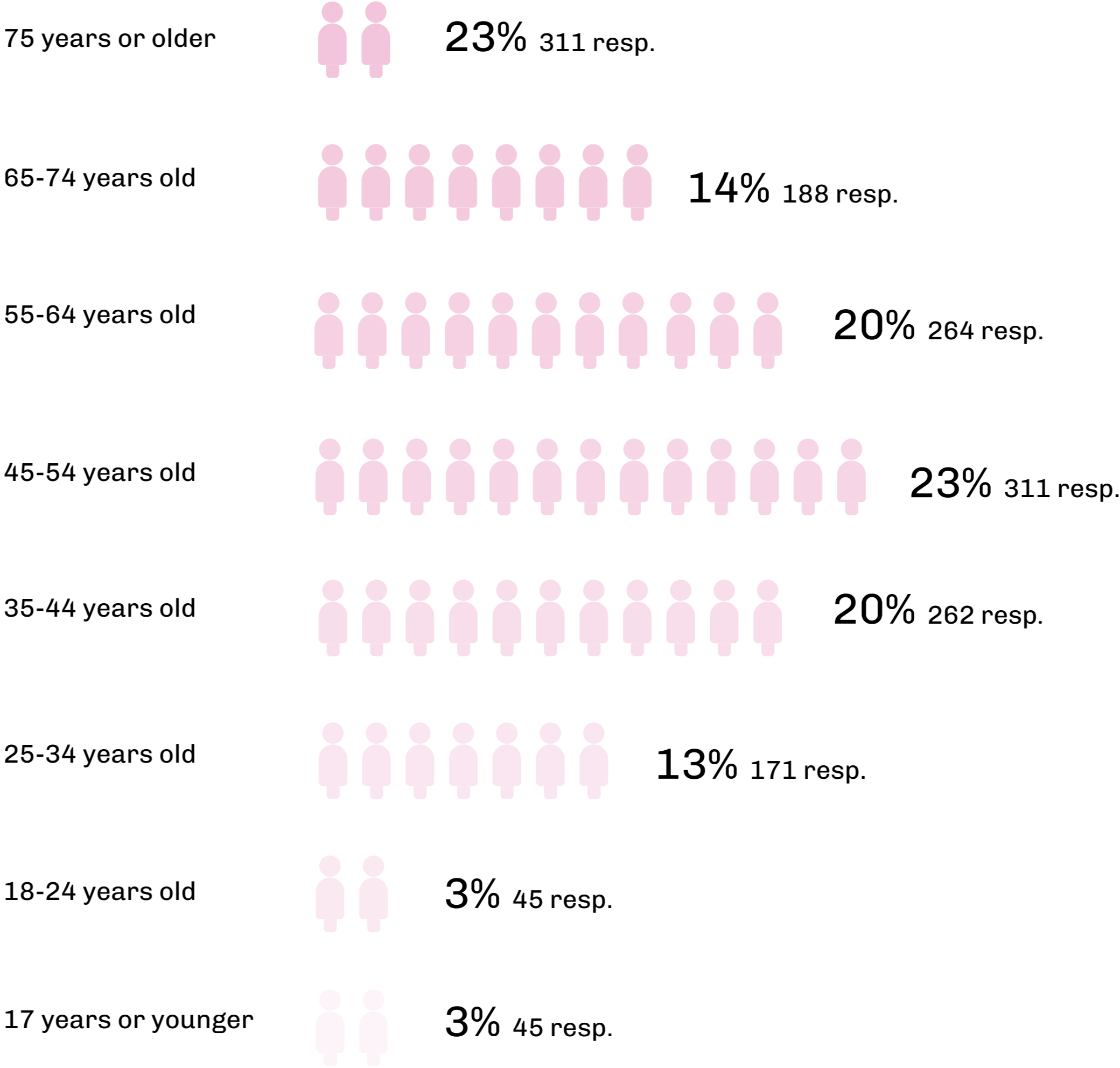
This document is an analysis of the responses from the survey, which was open from the 5th of December 2022 to the 3rd January 2023. The survey closed with a total of 1,967 starts of which 1,339 people submitted their answers. Completion rate was 68%, with respondents spending an average of 20 minutes completing the survey.



### Demographics

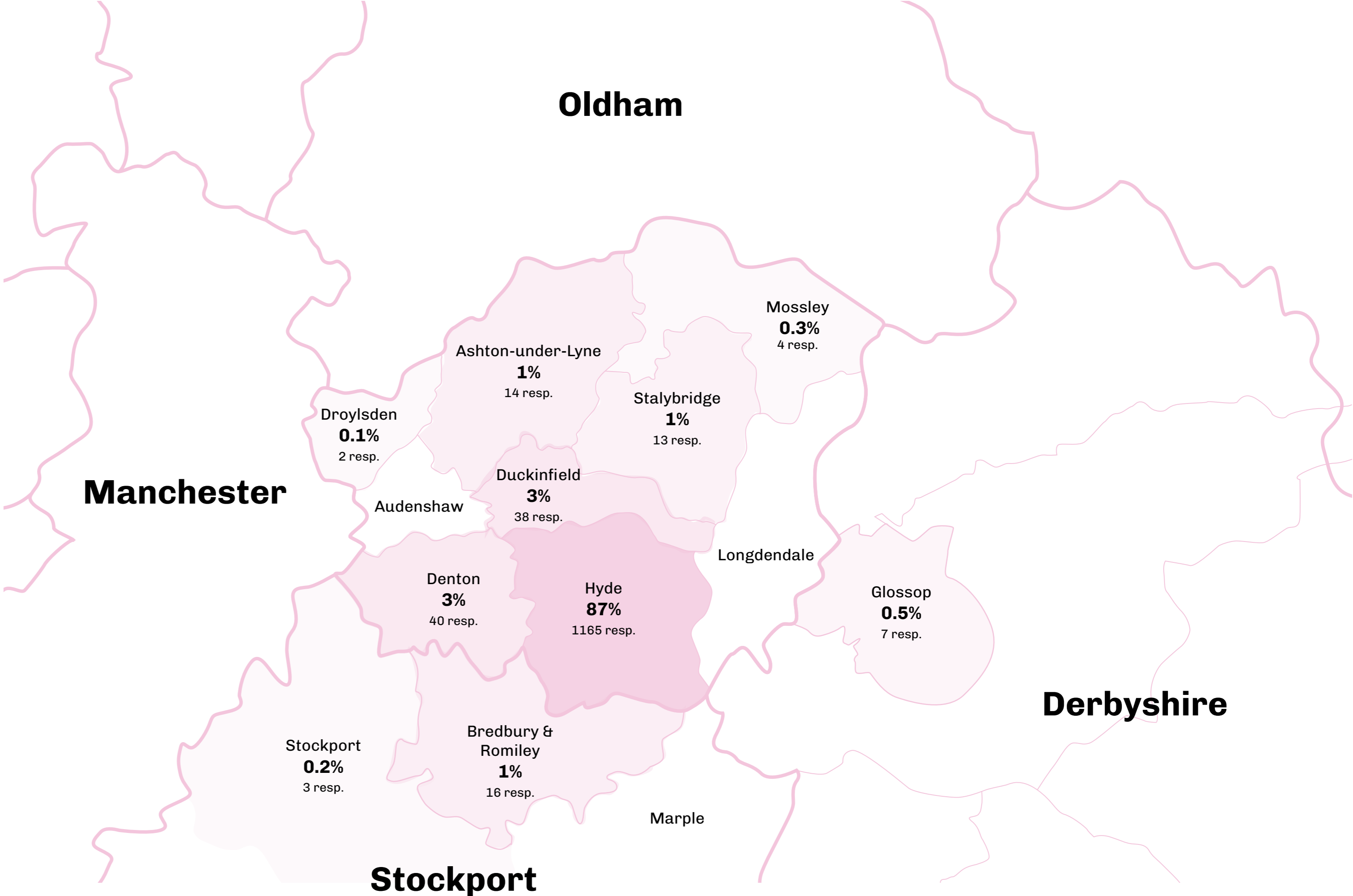
The public survey received the greatest response from those aged between 45-54years old. Under 25s make up for 6% of survey responses.

#### Which age bracket do you fall into?



### Demographics

87% of survey respondents are Hyde (SK14) residents.



## Demographics

Common reasons as to why respondents chose to live in Hyde are for its proximity to both the countryside and Manchester city centre and its affordability

Many respondents were born in, and have lived in Hyde for most of their lives, or moved to live with or close to family.

### Why did you choose to live in Hyde?

*Moved here to be close to family*

*Born here*

*Access to countryside (e.g. Peak District)*

*Access to motorway*

*Moved to live with my partner*

*It's affordable*

*For work*

*Transport links - good connections to Manchester*

# CURRENT PERCEPTIONS



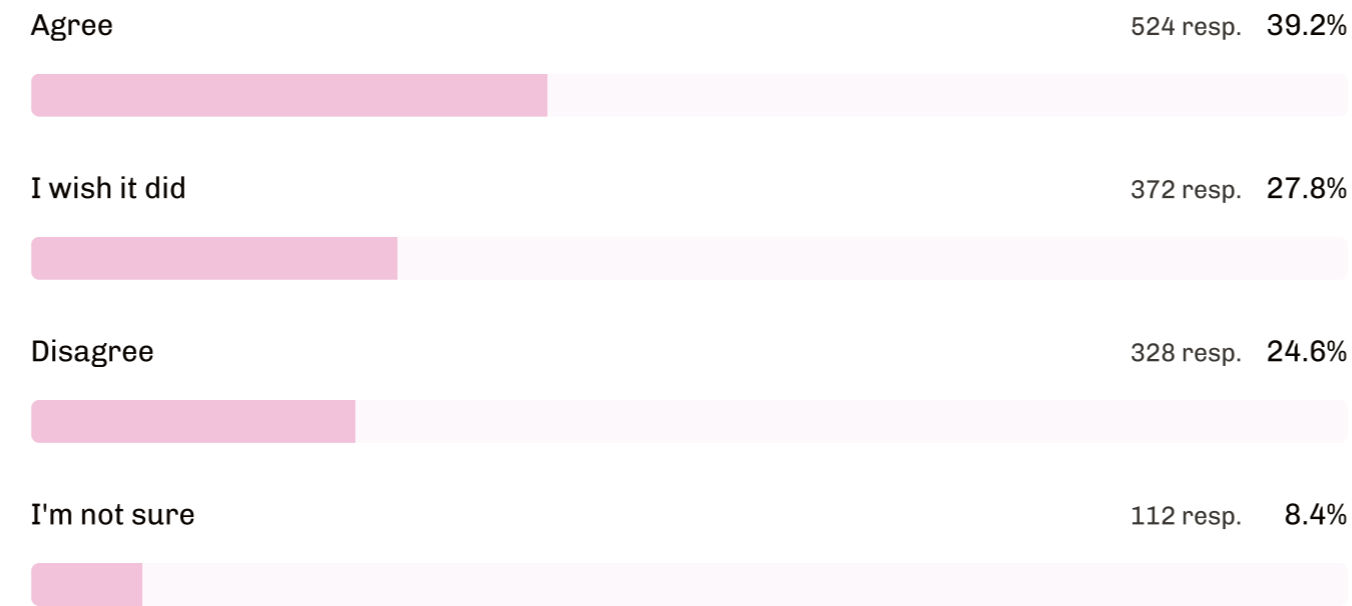
## Perception

Respondents feel Hyde town centre is easy to walk around and not too spread out. However when asked if there are attractive alternative ways to travel in to Hyde, other than by car 34% wish there was and 42% disagree.

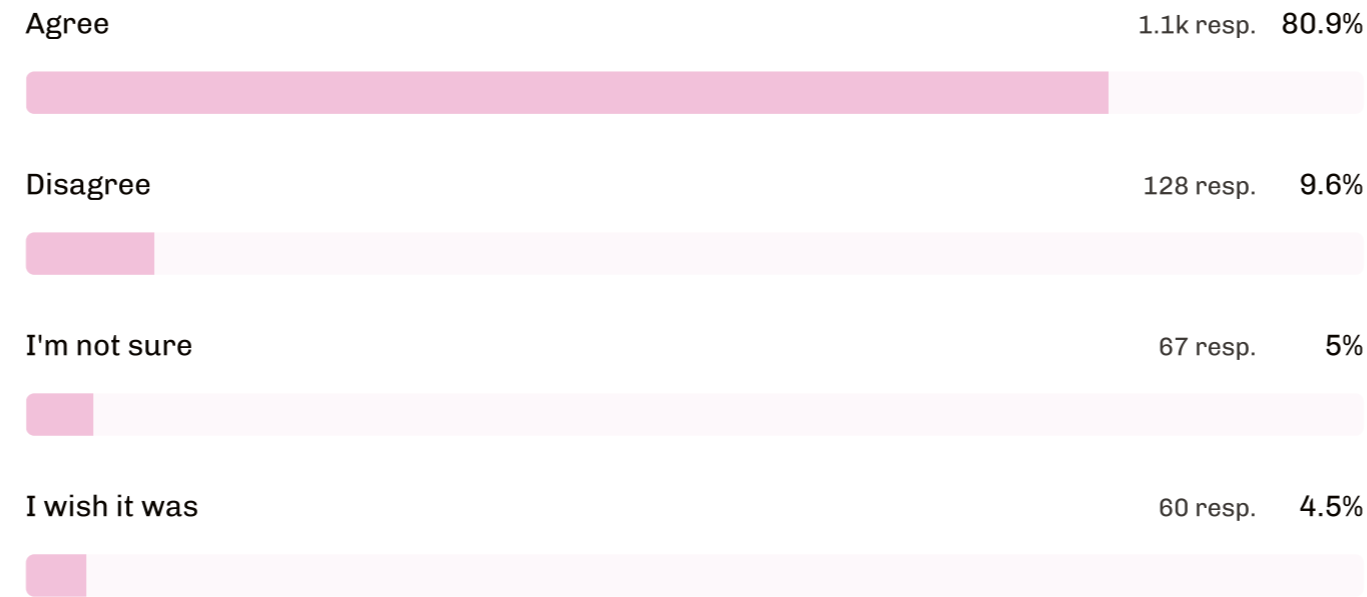
40% of respondents feel Hyde town centre is full of beautiful historic buildings, whilst 52% either disagree or wish it had.

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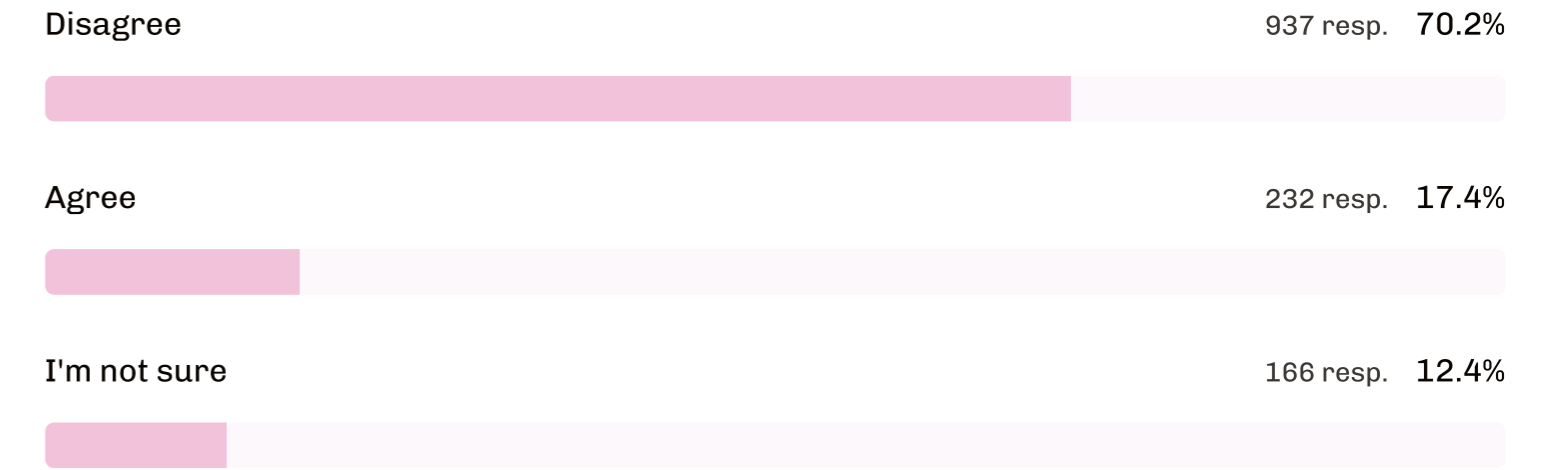
### Hyde has a town centre full of beautiful historic buildings



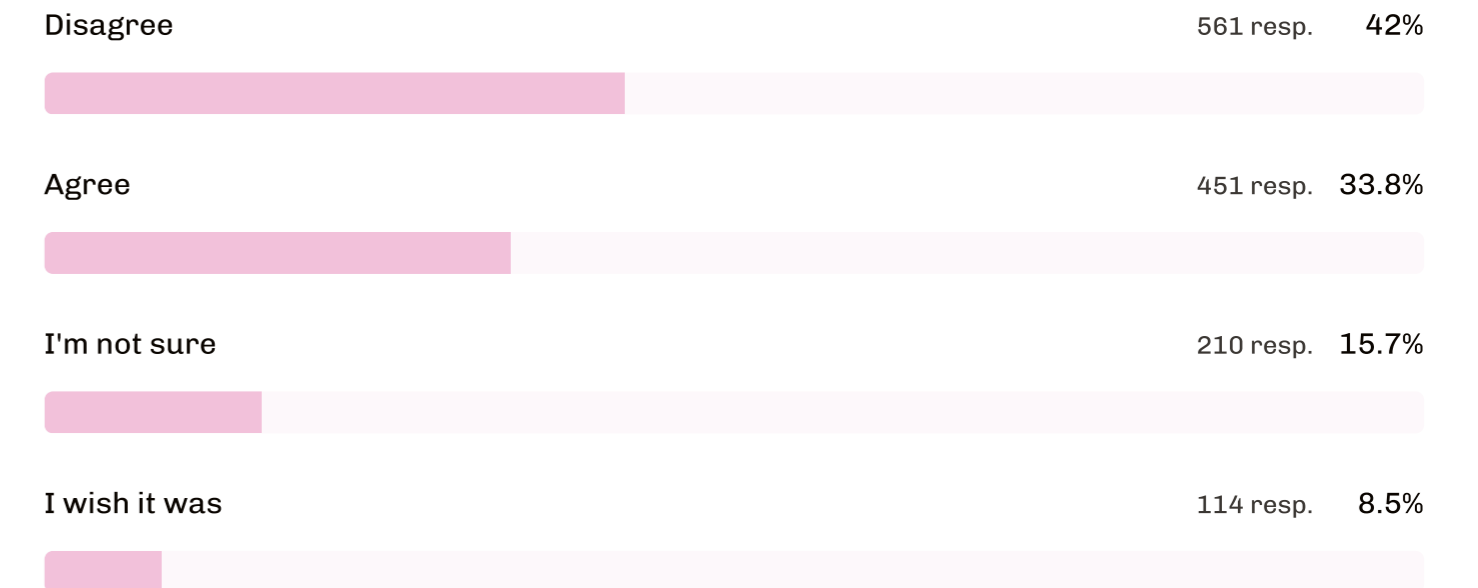
### The centre of Hyde is easy to walk around



### Hyde town centre is too spread out



### There are attractive alternative ways to travel in to Hyde, other than by car.





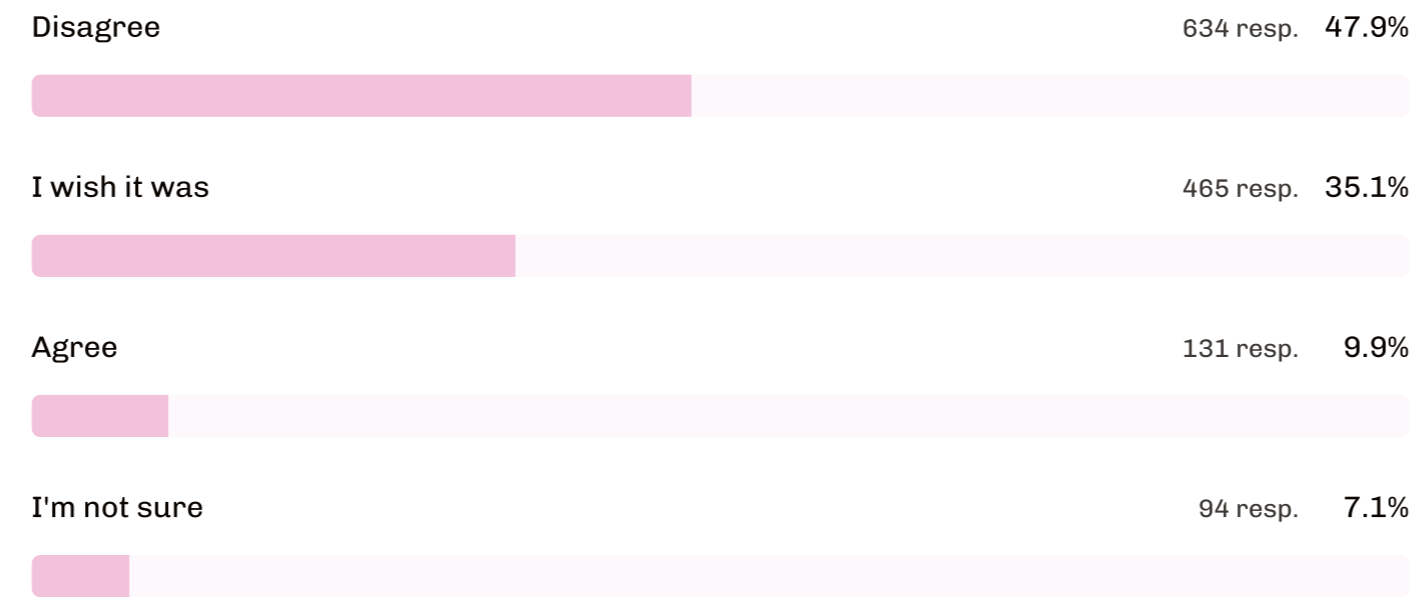
## Perception

There is clear need for an improved food & drink offer, with less than 10% of respondents agreeing the town centre has great places to eat and drink both during the daytime and evening.

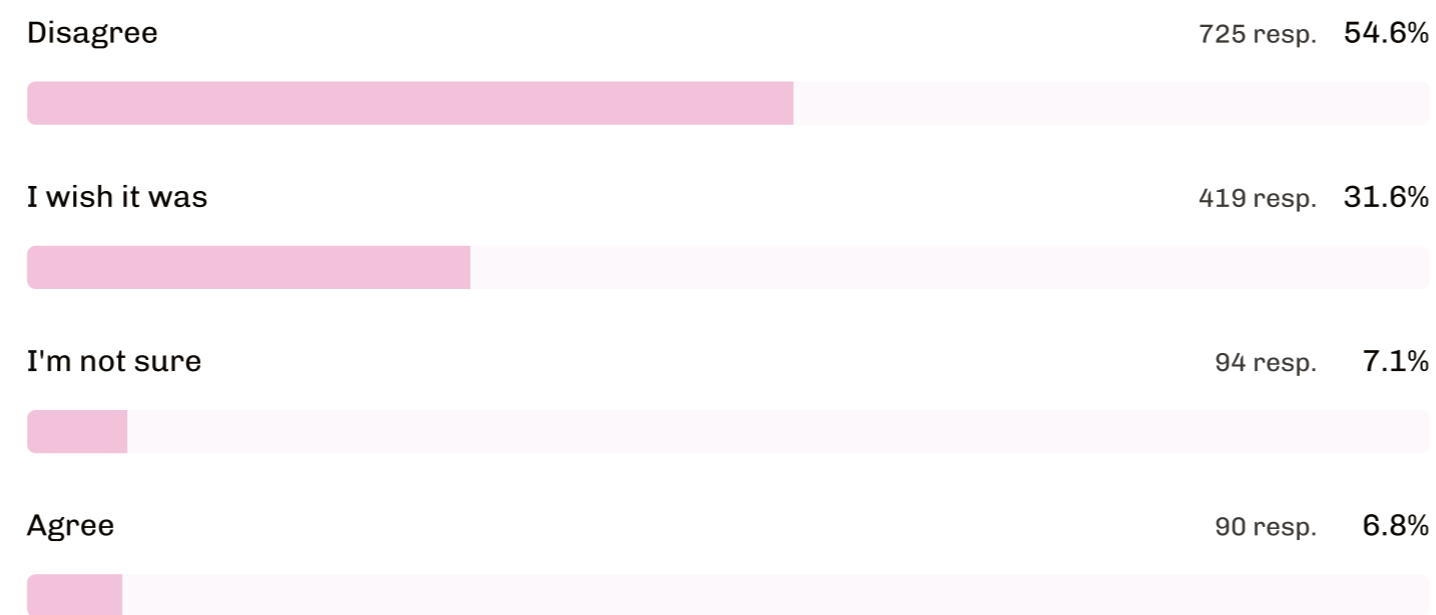
Very few respondents feel Hyde town centre offers an interesting range of shops. 63% disagree with the statement, whilst 31% wish it did.

Only 7% feel that the town centre provides plenty of spaces to socialise. 59% disagree, whilst 25% wish it did.

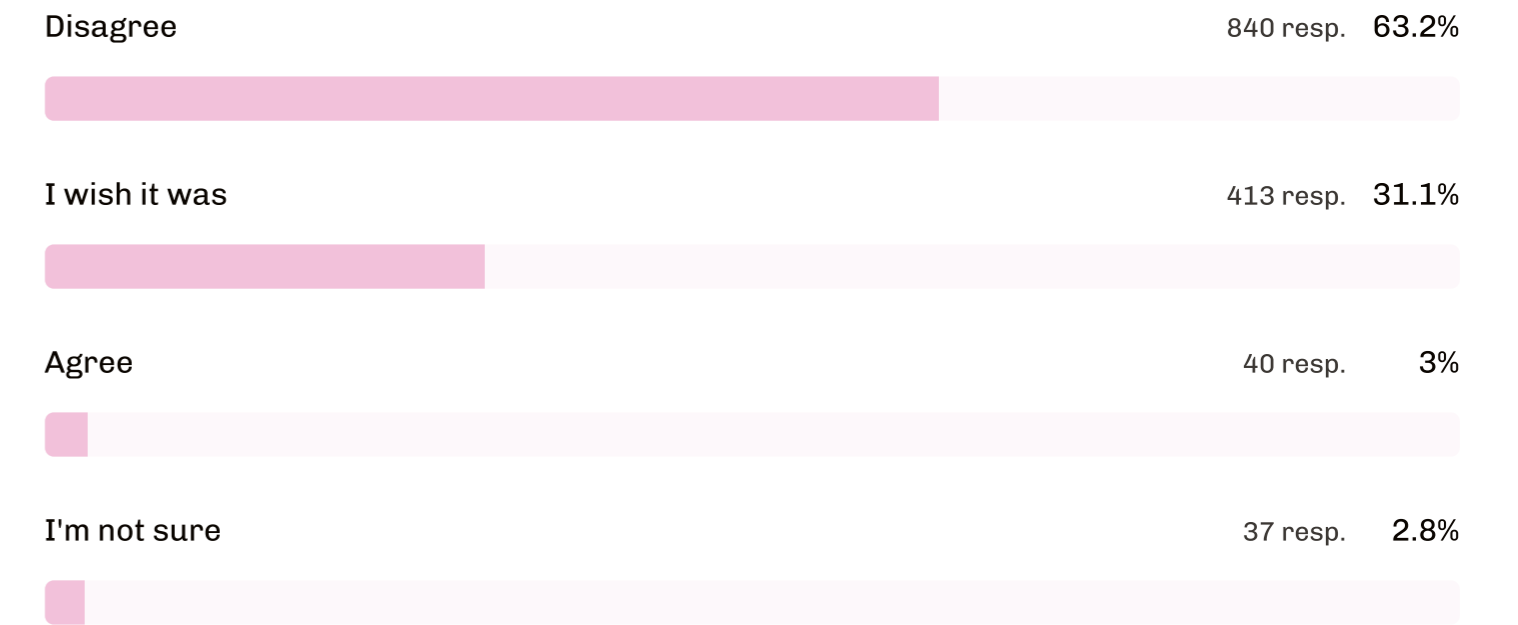
### Hyde has a town centre full of great places to eat and drink in the daytime



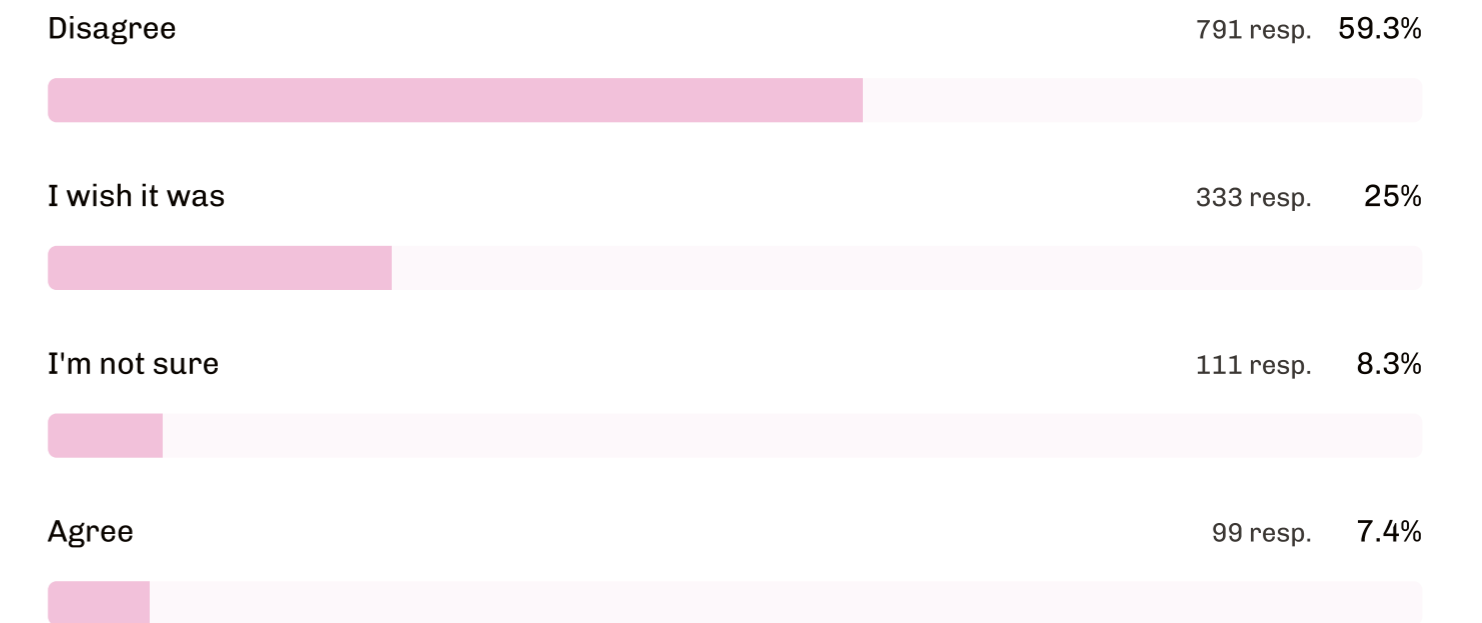
### Hyde has a town centre full of great places to eat and drink in the evening



### Hyde is a town centre full of interesting shops



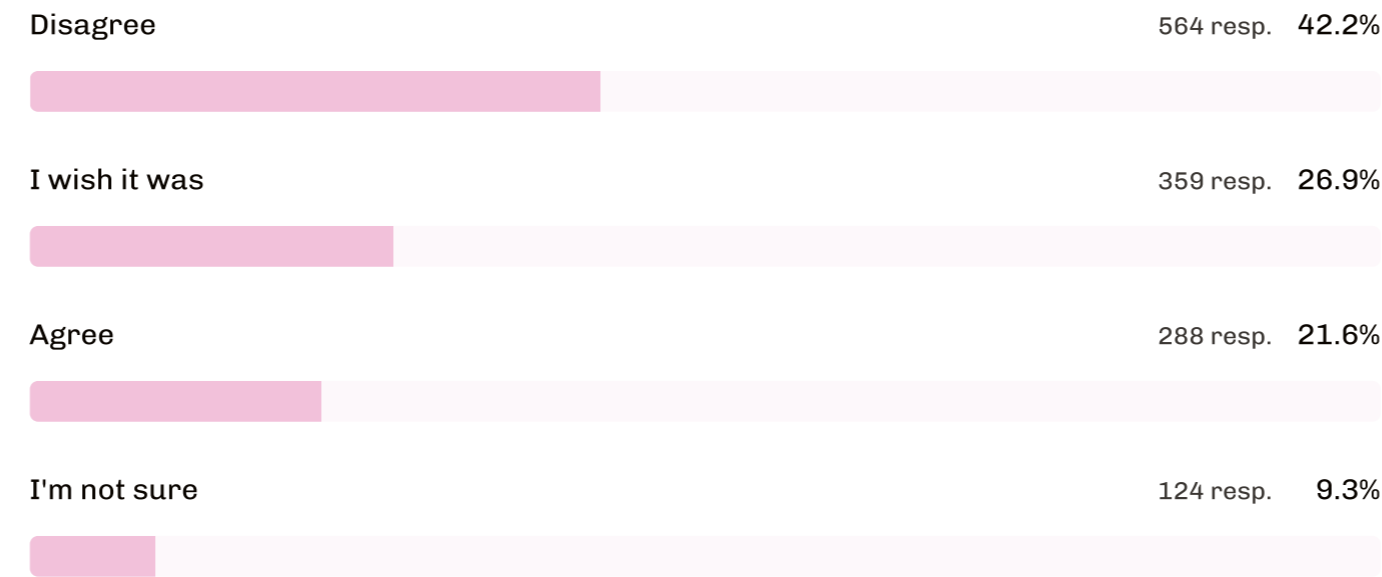
### Hyde is a town centre with plenty of places to socialise



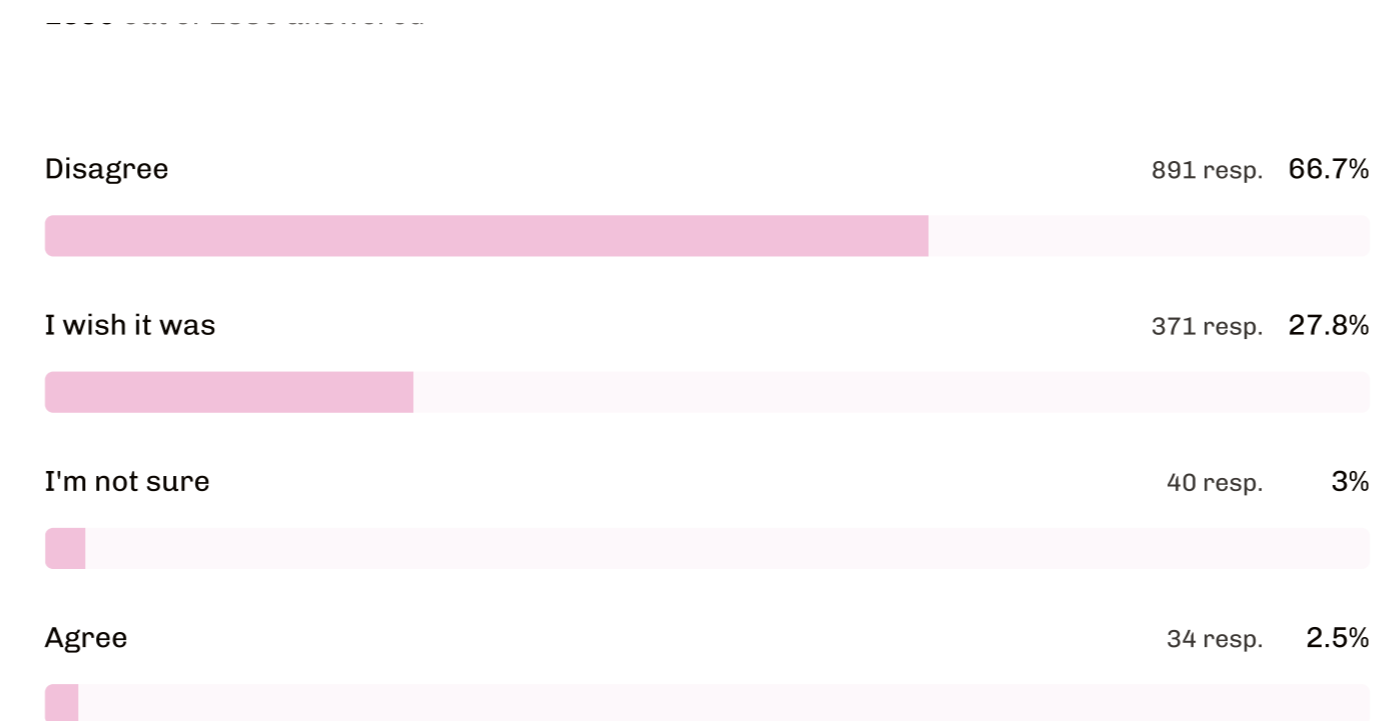
## Perception

The survey highlights a clear need for an improved market offer in Hyde town centre. Only 3% of respondents agree that Hyde has an interesting outdoor market. Whilst perception of the indoor market is slightly better than the outdoor market offer, there is plenty of room for improvement. 22% of respondents feel the current market offer is interesting, whilst 42% disagree, and 27% wish it was.

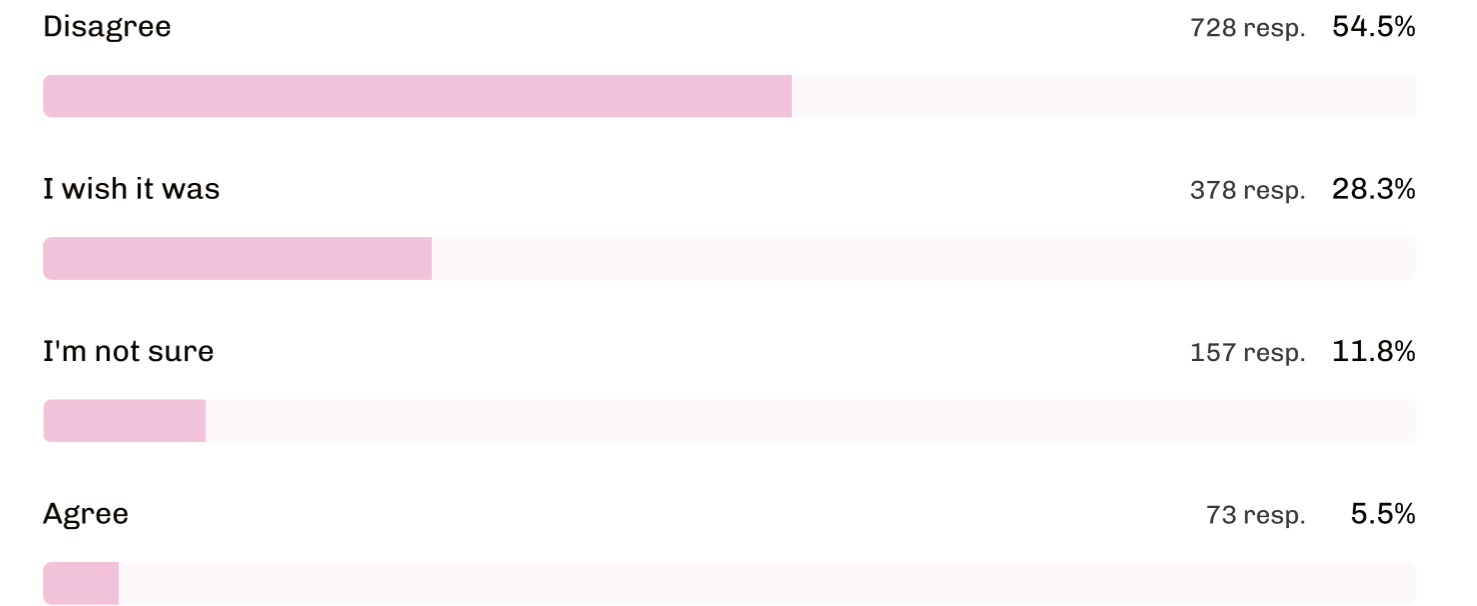
### Hyde is a town centre with interesting indoor markets



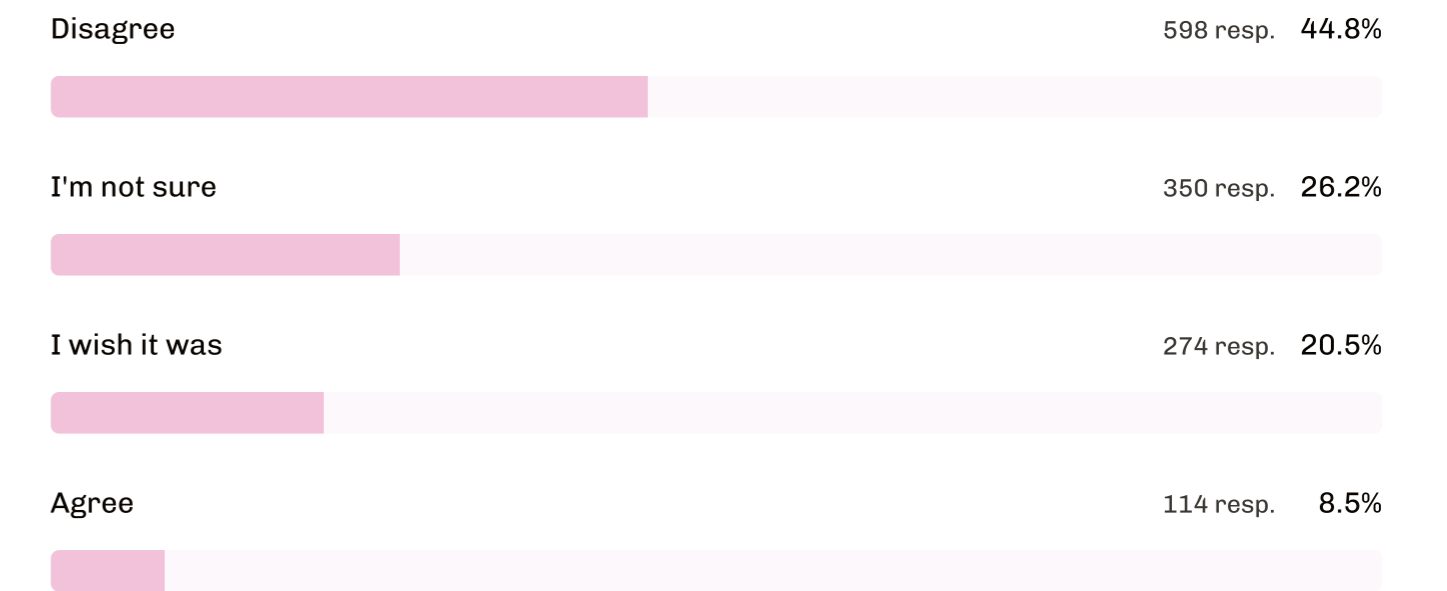
### Hyde is a town centre with interesting outdoor markets



### Hyde is a town centre with a good range of events and festivals



### Hyde town centre is a good place to start a business



## Perception

Respondents were asked which areas of Hyde town centre have potential to be better and what could be done to improve them. Common themes include:

### Market Square

- Public realm improvements including more seating and greenery
- Activating more frequently with better quality markets and events

### Pedestrianisation

Traffic calming and/or pedestrianisation of Market Place and Market Street (outside Town Hall)

### Heritage/Civic Buildings

Celebrating and utilising key heritage/civic buildings such as the Town Hall, Old Library, former HSBC building etc. for community, arts and cultural use.

### Building/Shop-front Improvements

- Implementation of a shop-front improvement strategy/guidelines
- Redevelopment of Clarendon centre

**Do you think there are spaces/areas in the town centre that have potential to be better? And what could improve them?**





## Distinctiveness

Key things that respondents feel make Hyde distinctive include proximity to the countryside, motorway connections, its diverse community, heritage and cultural buildings, and green spaces. Whilst many respondents feel that Hyde lacks distinctive qualities.

What makes Hyde distinctive to you?



# VISITING THE TOWN CENTRE

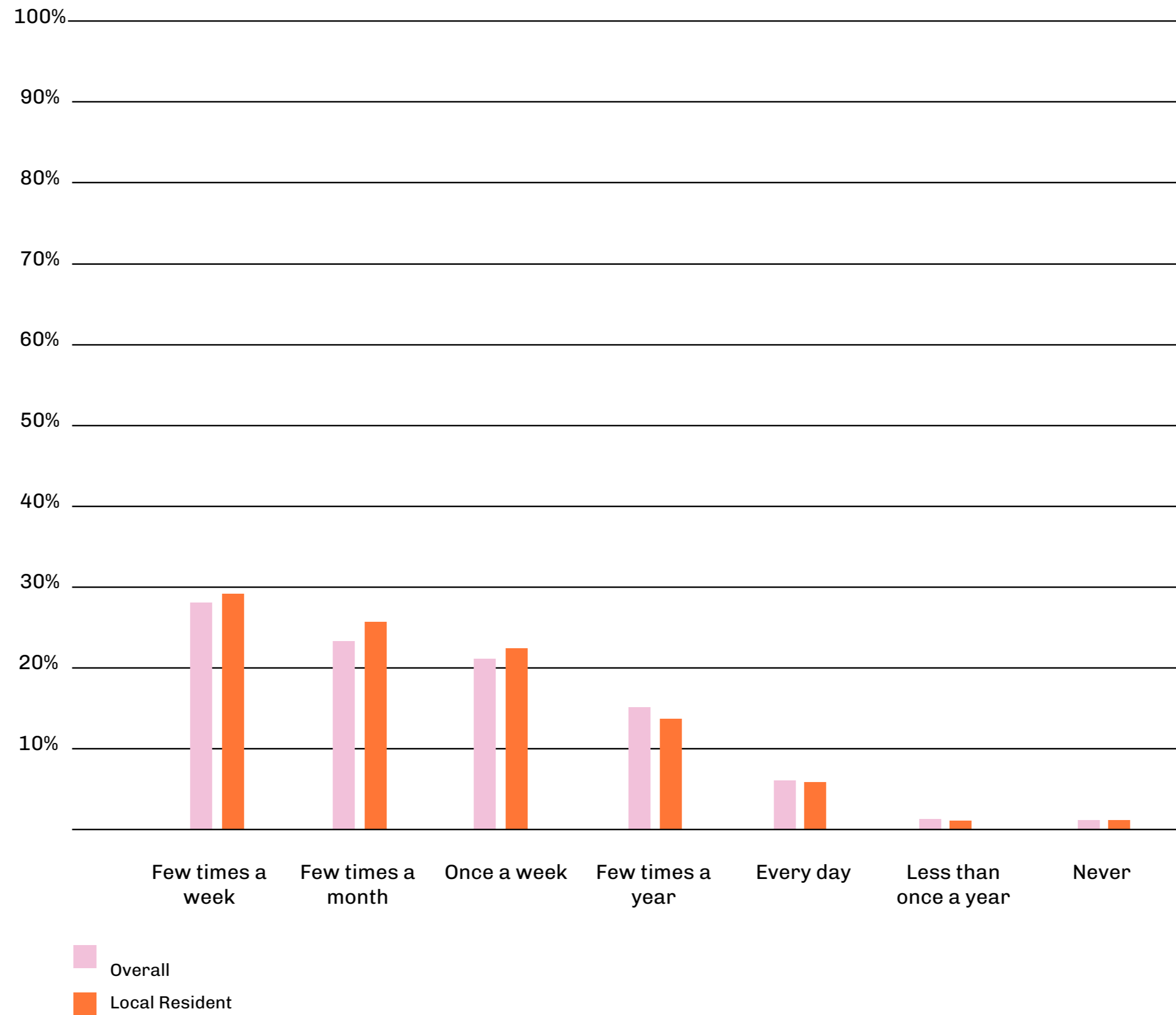
## Visits

Just over a third of local respondents visit the town centre more than once a week.

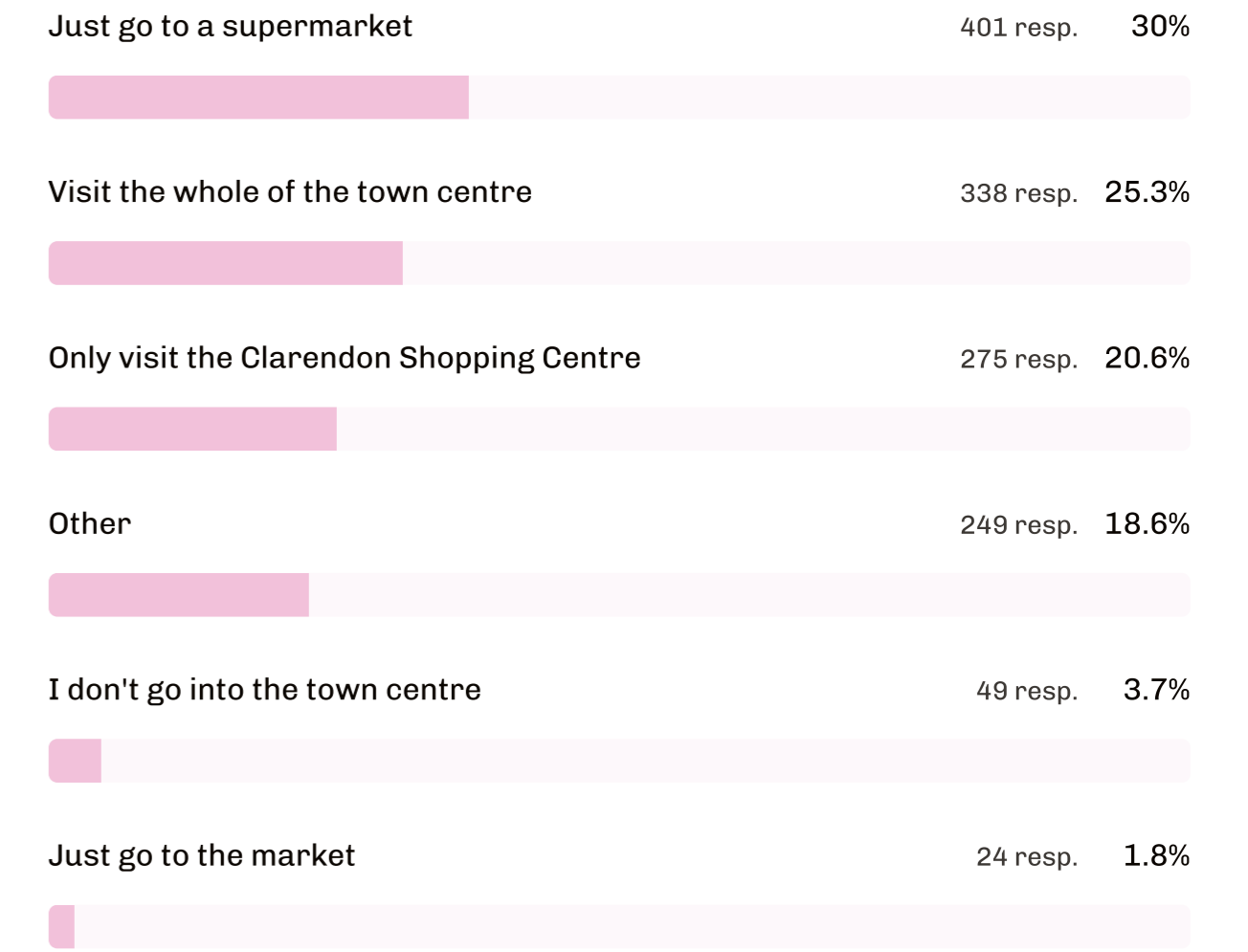
30% of respondents only visit the supermarket, whilst 20% only visit the Clarendon Shopping centre.

25% of respondents tend to visit the entire town centre.

### How often do you visit Hyde town centre?



### And where do you go when visiting?



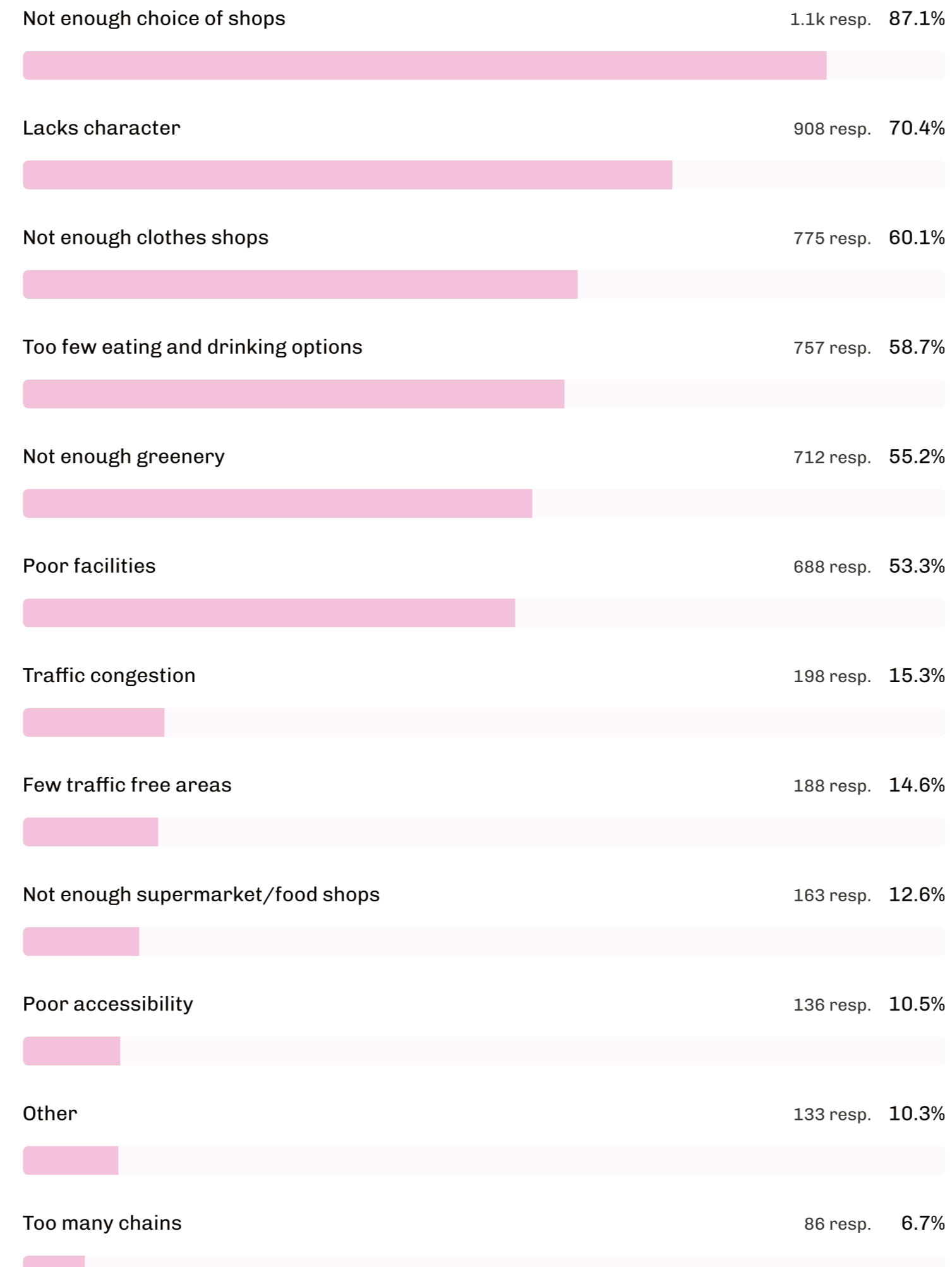
## Visits

Not enough choice of shops and lack of character are the top two things respondents dislike most about the town centre.

Other responses to what they dislike about the town centre include poor/scruffy appearance, the dominance of takeaway food shops, lack of free parking, lack of night-time economy, and it feeling unsafe.

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## Is there anything you dislike about the town centre?



## Other:





## Visits

80% of respondents state their main reason for visiting the town centre is to shop.

Fewer than 20% of respondents visit the town centre to eat, drink or socialise during the daytime, this drops to 13% in the evening.

### Key messages:

Whilst 80% of respondents mainly visit the town centre to shop, only 3% feel Hyde town centre is full of interesting shops, which suggests that many visitors frequent the town centre shops out of necessity.

The town centre lacks spaces/ places to get together and socialise.

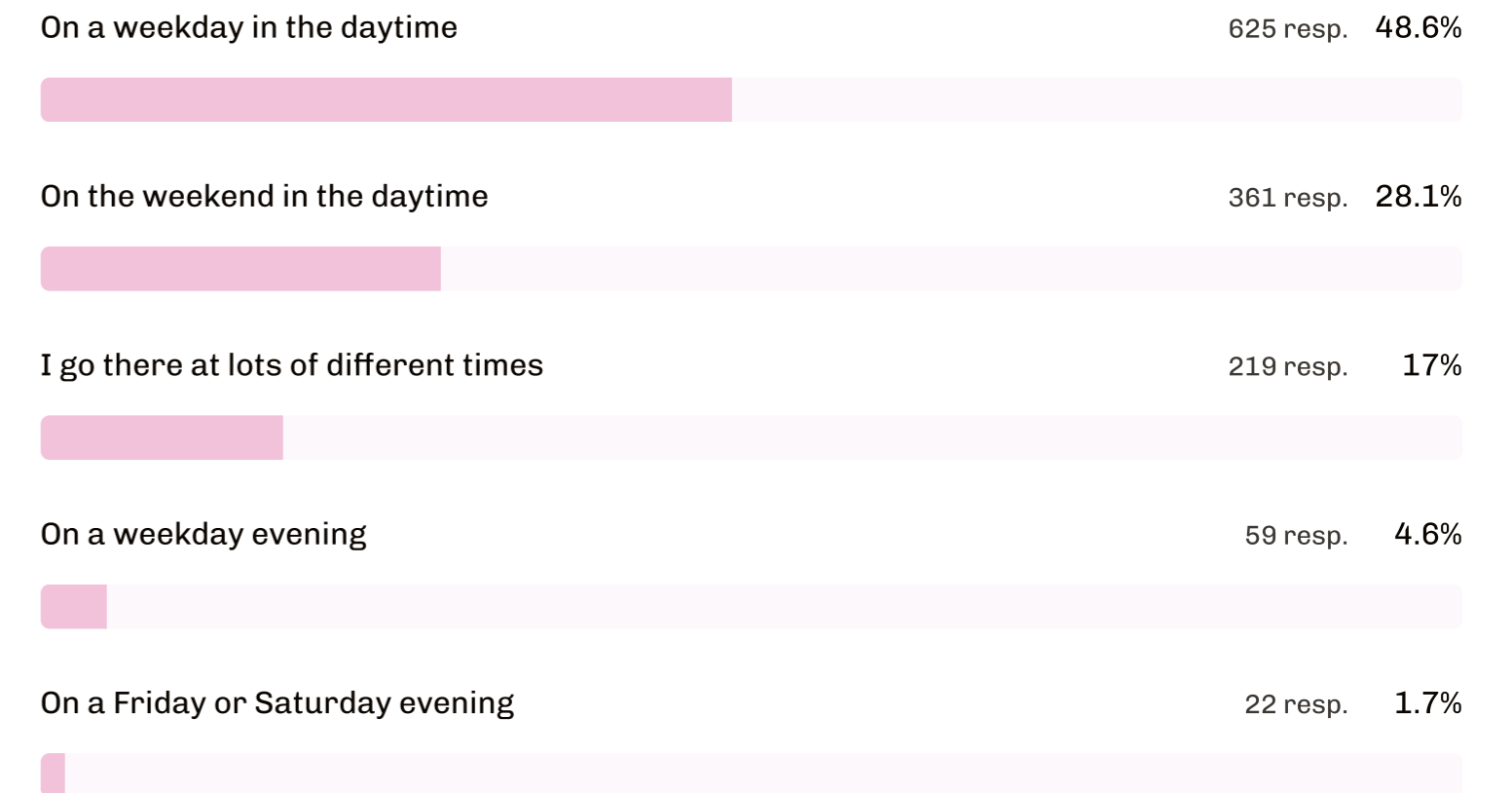
There is a clear need for an improved evening and cultural offer.

### What are your main reasons for visiting the town centre?

You can select up to three options:



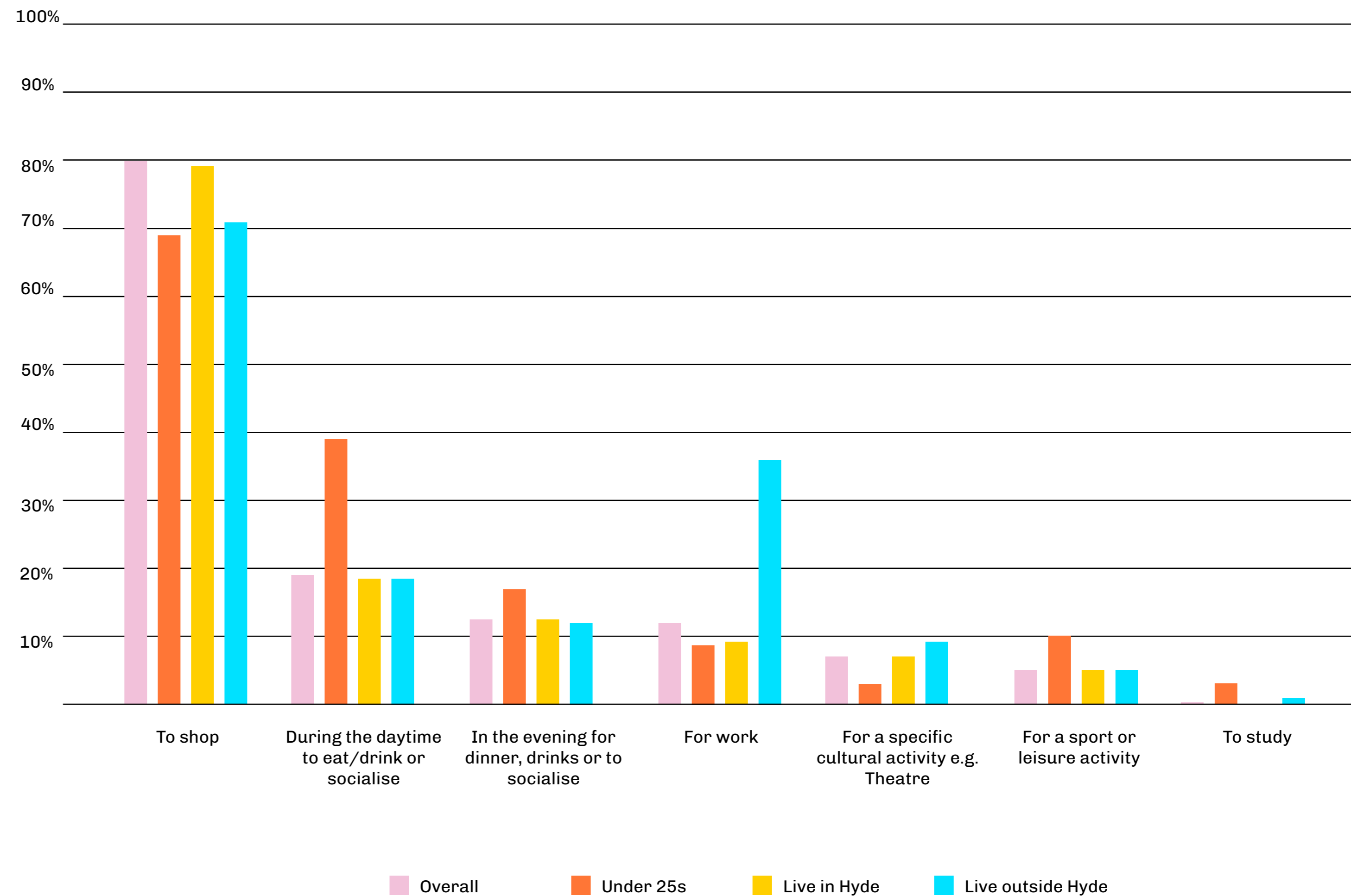
### When are you most likely to visit the town centre?



## Visits

A higher percentage of Under 25s visit the town centre in the daytime to eat/drink, or for a sport or leisure activity.

**What are your main reasons for visiting the town centre? You can select up to three options:**

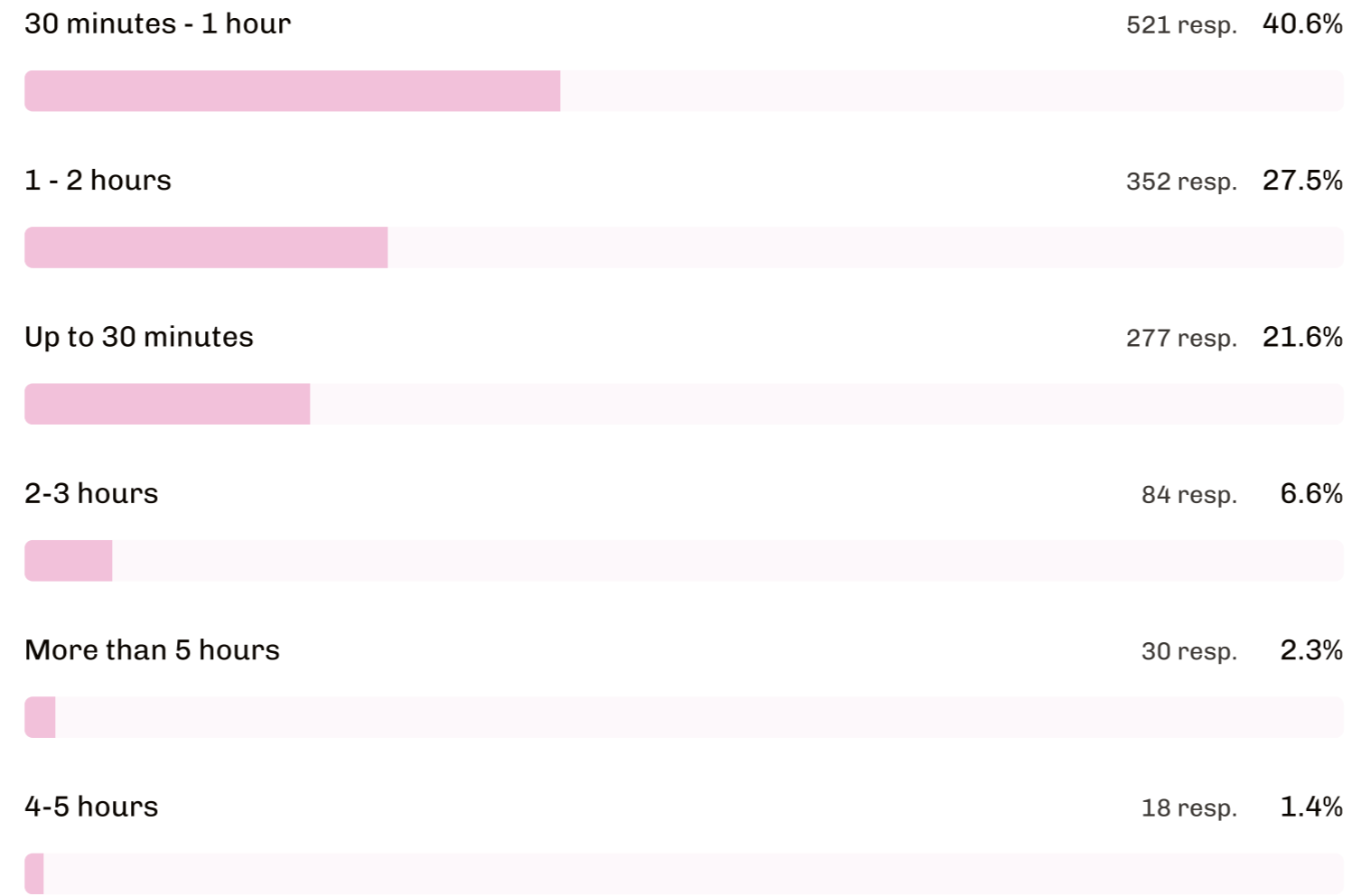


## Visits

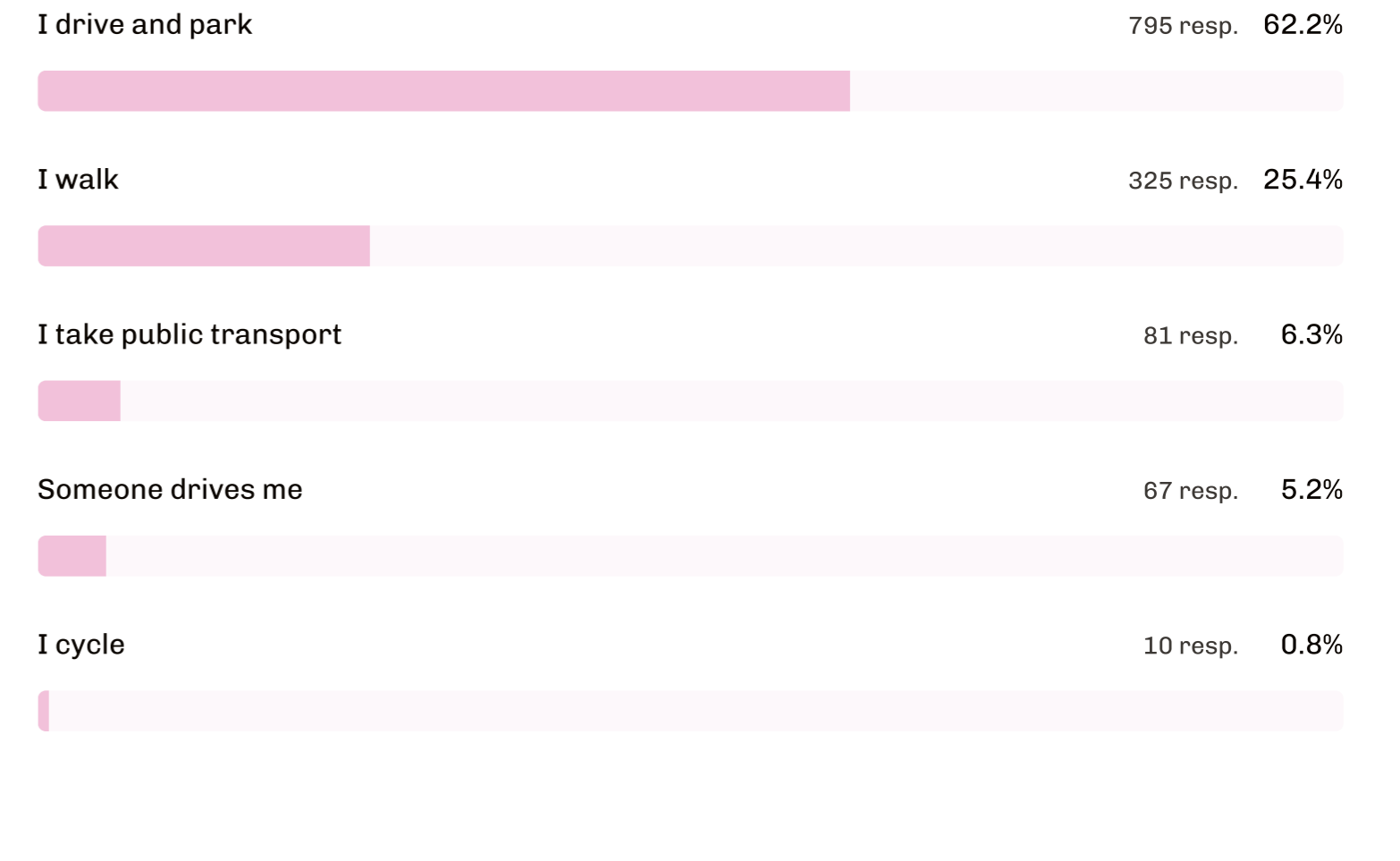
62% of respondents spend an hour or less visiting the town centre. Only 12% of respondents are likely to stay in the town centre for more than 2 hours.

64% of local residents travel to the town centre by car. 27% walk or cycle.

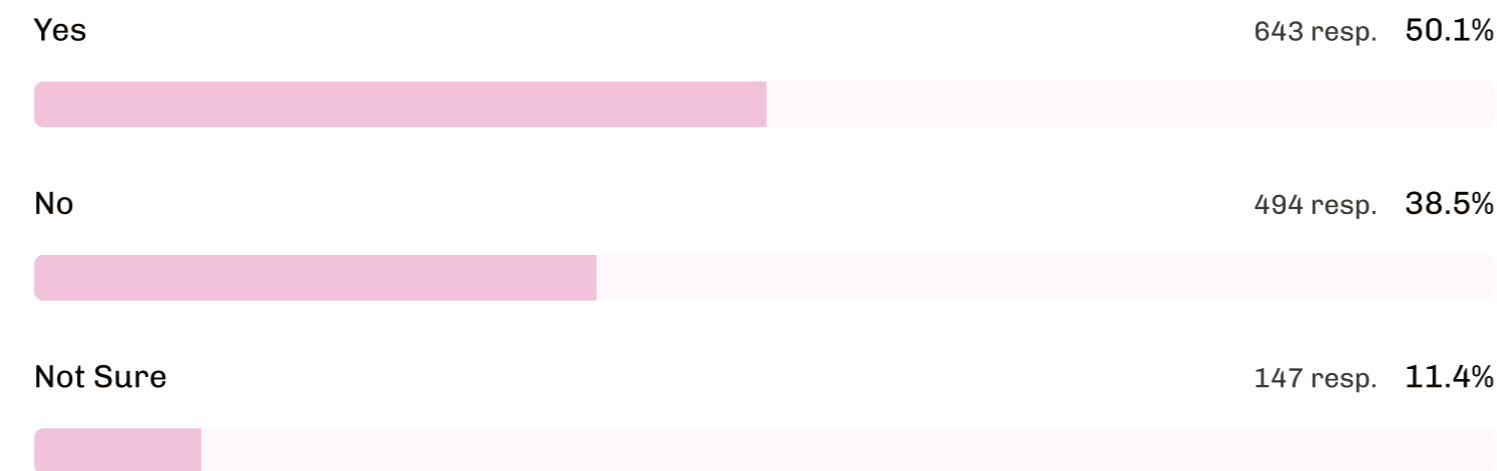
### On average, how long do you usually stay in the town centre?



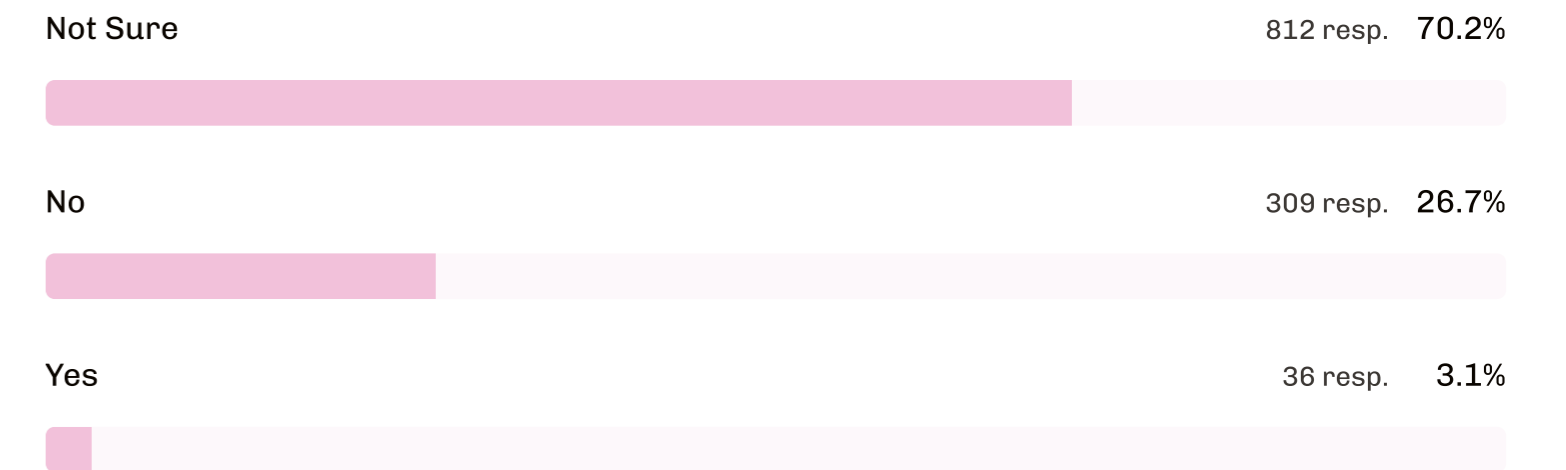
### How do you usually travel to the town centre?



### Do you feel there are enough places to park in Hyde town centre?



### If you cycle, are there enough secure places to park your bicycle?



## Visits

Residents that travel to the town centre by car are most likely to only visit the supermarket. Those that walk or cycle are most likely to visit the whole of the town centre.

Residents that drive and park spend marginally more per visit than those that travel to the town centre on foot. However those that walk are likely to visit the town centre almost twice as often over the space of a month than those that drive.

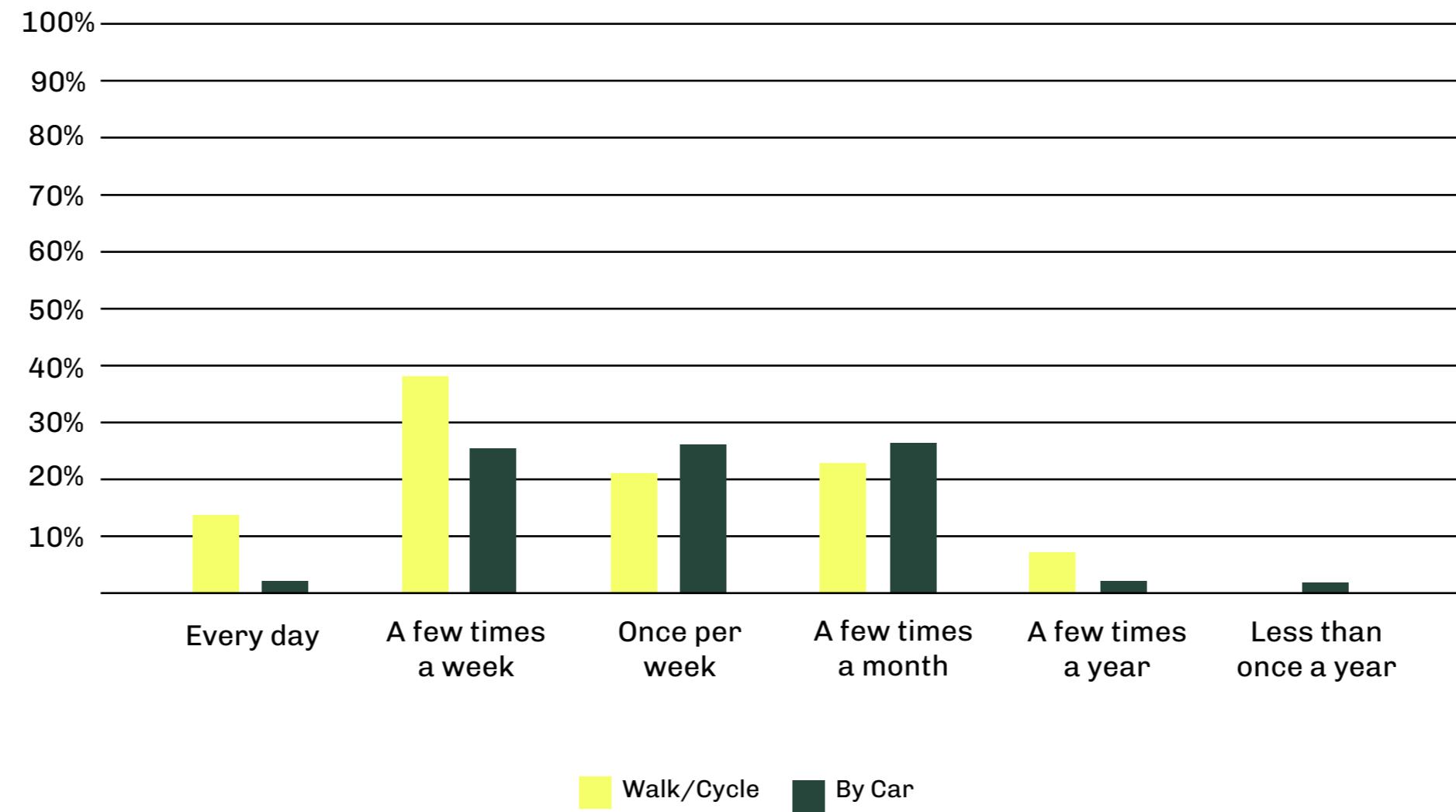
66% of those that drive to the town centre and spend over £50 state they only visit the supermarket.

### Key messages:

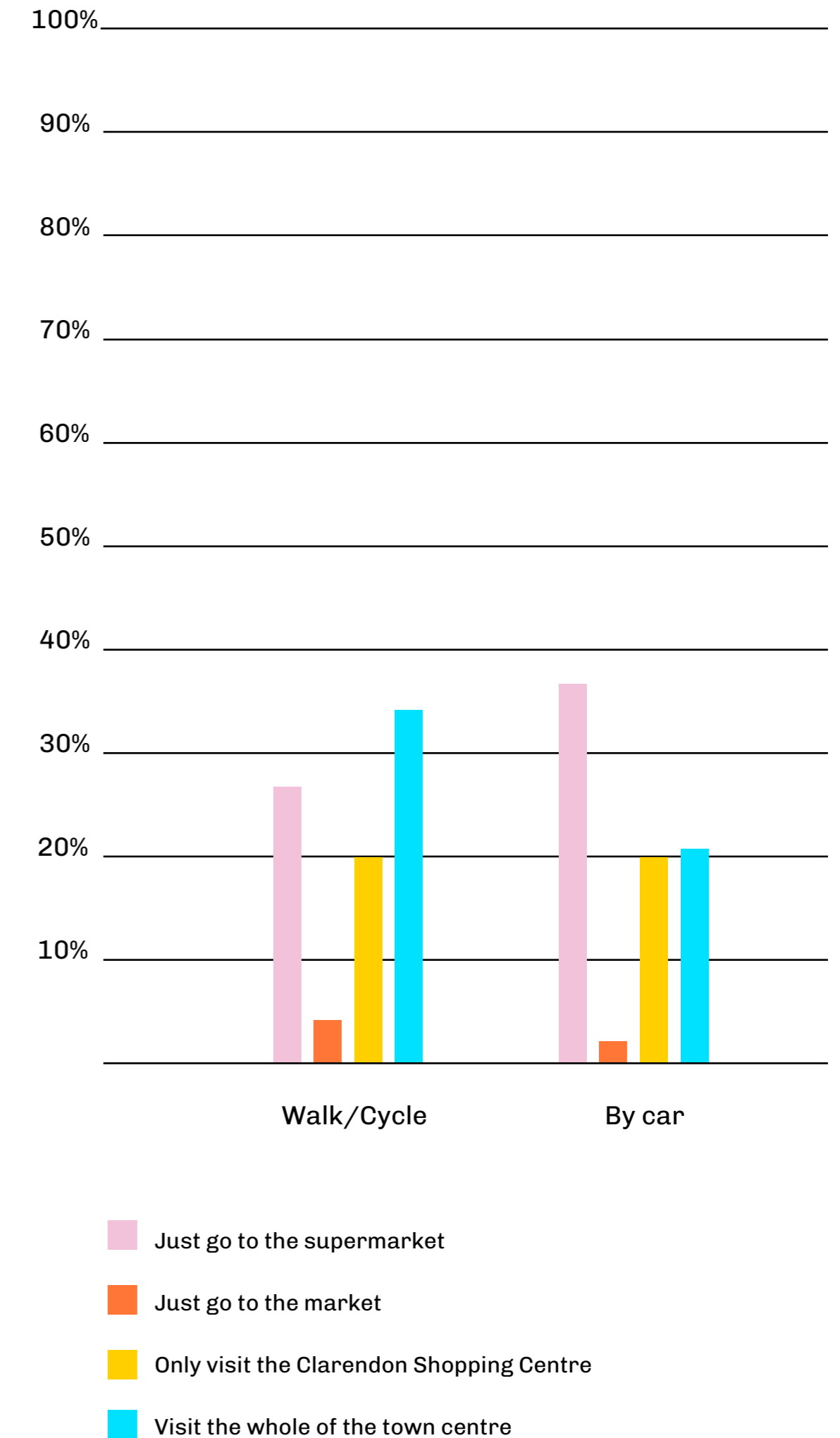
Residents that walk/cycle to the town centre, visit more often and are more likely to visit more of the town centre than those that drive and park

A key priority must therefore be to encourage more visits on foot or bicycle.

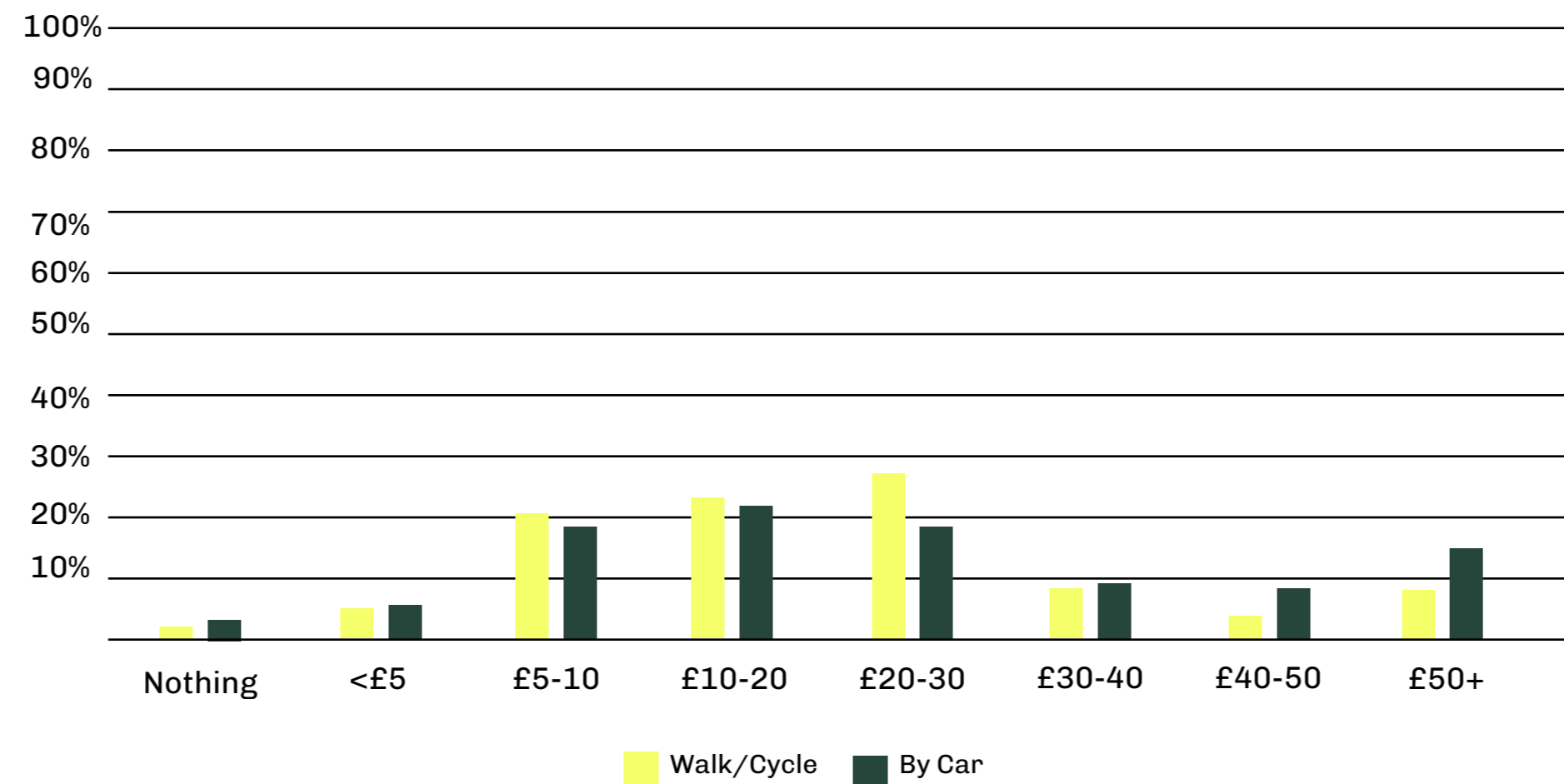
Frequency of visit (Local residents)



Location of visit (Local residents)



Average spend per visit (Local residents)



### Visits

Respondents were asked what other local town centres they like to visit. The most popular town centres to visit are Stockport, Denton and Glossop.

### What other local town centres do you like to visit?



Stockport



Denton



Glossop



Ashton-under-Lyne



Other  
E.g. Manchester City Centre



Stalybridge

### Other:

- Bury
- Manchester City Centre
- Woodley
- Romiley
- Oldham
- Marple
- Altrincham

## Visits

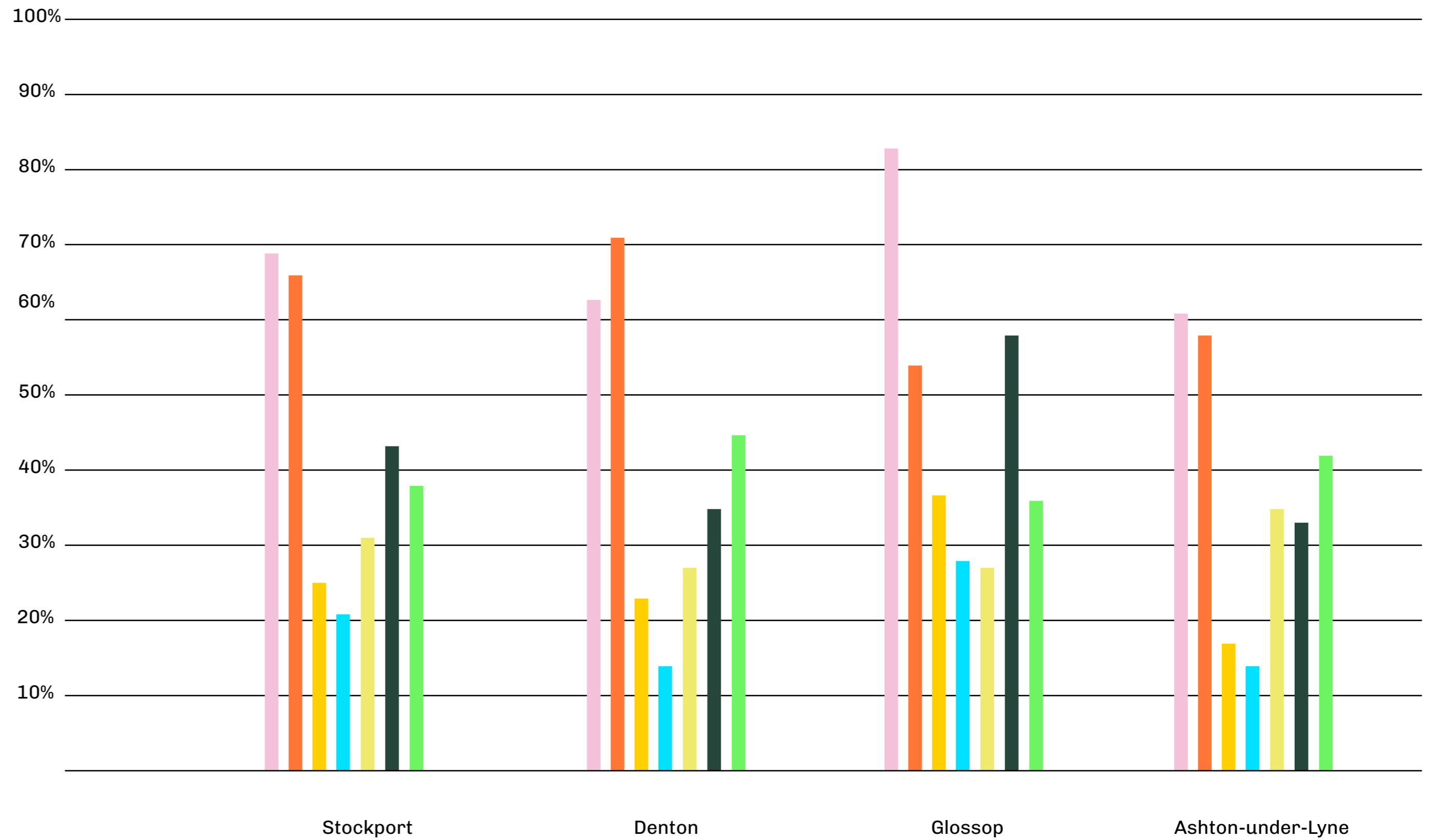
Respondents enjoy visiting Stockport for its independent shops, cafés and restaurants, as well as the chain retail stores and atmosphere.

Glossop is popular for its independent shops, cafés and restaurants, its atmosphere, as well as its chain stores, & restaurants, and nightlife. Its cultural offer is also clearly a draw.

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- There is a good range of independent shops, cafés & restaurants
- There is a good range of chain stores & restaurants
- I enjoy the nightlife here
- There's a good cultural offer
- It has a good market
- I enjoy it's atmosphere
- It's convenient (easy for me to get here)

## And, why do you like to visit here?

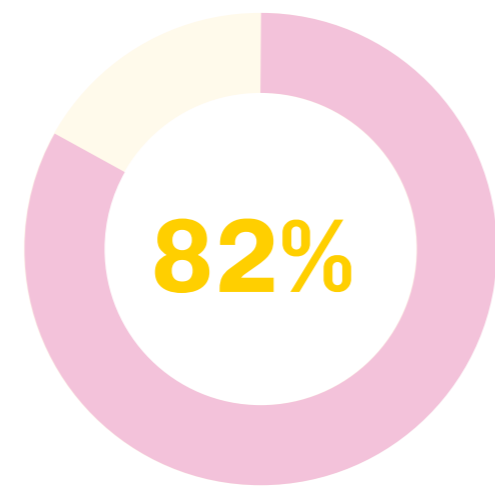


# FUTURE

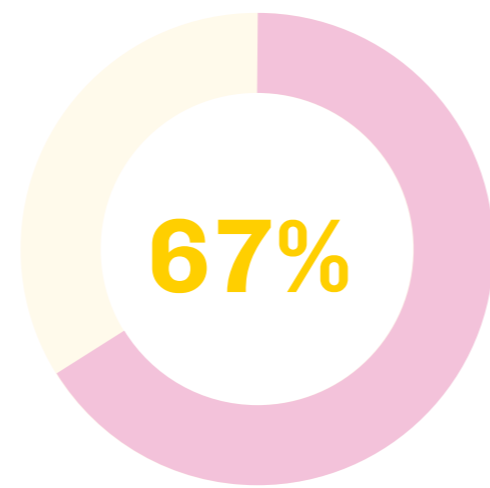
## Future

Top priorities include more local, independent shops, cafés and restaurants. Better maintenance of building fronts, more green space, planting/greenery, and street furniture, as well as better/more spaces for events, festivals, arts and cultural activity.

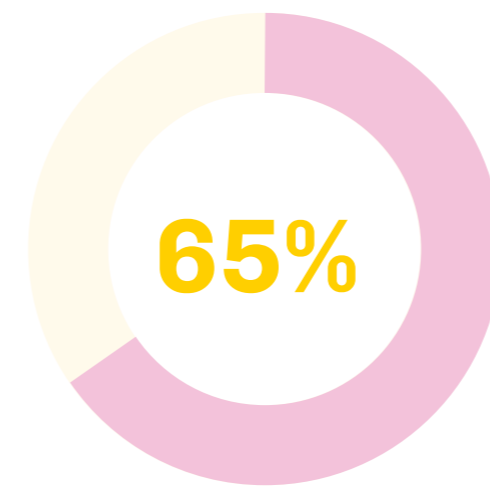
### What do you think Hyde town centre needs to make it a better place for everyone to enjoy in the future?



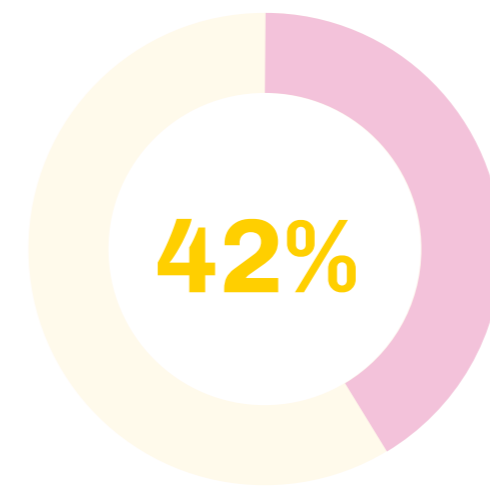
More local and independent shops



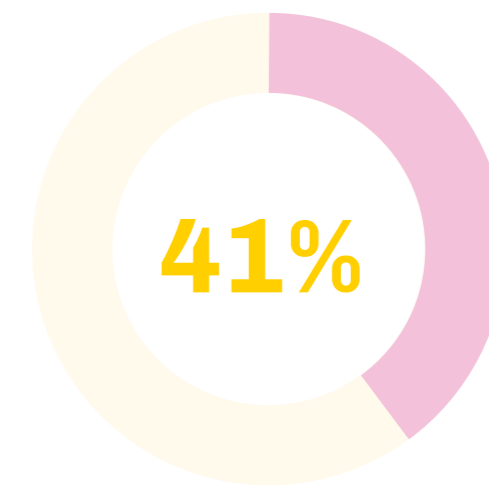
More local and independent cafés and restaurants



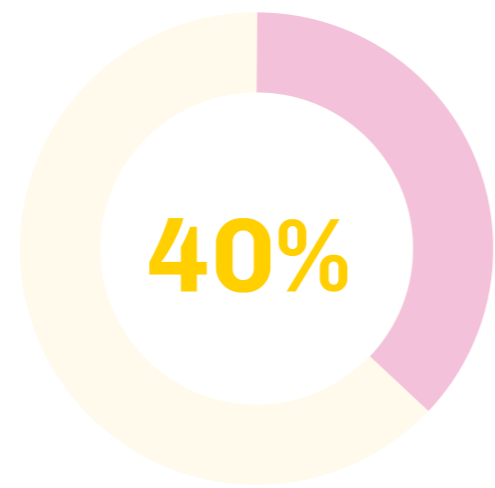
Better maintenance of building fronts on the high street



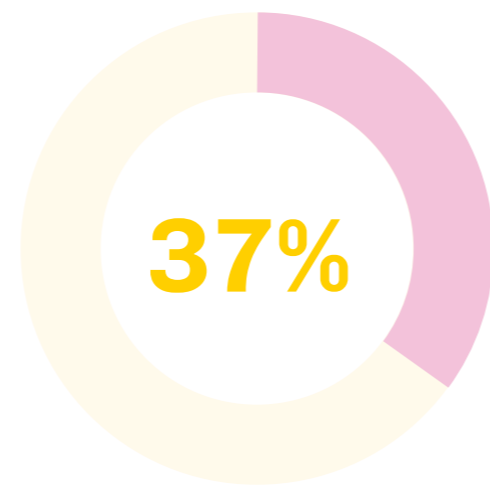
More green space



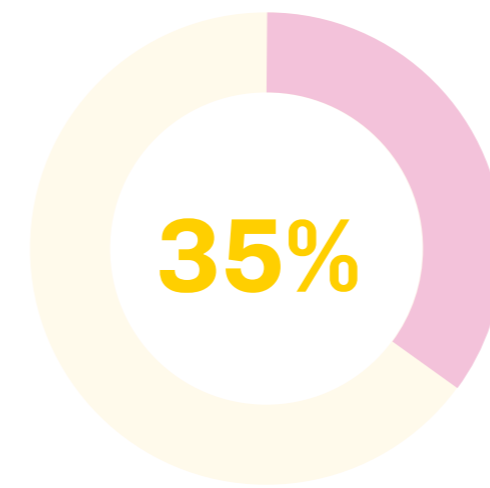
More street furniture, trees & planting



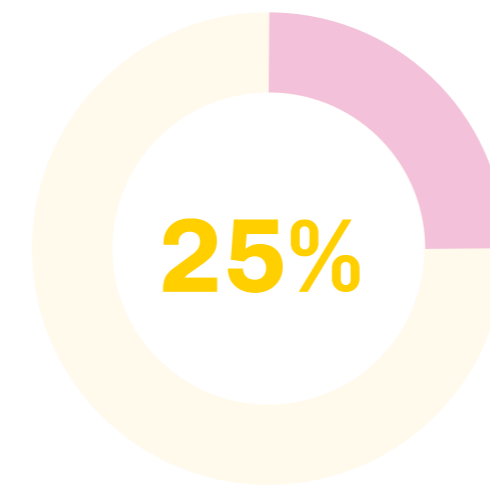
Better open public space to hold events and festivals



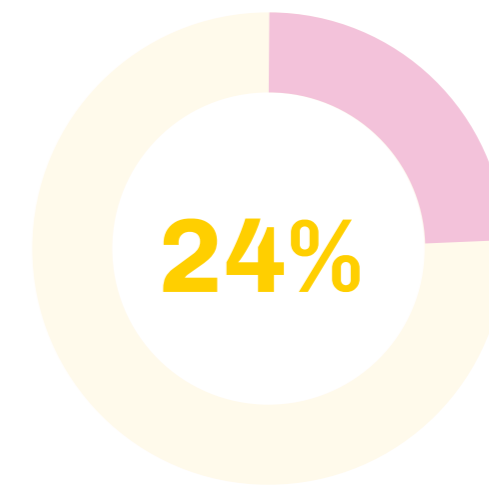
More cultural space for arts, music, film and theatre



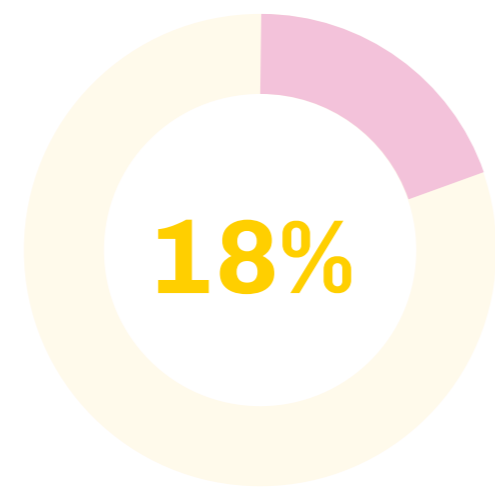
More spaces for young people to hang out



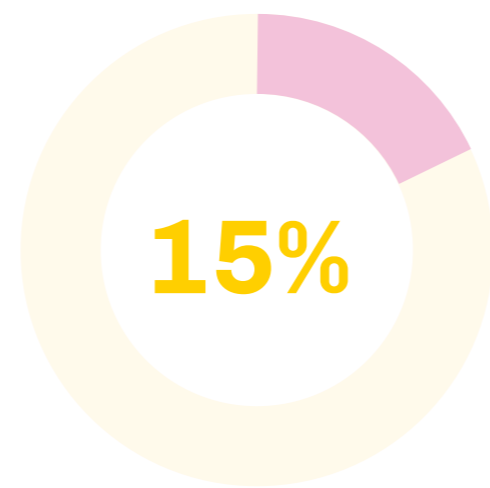
Improved access to green spaces such as Hyde Park



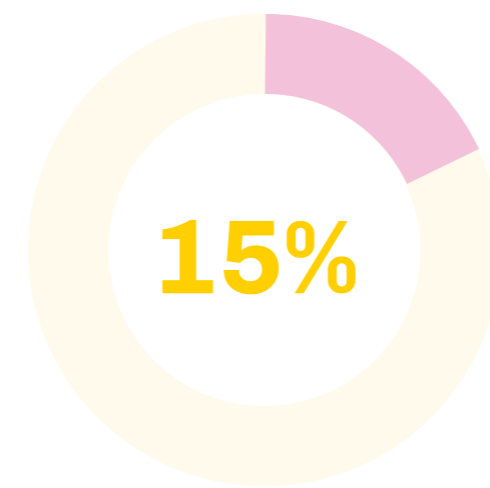
More child friendly spaces



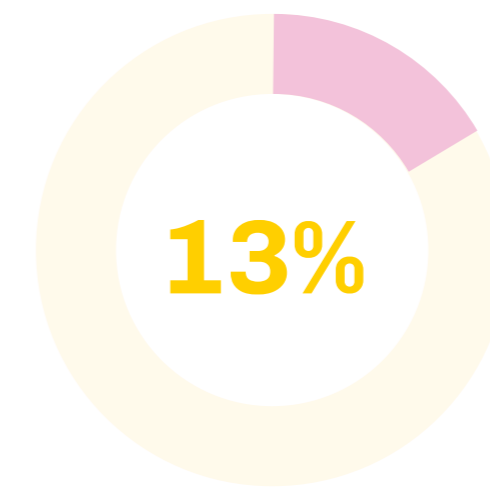
Improved access to the canal



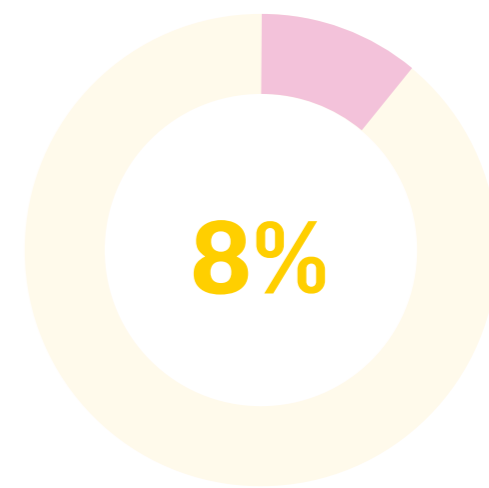
More people living in the town centre



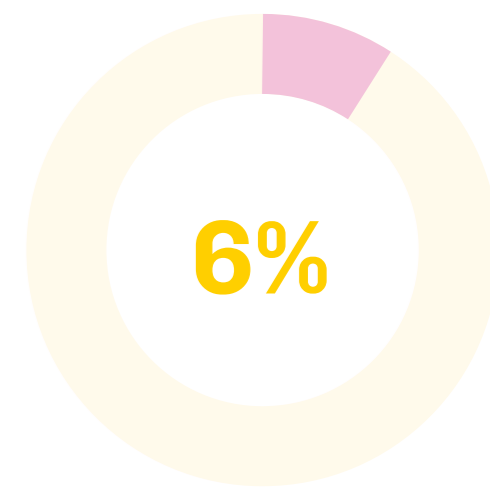
More work / studio / office / co-working space



Better public transport



Better access for walking / cycling so I don't have to drive there



Other

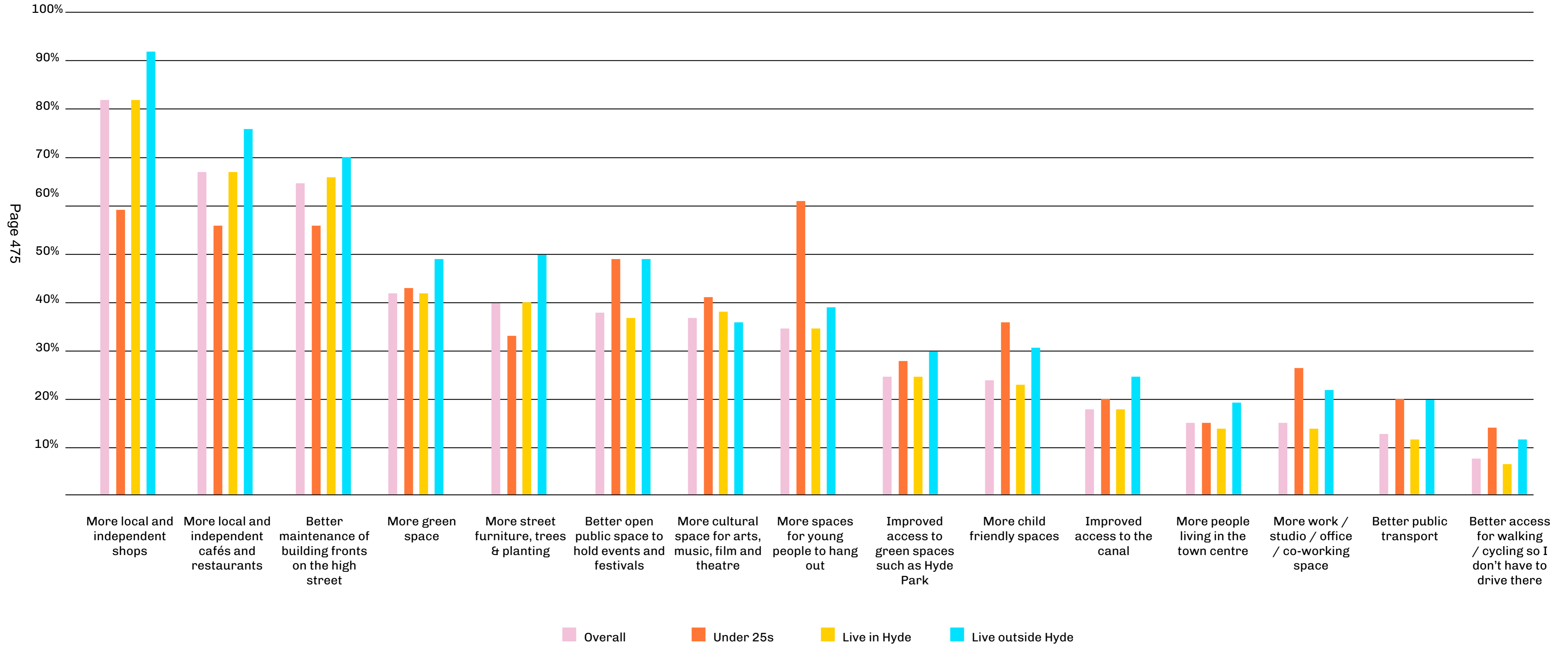
### Key messages:

The top priority for young people is more 'spaces for young people to hang out' - of which over 60% of U25s highlighted as a priority compared to 35% of overall respondents.

Under 25s also consider more cultural space, workspace, and better access for/via walking, cycling & public transport of higher priority than other age groups.



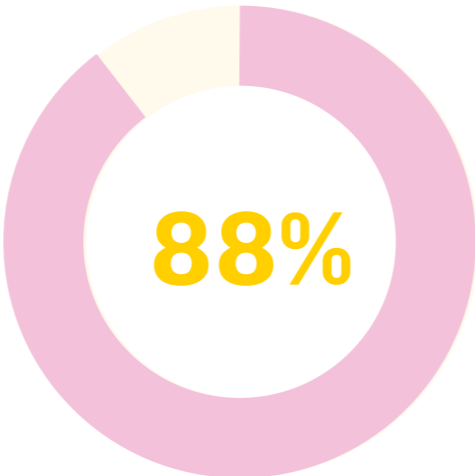
**What do you think Hyde town centre needs to make it a better place for everyone to enjoy in the future?**



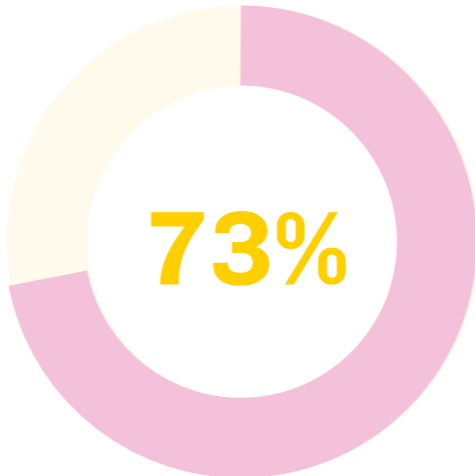
**Future**

Local, fresh food produce, street food, independent designer-makers & craftspeople, as well as pop-up activities and entertainment are what respondents would like most from a modern market in Hyde town centre.

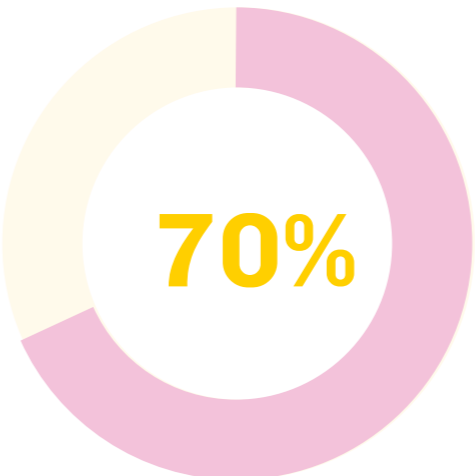
**What would you like to see from a modern market in Hyde town centre?**



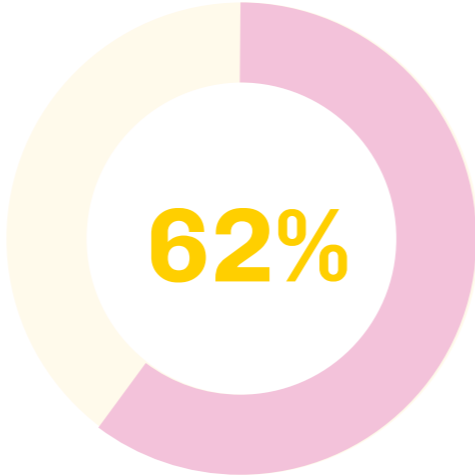
**Local, fresh food produce**



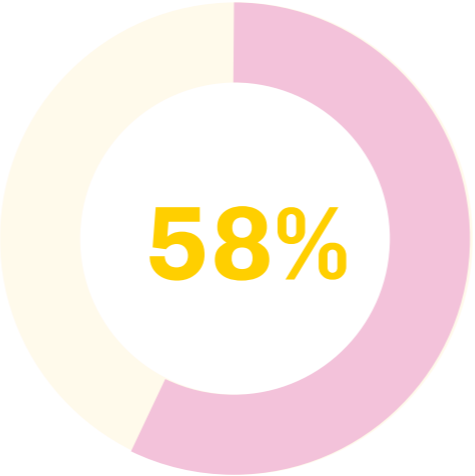
**Street food traders**



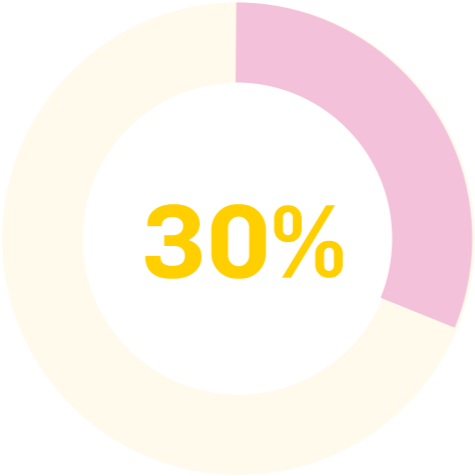
**Product by local, independent designer-makers and craftspeople**



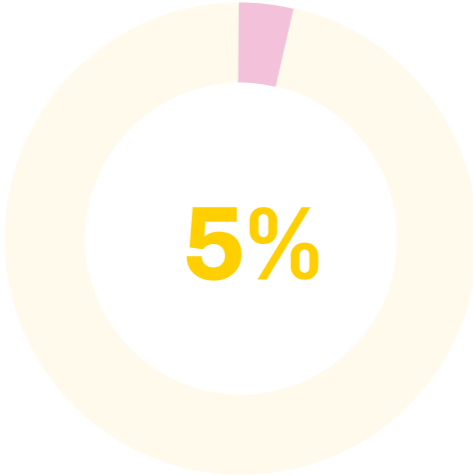
**Pop-up activities (such as family friendly workshops and live music)**



**Affordable clothing and household items**



**Pre-loved clothing and homewares**

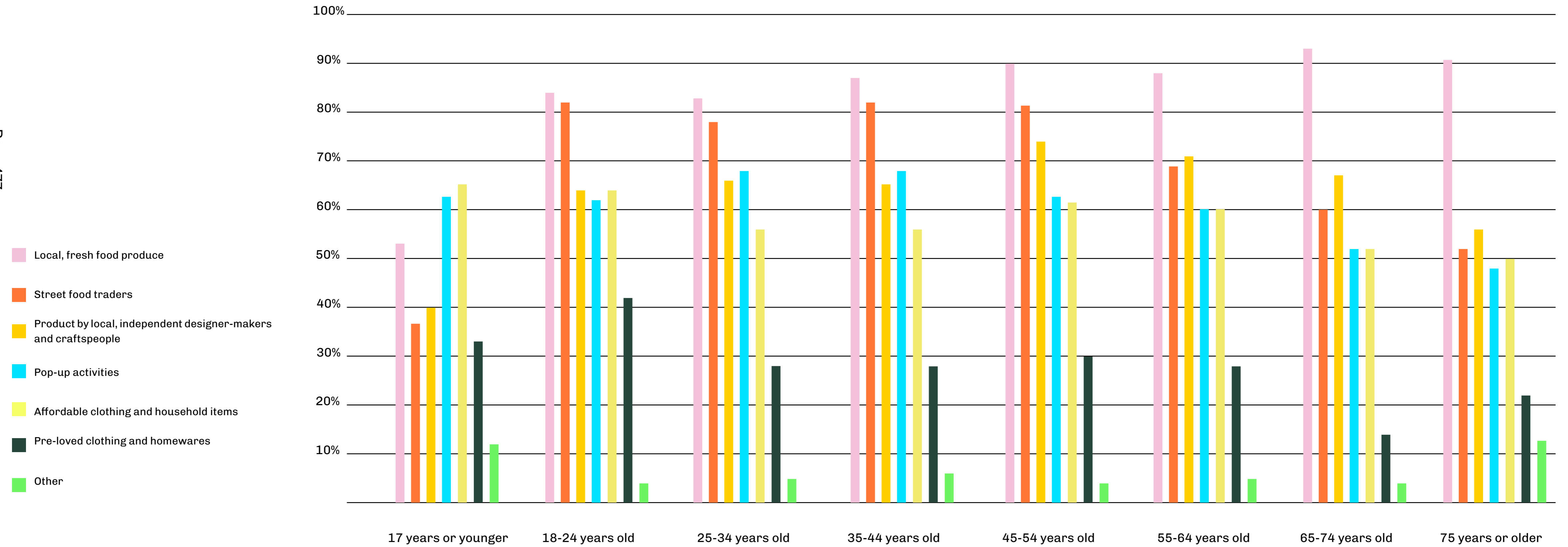


**Other**

# Future

## What would you like to see from a modern market in Hyde town centre?

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## Future

When asked “What would you do improve Hyde town centre”, we had 1254 responses.

### Common Themes:

- Celebrating and utilising historic buildings such as the Town Hall for cultural and community uses
- Improvements to Market Square including increasing planting/greenery & public furniture.
- Improving the market offer
- Creating more traffic-free areas
- Introducing free parking
- Improving shop/building front appearance
- Improving the cultural offer including more (a better range of) town centre events and activities
- Encouraging more small, independent businesses to establish in the town centre with incentives including reduced business rates.

*Bring empty and derelict buildings back to life and offer people and businesses incentives to live and do business in the centre. You need people living centrally to support initial growth.*

*Improve the market square, make the rents lower to attract independent businesses, have more green space*

*I would look at the empty buildings and see which could be developed into affordable housing. Then see which could be attractive for new business. Take Market Street shop frontage and supplement a common town centre frontage, making it attractive. Remove car parking charges. Reach out to high street stores to encourage them to come/return to Hyde. Look at Denton and Droylsden they are a hype of activity with good shops and eating and drinking nightlife... over the past couple of years these two towns have boomed*

*Clean it up, make some green spaces with places to sit and socialise in summer.*

*I would complete remodel the shopping centre. Make it more visually appealing and enticing and fill the centre with interesting shops that are both popular chain and small businesses to attract all people. Introduce a better market that can facilitate farmers markets and foodie Fridays similar to Stalybridge and Stockport. Improve nightlife options, create a community like the one in Glossop and areas similar.*

*Create spaces for children and young people, encourage restaurateurs to open businesses in empty buildings, invest in small, independent businesses, add more green spaces*

*Invest in the empty historic buildings to create places for culture and events, improve the food, drink and retail offering with independent shops/restaurants in Clarendon square and on the high street. Make Hyde a nice place to go in the evening with bars/restaurants (this would also mean the need for improved lighting and later public transport coming out of the town centre). More people living in the centre would be good, however if new flats/accommodation were built I would want to ensure they are still affordable.*

*Add green spaces and social spots. Improve the market/add stalls. More independent stalls in the mall.*

*I would make the stalls and rent in the mall more affordable, this way you'd have more traders/shops interested. I'd open more stalls to wrap around the mall with space to show case events and have street food vendors. Scrap car parking fees and make use of one of the car parks. That space could be used for something else. I'd give the mall a refurb it looks old and outdated. Outside consider putting more seating and plants to make it look welcoming its very dull and grey at the moment.*

LET'S TALK ABOUT HYDE

Improve all the areas/historical buildings/communal areas within the town centre that have remained derelict/empty for far too long but retaining their historical architecture. Provide incentives to attract/encourage quality, independent traders/shoppers back into the town, thereby making a visit to Hyde a worthwhile, attractive, pleasant experience. Improve/redevelop the barren/concrete spaces into attractive, communal, greenery areas for all to enjoy visiting, working and socialising.

I would start by reducing the price of market pitches to encourage traders into the centre. Once a month have street food stalls to encourage younger people to visit. I would enhance Hyde by keeping our old buildings in good repair and introduce some free parking.

Make more streets traffic-free so that it's more pleasant to walk around. Get rid of all on-street car parking around the town centre. There are already plenty of nearby car-parks. Build cycling infrastructure to help people get to the town centre without needing a car, and to help them get around the town centre safely. Build walking/cycling infrastructure to connect to the canal, the river, and Hyde Park. Don't let beautiful buildings like the old library on Union Street go to ruin. If buildings like that are in use they will attract people to the town centre, but if the town centre is full of derelict buildings people will avoid it. More green space and child-friendly areas are needed in and near the town centre. If walking/cycling infrastructure was built there would be less need for as much car-parking, which would free up land for green space. Don't let any more big-box stores open in the region. It makes it difficult for small shops in the town centre to compete with them.

Ask market traders what would make the stalls attractive to encourage their use, encourage restaurants and independent shops to open, clean the streets, provide benches for residents to sit and public toilets, protect historic buildings, prioritise safety for all, day and night and including women.

Improve marketing and promote the theatre, shopping centre and other historic venues to improve foot fall modern activities such as music events, summer outdoor cinema, family festivals etc.. There are far too many takeaways and not enough restaurants for evening activities. No nice bars available like other locations. It looks run down and scruffy to visitors driving through.

Brighten the place up. Re-establish the market. Pedestrianise more of the centre. Stop people parking in the middle of the town. Encourage more young people to visit.

Improve the shop fronts

Add more greenery. Renovate Hyde library and make it a useful community space. Renovate dilapidated rundown buildings on main streets. Especially market street.

Use the library building, its lovely and its sad to see it unused. Find a way to reroute the main road to bring the Town hall as part of the town centre and use empty retail units as pop ups to encourage better footfall.

Improve the market get a wide range of different types of stalls on different days ( themes), improved seating and greenery/ planting, spruce up buildings and make use of empty buildings

Open the Town hall as a hub for the whole community. Put on events for all ages, mixed and targeted. Ask them for their ideas. Cooking, art & music bring people together and let them have a say so they have a sense of ownership and PLEASE make Union Street library a part of the town again - it's a great building with loads of space to use for living, working, creativity and community life.

Pedestrianise the road in front of the town hall, develop the block of buildings between the Market Place and the bus station to open a thoroughfare for pedestrians. Move the hard standing stalls from in front of the shops to make the units more appealing to businesses and allow for outdoor cafe/ restaurant seating.

Create a 'quarter' for creative, independent artists / artisans, which offers incentives for local start-ups to be based and trade from there. Link this to the market as an outlet for their goods and products. Move traffic flows on Market Street to allow the Town Hall to be fully connected to the Square (maybe use Water Street / Corporation Street and redesign part of Asda Car park as main thoroughfare). Create walking, cycling and jogging trails to access the canal, the rail station, the TPT etc. and to create green corridors that are focused on the market square, to bring people to the town centre. Use brownfield sites to build good quality accessible housing for young professionals that can use public transport or bikes to access Manchester if wanted for employment opportunities, but who will be engaged in the 'quarter'.

If possible, reduce business rates to entice traders and independent business owners to set up shop. Think of strategies to increase footfall such as workshops aimed at all ages. Themed event days such as celebrating cultures and places of the world, heritage of Hyde, games months in the Clarendon perhaps ping-pong table one month, pool table the next, to promote sports, health and wellbeing. As well as try and welcome the younger people, rather than trouble causing and congregating on the market..

LET'S TALK ABOUT HYDE

Lower the rent of shops and other buildings for independent retailers, improve frontage on buildings so they don't look scruffy, temporarily fill the empty shops with local craftspeople until the shops are filled, get more big-name brands in too

Restore the old library, open this and Town Hall up for events, markets, live music etc.. Set higher standards re shop frontages. Set targets / achieve better mix of independent shops, don't enable concentration of cheap food outlets. Establish food and veg / farmers markets. Increase pedestrian areas. Improve the aesthetic.

Make the shops on the high street keep the streets tidier and their shop fronts more attractive, plant more greenery, more outdoor market stalls at a decent rate for independent business to rent, less takeaways.

I'd make sure that there were greenspaces available for all people if possible, I'd look at local businesses and how I could best support them to be part of the town centre, I'd also consider what speciality Hyde can offer from other local centres like Denton for e.g. Hyde has a market place and this could be utilised much better with farmers markets, greengrocers or independent coffee shops and bars like Heaton Moor which has a thriving local centre.

Breathe new life into the outdoor market - make it look alive. Same for the indoor market. Try and get a good supermarket like M&S or Sainsburys into the old Wilkinson. Freshen up the route to Hyde Park. Think about what could be done with the town hall, the old post office, the old HSBC building

The idea of street food on the markets with music would be brilliant just like foodie Friday in Stockport. More popular shops. The old HSBC bank would be an amazing restaurant with live music.

Attract smaller independent retailers, cafés, etc.. Make better use of the old historic buildings Create events that attract the community

Community events, improve the night-time offer, reduce takeaways, encourage, and enforce maintenance of existing buildings

Add more youth spaces

Greenery to the market square, make a communal garden, reinvigorate the market to traders and make it worth their while, pop up markets (Look at Knutsford as an example)

1) Open the market on Saturdays and Sundays all year round. 2) Try and attract more interesting mix of stall holdings for the market e.g., record fairs. 3) Fix up the library building and convert it into a food court for independent food businesses (like what they have done in Altrincham). 4) Offer lower / subsidised rents to encourage independent businesses. 5) Plan an event at least once a month in the town centre in the evenings to encourage people to come out and socialise.

Hold more community events.

The old library is crying out for being used , it could be a arts/ music club for the local youths who have nowhere to go.

Get better links between Hyde's railway stations and the town centre and better parking provision outside the town centre, expanding pedestrianisation in the process

Improve the market square, make this the central focus for the town, improve public realm, introduce more greenery, make it a place that residents and visitors want to sit and hang out in. Programme with high quality events and markets. Utilise the Town Hall for cultural and community uses. Consider traffic calming measures/carrageway surfacing treatments to improve the setting of the Town Hall and enable spill-out on to an improved market square.

Start again; remove the enclosed shopping centre/mall and build a few small streets around an open square in its place. Invest in using the old original buildings near the library and theatre and make that the hub. Don't allow any more supermarkets.

Knock down Clarendon Centre, invest in large public square for high quality markets and events, restore and protect heritage assets, more greenery, fewer takea-ways, shop front improvements, ample free parking, inviting station , safe cycling facilities, be brave, big change needed, this is a crucial opportunity

# Pop-up Shop

On Friday 9th December 2022, working with Tameside Council, the design team hosted a pop-up shop in the former Jack Foultons store in Clarendon Shopping Centre.

Residents and visitors were invited to drop in to tell us about their thoughts on the current town centre and their desires for its future.

Despite the poor weather, between 100-200 people of all ages and backgrounds visited to share their views.

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**\* pop-up shop \* pop-up shop \***

# LET'S TALK ABOUT HYDE!

We are on a fact-finding mission and want to understand what you feel Hyde town centre needs to **make it a better place to live, work, shop, socialise and visit.**

Visit our pop-up shop located at **48-50 Rutherford Way, The Clarendon Square Shopping Centre** to share your thoughts with us.

**\* pop-up shop \* pop-up shop \***







Hyde is a ghost town  
needs to be family orientated  
needs more selection of restaurants + bars.

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
ghost town due to closed poor maintenance + not so much variety. too quiet. gets all the money. what is poor. kids. Arcade youngsters.

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
hall for community events  
access for disabled. ARTISM AWARDS  
variety of shops. - were choice  
shops + spaces to be used. MORE INVITING  
come to a shop + go home. MORE FRIENDLY  
too dark. SOMETHING FOR YOUNGERS!  
EUROPEAN MARKETS. ARE MORE LIVELY. ANTI-SCAM BEHAVIOUR.  
DEAF FRIENDLY.

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
free parking days. - regularly  
events outside of working hours.  
+ public events.

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
mix of independent, local shops, not chains  
leisure in the centre.  
More spaces & places for young people to get together & socialise.

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
ghost town  
go to Trafford  
more online pr...

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
market (outdoor) is poor.  
needs to be family orientated

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
ghost town due to closed poor maintenance + not so much variety. too quiet. gets all the money. what is poor. kids. Arcade youngsters.

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
pop up bars  
food.  
any vacant in town. many shops numbers +

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
free parking days. - regularly  
events outside of working hours.  
+ public events.

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
leisure in the centre.  
More spaces & places for young people to get together & socialise.

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
ghost town  
go to Trafford  
more online pr...

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
market (outdoor) is poor.  
needs to be family orientated

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
ghost town due to closed poor maintenance + not so much variety. too quiet. gets all the money. what is poor. kids. Arcade youngsters.

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ghost town  
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more online pr...

LET'S TAKE HYDE TO THE SKYS

LET'S TAKE HYDE TO THE SKYS

LET'S TAKE HYDE TO THE SKYS

LET'S TAKE HYDE TO THE SKYS

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
Market is a better stalls  
Shops are shutting  
Shit hole.  
less litter

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
better quality and selection of shops

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
shops, independent shops  
no more foot spaces  
leisure places, community

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
Pop up Bar  
Live music  
Bin areas

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
market (outdoor) is poor.  
needs to be family orientated

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
ghost town due to closed poor maintenance + not so much variety. too quiet. gets all the money. what is poor. kids. Arcade youngsters.

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
needs a meeting point.  
A case in the open  
where you can see

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
CHEAPER  
MORE ACTIVITIES/SOCIAL EVENTS  
MORE MARKET STALLS  
OLD LIBRARY COULD BE USED FOR HOMELESS

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
market (outdoor) is poor.  
needs to be family orientated

responsibility for improving Hyde town centre, I would...  
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MORE ACTIVITIES/SOCIAL EVENTS  
MORE MARKET STALLS  
OLD LIBRARY COULD BE USED FOR HOMELESS

LET'S TALK ABOUT HYDE

Something for the youngsters to reduce anti-social behaviour in the town centre.

Too many charity shops  
The market is not "the market" anymore  
More leisure  
Pop up cafés  
Lack of things to do is affecting social behaviour

Nothing for kids to do  
More shops  
Better maintenance  
Give it some wellie and start again  
Too many cheap shops

Cultural events  
Needs to be more welcoming  
Market needs to be good  
Community Hub  
Still keep character  
More independent shops

Cheaper rent for shop owners  
More activities / social events  
More market stalls  
Old library could be used for homeless

Needs more variety  
Too many take-aways  
Outdoor market is poor  
Hyde Park needs to stay open and improve

Park is run down and used to have concerts  
Needs more restaurants and bars  
Ghost town

Market is poor, needs to be more family orientated.

Variety of shops, more choices so people stay to shop.

Rent free periods for struggling shops and to attract new retailers  
Better open space to encourage dwell time  
Cleaner spaces

Ghost town, too many closed shops  
Poor maintenance + not safe  
Needs more variety, too quiet  
Ashton gets all the money  
Indoor market is poor  
Milkbar / arcade for kids

Better quality and selection of shops

Improve market place  
Create leisure spaces  
Needs a community hub  
Shops to attract younger people

Poor relation to Ashton  
More market stalls  
Too many vacant buildings  
More shops open on high street and fresh produce

Needs more features on street  
More maintenance  
Racism from drinkers on Market Street. Asian community avoid this area in evenings  
More shops and places to eat

Denton is on the up, more new restaurants  
Market is failing  
Needs a flea market  
Ashton on a Sunday is busy  
Better when market was bigger and shopping centre didn't exist

LET'S TALK ABOUT HYDE

Needs to be more multicultural  
Needs to improve market

Nothing to visit for; Would rather go to outlets as it's more convenient. It lacks a sense of life, culture and character. The shopping centre has ruined the town and has contribute to its loss of identity.

Want mix of independent and local shops less chains  
More leisure in town centre  
More spaces/places for young people to socialise safely

Children's activities  
Apartments (not social Housing)  
Community Cohesion  
Youth activities  
Music Culture

Shops, independent shops, leisure places, community spaces, markets & no more food spaces.  
" It's all gone downhill, the library is not doing great, and lots have moved to Aston"

Pop up Bars  
Live music  
Bin areas not suitable  
More Accessible Parking

Hyde: Too many vacant unit, charity shops, barbers and nail salons.

Free parking days, regular events outside working hours & public events.

The town centre would benefit from more green spaces, trees and public realm where people can sit and talk.

Needs More going on  
Utilise Market Sq more for events for all ages  
I liked the craft market that used to be on. Needs to be more of this and better advertised

Feels sad, needs life

It needs a meeting point; a café or bar in the open place where you can see people enjoying themselves.

Hyde needs to have more family friendly and youth offer. It would be great to see a dog park in Hyde Park.

Pop up leisure activities (table tennis etc.)  
Old people don't shop online  
Create a community  
Modernise town centre to bring people in

More play areas  
New arcade  
Cinema

More police  
Asians don't feel safe

# Thank you!

E: [info@hemingwaydesign.co.uk](mailto:info@hemingwaydesign.co.uk)

T: 0208 9031 074

Channel	Activity	Target Audience	Timing			
			wk 1	wk 2	wk 3	wk 4
<b>Online</b>						
Live web page www.tameside.gov.uk/hydetowncentre	Information on the consultation documentation with a link to the survey. (This will be updated following the survey close as a general overview and update page)	All	X	X	X	X
Social media messaging and regular updates and monitoring of interaction on corporate channels, including business facing channels on; LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram	Regular messaging circulated and linked to news articles and main page on the website daily.	All	X	X	X	X
MP to publicise	Publicise via social media streams	Tameside Council staff			X	
Leader's Stakeholder Weekly briefing	Information sent to Leaders contacts and stakeholders	Key stakeholders, partners and councillors	X	X	X	X
Chief Executives Weekly Brief	Information and web link	Tameside Council staff	X		X	X
LiveWire - online monthly staff newsletter	Article to encourage staff to complete the survey	Tameside Council staff		X		
<b>Offline</b>						
Press Release	Proactive press release to local, regional and national contacts to announce the launch of the survey	Local, regional and national press and public	X			
Hyde Ward Members	Presentation of draft proposals to group followed by Q & A's session.	Local Ward Members	X			
Hyde Together CIC	Regular attendance and updates at meetings	Representation from wider community		X		
Market Traders Session	Discussion sessions with market traders from indoor and outdoor markets	Market traders				
Town Centre Public Consultation Event	Local event to be held in the town for everyone to view the draft proposals and discuss any issues or ideas local people have.	Local Community			X	
Scrutiny Panel	Presentation of draft proposals to group followed by Q & A's session	Local Members and Senior Council Officers			X	
Creative and Cultural Workshops	Design workshops	Key representatives from the creative and cultural industries.				
Local Schools	Workshops with students in local area	Students and members of staff				X
Youth Council	Engagement session to be offered	Identified stakeholder group			tbc	
Blind and Deaf Team	Engagement session to be offered	Identified stakeholder group			tbc	
Open Space Society	Engagement session to be offered	Identified stakeholder group			tbc	
People First	Engagement session to be offered	Identified stakeholder group			tbc	
Faith Groups	Engagement session to be offered	Identified stakeholder group			tbc	
Emergency services	Continued liaison with key senior locality officers	Identified stakeholder group			tbc	
Stakeholder engagement sessions	Sessions with key stakeholders including the shopping centre owners and land/building owners.	Key stakeholders, partners and councillors	X	X	X	X
Tameside Community Champions	Weekly round up, plus daily WhatsApp group message	Residents and local community	X		X	
Neighbourhood Forums	Attendance and presentation of consultation document at all four Neighbourhood Forums	Tameside Councillors	X	X	X	
All other available shared channels and partner networks including GP surgeries	Continued liaison with key senior officers in the NHS/PCT	All	X	X	X	X

Correspondence to PEN participants	Email correspondence to encourage and highlight survey and participation	All	X		X	
Discover App	Feature across all towns	Residents/visitors and app users	X	X	X	X
Communications Network including social housing providers	Email information with toolkit	All				
Schools, Colleges and Learning Providers Network	Email issues to all secondary school and college providers	All		X		
Tameside Means Business Newsletter subscribers	Email addressed to 2,500 businesses to encourage participation in the survey	Businesses	X		X	
<b>Other External Media and Publications</b>						
Tameside Reporter Manchester Evening News Tameside Correspondent About Tameside Tameside Radio BBC Radio Manchester HITS Radio	Articles and press release as well as member interviews and briefings where requested.	All	X	X	X	X

**Additional channels will be added on an ongoing basis**

Task	Additional Information	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12	Week 13	Week 14	Week 15	Week 16	Week 17	Week 18	Week 19	Week 20	Week 21	Week 22	
		30 01 23	06 02 23	13 02 23	20 02 23	27 02 23	06 03 23	13 03 23	20 03 23	27 03 23	03 04 23	10 04 23	17 04 23	24 04 23	01 05 23	08 05 23	15 05 23	22 05 23	29 05 23	05 06 23	12 06 23	19 06 23	26 06 23	
Issue of masterplan progress including draft Masterplan Framework	Report will contain high level draft proposals only which may need to be refined following testing																							
Development of Masterplan including material for consultation	Development of the framework issued above. Additional info to include Illustrative Masterplan, visualisation, intervention principles etc..																							
Agree Consultation Strategy	Sign off of consultation material, agree drop in and website details																							
Responding to queries	once the next stages have been agreed the team will be on standby																							
Consultation Events	Series of drop ins, workshops, 1-2-1 and web based survey																							
Identify Preferred Options	agree changes to masterpla based on consultation feedback																							
Update Draft Masterplan	incorporate changes and finalise main report																							
Viability and Delivery Strategy	once the interventions has been frozen Steve, Katie & Co will prepare the delivery section																							

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE CABINET</b>
<b>Date:</b>	29 March 2023
<b>Executive Member:</b>	Cllr Jacqueline North; First Deputy (Finance, Resources & Transformation)
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Julian Jackson, Director of Place
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>HATTERSLEY ANNUAL UPDATE REPORT</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	The report provides an update on the Hattersley Regeneration Programme for the period 2022/23.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p>That Executive Cabinet be recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) Note the work undertaken in 2022/23 as part of the Hattersley Regeneration Programme and the proposed next steps.</li><li>(ii) Approve the payments to Onward Homes, Homes England and the Council to reimburse expenditure as set out in table 2 (section 4.2) with a sum of up to £281,000 to finance public realm schemes and a sum of up to £318,000 to finance collaboration agreement expenditure. The expenditure is to be financed via the funding held in the Council reserve for the Hattersley Land Board, the balance of which is included in table 2 and was £4,708,395 at 1 April 2022.</li><li>(iii) Approve that future payments to partners in respect of the Hattersley Regeneration Programme be undertaken at a minimum of every six months (usually September and March), subject to approval either via Cabinet through the Annual Update Report or a separate Executive Member Decision Notice.</li></ul>
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	Key aims of the Corporate Plan are to provide opportunities for people to fulfil their potential through work, skills and enterprise and to ensure modern infrastructure and a sustainable environment that works for all generations and future generations. The Hattersley Regeneration Programme is delivering against these aims in the areas of job creation, modern infrastructure and a sustainable environment.
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	The Hattersley Regeneration Programme supports the policy aims of the Council's Inclusive Growth Strategy 2021, Tameside Climate Change & Environment Strategy, the Council's growth priorities agreed at Council February 2020 and the draft Greater Manchester Places for Everyone joint development strategy.
<b>Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer)</b>	<p>The report provides an update of the regeneration programme in Hattersley for the current financial year.</p> <p>The programme is supported via funding held in a Council reserve (as accountable body) for the Land Board, the balance of which is reported within the Council's annual Statement of Accounts.</p>

The balance at 1 April 2022 was £4,708,395. £3,745,000 of the balance is allocated to public realm related works and £963,395 is allocated to expenditure relating to the collaboration agreement.

Table 1 (section 4.1) provides a summary of the funding held within the reserve for the 2021/22 financial year. It should be noted that there was no expenditure financed via the reserve in that financial year.

Table 2 (section 4.2) provides a summary of the proposed expenditure that will be financed via the reserve in the current financial year (2022/23) as per recommendation 2. A sum of up to £281,000 to finance public realm schemes and a sum of up to £318,000 to finance collaboration agreement expenditure.

Any further expenditure that is proposed to be financed via the reserve will be subject to Member approval in subsequent annual reports or Executive Member Decision.

As accountable body, it is essential that Members have assurance that value for money can be clearly evidenced for all expenditure that is proposed to be financed via the reserve.

**Legal Implications:  
(Authorised by the Borough  
Solicitor)**

As set out in the main body of the report the council is the accountable body under the collaboration agreement for the public realm works.


It is therefore incumbent on Members to oversee the progress of works at Hattersley not only for the benefit of the residents of the area but also to ensure that the council is fulfilling its fiduciary duty as the accountable body for the use of the funding in order to ensure best value and good outcomes.

**Risk Management:**


The approach to risk management is set out at Section 4.

**Background Information:**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the Report Writers, Mike Reed and Carol Bryant

 Telephone: 07974111756

 E-mail: [mike.reed@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:mike.reed@tameside.gov.uk)

 Telephone: 0161 342 2716

 E-mail: [carol.bryant@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:carol.bryant@tameside.gov.uk)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The regeneration of Hattersley started in 2006 when housing stock transferred from Manchester City Council to Peak Valley Housing Association. At the time, the population of Hattersley had declined to 6,600 from 15,000 and the estate was suffering from a serious lack of investment. There have been considerable developments in the area since then, including:
- Onward Homes (formally Peak Valley Housing Association) has demolished 900 homes, refurbished 1,475 homes and built 155 new properties.
  - Barratts will have built a total of 692 homes through the Development Agreement by the summer of 2023.
  - Hattersley Road West has been re-aligned to pass adjacent to the train station and the station car park improved. On average, this and the new build properties have led to an increase in rail passenger numbers (notwithstanding a drop in figures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic).
- 1.2 In 2006, the Hattersley public sector partners entered into a Collaboration Agreement and subsequently a Development Agreement with BASE Hattersley LLP (Barratt Homes) in March 2007 for private sector residential development. The public sector partners are now Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council (the Council), Onward and Homes England following various name changes since the original agreements were signed.
- 1.3 The Collaboration Agreement governs the financial and land input required to facilitate the Hattersley Regeneration Programme and is overseen by the Collaboration Board (known colloquially as the Hattersley Land Board). The Development Agreement provides Barratt Homes with a licence to build on the land and sell the properties. The freehold remains with the landowner. The Development Agreement and associated Deed of Variation set out provisions for a programme of public realm works to be delivered estate wide on a phased basis, as sites are drawn down.
- 1.4 Work started on the land allocated to Barratt Homes in April 2010. Since then, Barratt Homes have been completing a major regeneration programme as part of its new Hattersley community, creating a new neighbourhood of 692 homes. These Hattersley developments have taken place in partnership with the Council, Onward Homes and Homes England, with the aim to improve and enhance the local area.
- 1.5 Since development of the first property under the programme was completed in 2011, Barratt Homes have now legally exchanged on all 692 properties across its Hattersley developments. As part of the Hattersley Regeneration Programme, Barratt Homes have delivered sustainable, high quality homes and have generated 156 jobs per year, providing £9 million total economic output each year during the build, 735 economically active and employed residents into the new homes, and £8.2 million annual household spend on household goods and leisure. Barratt Homes have also provided the funding to support a programme of public realm works; these will include improvements to the streets and landscaping, enhancing pedestrian and cycle provision, improving parking and the creation of recreation areas.
- 1.6 The relationship of Homes England with Hattersley dates back nearly 20 years, in which time they have worked closely with key stakeholders and development partners to provide funding and land, to help create almost 700 homes and contribute towards the transformation of the area. The Council's collaborative working approach with Homes England, and development agreements and strategic partnership with Onward Homes, has allowed Homes England to provide support and expertise over a long period of time, to ensure new affordable homes are supported by robust infrastructure and essential services for local people. The involvement of Homes England with the project continues, and their partnership with the Council, Onward and Barratt Homes will support continued delivery of the Hattersley Regeneration Programme.

1.7 This report provides an update on delivery progress in 2022/23.

## **2. PROGRESS IN 2022/2023**

### ***Public Realm***

2.1 Through the Development Agreement Barratt Homes have contributed £4,000,000 into a fund that will enable Onward and the Council to provide public realm infrastructure, such as playgrounds, improvements to natural spaces and improved parking facilities, within Hattersley. A Masterplan was prepared by Planit-ie with a public consultation subsequently held between June and July 2018 to inform residents of the proposed work, gather feedback on individual project themes and to influence the focus of the investment.

2.2 Onward have contracted with Playdale to construct four play areas. Two of these take the form of traditional playgrounds and have been completed; one at Fields Farm Road and the other at Underwood Road. The other two include equipment of a more rural feel, an Adventure Trail and a Trim Trail, and are to be located opposite Porlock Avenue leading down towards Waterside Clough. Both these schemes are currently being worked up to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

2.3 A Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) was located within the Hattersley Central development site and will have to be relocated. The new MUGA will be located off Ashworth Lane opposite the Tesco petrol station and at the rear of the proposed phase two district centre scheme.

2.4 Waterside Clough is recognised as a resource with untapped environmental and recreational potential in the centre of Hattersley. Onward are currently working with a range of specialists to enhance the woodland and open access into Waterside Clough with a variety of paths, other surfaces and interactive features to deliver a recreational space whilst preserving and improving wildlife habitats.

### ***Hattersley Station Ticket Office***

2.5 The Council secured funding from Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) to significantly improve the Hattersley Station Ticket Office in conjunction with Northern Trains. The new ticket office was opened in February 2023. Previously, the experience for passengers using the station was the poor, due to the uninviting nature of the building, as well as the lack of safe waiting facilities in the previous ticket office. This project has refurbished and enlarged the existing ticket office structure with a lightweight extension, providing a much improved experience for visitors along with additional seating and a waiting area.

2.6 Passenger numbers at the station had been increasing approximately 25% year on year until the impact of COVID-19. This passenger growth was linked to the realignment of Hattersley Road West and the delivery of new homes within Hattersley in recent years. The reconstruction of the ticket office will provide a facility for the long-term and account for further increases in passenger numbers and the impact of future residential developments in Hattersley.

### ***Housing Development***

2.7 The Hattersley Central Development is split across three sites and will complete the regeneration of the former central parade site and represents one of the final parts of the Hattersley Masterplan. The project will deliver 161 homes, including 91 homes as part of an Extra Care Scheme, 55 homes for affordable rent and 15 homes for shared ownership. The scheme has a total cost of £31,547,290, including funding secured from Homes England of £11,358,000 and the GMCA Brownfield Homes Fund of £3,220,000. Onward have contracted Rowlinson Construction to deliver the scheme which started on site in January 2022 and will be fully complete by mid-2024.

- 2.8 The Harehill Development is located on vacant land between Hare Hill Road and Porlock Avenue and will deliver 27 homes for Affordable Rent comprising a mix of two and three bedrooms. Progress to date includes completion of the access road to base coarse and works to properties ranging from foundation stage to roof installation. The development includes upgrades to an existing bridleway that will eventually form part of the realignment of Route 62 of the National Cycle Network. The scheme has been funded through Onward's strategic partnership with Homes England.

#### ***RSK Science Park***

- 2.9 The RSK Group is in the process of providing new state-of-the-art laboratories to be used by laboratory company Envirolab within the former Centrica Building, as they have outgrown their current premises at Sandpitts Industrial Estate in Hattersley. MWH Treatment, part of the RSK Group, have now moved into part of the former Centrica building, accommodating engineering and scientific staff. The former Centrica Building together with the land purchased from the Council by the RSK Group will form the RSK Science Park and accommodate their future growth ambitions. The company anticipates it will develop the site into a multi-disciplinary hub, with several RSK Group businesses present and provide a focus on sustainable development, in particular renewable energy.

#### ***Work and Skills coach***

- 2.10 The support offered by the Hattersley Work and Skills Coach has evolved to incorporate more use of social media to conduct conversations, one-to-one appointments and advertise training. The Work and Skills Coach has published several how-to videos, covering several areas of employability. The current contract started in October 2021 and is for a period of three years ending in September 2024. This project is currently funded via the Collaboration Agreement, providing a total of £85,377 with Onward taking on the employer responsibilities. Since the start of this contract to date (February 2023) 17 individuals have been helped into employment, 100 into training, 51 helped into work experience/volunteering and 361 helped into the first steps of employability; this work has generated 20 cases studies. The Work and Skills Coach also engages with employers or providers and, to date, 17 such engagements have been achieved.

### **3. PRIORITIES FOR 2023/24**

#### ***Governance***

- 3.1 To provide clarity as to decisions set within the context of the Hattersley Land Board there will be regular reporting to the Council's Executive Board and Executive Cabinet. These reports will include updates on annual performance of the delivery of the Hattersley Regeneration Programme, together with approval of payments, as required, in relation to the funding held in a Council reserve for the Land Board where the Council acts as the accountable body.

#### ***Public Realm Delivery***

- 3.2 Delivery of an Adventure Trail and a Trim Trail will be progressed by Onward in 23/24.
- 3.3 The largest two public realm schemes for delivery in 23/24 are Waterside Clough and the relocation of the MUGA, together with associated play and multi-user paths. Onward are in the process of procuring a Project Manager for these two schemes.
- 3.4 Onward have appointed specialist services and land surveyors to carry out survey work and progress the Waterside Clough project, whilst a Project Manager is being appointed; construction is anticipated to start in 23/24.
- 3.5 Public consultation to date has identified recreational facilities as the top priority for the residents of Hattersley. To ensure there are sufficient funds for Waterside Clough and the relocation of the MUGA, the other schemes mentioned in paragraphs 3.7 and 3.8 are currently

on hold; once costs become finalised then these will remaining schemes will be progressed accordingly.

3.6 It is recognised that gateways into Hattersley are important to help create the right environment for continued investment in the area. Improvements to the entrance to Hattersley from Mottram Road onto Hattersley Road West are therefore being planned. The walls at this location are in need of repair or removal if appropriate and the surrounding area will be improved with additional planting.

3.7 Car parking in and around Hattersley remains a key priority for residents. Work has been previously carried out to look at parking bays on Fields Farm Road but this now needs to be reviewed. Further improvements to the parking courts will be carried out by Onward with a need to review the impacts of this on the overall parking capacity within Hattersley.

### ***Housing Development***

3.8 Delivery of the Hattersley Central Development will continue and is anticipated to complete in 2024. Delivery of the Harehill Development and will continue with completion anticipated by autumn 2023.

3.9 Barratts will have completed all their housing schemes by the summer of 2023.

### ***District Centre Phase 2***

3.10 In April 2017 Onward Homes completed the negotiations on a Development Agreement with Maple Grove and Eric Wright Group Ltd for the redevelopment of approximately 8.5 acres of land located off Ashworth Lane and Stockport Road for new retail units anchored by a discount food store forming the phase 2 district centre scheme. Over the last few years the retail property market has changed significantly alongside a considerable increase in build cost inflation which has negatively impacted the viability of new development. The original phase 2 district centre scheme is no longer deliverable and Onward are considering options for an appropriate and financially viable alternative. There remain significant obstacles to the viability of the site, not least the abnormal costs associated with ground conditions. Over the next year Onward will seek to identify the best outcome for the delivery of the phase 2 district centre for Hattersley. All parties are committed to finding the best solution possible to progress the scheme.

## **4. FUNDING**

4.1 Table 1 provides summary details of the balance of funding held in the Council reserve as accountable body at 31 March 2022. The balance is allocated between the funding that supports public realm schemes and the Collaboration Agreement. It should be noted there was no expenditure in 2021/22 via the funding held in the reserve.

**Table 1**  
**2021/22**

Narrative	Public Realm		Collaboration Agreement		Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Balance At 1 April 2021</b>		<b>2,740</b>		<b>961</b>	<b>3,701</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Barratt's Final Instalment	1,000				
Interest	5		2		
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>1,005</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>1,007</b>

<b>Balance At 31 March 2022</b>		<b>3,745</b>		<b>963</b>	<b>4,708</b>
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- 4.2 Table 2 provides summary details of the forecast balance of funding that will be held in the Council reserve as accountable body at 31 March 2023. The table also includes details of the proposed expenditure to be financed via the reserve allocated between public realm schemes and the Collaboration Agreement.

**Table 2**  
**2022/23**

Narrative	Public Realm		Collaboration Agreement		Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Balance At 1 April 2022</b>		<b>3,745</b>		<b>963</b>	<b>4,708</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Onward Project : Playgrounds - Fields Farm Road, Underwood Road, Porlock Avenue, Lynton Avenue	(262)				
Onward Project : MUGA – Drainage Design Work	(2)				
Onward Project : Pathways / Clearance - Waterside Clough	(17)				
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>(281)</b>			<b>(281)</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Onward - Site 27			(234)		
Onward - Work and Skills Coach – 1 October 2021 To 31 March 2023			(42)		
Council and Onward - VAT Advice			(4)		
Hattersley Railway Station - Maximum Contribution - Subject To Final Cost Review			(30)		
Homes England - Overage Audit Fee - Barratt's Development Agreement			(8)		
<b>Sub Total</b>				<b>(318)</b>	<b>(318)</b>
<b>Forecast Balance At 31 March 2023</b>		<b>3,464</b>		<b>645</b>	<b>4,109</b>

**Public Realm**

- 4.3 The sum of £262,000 relates to the procurement of Playdale by Onward to design, obtain planning permission and build four play areas. This figure is for the two playgrounds that are now complete on Fields Farm Road and Underwood Road and costs associated with the

Adventure Trail and Trim Trail that will be located opposite Porlock Avenue leading down to Waterside Clough.

- 4.4 The sum of £2,000 was for drainage design work for the previous location of the relocated MUGA at Torrington Drive which proved to be unviable.
- 4.5 The sum of £17,000 is for work that has commenced at Waterside Clough including the appointment of CASS Architects and survey works. Due to the nature of this scheme activities can only take place at certain times of the year; if these opportunities are missed then delivery of the scheme will experience delay.

**Collaboration Agreement**

- 4.6 The sum of £234,000 relates to a claim from Onward for the phase 2 district centre scheme also sometimes referred to as Site 27. This is the last site to be developed within the Collaboration Agreement and as such costs associated with bringing this site forward are able to be claimed from the Collaboration Agreement monies. This claim is for consultancy, legal and professional fees related to the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) for 21 Shelmerdine Way, together with legal and professional fees for the whole of the site, demolition of three properties following the confirmation of the CPO and the diversion of gas services.
- 4.7 The sum of £42,000 relates to the funds required for the Work and Skills Coach for the period 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2023. Hattersley Land Board agreed to fund this cost and Onward have agreed to undertake the employer responsibilities.
- 4.8 The sum of £4,000 is for specialist consultancy advice in respect of VAT relating to both the Collaboration Agreement funds and those in the Public Realm Agreement.
- 4.9 The sum of £30,000 represents a maximum contribution towards the delivery of the Hattersley Ticket Office. The exact figure is not yet known as the final accounts are still be completed by Northern and Network Rail.
- 4.10 The sum of £8,000 relates to the Overage Audit work that is required to be undertaken on the Barratt Homes schemes, as required by the Development Agreement. Homes England procured and appointed Savills via their procurement framework as an independent body to carry out this work.

**5. RISK**

- 5.1 There are a number of high-level risks associated with the Hattersley Regeneration Programme:

Risk Area	Detail	RAG Rating	Mitigation	RAG Rating
<b>Financial</b>	There is insufficient funding available to deliver the full scope of public realm works set out in previous master planning.		Further work with partner will identify what can be delivered within the available budget envelope and seek to ensure value for money.	
<b>Programme</b>	Lack of resource capacity to undertake work streams in line with expectations.		An experienced team across the partner organisations will ensure that programme timescales and key milestones are met. Internal resource has been identified to meet	



			expectations.	
<b>Programme</b>	The physical regeneration works do not address underlying deprivation and worklessness.		The Hattersley Works and Skills Coach will continue to offer targeted employment support.	

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 As set out at the front of the report.

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# Agenda Item 12

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE CABINET</b>
<b>Date:</b>	29 March 2023
<b>Executive Member:</b>	Councillor Jan Jackson, Executive Member for Planning, Transport & Connectivity
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Emma Varman, Assistant Director of Operations & Neighbourhoods
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND 2 – FULL SCHEME DELIVERY APPROVAL</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	<p>Subject to approval of the Active Travel Fund 2 (ATF2) Delivery Plan this report seeks approval to enter into the relevant ATF2 funding agreement between the Council and TfGM in order to secure and allow draw down of active travel grant funding to support delivery of the four prioritised ATF2 schemes located at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Oldham Road (Ashton-under-Lyne)</li><li>• Newman Street (Ashton-under-Lyne)</li><li>• Stockport Road (Ashton-under-Lyne)</li><li>• Guide Lane (Audenshaw)</li></ul>
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p>That Executive Cabinet be recommended to agree that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) The four Active Travel Fund 2 (ATF2) schemes detailed in the report are approved after having given careful consideration to the outcome of public consultation, which was undertaken between the 5 September 2022 and 14 October 2022.</li><li>(ii) Subject to Transport for Greater Manchester's (TfGM) approval of the Council's ATF2 Delivery Plan, authorise entering into the relevant funding agreement to secure the allocated ATF2 grant funding to add to the Council's capital programme.</li><li>(iii) Subject to approval and satisfactory completion of statutory processes, authorise the construction of the four ATF2 schemes located at:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Oldham Road (Ashton-under-Lyne)</li><li>• Newman Street (Ashton-under-Lyne)</li><li>• Stockport Road (Ashton-under-Lyne)</li><li>• Guide Lane (Audenshaw).</li></ul></li></ol>
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	The schemes set out in this report support all eight objectives of the Corporate Plan, with a particular focus on 'Infrastructure and Environment', 'Nurturing Communities' and 'Longer and Healthier Lives'.
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	In line with existing policy

**Financial Implications:**  
**(Authorised by the statutory  
Section 151 Officer)**

The current cost estimates for the schemes outlined in this report exceed the grant allocation by £61,000. If these estimates cannot be reduced, a prioritisation exercise will take place to ensure that work only starts on the delivery of schemes that are affordable within the allocated grant funding package.

It should be noted that there is currently no requirement for match funding to be made available for these schemes from existing Council budgets.

Monthly update reports will be provided to TfGM in accordance with the grant conditions. These updates outline key milestones and expenditure summaries. In addition to this, grant claims will be submitted on a quarterly basis. Scheme progress and associated expenditure will be monitored closely via the Councils Capital Monitoring process to ensure that key milestones are being met and that expenditure remains within the allocated funding envelope.

**Legal Implications:**  
**(Authorised by the Borough  
Solicitor)**

As set out in the main body of the report, consultation has been undertaken on the schemes.

The feedback from the consultation has been given careful consideration by the service when preparing the details of the four schemes.

The feedback from the consultation is also set out in the main body of the report so that Members can review and consider the same as part of this decision making process.

If the schemes are approved then the council will be required to enter into a funding agreement. Advice will be provided by legal services as the terms of that agreement.

**Risk Management:**

As set out in Section 6 of this report.

**Background Information:**

<b>Appendix 1</b>	TMBC Active Travel Tranche 2 Oldham Road / Newman Street Consultation Plan.
<b>Appendix 2</b>	TMBC Active Travel Tranche 2 Stockport Road, Ashton Consultation Plan.
<b>Appendix 3</b>	TMBC Active Travel Tranche 2 Guide Lane, Audenshaw Consultation Plan.

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Lee Holland – Head of Environmental Services.



Telephone: 0161 342 3978



e-mail: [lee.holland@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:lee.holland@tameside.gov.uk)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On the 29 January 2021, the Council secured £985,000 of grant funding, in principle, from the Active Travel Fund 2 (ATF2) programme. The majority of the funds are subject to the submission and approval of a successful Delivery Plan.
- 1.2 The objectives of the ATF2 programme are to help create an environment that is safe and attractive for both walking and cycling to replace journeys previously made by car and public transport. Longer term the plans will also help to deliver significant health, environment and congestion benefits by contributing to the development and roll out of the Greater Manchester Bee Network.
- 1.3 A report providing details of the Council's Active Travel Fund prioritisation programme was approved by the Council's Executive Cabinet in July 2022. Since this time the four prioritised ATF2 schemes have been progressed through the design and development process in consultation with TfGM. The schemes are located at:
- i. Oldham Road (Ashton-under-Lyne)
  - ii. Newman Street (Ashton-under-Lyne)
  - iii. Stockport Road (Ashton-under-Lyne)
  - iv. Guide Lane (Audenshaw).
- 1.4 This report seeks approval to enter into the relevant funding agreement with TfGM to secure grant funding required to support delivery of the four schemes listed above.

## 2. SCHEME DETAILS

### **Oldham Road and Newman Street, Ashton-under-Lyne (See drawing in Appendix 1)**

- 2.1 These two schemes will introduce improved and segregated facilities for cyclists on Oldham Road – between Dean Street and Burlington Street and improved and segregated facilities for pedestrians and cyclists on Newman Street – between Oldham Road and Cavendish Street.

### **Stockport Road, Ashton-under-Lyne (See drawing in Appendix 2)**

- 2.2 This scheme will introduce segregated facilities for cyclists on Stockport Road, Ashton, between Hamilton Street and Guide Lane. The scheme includes treatments at bus stops, to allow cyclists to pass behind a bus platform, the replacement of existing, two-stage, pedestrian crossings, to enable people to cross in a single stage and treatments at some side roads to improve cycle and pedestrian priority.

### **Guide Lane, Audenshaw (See drawing in Appendix 3)**

- 2.3 This scheme will introduce segregated facilities for cyclists on Guide Lane, Audenshaw, between Scott Gate and the junction with Stamford Road / Shepley Road. The scheme includes treatments at bus stops, to allow cyclists to pass behind a bus platform and treatments at some side roads to improve cycle and pedestrian priority. The scheme also proposes to change the priorities at the junction of Enville Street and Poplar Street, and to modify the approach to the junction with the B6169 Shepley Road to make this safer for all traffic.

## 3. PROGRESS UPDATE

### **Consultation**

- 3.1 A detailed consultation and engagement plan was produced for each scheme and public consultation took place between the 5 September 2022 and 14 October 2022. Ward councillors were briefed and involved in the launch of the public consultation programme.

- 3.2 In total, 65 responses were received for the four schemes of which 47% of the responses expressed positive feedback, 28% indicated no preference and 25% of the responses expressed some level of concern with the proposals.
- 3.3 Generally, the positive feedback focused on support for segregation between cyclists and general traffic and the associated safety benefits. The negative feedback was a mix of concerns relating to the impact on pedestrian space or safety, a perceived lack of cycle demand, and the potential impact on traffic, including parking and / or loading.
- 3.4 All of the consultation feedback was analysed and a detailed outcome report produced. Whilst no fundamental design changes are required a number of actions have been progressed to ensure that the scheme designs reflect the requirements of all users.

#### **Design Process**

- 3.5 The final scheme designs have been reviewed and approved by TfGM's Design Review Panel.
- 3.6 Standard scheme procedures and statutory processes are being followed, including advertisement of traffic orders and completion of road safety audits.

### **4. ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND DELIVERY PLAN**

- 4.1 It is anticipated that the Active Travel Programme Board will review the Delivery Plan in March 2023. Subject to approval, the intention would be to start work in the first quarter of 2023/2024. A detailed construction programme is currently being developed.

### **5. FUNDING PACKAGE**

- 5.1 The Council has been allocated, in principle, £985,000 from TfGM's Active Travel 2 programme. This funding must be spent by March 2024.
- 5.2 At the end of December 2022, £157,300 had been claimed to support the scheme development process.
- 5.3 The scheme development process included feasibility studies on a further five schemes as set out in the Executive Cabinet report dated 27 July 2022. This work will help to support the development of the Council's pipeline of walking and cycling infrastructure schemes to maximise future funding opportunities.
- 5.4 The cost estimate for the four priority ATF2 schemes, referred to in Section 2 of this report, is currently £61,000 in excess of the available budget. The estimate includes all of the planned works costs as well as allowances for Inflation, for the new financial year, the remaining Design and Development tasks and a Risk allowance.
- 5.5 Work is ongoing to identify value engineering opportunities and discussions are on-going with TfGM to understand if additional ATF2 funding can be made available.
- 5.6 There is currently no requirement for match funding for these schemes from existing Council budgets. If the costs cannot be met from the allocated ATF2 funding envelope, a phasing plan will be introduced to ensure that work only starts on the delivery of schemes that are affordable within the allocated grant funding package.

## **6. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 6.1 Subject to approval, funding agreements will be issued by TfGM setting out the terms and conditions. Colleagues in legal will be asked to review the draft funding agreement prior to accepting the grant offer to ensure that all terms and conditions can be met.
- 6.2 A quantitative scheme risk register will be maintained by the Council's Project team and an appropriate risk allowance has been included in the estimated scheme costs.
- 6.3 Key risks are discussed and reported to TfGM on a monthly basis to ensure that appropriate mitigation actions are identified and implemented.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

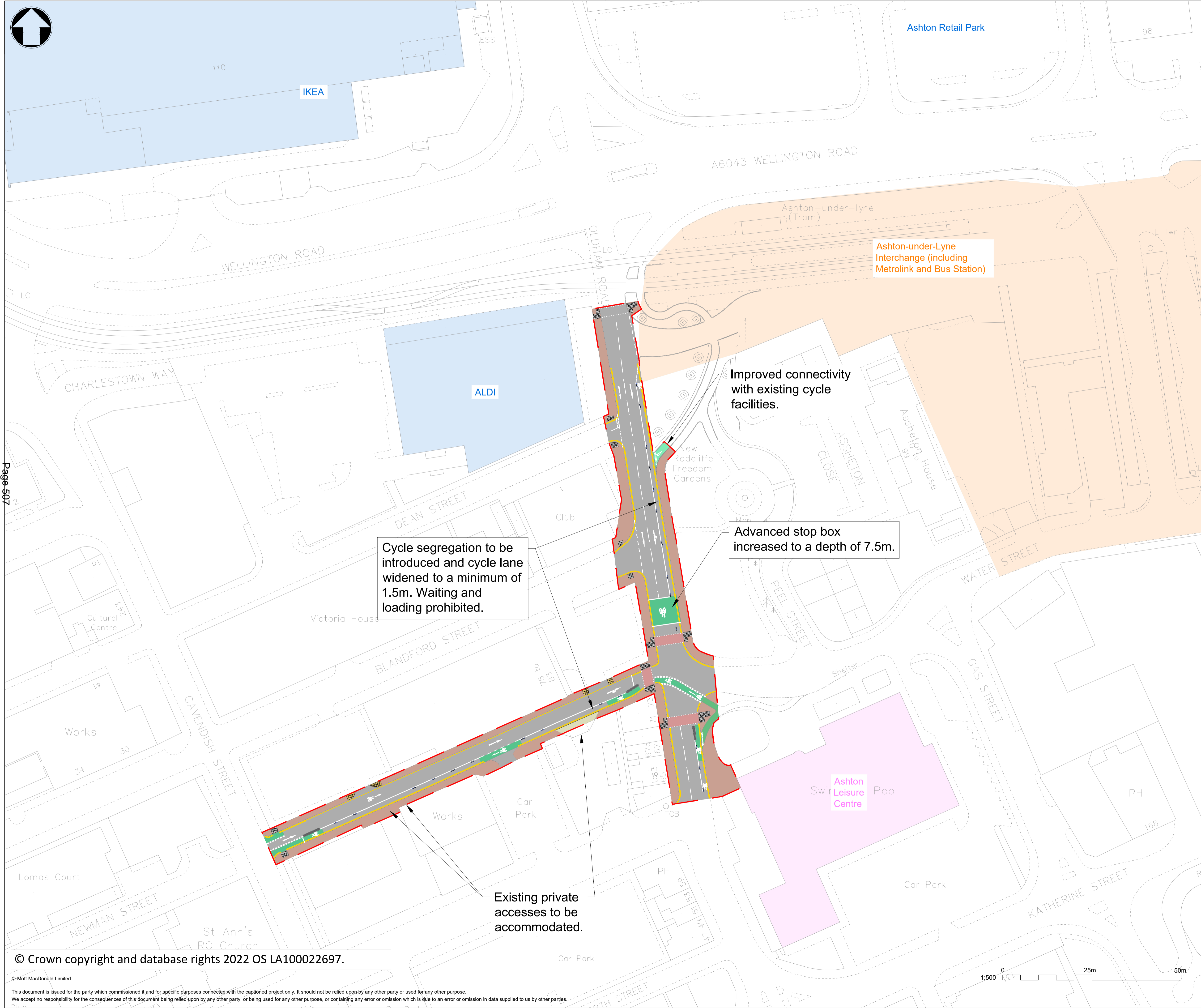
- 7.1 The ambitious ATF programme, and the high-quality design standards being applied across the Bee Network should help to increase the number of people choosing active travel modes. This is a key priority for the Council as it will support the delivery of environmental, economic and societal benefits.
- 7.2 Current cost estimates exceed the allocated ATF2 budget. Construction works will only start on all four ATF2 schemes if they are affordable within the approved grant funding envelope. There is currently no requirement to provide match funding from existing Council budgets.
- 7.3 Standard scheme procedures and statutory processes are being followed, including advertising of traffic orders, road safety audits and consultation with residents and key stakeholders.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

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**Notes**

- Design shown is based on Ordnance Survey mapping tiles.
- Cycle signs to be included in final design.
- Cycle lanes to be physically segregated from traffic lanes with segregation units.
- The proposed mandatory cycle lane markings will prohibit driving in the cycle lane, and light segregation will further limit physical access. It is therefore proposed to prohibit waiting and loading, at all times.

**Key to symbols**

- Site boundary
- Existing carriageway
- Existing footway
- Proposed footway
- Proposed green anti-skid cycle lane markings
- Proposed buff coloured tactile paving (uncontrolled)
- Existing tactile paving (controlled/uncontrolled) to remain in place
- Existing island to be retained
- Segregation unit (see drawing HS6051-058-GN-DR-0101 for further details)

**Reference drawings**

HS6051-058-GN-DR-0101 Infrastructure Examples

Rev	Date	Drawn	Description	Ch'k'd	App'd
P01	15/10/21	CO	First Issue	KR	MB
P02	09/11/21	CO	Second issue following TMBC comments	SH	MB
P03	11/11/21	CO	Third issue following further TMBC comments	SH	MB
P04	07/01/22	JK	Consultation Issue	KR	MB
P05	26/05/22	CO	Consultation Issue	SH	KR
P06	06/06/22	CO	Note added for Consultation Issue	SH	MB
P07	25/08/22	CO	Consultation Issue following TMBC comment	KR	MB

**Status Stamp**

**For Information**

**M MOTT MACDONALD**

Fourth floor  
9 Portland Place  
Manchester  
United Kingdom

T +44 (0)161 638 0885  
F  
W www.mottmac.com

Client

**Tameside Metropolitan Borough**

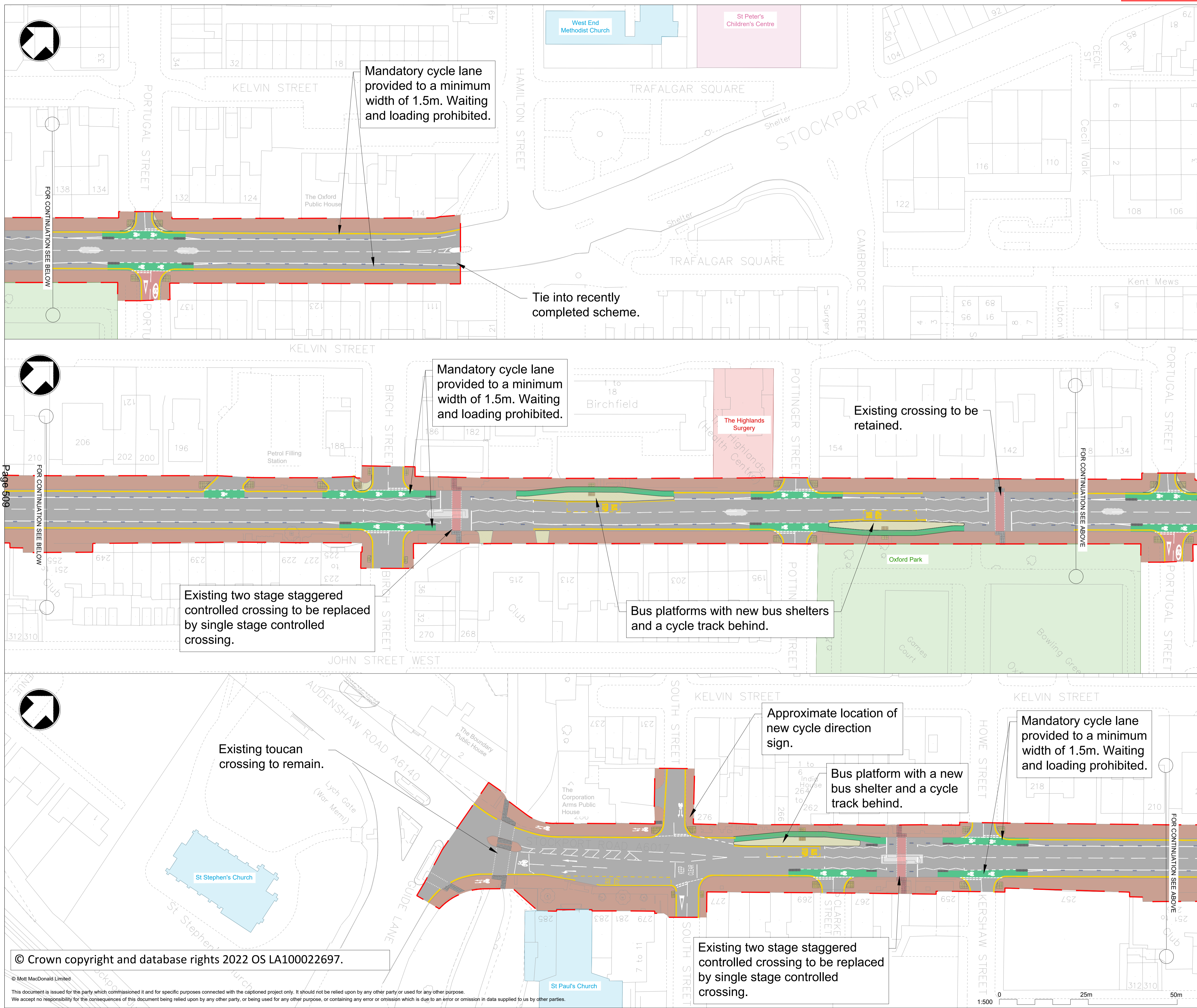
Title

TMBC Active Travel Tranche 2  
Oldham Road / Newman Street  
Consultation Plan

Sheet 1 of 1

Designed	C OSBORNE	CO	Eng check	K.RADBAND	KR
Drawn	C.OSBORNE	CO	Coordination	K.RADBAND	KR
Dwg check	K.RADBAND	KR	Approved	M.BASTING	MB
MMD Project Number	103004	Scale at A1	1:500	Security	STD
Suitability Description	Suitable for Information				Suit. Code
Drawing Number	103004-MMD-11-XX-DR-C-0002				Revision
					P07

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- Notes
1. Design shown is based on Ordnance Survey mapping tiles.
  2. Cycle signs to be included in final design.
  3. Cycle lanes to be physically segregated from traffic lanes with segregation units.
  4. Existing bus shelters will either be retained or replaced.
  5. The proposed mandatory cycle lanes will prohibit driving in the cycle lane, and light segregation will further limit physical access. It is therefore proposed to prohibit waiting and loading, at all times.

Key to symbols

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- Existing footway
- Proposed carriageway
- Proposed footway
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- Proposed buff coloured tactile paving (uncontrolled)
- Red coloured tactile paving (controlled)
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- Segregation unit (see drawing HS6051-058-GN-DR-0101 for further details)

Reference drawings  
HS6051-058-GN-DR-0101 Infrastructure Examples

Rev	Date	Drawn	Description	Ch'k'd	App'd
P01	07/01/22	JK	Consultation Issue	KR	MB
P02	26/05/22	CO	Consultation Issue	SH	KR
P03	06/06/22	CO	Note added for Consultation Issue	SH	MB
P04	25/08/22	CO	Consultation Issue following TMBC comment	KR	MB

Status Stamp

**For Information**

**MOTT MACDONALD**

Fourth floor  
9 Portland Place  
Manchester  
United Kingdom

T +44 (0)161 638 0885  
F  
W www.mottmac.com

Client

**Tameside Metropolitan Borough**

Title  
TMBC Active Travel Tranche 2  
Stockport Road, Ashton  
Consultation Plan

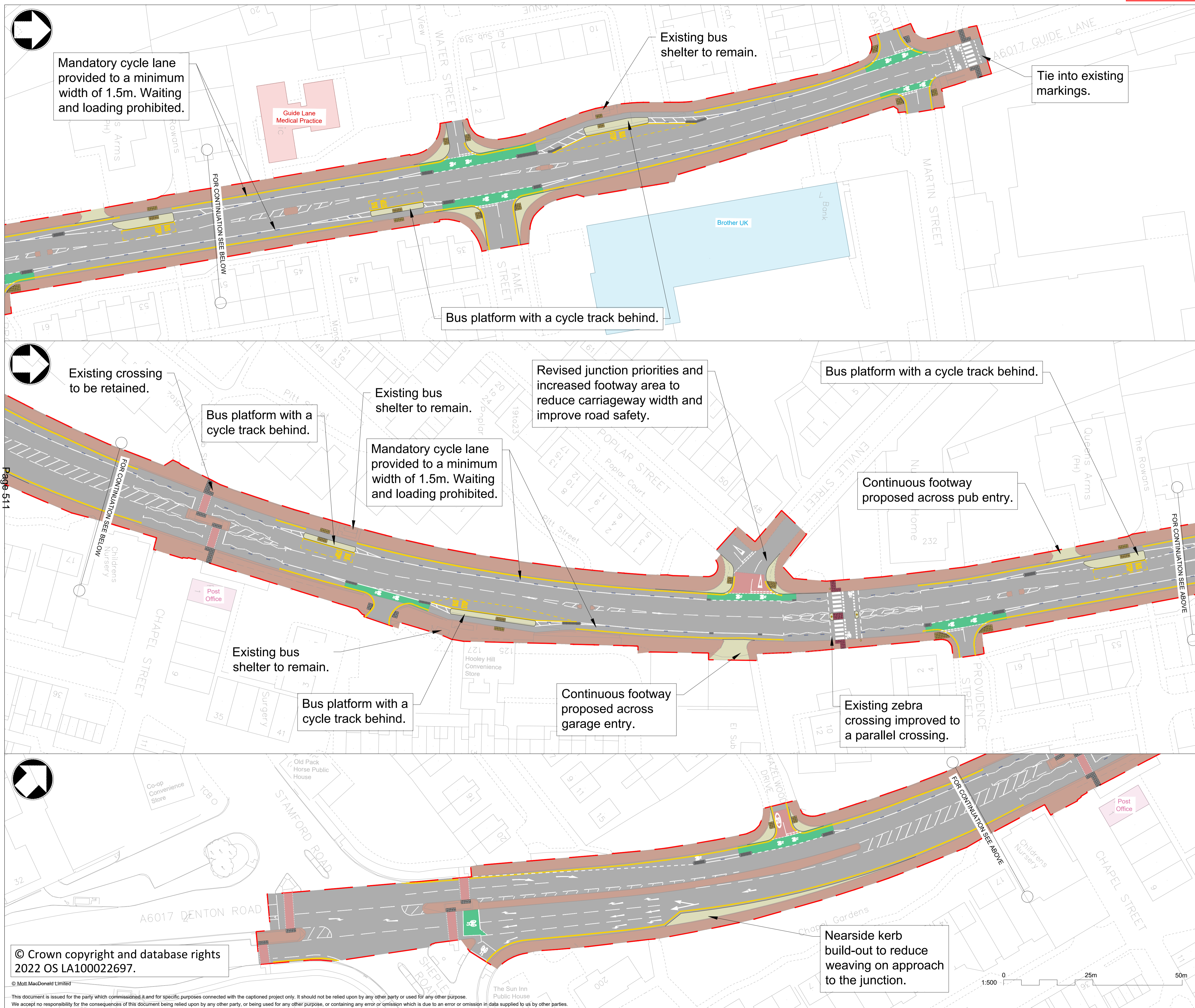
Sheet 1 of 1

Designed	C.OSBORNE	CO	Eng check	K.RADBAND	KR
Drawn	C.OSBORNE	CO	Coordination	K.RADBAND	KR
Dwg check	K.RADBAND	KR	Approved	M.BASTING	MB
MMD Project Number	100103	Scale at A1	1:500	Security	STD
Suitability Description	Suitable for Information			Suit. Code	S2
Drawing Number	103004-MMD-15-XX-DR-C-0003			Revision	P04

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Reference drawings

HS6051-058-GN-DR-0101 Infrastructure Examples

Rev	Date	Drawn	Description	Ch'k'd	App'd
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P02	26/05/22	CO	Consultation Issue	SH	KR
P03	06/06/22	CO	Note/markings added for Consultation Issue	SH	MB
P04	25/08/22	KR	Consultation Issue following TMBC comment	KR	MB

For Information

**MOTT MACDONALD**

Fourth floor  
9 Portland Place  
Manchester  
United Kingdom

T +44 (0)161 638 0885  
F  
W www.mottmac.com

Client

Title  
TMBC Active Travel Tranche 2  
Guide Lane, Audenshaw  
Consultation Plan

Sheet 1 of 1

Designed	C OSBORNE	CO	Eng check	K.RADBAND	KR
Drawn	K.RADBAND	KR	Coordination	K.RADBAND	KR
Dwg check	K.RADBAND	KR	Approved	M.BASTING	MB
MMD Project Number	100103	Scale at A1	1:500	Security	STD
Suitability Description	Suitable for Information				Suit. Code
Drawing Number	103004-MMD-20-XX-DR-C-0003				Revision
					P04

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**Report to:** EXECUTIVE CABINET

**Date:** 29 March 2023

**Executive Member:** Councillor Eleanor Wills – Executive Member (Population Health & Well-being)

**Reporting Officer:** Debbie Watson, Director of Population Health  
James Mallion, Assistant Director of Population Health

**Subject:** **PROBATION DEPENDENCY & RECOVERY SUPPORT SERVICE (DRUGS & ALCOHOL) – FUNDING TRANSFER AND CONTRACT VARIATION**

**Report Summary:** This report provides background information on reforms within His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) and work at a GM level to meet the objectives of the National Drug Strategy which include the proposals set out in this paper for the local authority to receive additional funding from HMPPS and GMCA to ensure continuation of the Dependency and Recovery service aimed at residents under the supervision of the probation service, to ensure they have access to appropriate treatment and support for substance misuse issues. This report outlines the progress already made and describes the arrangements and approach proposed over the coming years which will involve the local authority receiving this additional funding and varying in to our existing contract with our substance misuse treatment provider, to ensure this support continues to be offered to Tameside residents. The values are £88,047 for 2023/24 and indicative amounts of £95,287 for 2024/25 and £95,755 for 2025/26.

The Council proposes to commission our existing specialist substance misuse service provider, Change Grow Live (CGL) Services My Recovery Tameside to deliver the Dependency and Recovery services funded by the HMPPS and GMCA. This will be for the duration of the existing contract between Tameside MBC and CGL Services (up to 31 August 2025) utilising a contract variation. The substance misuse commissioners in the Population Health Team are working with STAR procurement on the process and collaboratively with the management team from CGL Services to develop a continued robust delivery plan that meets local needs.

**Recommendations:** That Executive Cabinet be recommended to agreed that:

- (i) Approval is given to receive the allocation of £88,047 for delivery of the HMPPS Dependency and Recovery Service in 2023/24 and to award this to CGL Services via a contract variation to the existing substance misuse treatment service contract in place. Also to receive and award the indicative amounts for 2024/25 and part of 2025/26 up to the end of the current CGL Services contract in August 2025 (c. £95,287 and £95,755 respectively)
- (ii) Approval is given to vary the existing contract with CGL Services My Recovery Tameside to deliver the HMPPS Dependency and Recovery Service in 2023/24, 2024/25

and part of 2025/26.

**Financial Implications:**

**(Authorised by the statutory  
Section 151 Officer & Chief  
Finance Officer)**

The financial implications outlined in this report is to seek permission to receive external new funding from the probation service for enhanced support in our substance misuse service and will have no impact on the council's core budgets.

The confirmed amount for 23/24 is £88,047 (Year 1), 24/25 £95,257 (Year 2) and 25/26 £95,755 (Year 3). The council is not to exceed this within the contract with CGL.

In line with the national approach, funding for this over the past two years has been between the Probation Service and CGL. From April 2023, the council will receive the allocation instead, following the announcement of the three-year settlement. The council's substance misuse provider CGL is therefore already delivering the Dependency & Recovery service from a provider perspective. The council, as lead commissioner for substance misuse will undertake a contract variation with CGL to include this into their existing contract from April 2023, which runs until August 2025. In the final year of 25/26, this will be paid on a pro-rata basis, with a view to build into contracts should funding continue, or would be removed at that point.

**Legal Implications:**

**(Authorised by the Borough  
Solicitor)**

As outlined in the report, the service are seeking approval to receive additional funding from HMPPS and GMCA to ensure continuation of the Dependency and Recovery service aimed at residents under the supervision of the probation service, to ensure they have access to appropriate treatment and support for substance misuse issues and to undertake a contract variation with the existing provider of substance misuse services. Any contract variation will need to be in line with the provision of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules for modification of contracts. Advice from STaR procurement has been taken to ensure compliance with the Contract Procedure Rules which in turn mirror the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. If there are any conditions on the funding from HMPPS and GMCA this will need to be reviewed by Legal at the appropriate time before any grant funding agreement is entered into. There may also be conditions that need to be carried through in to the contract variation with the Council's provider as well as the requirement to make future years' services dependent on future funding which at this stage is indicative only.

**Risk Management:**

Risks will be identified and managed by the implementation team and through ongoing performance monitoring once the grant funding has been awarded.

**Access to Information:**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer James Mallion, Assistant Director of Population Health.



Telephone: 0161 342 2328 / 07970946485



e-mail: [james.mallion@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:james.mallion@tameside.gov.uk)



## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Substance misuse places a significant burden on health outcomes in Tameside. High rates of drug and alcohol consumption and dependence have a substantial impact with Tameside having high rates of drug and alcohol harm. This particularly affects certain groups in the population such as those who have been in prison and are currently on probation.
- 1.2 As part of the existing responsibilities of His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), there is specific funding from probation to support those in the probation system with dependency & recovery from drugs and alcohol. Over the last two years there have been arrangements in place for HMPPS to directly award grants to our local substance misuse providers (CGL Services in Tameside) to provide this enhanced service to probation clients.
- 1.3 Going forward, and as part of the GM objectives to deliver on the National Drugs Strategy, it is proposed that this funding is transferred from HMPPS to local authorities, as the commissioners of the existing specialist substance misuse treatment services, to be varied into existing contracts with these providers to ensure continued delivery of this support for those in the probation system.
- 1.4 This report outlines the strategic context to this funding; successes and impact of the existing provision locally; proposals of how this further funding will be utilised to improve support for those in the probation system in 2023/24 and beyond; and next steps to put this in place.

## 2. THE NATIONAL, GREATER MANCHESTER AND TAMESIDE CONTEXT

- 2.1 The government published a new national drugs strategy at the end of 2021, "***From Harm To Hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives***"<sup>1</sup>, which provides a 10-year plan to cut crime and save lives by reducing the supply and demand for drugs and delivering a high quality treatment and recovery system. In order to deliver the change this strategy calls for, local authorities have already been awarded with additional grant funding, the Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant, over 3 years. To further support cohorts in the criminal justice system, there is further funding in the probation service to support dependency and recovery among these groups.
- 2.2 In fulfilling the requirements of the National Drug Strategy, across Greater Manchester, a GM Drug and Alcohol Transformation Board has been established which has system-wide representation to ensure that our GM system is taking the steps required to meet the outcomes set out in the National Drug Strategy. The national strategy refers to 'Combatting Drugs Partnerships', which the GM Drug and Alcohol Transformation Board fulfils the role of. This group is chaired by Baroness Beverley Hughes, Deputy Major for Greater Manchester, and has system wide representation including representation from the Directors of Public Health across GM as the lead commissioners of local authority funded substance misuse treatment services.
- 2.3 The government has established a national Joint Combatting Drugs Unit to hold oversight of local areas' progress against the objectives set out in the National Drugs Strategy. For this, local partnerships must provide 3 key documents: a Combatting Drugs Delivery Plan; a Drug and Alcohol Strategic Outcomes Framework; and a Joint Drug and Alcohol Needs Assessment. Each of these are in development for GM, led by the GM Drug & Alcohol Transformation Board, and the GMCA. A draft of the GM Combatting Drugs Delivery Plan has been produced. One of the key areas in this delivery plan are the steps required to ensure we have a world-class treatment and recovery system in GM. One of the objectives under this

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/from-harm-to-hope-a-10-year-drugs-plan-to-cut-crime-and-save-lives>

area is the effective commissioning and provision of substance misuse services for probation clients in collaboration between the National Probation Service and local authorities to ensure a strong, coordinated approach.

- 2.4 In 2021 reforms were introduced to Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) which brought previously separate elements of this system together under one organisation within HMPPS. This also included commissioning responsibilities for HMPPS for a range of additional support for those in the probation system, including those requiring dependency and recovery support for drug and alcohol issues. In Greater Manchester, as part of the Justice Devolution arrangements between GMCA and HMPPS, these commissioning responsibilities were devolved to GMCA.
- 2.5 These reforms and commissioning arrangements within HMPPS have coincided with the new National Drug Strategy as outlined above, and GM and National drug and alcohol reviews in 2020/21 which recommended a more accurate assessment of the number of offenders in GM requiring substance misuse interventions, and the joint commissioning, planning and delivery of services to meet the identified needs.
- 2.6 These policy shifts at a national and GM level, as well as the available funding, provide a key opportunity to ensure that this funding is utilised to best meet the needs of our residents who are under the supervision of the probation system and face a greater degree of harm from drugs and alcohol, and have a direct need for support.

### **3. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DEPENDENCY AND RECOVERY SERVICE AND FUNDING**

- 3.1 The funding from the National Probation Service for the Dependency and Recovery support service commenced in 2021/22 and has been confirmed up to the end of the 2025/26 financial year (31 March 2026). This will in principle ensure the ongoing funding of specific locality drug and alcohol service support for criminal justice cohorts, pre and post sentence. This forms part of the GMCA Justice Devolution arrangements between GMCA and His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). GM Probation and GMCA oversee this overall funding which supports people on probation to access support for substance misuse issues.
- 3.2 The key outcomes that the Dependency & Recovery service, funded by HMPPS, aims to achieve over the coming years are: to increase engagement in treatment; to increase the numbers of clients entering community-based treatment within 3 weeks of release from prison; increasing the number of successful completions from community sentence treatments; and overall an increase in the proportion of people in the criminal justice system with an identified substance misuse need that receive appropriate treatment.
- 3.3 There has already been an arrangement in place across GM, for the additional provision of drug & alcohol support services for probation clients throughout 2021/22 and 2022/23, facilitated by the GMCA and the GM Drug and Alcohol Transformation Board, by directly awarding grants of the HMPPS funding to existing providers of local substance misuse treatment services.
- 3.4 Initially in 2021/22 and 2022/23, it was agreed that the probation dependency and recovery services should be delivered by the existing local substance misuse treatment providers (for Tameside this is CGL Services). This was put in place via a direct grant award of the funding to these providers from HMPPS, via GMCA. The GM and Tameside contributions from HMPPS/GMCA to CGL for this service for these two years are set out below in Table 1.

<b>D&amp;R Probation Funding direct to services</b>	2021/22	2022/23
Tameside	£47,460.87	£62,890.61
Greater Manchester Total	£639,733.00	£847,713.00

*Table 1: HMPPS Funding Allocations directly to local substance misuse treatment providers for 2021/22 and 2022/23 (Tameside and GM)*

- 3.5 Over the last two years, CGL Services have delivered the Dependency and Recovery service in Tameside alongside the other substance misuse service in GM which CGL provide, which is for Manchester. The service has ensured that strong relationships and data sharing links are in place with HMPPS; dedicated staff are in place with 5 separate key worker posts to carry out assessments, identify support needs and communicate with HMPPS; and there is a full time group work facilitator run by ACORN with at least weekly provision of group sessions in Tameside. This service offer has achieved some crucial outcomes for individuals who are under the supervision of probation services who have substance misuse needs to date in Tameside/GM:
- New referral pathways from HMPPS into CGL Services
  - In-depth substance misuse assessments for all clients referred by HMPPS with 44 completed in 21/22 as the service was established, increasing to 70 completed during 22/23
  - 45 out of 70 referrals in 22/23 (64%) received treatment from the service with 19 of the referrals (27%) achieving successful completions of treatment, which is above the average for the overall service
- 3.6 The national funding for these services has been agreed by HMPPS up to 2025/26. The future allocations for GM and Tameside are set out below in Table 2.

<b>D&amp;R Probation Funding to LAs</b>	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Tameside	£88,047	£95,287*	£95,755*
Greater Manchester Total	£1,253,241	£1,356,307	£1,362,964

*Table 2: HMPPS Funding Allocations to local authority commissioners of local substance misuse services to vary into existing contracts for the D&R provision for probation clients 2023/24 to 2025/26*

*\*indicative local funding, amount may vary*

- 3.7 Going forward it is proposed that this funding for the Dependency and Recovery service for probation clients is transferred to local authorities, who already commission the specialist substance misuse service providers, and that the specifications for this service are varied into the existing contracts that the local authority commissioners hold with the substance misuse service providers.
- 3.8 In Tameside, Change Grow Live (CGL) are currently commissioned to provide the integrated, all-age substance misuse treatment service 'My Recovery Tameside' up to August 2025. It is proposed that the council accepts the HMPPS funding for the dependency and recovery service and draws up a contract variation to allocate this funding to CGL, to continue to implement the service as per the outcomes set out by HMPPS. This would be for the duration of the current contract with CGL, up to August 2025. Advice on this process has been sought from STAR procurement in terms of thresholds for and contents of a contract variation.
- 3.9 In addition, while this contract will be held between Tameside MBC and our existing provider, CGL, HMPPS will be involved in monitoring this element of our contract with CGL.
- 3.10 The exact service specification for this service to commence from 01 April 2023, will be agreed with HMPPS, and will incorporate the following key aims and objectives:

- Reduce drug and alcohol related reoffending
- Reduce drug and alcohol related health harms for the offender
- Improve community safety by reducing the risk of drug and alcohol related harms to others
- Increasing numbers of appropriate referrals to specialist substance misuse services
- Increasing numbers retained in treatment
- Developing interventions for those that do not require specialist treatment
- Increasing numbers sustaining recovery

3.11 From 2023/24 onwards CGL Services have proposed that they will continue to coordinate their Dependency & Recovery provision across their two GM sites of Tameside and Manchester with all of the elements already achieved and implemented over the last two years including key workers, group work and rapid assessments. The ongoing coordinated approach across Tameside and Manchester provides increased resilience across the services to cover for issues such as vacancies / sickness etc. as well as better support around enablers such as intelligence and data sharing, leadership capacity and having dedicated roles for the Dependency & Recovery service.

3.12 As there is an uplift in funding for 2023/24 for Tameside (approx. 40%), CGL have proposed that they would also include increased project management capacity to improve collaboration with wider partners, assist with contract monitoring with HMPPS, training and improving pathways. They would also increase the ACORN group work capacity by 30% to increase access to group-based activities. Finally they would introduce a full time dedicated women's worker across Manchester and Tameside to address inequalities faced by women in the criminal justice system.

#### **4. RISKS**

4.1 The annual funds for this extended service are dependent on continued funding from HMPPS. HMPPS have indicated that funding will continue up to the end of 2025/26, however in the event that central government changes the current funding allocation, the local authority would not continue to commission the additional provision under the Dependency & Recovery programme. Wording to this effect will be included as part of the contract variation with the provider.

4.2 Final service specification and KPIs for the Dependency & Recovery service have not yet been provided by HMPPS. However work is ongoing with GMCA and HMPPS to finalise this to ensure that the requirements of the service are reasonable within the financial resources being provided.

#### **5. NEXT STEPS**

5.1 Once approved, the Council will receive the funding from HMPPS via GMCA and will vary the existing contract with CGL MRT to deliver the Dependency and Recovery Service for 2023/24, 2024/25 and part of 2025/26, up to the end of the existing contract on 31 August 2025. The final year funding allocation (2025/26) will be 'pro-rata' as the current contract with CGL Services ends in August 2025. At this point the intention will be to build any ongoing enhanced funding for this service into any future commissioning arrangement, but that is yet to be determined at a national level. These arrangements are based on the established contract with CGL Services to provide substance misuse treatment services in Tameside. There is provision within the current contract to extend the service to the amounts set out in this funding allocation and over this time scale. The cumulative value of modifications on this contract to date, including the proposals outlined in this paper, remains less than 50% of the original contract value, therefore this can be awarded via a modification and contract variation. Population Health have engaged with and sought advice from STAR procurement throughout

this process and will continue to follow this advice regarding the relevant procurement route and requirements.

- 5.2 This work will be driven by the commissioners in the Population Health team who will continue to work closely with the funders in HMPPS and GMCA and also with the provider CGL. There will also be oversight within the council via the Community Safety Partnership, where existing progress and work on drugs and alcohol is fed in and reported on, on a regular basis.
- 5.3 CGL Services will retain the flexibility to subcontract elements of the programme where appropriate, to ensure successful and timely delivery of interventions. Also, where and if it has been agreed, CGL will continue to deliver elements of this programme on a GM footprint (across Tameside and Manchester services).
- 5.4 CGL Services will implement the programme of interventions, ensure the offer is embedded within local neighbourhoods and monitor the outcomes of the work.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 This funding is being allocated to local authority commissioners of substance misuse treatment services to ensure the ongoing delivery of enhanced Dependency and Recovery support for probation clients across Tameside, to increase engagement with treatment and successful completions, as well as tackling inequalities such as those facing women. Progressing with this work will ensure that we are delivering on the GM Combatting Drugs delivery plan and wider outcomes set out in the National Drug Strategy.
- 6.2 Over the next 3 years, this funding and enhanced support for probation clients in Tameside will enable us to: reduce drug and alcohol related reoffending; reduce drug and alcohol related health harms for the offender; and improve community safety by reducing the risk of drug and alcohol related harms to others.

## **7. RECOMMENDATION**

- 7.1 As stated at the front of this report.

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**Report to:** EXECUTIVE CABINET

**Date:** 29 March 2023

**Executive Member:** Cllr Eleanor Wills – Executive Member (Health)

**Reporting Officer:** Debbie Watson, Director of Population Health

**Subject:** DOMESTIC ABUSE COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS

**Report Summary:**

Domestic abuse continues to be a growing issue in Tameside with data highlighting that the number of domestic abuse incidents reported to the police increased from 4424 in 2019/20 to 5409 in 2021/22 (22%). This is further echoed by the increases seen by Children's Social Care whereby referrals relating to domestic abuse rose from 1850 in 2019/20 to 3222 in 2021/22 (74%).

Reducing Domestic Abuse is a key objective in the Corporate plan and the Local Authority currently commits £506,818 annually to the delivery of domestic abuse support in Tameside, which funds the core contract provided by Jigsaw Support, delivering the Bridges service. This is enhanced by the Women and Families centre at a cost of £112,000 per year, which is also provided by Jigsaw Support. Both contracts are due to end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and will be subject of a re-commissioning exercise in 2023, with new contracts due to begin on 1 April 2024. In addition the Council receives an annual Domestic Abuse grant from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to deliver against statutory duties set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, specifically safe accommodation.

The report sets out the intentions to re-commission the domestic abuse response in Tameside from 1 April 2024, taking into consideration statutory requirements, national learning and recommendations, and stakeholder feedback.

Furthermore, the report outlines the commissioning intentions for 2023/24 in line with the statutory duties set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

**Recommendations:**

That Executive Cabinet be recommended to agreed:

- (i) That approval be given for a total of £5,035,101.05 (£1,007,020.21) per year) to be allocated from ring-fenced domestic abuse grant and core budget for the recommissioning of the Domestic Abuse Support Service for a 5-year contract, with the option of extending up to a further 5-years (optional extension of contract will be pending full formal review of service outcomes in Year 3)
- (ii) That approval be given to go out to procure the Domestic Abuse Support Service for Tameside
- (iii) Delegation is given to the Director of Population Health in consultation with the Director of Finance to award the contract following the completion of a compliant competitive procurement exercise;
- (iv) That approval be given to undertake the necessary procurement exercises including award and other necessary arrangements in order to deliver the commissioning intentions for 2023/24 as set out in section 3 of the report.

<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	The proposed activities directly support the delivery of the objective to reduce victims of domestic abuse under the priority 'Nurturing Communities' in the Corporate Plan.
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	As set out in the report.
<b>Financial Implications:</b> <b>(Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer)</b>	<p>The council have a total expenditure budget for Domestic Abuse in 2023/24 of £1,286,835 along with a forecast transfer to reserves in 2022/23 period 10 monitoring of £281,058. This relates to a Domestic Abuse Transformation Fund, to carry forward into 2023/24. This paper outlines the spend and commissioning intentions for the 2023/24 financial year based on the total budget and reserve amounts above. Any reduction to the amount available to transfer to reserve in 2022/23 will need to be taken into account when commissioning the services detailed in section 3 of the report below.</p> <p>Any commissioned services detailed in section 3.2 of the report will need to go through the appropriate procurement route to ensure that the council are receiving best value for money.</p> <p>The service are also requesting approval for the recommissioning of the Domestic Abuse Support Service for 5 years 2024/25 – 2028/29. While the Domestic Abuse Grant has been confirmed until 2024/25 no further confirmation has been received on future year's grants. The service need to take this into account when commissioning services and ensure that appropriate break clauses are included. This will ensure that the commissioned services can be withdrawn in the event that the grant ceases or reduces to avoid any financial impact on the council.</p> <p>Any uplift in commissioned contract values due to inflation or other reasons would need to be taken into account when commissioning contracts and ensure that there is sufficient funding available within the amount stated in point 2.14 of the report.</p>
<b>Legal Implications:</b> <b>(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	<p>The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 sets out the council's duties to combat domestic violence and to support victims.</p> <p>This report is seeking approval for the procurement of the main service delivery contract together with other incidental contracts and other service provisions as set out in section 3 of the report.</p> <p>The project officers will be engaging with STaR procurement to ensure that compliant procurement exercises are undertaken where appropriate and advice will also be sought from human resources in relation to any fixed term contracts of employment.</p>
<b>Risk Management:</b>	The programme described in the paper delivers on duties of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Risks to the effective delivery of the domestic abuse programme are identified, managed and mitigated by the Domestic Abuse Steering Group.
<b>Background Information:</b>	The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Lisa Morris, Strategic Domestic Abuse Manager



Telephone: 07980906027



e-mail: [lisa.morris@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.morris@tameside.gov.uk)



## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In October 2021, following the completion of an independent needs assessment, Tameside's multi-agency [Domestic Abuse Strategy \(2021 – 2026\)](#) was published. This sets out seven key ambitions for the borough:
- Making domestic abuse everybody's business
  - Creating safe spaces for disclosures
  - Meeting the needs of victims through local services
  - Helping victim-survivors stay safe at home
  - Better outcomes for children impacted by domestic abuse
  - Identifying problem behaviours early
  - Holding perpetrators accountable
- 1.2 The Domestic Abuse Strategy (2021 – 2026) also included our statutory strategy to provide accommodation based support services. The Tameside Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation strategy is a three tiered response:
- Better support victim-survivors to stay in their own homes with support and safety measures in place
  - Improve outcomes for those who approach our homelessness service as victims of domestic abuse
  - Strengthen and diversify our offer for those who require specialist domestic abuse accommodation
- 1.3 Tackling Domestic Abuse is a key priority for TMBC and the Council commissions a domestic abuse support service in Tameside at an annual cost of £506,818, which is from core council funding. This contract is due to end on 31 March 2024 and will be subject to a re-commissioning exercise in the preceding months to ensure an effective service is in place on 01 April 2024.
- 1.4 The Women and Families Centre provides holistic support for women and their children who have experienced domestic abuse, mental health issues and substance misuse, recognising that these areas often overlap and the impact that this can have on the women and their children. In 2022/23, approval was given to extend the Women and Families Centre contract 6 months to 31 March 2024 to align it with the Domestic Abuse Service contract, with the intention of integrating the commissioning of these services to enable a systemic and more coordinated support offer.
- 1.5 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 resulted in new duties for local authorities. This included establishing a local domestic abuse partnership board, a statutory duty to conduct a domestic abuse needs assessment and new duties to provide accommodation-based support for victims of domestic abuse and their children.
- 1.6 In 2022/23 TMBC was awarded £549,143 in grant funding to meet our new duties. This year our funding allocation has increased to £560,128 for 2023/24.
- 1.7 The funding is recurrent and future grant determinations will be decided in the government's Spending Review each year. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has provided assurance to the Council that the statutory duty will be funded in future years, and they have provided confirmation of 2024/25 funding at £570,696.
- 1.8 In April 2021, TMBC signed a memorandum of understanding with DLUHC on how the Council would spend this additional funding, confirming that the funding would be treated as an uplift to support victims of domestic abuse in the borough in addition to current investment.
- 1.9 Greater Manchester Combined Authority has also committed £41,066 per year for the provision of a medium risk Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA). The grant

agreement for this role is in place until 31 March 2025 and was approved as a variation to the core Domestic Abuse Service contract.

- 1.10 This report is seeking approval to go out to tender for the borough-wide Domestic Abuse Support Service to commence from 01 April 2024 for a period of 5-years plus the option of a further 5-year extension, and to award the contract to the successful bidder following the tender process.
- 1.11 The report is also seeking approval for 1-year commissioning intentions for 2023/2024 in order to allocate our ring-fenced grant to meet our duties under the Domestic Abuse Act and continue to deliver on the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2026.

## **2. COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS FOR THE CORE DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE FOR TAMESIDE 2024/25-2028/29 (5-YEARS)**

- 2.1 Domestic abuse continues to be a growing issue in Tameside with data highlighting that the number of domestic abuse incidents reported to the police increased from 4424 in 2019/20 to 5409 in 2021/22 (22%). This is further echoed by the increases seen by Children's Social Care whereby referrals relating to domestic abuse rose from 1850 in 2019/20 to 3222 in 2021/22 (74%).
- 2.2 Nationally, domestic abuse affects over two million people a year, causes the deaths of over 100 people per year and costs society an estimated £74 billion per year (an average of £37,000 per person).
- 2.3 The introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 brought with it key statutory duties for Local Authorities and their partners recognising the devastating impact that domestic abuse has on families and wider society. Key to tackling domestic abuse is a focus on:
  - prevention by raising awareness and challenging harmful attitudes and beliefs
  - ensuring the provision of high quality support for victims and survivors
  - engaging with perpetrators and holding them to account.
- 2.4 The Local Authority currently commits £506,818 annually to the delivery of domestic abuse support in Tameside, which funds the core contract provided by Jigsaw Support, delivering the Bridges service. This is enhanced by the Women and Families centre at a cost of £112,000 per year, which is also provided by Jigsaw Support. Both contracts are due to end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and will be subject of a re-commissioning exercise in 2023, with new contracts due to begin on 1 April 2024.
- 2.5 The local model will be developed based on our local needs assessments, statutory duties and in accordance with public and stakeholder consultation, which began on 20 February 2023 and will run until May 2023, providing opportunities for victims, survivors, children/young people, perpetrators, professionals, community groups and members of the public to feedback on the design of the local offer.

### **Outline model**

- 2.6 In consultation with victims, survivors, violence against women and girls (VAWG) sector specialists, Police and Crime Commissioners, NHS and Local Authorities, the Home Office has published a [National Statement of Expectations for Commissioning Violence Against Women and Girls Services](#).

Within the national statement of expectations, it makes clear that local services and strategies should:

- Put the victim/survivor at the centre of service design and delivery
- Have a clear focus on perpetrators in order to keep victims and survivors safe

- Take a strategic, system wide approach to commissioning, acknowledging the gendered nature of VAWG
- Be locally led and safeguard individuals at every point.

2.6 An effective support offer recognises that domestic abuse can affect anyone, irrelevant of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion or sexuality and acknowledges that often domestic abuse does not exist in isolation with victims, survivors and perpetrators experiencing multiple disadvantage.

2.7 According to the findings from the Domestic Abuse Commissioner’s Mapping of Domestic Abuse Services across England & Wales,<sup>1</sup> the majority of victims and survivors wanted to be able to access community-based services that offer both practical advice as well as support to help them cope and recover from the abuse, including counselling and therapeutic support.

2.8 Furthermore, victims and survivors stated that support needed to be available from a much earlier stage rather than the current crisis response that most experienced. Those from minoritised communities added that they wanted to be able to access specialised support that was delivered “by and for” their own communities, recognising the skills and knowledge that local community and voluntary organisations have often built up via direct work in the local area.

2.9 Taking into consideration the statutory requirements and findings from the commissioner’s report and best practice we would expect a core minimum support offer for Tameside to include:

- Sufficient, local safe accommodation, including refuge, dispersed accommodation, sanctuary and target hardening and appropriate move on accommodation
- Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) to support cases that are assessed as high risk of serious harm or homicide
- Specialist key workers to support medium and standard risk cases, step down and recovery
- Specialist children and young people’s workers
- Specialist support for minoritised communities
- Respect Accredited behaviour change programmes for adult perpetrators and for children using harmful behaviours
- Counselling and therapeutic interventions

2.10 The model that we will seek to commission in Tameside will aim to support a Co-ordinated Community Response (CCR)<sup>2</sup>, addresses prevention, early intervention, crisis, and long-term recovery and safety. CCR brings together agencies including Early Help, Children and Adult Social Care, Education, Health, Police and Housing, recognising the opportunities for co-location (for example within health setting and family hubs) and flexibility across the system enabling a whole system approach to domestic abuse.

### **Resource allocation**

2.11 There is a total annual funding resource of £1,230,613 to support tackling domestic abuse in Tameside from 2024/25.

2.12 TMBC has a commitment to fund the two existing strategic domestic abuse posts based within Population Health at a cost of £123,592.79 in 2024/25. This assumes an uplift of 3%, which has to be met by the DA Grant, however exact salary costs will not be confirmed until closer to the time. The posts are central to the systemic delivery of Tameside Domestic Abuse

<sup>1</sup> [DAC Mapping-Abuse-Suvivors\\_Summary-Report\\_Nov-2022\\_FA.pdf \(domesticabusecommissioner.uk\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [In Search of Excellence — Standing Together](#)

Strategy across the Partnership and to ensuring a co-ordinated community response to domestic abuse.

- 2.13 An annual resource of £1,007,020.21 is proposed for the re-commissioning of a specialist domestic abuse support service as outlined at 2.10. A consortia approach would be the recommended model for this service, enabling smaller “by and for” services to be part of any bid and supporting a coordinated and holistic response to victims, survivors and families.
- 2.14 A proposal is made for the remaining £100,000 to be held by Population Health as a Domestic Abuse Transformation fund to support the delivery of the key ambitions of the Domestic Abuse Strategy, primarily “Making Domestic Abuse everyone’s business” and “Identifying Problem Behaviours Early”. These ambitions aim to raise the profile of domestic abuse in Tameside to change the way that it is understood and challenged in our communities enabling problem behaviours to be identified early and appropriate support and interventions to be offered to reduce risk and escalation.
- 2.15 The domestic abuse transformation fund would support the delivery of these ambitions in the following ways:
- Workforce development to ensure professionals are able to recognise and respond to domestic abuse appropriately, including a front line workforce training offer
  - Community engagement and marketing events to support awareness raising across communities but specifically in marginalised communities that may not access mainstream services
  - Education and awareness in schools and colleges to ensure a preventative approach to raise awareness amongst young people about the signs of domestic abuse, gender based violence and how they can challenge and support their peers.

#### **Procurement timeline**

- 2.16 The advice from Star is to conduct an open tender process under the light touch regime, on The Chest portal, with the advert going live on 23 August 2023.
- 2.17 Deadline for submissions will be 20 September 2023 with evaluations and interviews being held from this date up to 15 November 2023. A final decision will be made by 23 November 2023.
- 2.18 Providing there isn’t any challenge to the decision the aim will be have contracts signed by 31 January 2024 with a service start date of 1 April 2024.
- 2.19 The report seeks permission to tender the Domestic Abuse Support Service, and Women and Families Centre in Tameside, in accordance with public and stakeholder consultation. For the new contracts to commence on 1 April 2024 for a five year period, plus the option of a five year extension, dependent on a review of the Service during year 3 (2026/27) to ensure adequate performance and outcomes achieved.
- 2.20 The report also seeks permission to award the contract following the completion of a competitive tender exercise, subject to compliance with the Council’s Procurement Standing Orders.
- 2.21 The report seeks permission to maintain a Domestic Abuse Transformation fund to support awareness raising and community engagement activities as part of the key ambitions of the Domestic Abuse Strategy.

### 3 SUMMARY OF COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS FOR 2023-2024

#### Resource

3.1 The total resource available for domestic abuse provision in 2023/24 is:

\*please note this includes funding for the existing Domestic Abuse and Women and Families Centre contracts (in grey).

<b>Domestic Abuse Act funding 2023/24 (ring-fenced)</b>	
<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount (£)</b>
Core Budget for existing contracts*	618,818
Domestic Abuse Act Grant – Statutory duties	560,128
GMCA – IDVA	61,099
ICB/ NHSE – IRIS project	60,000
Population Health Investment Fund – IRIS project	4,000
Domestic Abuse Transformation Fund	261,058
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,565,103</b>

#### Summary of DA Act proposals and approach to commissioning 2023/24

3.2 Below is an overview of the specific areas of spend to fulfil existing services and statutory duties under the DA Act for 2023/24. This report is seeking permission to allocate the lines of spend in Table 1 below. Further detail of each element of provision can be found in **Appendix A**.

\*please note this includes funding for the existing Domestic Abuse and Women and Families Centre contracts (in grey).

<b>DA Act Budget 2023/24 (restricted)</b>		
<i>Provision</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Delivery mechanism</i>
Core domestic abuse service contract*	£506,818	Contract (Bridges, Jigsaw Support)
Core Women and Families Centre contract*	£112,000	Contract (Jigsaw Support)
Safe Accommodation Team (12 months)	£185,398	Contract variation (Bridges, Jigsaw Support)
Accommodation based support – DA recovery service (6 months from September 23 to March 24)	£40,000	Contract variation (Bridges, Jigsaw Support)
Children that harm – TLC Pilot (12 months)	£75,000	Direct award – TLC
Children’s Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (CHIDVA) (12 months)	£120,000	Contract variation (Bridges, Jigsaw Support)
TMBC Domestic Abuse Staff (Strategic Domestic Abuse Manager and Programme Officer in Population Health)	£119,993	12 month fixed term contracts
A&E Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA )	£40,000	Contract variation (Bridges, Jigsaw Support)
IRIS – DA Primary Care intervention	£64,000	Procurement exercise
GMCA Medium risk IDVA (12 months) /Core IDVA (6 months)	£61,099	Contract variation (Bridges, Jigsaw Support)
Lived Experience Advisory Group (DA Partnership Board costs)	£20,795	Budget
Discretionary workforce training budget	£110,000	Procurement exercise
VAWG prevention pilot in schools	£110,000	Procurement exercise
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,565,103</b>	

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 As set out at the front of the report.

# APPENDIX A

## OVERVIEW OF COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS 2023-24

### 1. CORE CONTRACTS – DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE/ WOMEN & FAMILIES CENTRE

- 1.1 The Domestic Abuse Service is jointly funded by Population Health, Operations and Neighbourhood and Children's service at an annual value of £506,818. The service is delivered by Bridges and includes specialist outreach and safe accommodation for those experiencing domestic abuse and their families.
- 1.2 The Women and Families Centre provides holistic support for women and their children who have experienced domestic abuse, mental health issues and substance misuse, recognising that these areas often overlap and the impact that this can have on the women and their children. Population Health funds this service at an annual cost of £112,000, which includes funding for the premises at Cavendish Mill.
- 1.3 Both services are under contract until 31 March 2024, at which stage both will be subject to a re-commissioning exercise.
- 1.4 There is a remaining total £946,252 of ring-fenced resource to spend on Domestic Abuse Act duties and core contract commitments in 2023/24. The report outlines total spend on Domestic Abuse support services including the commissioning intentions utilising the ring-fenced grant funding as follows:

### 2. SAFE ACCOMMODATION TEAM (12 MONTH EXTENSION)

- 2.1 In the 2021-22 DA Commissioning intentions paper, the council approved the formation of a new Safe Accommodation service within Tameside, to meet our new statutory duties, complement our existing refuge offer and support the ambitions set out in the Safe Accommodation Strategy.
- 2.2 The Safe Accommodation Team provides support to victims of domestic abuse in various safe accommodation locations across the Borough including their own homes, temporary accommodation or an identified dispersed property. Support provided includes ongoing risk assessments, support for the victim and their children and provision of target hardening or sanctuary equipment to support victims to feel safer and remain in their own homes wherever possible.
- 2.3 This service is provided by Bridges and currently consists of six members of staff. The report is seeking permission to extend the contract variation for an additional 12 months at a cost of £185,398.

### 3. REFUGE BASED RECOVERY SERVICE (6 MONTH EXTENSION)

- 3.1 The Refuge Based Recovery Service was established as a pilot commencing in September 2022. This enables work to be completed with victims once the immediate domestic abuse risk has been managed, with the aim of supporting long-term recovery and preventing re-entry into the service. The current pilot project is due to end in September 2023, however in order to avoid a gap in provision during the re-commissioning process, the report is seeking permission to extend the variation to 31 March 2024 at a cost of £40,000.

#### **4. CHILDREN THAT HARM – TALK, LISTEN, CHANGE (12 MONTH EXTENSION)**

- 4.1 Since January 2022 Talk, Listen, Change (TLC) have been running two innovative pilots in Tameside for children aged 12 – 19 years old:
- Encouraging Healthy Relationships programme – for children that are displaying harmful behaviours towards their siblings, girlfriends/boyfriends and people they are dating
  - Respect Young Peoples programme – for children that are displaying harmful behaviours towards their parents or carers.
- 4.2 These interventions are part of a Greater Manchester wide pilot, which is 2/3 funded by the Home Office and 1/3 funded by TMBC. This programme meets two of our Domestic Abuse Strategic Ambitions: “Better outcomes for children impacted by domestic abuse” and “Identifying problem behaviours early”.
- 4.3 To date the service has received 89 referrals, of which 62% have engaged. This is the second highest engagement rate in Greater Manchester (after Wigan). There has been 717 sessions and interventions delivered with children and young people, from which the service reports a decrease in emotional problems, conduct problems, peer problems and hyperactivity.
- 4.4 The report seeks permission to extend the funding for a further 12 months at a cost of £75,000.

#### **5 CHIDVA (12 MONTH EXTENSION)**

- 5.1 Children’s Services currently funds two specialist domestic abuse posts to support child victims of domestic abuse. Bridges deliver the CHIDVA (Child Independent Domestic Violence Advocate) service at an annual cost of £80,000.
- 5.2 Approval was given to fund an additional £40,000 for a refuge based CHIDVA in 2022/23 due to high demand and a significant number of children on the CHIDVA waiting list. The waiting list for the CHIDVA service continues to be high (136) with new referrals being received as quickly as cases are being closed. The number of referrals to Children’s Social Care that relate to domestic abuse continues to be high with 3222 referrals being received in 2021/2022. This was an increase of 23% compared to 2020/21. In the first two quarters of 2022/23, the referrals to children’s social care relating to domestic abuse are 1875.
- 5.3 The Domestic Abuse Steering Group is undertaking an audit to understand the level of demand and to ensure that children and young people are being referred to the most appropriate place for support.
- 5.4 The previous CHIDVA funding from Children’s Services was time limited, therefore this report seeks permission to extend the funding for all three CHIDVA roles for a further 12-month period at a cost of £120,000, from the council’s core domestic abuse funding to ensure children and young people continue to be offered a specialist service.

#### **6 GMCA FUNDING - MEDIUM RISK IDVA / CONTRIBUTION TO CORE CONTRACT (12 MONTHS EXTENSION/ 6 MONTH EXTENSION)**

- 6.1 GMCA have awarded the Council £61,099 in 2023/24 for:
- continuation of a medium risk IDVA for 12 months
  - contribution to the Core IDVA contract for 6 months
- 6.2 The core contribution has only been confirmed for 6 months, as it is part of wider Ministry of Justice Funding for victim’s services, which GMCA is currently reviewing.



- 6.3 The grant funding was transferred to the Bridges service previously, as the sole provider of domestic abuse services in Tameside, and is an ongoing arrangement.
- 6.4 This report seeks permission to extend the contract for a further 12 months for the medium risk IDVA and 6 months for the contribution to the Core IDVA service, in line with the grant expectations from GMCA.

## 7 A&E/ HOSPITAL BASED IDVA (12 MONTH EXTENSION)

- 7.1 The A&E IDVA role to identify and support victims coming into hospital started in February 2022. This is recognised as a valuable role to identify high-risk victims and the IDVA has been able to deliver training to hospital staff on domestic abuse to support early identification of abuse. There has been disruption in A&E due to high demand and building work therefore it is proposed that this role continues to be funded for a further 12 months but to be based in other locations within the hospital as well as A&E when available, such as maternity services, where high risk victims may also be identified.
- 7.2 Recognising the key role that health departments have in identifying and addressing domestic abuse the hospital based IDVA continues to be a priority.
- 7.3 As such, the report seeks permission to extend the existing post for a further 12 months at a cost of £40,000.

## 8 IRISI IN PRIMARY CARE

- 8.1 IRIS is a specialist domestic violence and abuse (DVA) training, support and referral programme for general practices that has been positively evaluated in randomised controlled trials and was introduced in Tameside last year following council approval. It is a partnership between health and the specialist DVA sector. IRIS provides in-house DVA training for general practice teams and a named advocate to whom patients can be referred for support.
- 8.2 Following a competitive procurement exercise, Bridges was awarded the contract to deliver the IRIS programme in Tameside. The programme went live on 1 November 2022 and will run until 31 October 2025.
- 8.3 Given the later start date, the annual funding allocations have been amended to ensure coverage during the period of the contract as follows:

	<b>Nov 2022 – March 23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>Apr 2025- October 2025</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>TMBC</b>	£5,000	£4,000	£9,000	£7,000	£25,000
<b>NHS GM (ICB) and NHS England</b>	£29,166	£60,000	£50,000	£40,834	£180,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£34,166</b>	<b>£64,000</b>	<b>£59,000</b>	<b>£47,834</b>	<b>£205,000</b>

The report seeks approval of the revised funding arrangements for IRIS service in Tameside.

## 9 DOMESTIC ABUSE SPECIALIST WORKERS

- 9.1 The report seeks permission to spend £119,993 of the DA Act funds to continue the roles of the specialist workers within Population Health in the local authority. These roles enable

TMBC to discharge its' duties under the DA Act 2021 and continue to lead the system-wide response to tackling domestic abuse:

- 1x Strategic Domestic Abuse Manager (K Grade - 12 months)
- 1x Programme Officer (Domestic Abuse) (G Grade - 12 months)

## **10 TRUST GROUP**

- 10.1 The Trust Group is our lived experience advisory group, which forms part of our formal governance around domestic abuse and our statutory Domestic Abuse Partnership Board. The advisory group membership is local Tameside victim-survivors of domestic abuse and meets quarterly.
- 10.2 The group is supported by Diversity Matters North West who provide translation and interpreter support to enable victim/survivors to attend and fully engage with the work of the group.
- 10.3 Further work is underway to develop a male victim/survivor advisory group, which will be held separately to the Trust group. Opportunities will be explored for the two groups to come together for identified projects if appropriate.
- 10.4 The report seeks permission to spend £20,795 on reasonable running and translation costs for the Trust Group and male advisory group once established.

## **11 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING**

- 11.1 A key ambition of Tameside's Domestic Abuse strategy is the creation of safe spaces for victims and survivors of domestic abuse to disclose and access support. A primary factor in the success of this ambition is the confidence and competence of staff across the Partnership to recognise and respond appropriately to any disclosures.
- 11.2 During 2022/23, specialist training was commissioned from Rockpool and Safe Lives which enabled an initial cohort of 54 children and adult services staff to receive training on engaging with perpetrators, 439 multi-agency professionals to access domestic abuse awareness training and allowed a pool of 20 multi-agency professionals to access a train the trainer course to support the ongoing delivery of domestic abuse awareness sessions in Tameside.
- 11.3 The report seeks permission to hold £110,000 in a discretionary workforce training budget, allocated for the ongoing delivery of specialist training for professionals across the Local Authority and wider Domestic Abuse Partnership. This budget will be held within Population Health, with oversight and assurance from the Domestic Abuse Steering Group and used to target gaps identified through quality and performance monitoring.
- 11.4 The Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment and Perpetrator Needs Assessment highlighted gaps in professional knowledge relating to the identification of domestic abuse victim/survivors/perpetrators and a lack of consistency in responding to perpetrators.
- 11.5 Key to the delivery of the ambitions within the Domestic Abuse Strategy is a strong multi-agency understanding and response to support the creation of safe spaces for victim/survivors to disclose and to enable earlier intervention and prevention.
- 11.6 Proposed areas of training in 2023/24 would include:
- Training another cohort of frontline professionals to safely engage with perpetrators
  - MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) training for all current MARAC representatives and chairs to support a robust response to high risk cases

- Understanding the impact of domestic abuse on children and ways to safety plan with children and young people
- Training for frontline professionals on safety planning and exit strategies, particularly when a victim/survivor wishes to remain in the relationship
- Supporting a trauma informed approach to domestic abuse recognising the multiple disadvantages victim/survivors often face

11.7 The training needs highlighted above will require specialist training providers for the delivery which will be procured in line with Contract Procedure Rules.

## 12 VAWG PREVENTION PILOT IN SCHOOLS

12.1 Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is multi-faceted and includes domestic abuse, rape and other sexual offences, stalking, 'honour based' abuse (including female genital mutilation and forced marriage and 'honour' killings), 'revenge porn' and 'upskirting', all of which disproportionately affect women and girls in our society.

12.2 Fundamentally, VAWG is rooted in gender based inequality and harmful attitudes which allow cycles of abuse and violence to continue. The murders of Sarah Everard and Sabina Nessa sparked national conversations about the prevalence of male violence against women and have been further fuelled by misogynistic narratives across social media.

12.3 In order to begin to put an end to domestic abuse and wider violence against women and girls there has to be a focus on addressing issues of harmful gender based attitudes and norms within society, particularly amongst young people.

12.4 Research by Safe Lives<sup>3</sup> highlighted that 49% of boys and 33% of girls aged 13 – 14 thought that hitting a partner would be 'okay' in at least one of twelve scenarios they were presented with.

12.5 Recognising the scale of violence against women and girls the Government has made Relationship and Sex Education mandatory for schools as part of the curriculum. The Domestic Abuse Commissioner recently stated, "The new RSHE requirement in primary and secondary schools is a welcome and positive step, but work in this space must go further to bring the entirety of the education system into step with a holistic understanding of domestic abuse and VAWG and how it needs to be tackled through policies, behavioural and attitudinal change that both sensitively and confidently challenge harmful gendered beliefs and attitudes."

12.6 In order to begin to address VAWG from a prevention perspective the report is seeking permission to develop a pilot project to create a Whole School Approach to VAWG in schools. This will be a 12-month pilot, to commence during 2023/24. Using the findings from a similar pilot in London<sup>4</sup>, the Tameside pilot would take place in a selection of primary and secondary schools and would include:

- Consultation and engagement over spring and summer terms to co-design a Whole School Approach delivery model with schools, pupils, parents, partner agencies and local communities that addresses VAWG within the curriculum but also within the school culture, ethos and environment
- Specialist worker to pilot the delivery model with young people, teachers and parents in a selection of primary and secondary schools in Tameside
- Evaluation of the pilot including key outcomes and recommendations for future work

<sup>3</sup> [Spotlight #3: Young people and domestic abuse | Safelives](#)

<sup>4</sup> [VAWG Prevention pilot in the London Borough of Croydon | London City Hall](#)

- 12.7 In designing and developing the pilot, commissioners will work with colleagues in Community Safety as well as the GM Violence Reduction Unit and ensure this aligns to other priorities such as work taking place under the Serious Violence Duty. The pilot will be commissioned in line with procurement regulations and in consultation with Star.