

**Tameside Council  
Elected Member  
Annual Report of Activities 2020/21**

**Councillor Name: Dolores Lewis**

**Ward Name: Ashton Hurst**

**Participation at Council Meetings and Panels**

With the global pandemic and the ongoing restrictions placed upon us in a bid to minimise transmission of the virus, I have discovered new different and coherent ways of working and subsequently, all of my meetings have taken place in a virtual setting. I have embraced the sophisticated challenges of working remotely, using new versions of software such as Zoom and Skype and utilizing different methods to actively participate in council meeting and panels.

I have actively participated in all council meetings and have attended every full council meeting since being elected in 2018.

In addition to my ward and council duties, I currently hold the position of Assistant Executive Member (Health, Social Care and Population Health). In light of the world pandemic, governmental restrictions have meant adapting and adopting different working practices within the role. I attend virtual meetings through which I contribute through debates and discussions relating to a wide scope of subjects including but not limited to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children, health and wellbeing, mental health support and early help pathways.

I sit on the Speakers Panel (Planning) where I use my decision making skills when considering often complex and contentious planning applications that are submitted before the panel.

I sit on the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel taking an active role in debates and discussions in the specific field of topics being highlighted and scrutinised.

I hold a seat on the North Strategic Neighbourhood Forum where various presentations are delivered and active debate and discussion follows.

**Participation on Outside Bodies and Partnerships**

I regularly attended Police And Communities Together (PACT) meetings and consider myself to be a pro-active member of the group albeit, these meetings have been temporarily suspended until such a time as the Covid-19 pandemic government restrictions are lifted.

I am a Community Champion, a borough wide initiative established by Tameside MBC in response to the Covid-19 crises. My participation in this role involves both endorsing and cascading information from reliable sources onto a social platform, hence ensuring important information is not lost or misinterpreted. Additionally, this role provides an opportunity to identify local residents who require extra support during the pandemic.

I am an active local volunteer for the Smallshaw and Hazelhurst Community Group, providing effective and collaborative working practices with partners including Ashton United Football Club and Save the Children who have played a key role during the Covid-19 crises. The group is focused on

delivering multiple initiatives to local people who may have been faced with problems such as furlough, redundancy, shielding or changes in the regular delivery of services. Vital resources such as food, medication and other essentials are being delivered to the local community in response to the potential hardships and detrimental effects brought about by the pandemic.

I have participatory involvement with the Hartshead Estate Homewatch group.

I am principal administrator for the Green Lane and Broadoak Homewatch WhatsApp group.

### **Constituency Work and Local Issues**

Unsurprisingly, with all but essential services running at reduced capacity, I have seen a substantial increase in my casework, some of which has arisen as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

I am dealing with a continuation of complaints and issues relating to construction work on the Hartshead development site situated on the footprint of the former Hartshead School.

I am working collaboratively with Tameside MBC, the local MP, ward colleagues, residents and partners in dealing with complex anti-social behaviour difficulties occurring on Hartshead estate.

I have highlighted concerns with Jigsaw Homes relating to the decline in the overall condition of Smallshaw in comparison with previous years, referencing environmental issues, pest control problems and overt drug dealing in and around the locality.

I am supporting local residents who have raised concerns about anti-social behaviour, overgrown trees, recycling, speeding traffic and the increase in litter specifically around Hurst Cross.

### **Members Advice Surgeries**

I deliver advice surgeries by telephone, email and roaming surgeries (where appropriate).

### **Training and Development**

I continue to attend regular online training and development sessions on subjects such as but not limited to, dealing with domestic violence, boundary reviews, media training and Covid-19 update briefing sessions.

### **Achievements during the Year**

As the thread throughout my report demonstrates, this year has been very different due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the consequent restrictions placed upon us in a bid to reduce transmission of the virus. With social distancing measures in place, there has been little room for face to face social interactions, nevertheless, I have illustrated how, by innovative strategic working practices and transference of skills, I have succeeded in placing a strong emphasis upon the needs and wellbeing of my constituents ensuring that nobody is left behind.

### **Any other comments**

I am immensely proud to represent the constituents of Ashton Hurst and find myself lost in admiration for the resilience and compassion emerging from the local community during a time which is globally recognised as unprecedented.

At the time of writing this report, restrictions have been slightly eased so as to allow 'door knocking' sessions within my ward. This has allowed me to see first-hand how the people of Ashton Hurst have responded to the crises and I am overwhelmed by the positivity and kindness residents are showing towards one another, with neighbours helping each other and supporting the most vulnerable in their local area.

As we emerge from lockdown restrictions due to take place in June 2021, my priorities will be supporting local businesses as the local economy starts to reopen and by working together with the local community and partners, to make Ashton Hurst an even better place to live.

This can be achieved by tackling areas which have become neglected such as 'clean up days' where skips are provided and local volunteers litter pick, 'planting days' – local people planting and displaying hanging baskets and grot spots are cleared in favour of planting woodland flowers which will take little future maintenance and ultimately brighten the area.

Going forward, it is my ambition to create a community fun day in Ashton Hurst, bringing the local community together once again.