
ECONOMIC IMPACT & RESPONSE

Key Messages

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

Growth Company Situation Report & Business Survey

Results for Tameside to May 2021

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

COVID-19 Business Support

Government Schemes.

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

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

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

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

HMRC payment holidays – Payment breaks on VAT bills.

Business Growth Hub & GMCA provision

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

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

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

Skills Support for Growth – to develop skills and apprenticeships

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

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

Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce

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

Business Communications

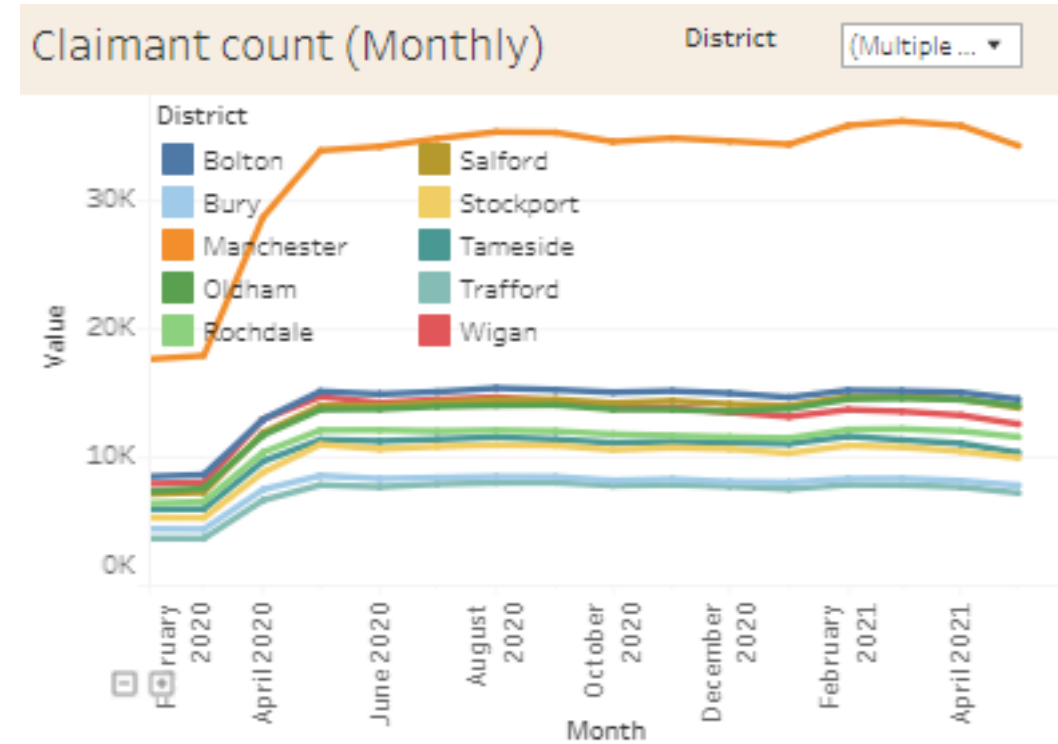
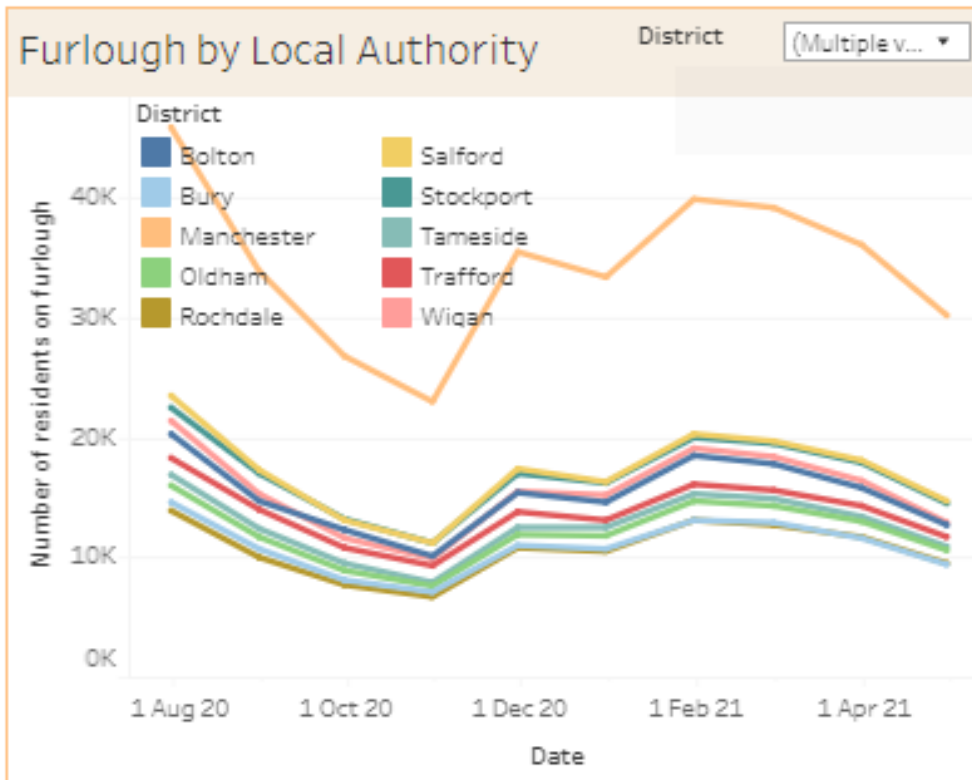
We have implemented a multi-channel communication approach to ensure the maximum spread of information on the offer.

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

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

Employment Data

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



Support to retain or move back into employment

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

Tameside Council Support

Tameside Business Resilience Clinic (BRC)

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

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

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

Routes to Work

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

Operating safely

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

Tameside Employment Fund (TEF) from 2019 until March 2021

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

Future Support Plan

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

LOCAL PLAN

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