

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>JOINT MEETING EXECUTIVE CABINET/OVERVIEW PANEL</b>
<b>Date:</b>	9 February 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Sandra Stewart, Director – Governance and Pensions Sarah Threlfall, Assistant Director – Policy, Performance and Communications
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY UPDATE</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	To receive for information, a summary of the work undertaken by the Council's two Scrutiny Panels.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	That Overview Panel is asked to note the content of the report and summary of scrutiny activity. All related documents can be viewed within the appendices.
<b>Links to Corporate Plan:</b>	Scrutiny work programmes are linked to the Council's corporate priorities. Scrutiny activity seeks to support effective decision making and priorities across Tameside.
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	The work programmes comprise activity that seeks to check the effective implementation of policy and if appropriate make recommendations to the Executive with regard to development, performance monitoring, outcomes and value for money.
<b>Financial Implications: (Authorised by the Section 151 Officer)</b>	There are no direct financial implications arising from the content of this report. Any policy or service delivery changes considered as a consequence of Scrutiny activity and the recommendations from Scrutiny Panels will need to be assessed separately and the financial implications determined as part of this consideration.
<b>Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	The Overview Panel provides a critical scrutiny function which will be supported by the work programme as set out in this report.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	Regular updates to Overview Panel provide assurance that scrutiny is progressing with an effective work programme, supporting good decision making and service improvement.
<b>Access to Information:</b>	The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Paul Radcliffe, Policy and Strategy Lead by:  Telephone: 0161 342 2199  e-mail: <a href="mailto:paul.radcliffe@tameside.gov.uk">paul.radcliffe@tameside.gov.uk</a>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Update provides a platform for appropriate insight, activity, outcomes and proposals to be relayed. This method of reporting supports the improved responsiveness of scrutiny work and also prevents any delay in the communication of key messages.
- 1.2 The report, by nature, aims to provide members with a general summary of scrutiny activity and proposals. It remains that all reports produced by Scrutiny as a result of in-depth review will be tabled separately at the earliest opportunity.

## 2. SCRUTINY ACTIVITY

- 2.1 Scrutiny in practice remains mindful of the suitability and appropriateness of timings with regard to the impact and value of planned activity. This includes the selection and order of topics and updates to be received during the year. The annual work programmes and priorities were agreed at the June meetings and this coincides with consultation activity for which a valued response and input can be achieved. The tables below provide a summary and chronology of scrutiny activity.

**Figure 1: Breakdown of activity at most recent Scrutiny Panel meetings**

<b>PLACE AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS</b>	
<b>2 November 2021</b>	<b>11 January 2022</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Panel met Councillor Gerald Cooney, Executive Member, Housing, Planning and Employment; Ian Saxon, Director of Place; Gregg Stott, Assistant Director; and John Gregory, Head of Community Safety and Homelessness, to receive an update in response to the Scrutiny desktop review of homelessness and housing.</li> <li>The Panel received a letter of the Scrutiny Chairs to Councillor Oliver Ryan, Executive Member, Finance and Economic Growth, in response to the mid-year budget update.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Panel met Councillor Oliver Ryan, Executive Member (Finance and Economic Growth); and Tim Rainey, Assistant Director, to receive an update on the Council's current position and the wider digital strategy and offer for 2022 and beyond.</li> <li>The Panel received the final report to conclude the review of Homelessness and Housing.</li> </ul>
<b>INTEGRATED CARE AND WELLBEING</b>	
<b>4 November 2021</b>	<b>13 January 2022</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Panel met Councillor Eleanor Wills, Executive Member, Adult Social Care and Health; and Stephanie Butterworth, Director of Adult Services, to receive an update on current challenges, recent consultations and future strategic priorities for Adult Services.</li> <li>The Panel received a letter of the Scrutiny Chairs to Councillor Oliver Ryan, Executive Member, Finance and Economic Growth, in response to the mid-year budget update.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Panel met Councillor Leanne Feeley, Executive Member (Lifelong Learning, Equalities, Culture and Heritage); and Tim Bowman, Director of Education, to receive an update on the recent SEND inspection, outcomes and actions.</li> <li>The Panel received a service response to the LGSCO Focus Report – <i>HELP! Learning to improve council services for domestic abuse victims</i>, published November 2021.</li> <li>The Panel received an interim paper on the review of Mental Health Provision (Access and Crisis), to be shared with the Executive.</li> </ul>

### Scrutiny Work Programmes and activity

- 2.2 At the Scrutiny Panel meetings held in June 2021, all panel members were provided with the opportunity to comment and contribute to the list of topics included in the annual work programmes. The programme of work covers a two-year rolling period to be reviewed, updated and agreed on an annual basis.
- 2.3 Scrutiny is mindful of the suitability and appropriateness of timings, with regard to the impact and value of planned activity. This includes the selection and order of topics and updates during the year. The work programme is ambitious and it is not an expectation that all topics and subject areas be covered during this period, but more an agreed list from which to select work items.
- 2.4 The table below provides a summary of activity undertaken by Scrutiny Panels for the period March 2021 to January 2022, with topics cited in Annual Work Programmes (**Appendix 1**).

**Figure 2: Summary of Scrutiny activity and oversight (March 2021 to January 2022)**

Place and External Relations	Integrated Care and Wellbeing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HMIC inspection of GMP</li> <li>• Climate change and improving the local environment</li> <li>• Economic impacts of Covid-19</li> <li>• Tameside cultural offer and strategy</li> <li>• Homelessness and Housing</li> <li>• Digital offer and delivery</li> <li>• Response to Community Safety Strategy consultation</li> <li>• Corporate performance scorecard</li> <li>• Mid-year budget update</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Improvement Service</li> <li>• Health and Care Bill</li> <li>• Children’s Services – Ofsted focused visit</li> <li>• Mental health and wellbeing (Access and Crisis)</li> <li>• Adult Services</li> <li>• Tameside SEND inspection</li> <li>• Assurance review of LGSCO focus report – Domestic Abuse</li> <li>• Corporate performance scorecard</li> <li>• Mid-year budget update</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Children’s Working Group</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fostering marketing and recruitment</li> <li>• Children’s Services Improvement Plan</li> </ul>

### **Budget Consultation**

- 2.5 Scrutiny Panels received a mid-year budget update at the panel meetings held on 7 and 9 September 2021. The Executive Member for Finance and Economic Growth received a formal response of the Scrutiny Chairs, capturing a range of points and highlighting any concerns and specific areas for consideration in supporting the Council’s ongoing work in this area, (**Appendix 2**).
- 2.6 All Scrutiny Panel members were invited to attend one of two annual budget briefing sessions held on 17 January 2022. This follows on from a mid-year budget position update received in September 2021. The independence of Scrutiny enables members to seek assurances on budget planning, process and priorities for 2022/23 and beyond. It is also appropriate for budget priorities to inform future Scrutiny activity and work programmes. A response letter

of the Scrutiny Chairs has been sent to the Executive Member for Finance and Economic Growth; and the Director of Finance – Section 151 Officer, (**Appendix 3**).

### **Follow-up on past reviews**

- 2.7 As detailed within the annual work programme, both Scrutiny Panels have recently conducted follow-up activity in order to monitor and seek assurances against past recommendations. This work is a vital part of the review process and it is customary for follow-up activity to take place approximately 12 months following the initial review.
- 2.8 The Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel has recently revisited the following review.
- Recruitment and Retention of Foster Carers - follow up has now been received at meetings of the Children's Working Group on 12 November 2020 and 20 September 2021.
- 2.9 The Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel has recently revisited the following review.
- Improving Quality and Standards in the Private Rented - as part of the Homelessness and Housing review, detail of the wider housing strategy and homelessness prevention work touched upon the role of the private rented sector.
  - A further recommendation was put to the Executive regarding future decision-making linked with previous ambitions to improve quality and standards in the private rented sector; and to connect with regional schemes aimed to promote best practice and build partnerships with the private rented sector.

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

- 2.10 Scrutiny continues to review decisions and focus reports published by the Ombudsman. The aim is 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.
- 2.11 It will remain important to ensure that the subject matter is appropriate, proportionate and can add value. Work in this area has progressed well, with the plan to ensure responses be reported to Overview Panel at the earliest opportunity. Activity informed by recent LGSCO focus reports listed below:
- Focus report – HELP! Learning to improve council services for domestic abuse victims (published November 2021).
    - A response of the Executive Member (Health, Social Care and Population Health) and Interim Director of Population Health, received January 2022. The focus report and response tabled in a separate report to the joint meeting of Cabinet and Overview Panel on 9 February 2022.

### **Consultation and Engagement**

- 2.12 Scrutiny will remain suitably informed of open consultations at a local, regional and national level. Past responses include:
- Community Safety Strategy – January 2021
  - Health Improvement Service – April 2021
- 2.13 Where appropriate Scrutiny Panels will undertake engagement outside of the formal meetings with Council services and external partners. The Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel provided a direct response and feedback to:
- Greater Manchester Police HMICFRS Inspection

### **Keeping Scrutiny Members Informed**

- 2.14 All Scrutiny Panel members receive a monthly update email, with the purpose of raising awareness to a variety of materials to support their role, provide access to scrutiny resources and the ongoing opportunity for councillors to contribute and share any open consultations

and engagement exercises. This will continue to include a wide variety of topic areas for consideration.

- 2.15 The update email also includes links to Greater Manchester Priorities and the work of the Combined Authority Scrutiny Panels. This also provides a further opportunity to inform members how the work of scrutiny is shared and reported within the Council. .

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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