

## EXECUTIVE CABINET

14 February 2024

**Commenced:** 13:00

**Terminated:** 14:10

**Present:** Councillors Cooney (Chair), Fairfoull (Vice-Chair) Jackson, Kitchen, Naylor, North, Taylor, Ward and Wills

Overview Panel: Councillors Fitzpatrick, Billington Reid, Roderick, Sharif and M. Smith,

<b>In Attendance:</b>	Sandra Stewart	Chief Executive
	Ashley Hughes	Director of Resources (S151 Officer)
	Julian Jackson	Director of Place
	Stephanie Butterworth	Director of Adult Services
	Debbie Watson	Director of Public Health
	Tracy Brennand	Assistant Director for People and Workforce Development
	Tom Hoghton	Policy & Strategy Service Manager
	Alec Milner	Policy Officer

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillors Choksi

### 119 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 120 MINUTES

#### RESOLVED

**That the Minutes of the meeting of Executive Cabinet held on 24 January 2024 be approved as a correct record.**

### 121 SCRUTINY UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive. The report provided a summary of the work undertaken by the Council's Scrutiny Panels during November 2023 to February 2024.

Members were advised that the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel on the 7 November 2023 met with the Executive Member for Inclusive Growth, Business & Employment, Assistant Director for Investment, Development and Housing and the Head of Economy and Skills to receive an update on strategic priorities, work streams, local delivery and support for business and employment. The Panel also received the formal response submitted to the Executive Member for Towns & Communities on the draft Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. On the 9 January 2024 the Panel met the Executive Member for Planning, Transport & Connectivity, Director of Place and Planning Policy Team Manager to receive an update on developments and arrangements for Tameside. The Members also received the response letter sent to the First Deputy (Finance, Resources & Transformation) and the Director of Resources following a mid-year budget update received on 6 November 2023.

It was reported that the Children's Services Scrutiny Panel on the 8 November 2023 met with the Deputy Executive Leader (Children and Families), the Director of Children's Services and the Interim Head of Quality Assurance to review the Children's Social Care and Early Help Scorecard and to receive a summary of findings and learning from recent quality assurance work audits with a focus on practice improvement. On the 11 January 2023 the Panel met with the Executive Member

for Education and Achievement, Director of Children's Services and the Interim Lead for SEND to receive an update specific to the provision of SEND services and required improvements. The Panel received a response to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Focus Report, Parent Power: learning from complaints and personal budgets published November 2023. Further, the Panel reviewed the Quality Assurance Scorecard and a response to enquiries made previous and the Members received the response letter to the First Deputy (Finance Resources & Transformation) and Director of Resources following a midyear budget update.

The Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel on the 9 November 2024 met the Medical Director of Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust, Deputy Place Based Lead, Head of Mental Health Learning Disabilities and Autism to receive an update on mental health priorities for Tameside and an overview of services and support delivered by Pennine Care. On the 11 January 2024 the Panel met with the Independent Chair, Tameside Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board and Head of Safeguarding, Quality and Practice to receive the annual report. The Panel met the Manager of Healthwatch Tameside, to receive the annual report and to discuss opportunities regarding insight and information sharing, forward plans and the learning available by effectively capturing the voice and experience of patients and service users. Members of the Panel also received the response letter sent to the First Deputy (Finance, Resources & Transformation) and the Director of Resources, following a mid-year budget update review on 6 November 2023.

#### **RESOLVED**

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

#### **122 SCRUTINY ACTIVITY 2023/24**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive, which provided a summary of work undertaken by the Council's Scrutiny Panels for 2023/24.

Members were advised that at the start of the Municipal Year all Panel members were provided with the opportunity to comment and contribute to the list of topics included within the annual work programmes. The programme of work for each panel covers a two-year rolling period to be reviewed, updated and agreed on an annual basis. The report provided a breakdown of the activity undertaken by Scrutiny Panels for the period March 2023 to February 2024, with topics cited in Annual Work Programmes.

#### **REOSLVED**

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

#### **123 SCRUTINY BUDGET CONSULTATION**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chair of Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel / Chair of Children's Services Scrutiny Panel / Chair of Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel / Chief Executive.

It was reported that all Scrutiny members, along with the Chair, Deputy Chair and non-executive members of Overview Panel, were invited to attend one of two budget briefing sessions held on 15 January 2024. This followed on from a mid-year budget position for 2023/24, received in November 2023. The update on 15 January 2024 was provided by Councillor Jacqueline North (First Deputy – Finance, Resources & Transformation); and Ashley Hughes, Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer). Also in attendance were the Chief Executive and Directors. Scrutiny members received an overview of the 2023/24 financial outturn and budget planning for 2024/25. A collective response letter of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Chairs was sent to the First Deputy (Finance, Resources and Transformation); and Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer) attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

It was also reported that all Scrutiny members, along with the Chair, Deputy Chair and non-executive members of Overview Panel, were provided with an opportunity to attend one of two

budget briefing sessions held on 6 November 2023. The sessions provide members with the opportunity to receive a comprehensive appraisal, which included an overview of key financial assumptions, the current budget position and a forward view regarding risks and pressures. A collective response letter of the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Chairs was sent to the First Deputy (Finance, Resources and Transformation); and Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer) – Appendix 2. The Chair of Overview and the Scrutiny Chairs received a direct response from the First Deputy and Director of Finance to the Scrutiny mid-year letter. The letter provided a detailed reply to the questions and comments shared in November. The letter had subsequently been shared with all Scrutiny members and was to be tabled at Scrutiny Panels in March 2024 – Appendix 3.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the summary and feedback based on recent scrutiny engagement on the budget position for 2024/25 and future planning be noted.**

### **124 PERIOD 9 2023/24 FORECAST OUTTURN – REVENUE AND CAPITAL**

Consideration was given to a report of the First Deputy (Finance, Resources and Transformation) / Director of Resources. The report detailed the forecast outturn for period 9 of the current financial year.

It was reported that overall there were significant overspends on expenditure of £10.370m on the underlying position within the General Fund. This showed the total potential overspend, should actions within the recovery plans to bring the expenditure down to within budget not be taken. As per the Council's financial regulations, Directors had a responsibility to manage within budgeted levels of expenditure and where overspends occur, Directors were required to present a recovery plan to the Section 151 Officer.

At month 8, recovery plans were presented to the cabinet, which included actions totalling £9.335m. Reviews of proposed actions had been undertaken by service areas in conjunction with Finance in the period between Month 8 and Month 9 reporting to ensure that actions could be delivered as planned. This had resulted in a reduction in the total value of plans of £2.321m, to £7.014m. This decrease in deliverable actions had increased the residual overspend from £3.824m at month 8 to £7.342m at month 9. Recovery Plans were a standing agenda item at Senior Leadership Team meetings and would remain so for the duration of the financial year to ensure corporate oversight. Any pressures or undelivered savings within Directorates by the end of the financial year would need to be resolved in the next financial year, in addition to delivering MTFS proposals to meet the budget gap for 2024/25.

A £4.731m overspend was forecast on the DSG fund, mainly due to unprecedented levels of growth on Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs), at which the work on the Delivering Better Value (DBV) project was targeted. The DBV project was in the final stages of consideration with the Department for Education (DfE) for a revenue grant to support the deliverables agreed between the Council and the DfE.

The Capital budget had forecast budgets of £11.885m to be reprofiled to future years in 2023/24, agreed at month 6, representing a reduction from previous reprofiling requested, due to schemes progressing more quickly than expected. This did not affect the overall programme budget which was forecast to underspend by £2.872m.

## **RESOLVED**

**That Executive Cabinet approve:**

- (i) **The extension of four posts within the Adult Services Moving with Dignity team (two manual handling practitioners, a senior practitioner and an occupational therapy assistant), for a further three-year period, 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2027 funded through the Disabled Facilities Capital grant.**
- (ii) **Drawdown of £0.706m from the Complex Placements Reserve to support high-cost**

- high need placements in the Children's directorate.
- (iii) The acceptance of £0.050m ABEN Warm Winter Fund from GMCA which aims to provide enhanced capacity during the period 1 November 2023 to 31 March 2024 to support the delivery of the 'A Bed Every Night' grant funding programme within Homelessness.
- (iv) Draw down of £113k from the IT investment fund to commission SoCITM to undertake a digital maturity assessment, review and update the digital strategy, develop a digital roadmap and develop a Target Operating Model for the ICT service.

**That Executive Cabinet note:**

- (i) The forecast General Fund revenue budget position of an overspend of £10.370m, prior to any remaining recovery plan actions
- (ii) The update on the production of recovery plans to mitigate the shortfall in budgets, with total mitigations of £7.014m identified, of which £3.028m is due to be delivered in quarter 4, with the remainder included in the month 9 overspend.
- (iii) That there is a projected General Fund overspend for the Council of £7.342m, following the application of actions within draft recovery plans and the identification of additional pressures.
- (iv) The forecast deficit on the DSG of £4.731m, which is a slight adverse movement of £0.013m on the month 8 position.
- (v) The Capital programme position of projected spend of £46.946m, following Cabinet approval to reprofile project spend of £1.024m from 2024/25.

## **125 2024/25 BUDGET REPORT**

Consideration was given to a report of the First Deputy (Finance, Resources & Transformation) / Director of Resources. The purpose of this report was to set out and seek approval for the setting of a balanced budget for the Council for the financial year 2024/25, including a proposed Council Tax increase and an adult social care precept increase. This report also set out forecasts for the years up to 2028/29. The Council was required by law to set a balanced budget for the upcoming financial year. Provisional Council funding for 2024/25 was announced in the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement in December 2023 and was expected to be confirmed in February 2024. The Council must set the budget and agree the level of Council Tax by 11 March 2024 at the latest.

The proposals set out in the report and the detailed appendices proposed a balanced Council budget for 2024/25 subject to the delivery of identified budget reductions, and agreement of a proposed increase in Council Tax. Appendix 1 to the report provided a summary of the Council budget for 2024/25 and forecasts for future years. Budget summaries for each Directorate were included in Appendices 6 to 11 to the report. Balancing the 2024/25 budget had only been possible through the agreement of challenging budget reductions, income generation and demand management. Demand and cost pressures were forecast to continue to increase during 2024/25 and as a result the Council still faced a significant budget gap in future years.

It was explained that the Council had been working on proposals to deliver suitable and sufficient budget reductions to bridge the gap in 2024/25 and to support delivery of the MTFS to 2028/29. As such, the budget reductions of £11.828m were proposed in 2024/25, with further costed and planned budget reductions to 2026/27 detailed in the report. Additional work would be undertaken to extend budget reduction proposals and transformation ideas to 2028/29 that were costed and considered to be deliverable.

The budget reduction proposals, as part of the wider budget, had been subject to public consultation since Cabinet in December 2023 and were going through both internal and external scrutiny with reviews with Political Groups, Scrutiny Panels, Star Chamber sessions and Neighbourhood forums all in January 2024. In addition to this, work had been ongoing for confirmation of deliverability by officers as part of the assurance process to set a balanced budget. Budget reductions totalling £14.429m had been identified, with £11.828m falling in 2024/25. Within Adults Social Care, a clear

theme of maximising independence was key to the proposals proposed to transform the Service, with a strong commissioning focus and review of provision, including resettlement into the Borough.

Significant budget reductions were proposed within Children's Social Care for 2024/25, with a clear focus on supporting children in familial settings as part of the Children's Improvement plan, moving away from external residential settings and with the knowledge that better outcomes for children, cost less. In addition, a full review of transport options across the Council, including home to school transport with a view to build resilience and independence were underway with a theme of maximising independence for young people. Additional budget reductions were anticipated as a result of the ongoing Children's Improvement Plan for future years, however following the Ofsted inspection in December 2023, it was prudent to fully review and consider the quantum and phasing of potential budget reductions in Children's Social Care to ensure the Council adequately supported the long-term transformation of practice and care provided to the young people of the Borough. The phasing of future reductions was dependent on the speed of improvement, however it was clear that Children's Social Care must contribute to delivering a balanced budget over that period.

Within the Place Directorate, a range of budget reductions had been put forward with a view to proactively addressing the rising demand for services, such as the increased demand for temporary accommodation (as a result of homelessness), through early intervention and prevention work as well as proposals to increase the sufficiency of suitable accommodation. In addition, the Directorate had reviewed fees and charges (with the exception of off-street car parking). The Parking Strategy would support the inclusion of on-street parking charges. The continuation of new contactless car parking payment machines will be fully rolled out, and standardised parking fees would be implemented across the Borough with the new machines.

## **RESOLVED**

**That Full Council be recommended to approve:**

- (i) The budgeted net expenditure for the financial year 2024/25 of £266.984m as set out in section 4 and Appendix 1 to the report, noting the significant pressures outlined in Appendix 2 to the report.**
- (ii) The proposed budget reductions to be delivered by management outlined in section 5 and Appendix 3 to the report.**
- (iii) The uplifts to fees and charges as set out in Appendix 15 to the report.**
- (iv) The proposed resourcing of the budget as set out in section 6 of the report.**
- (v) A 2.99% increase to Council Tax and an increase of 2% in respect of the Adult Social Care precept for 2024/25.**
- (vi) The Director of Resources' assessment of the robustness of the budget estimates and adequacy of reserves as set out in Appendix 4 to the report. Following this, determine that the estimates are robust for the purpose of setting the budget and that the proposed minimum General Fund Balance is adequate.**
- (vii) The proposed minimum General Fund Balance of £27.537m set out in Appendix 5 to the report.**
- (viii) The Reserves Strategy and note the projected reserves position as set out in Appendix 5 to the report.**
- (ix) The Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25, which includes the proposed borrowing strategy, Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy.**
- (x) The Capital Strategy 2023/24.**
- (xi) The Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25 as set out in section 12 and Appendix 19 to the report.**
- (xii) Delegated authority to the Directors (in consultation with the Section 151 officer) to agree any uplifts required to other contractual rates from 1 April 2024 which Directorates will manage within their approved budgets for 2024/25.**

**That Full Council be recommended to note:**

- (i) The significant financial challenges and risks set out in this report.**
- (ii) Note that the budget projections set out in section 6 assume a 1.99% per annum increase in general Council Tax from 2025/26 through to 2028/29. The budget projections also assume that there is no reduction to current levels of Government**

**funding.**

- (iii) **Note the position on the Capital Programme (Section 12 and Appendix 17) previously approved by Executive Cabinet, and the forecast future investment requirements.**

## **126 BUSINESS RATES ACT 2023**

Consideration was given to a report of the First Deputy (Finance, Resources and Transformation) / Assistant Director of Exchequer Services. It was explained that the Non-Domestic Rating Act 2023 was given Royal Assent on 26 October 2023. Detailed in the Act were changes to current reliefs, the introduction of new relief and the removal of reliefs that were now obsolete. The Act also provided for the future commencement regulations in respect of duties on ratepayers to provide information to the VOA and HMRC and gateways for the VOA to share information with ratepayers and HMRC to share information with billing authorities.

Members were advised that the Chancellor delivered the Autumn statement on 22 November 2023, and announced a package of support worth £4.3 billion over the next 5 years to support small businesses and the high street. Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief was to continue into 2024/25 at the rate of 75% for all eligible businesses. This would be fully funded by central government.

From 1 April 2024 the restriction in Section 47 (7) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 on backdating of discretionary relief had been removed. A local decision was now required to determine whether to continue with the existing process in accordance with current legislation regarding backdating of discretionary relief which was to only allow relief to be applied for a period of six months from the end of the previous financial year, or to amend the Discretionary Relief Policy with local rules.

The report recommended that a backdate of discretionary relief for a period of no more than 6 months from the end of a financial year, subject to eligibility, be awarded. This would have no financial impact on the Council's budget in respect of fully funded reliefs to businesses and would continue to support the economic wellbeing of local businesses, while being cognisant of the impact on the budget in respect of discretionary rate relief awards to charities and community groups as 99% of each award was funded by the Council. The costs of backdating discretionary rate relief would be monitored during 2024/25.

A further full review was proposed of the existing Discretionary Relief Policy to consider the amount of discretionary rate relief currently awarded to charities, CASC's and Not for Profit Organisations and Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Groups (VCFS) with a report being drafted for Executive Cabinet in summer 2024. Ratepayers must be notified 12 months in advance of any changes, in accordance with Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, therefore notification letters must be issued to ratepayers prior to 31 March 2024 for any potential change to become effective from 1 April 2025.

### **RESOLVED**

- (i) **That Retail, Hospitality and Leisure relief be administered and awarded as a discretionary relief in accordance with Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act.**
- (ii) **That the Discretionary Relief Policy be amended to include requests for retrospective awards of discretionary relief will be considered for a period of no more than 6 months from the end of a financial year, subject to eligibility, as detailed in Option 1 of this report at Section 2.10.**
- (iii) **That the Discretionary Relief Policy be reviewed during the financial year 2024 with changes taking effect from 1 April 2025 after the necessary 12-month notice has been given to ratepayers.**

## **127 MICROSOFT ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT RENEWAL**

Consideration was given to a report of the First Deputy (Finance, Resources and Transformation) / Assistant Director for ICT & Digital. Members were informed that the Microsoft Enterprise Agreement would expire on 31 March 2024 and this report set out the proposed investment required to further strengthen the Councils security posture, improve data security, and ensure compliance. There were also additional benefits in terms of Teams telephony services and business intelligence, through Power BI to create data visualisations. The report also covered the licences to be purchased to unlock the automation, low code, and rapid development capabilities available through the Microsoft Power Platform.

The existing agreement consisted of E3 licences for all its laptop users, which provided 2,800 user licences and was at a cost of £1.750m over the three-year contract.

In addition to the E3 licences 1,600 licences were purchased for Teams telephony which allowed for the removal of desktop telephony, and this was at a cost of c. £0.285m. However, it had recently become apparent that the 1,600 licences purchased had all been allocated to users and additional licences had been purchased to ensure users had the Teams telephony capability to support their role and to avoid allocating them with a mobile phone. To support hybrid working, there were also a few licences purchased for the facilitation of Teams meetings within the meeting rooms, allowing those working from home to join meetings hosted within the meeting rooms at Tameside One. The total cost for the current contract over the three years was £2.200m.

It was proposed that as part of the new Enterprise Agreement, Tameside Council move from the current M365, E3 licensing to E5, which meant there would be an increase in the revenue commitment over the next three years. The move to E5 licences would unlock considerably more capabilities in addition to those already received as part of the E3 licences and included Teams telephony as standard, therefore not needing Teams telephony licences to be purchased separately.

The Microsoft E5 licence provided increased security, compliance, and data loss prevention features, plus a few additional capabilities around telephony and data visualisation tools. E5 licences, would provide several benefits to the organisation but also to the ICT & Digital service, some of which were:

- A standardised set of tools, making it easier to manage and maintain services.
- A standardised training approach for staff, as staff will not need to maintain their skills in various technologies.
- Simpler to recruit, as the skill set required was defined to a core standardised architecture.

It was explained that the Council was barely touching the surface when it came to realising the benefits of M365. It was planned that an M365 Programme was stood up in the very near future, through which a capability roadmap would be developed to ensure the Council was making the most of the licences purchased as quickly as possible. The capabilities once made available would also increase security as well provide services with the tools to work more digitally and remove low complexity manual processes and transform agile working.

The proposed change to E5 licences and the inclusion of the minimum Power Platform licences as part of the Microsoft Enterprise Agreement would result in a total increase of £0.492m over the length of the contract (3 years). The total cost over the term of the contract was c. £2.692m.

## **RESOLVED**

**That Executive Cabinet approve:**

- (i) The procurement of Microsoft 365 E5 licences for the authority over a period of three years from 31 March 2024 – 31 March 2027.**
- (ii) A further report be presented to Executive Cabinet in 2024/25 detailing the full benefits realisation from the implementation of the E5 licences.**

**That Executive Cabinet note:**

- (i) **The gross increase in costs of £0.492m over a three-year period**
- (ii) **The gross budget reductions of £0.250m over a three-year period from decommissioning licences no longer needed**
- (iii) **The additional funding for the licence cost increase is captured in the 2024/25 Budget at Full Council.**

## **128 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE UPDATE, JANUARY 2024**

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Leader / Chief Executive. The report detailed the corporate scorecard attached to the report and the progress towards achievement of the Corporate Plan and improving the services provided to residents, business and key stakeholders within the locality.

The Corporate Plan outcomes scorecard attached at Appendix 1 to the report, contained indicators focused on long term outcomes across the eight corporate plan priorities. The measures within this scorecard were chosen to illustrate how the Council's work directly and indirectly impacted the lives and experiences of Tameside residents.

The report highlighted that the rate at which Tameside residents aged 65 years or older were permanently admitted to residential or nursing care was 181.6 per 10,000 in Quarter 2, up from 152.8 in the same quarter the previous year. This change has been identified as administrative due to an ongoing piece of work to transition service users on long-term temporary contracts to permanent contracts. The percentage of service users who reported finding it easy to find information about the services they receive climbed to 69.5% in 2022/2023, up from 57.7% in the previous year and higher than the national average of 67.2%.

It was reported that the percentage of Tameside children meeting the expected level in phonics decoding was 75% in 2023, up from 72% in 2022 but below the national average of 79%. 81.1% of three and four year-olds placed in Early Years settings that were rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted in the Autumn term, down from 92% in the previous Autumn term. Provisional Key Stage 2 figures for 2023 showed no improvement in outcomes, with the percentage of pupils meeting expected standards remaining at 57% compared to the national average of 59%. Looking specifically at reading, the percentage of Tameside pupils meeting the expected standard has fallen from 76% in 2022 to 72% in 2023, again below the national average of 73%. Demand for Children's Social Care had increased significantly; the service conducted 1,229 child and family assessments in Quarter 3, an increase of 25.5% on the same quarter last year. There had also been an increase in the number of domestic abuse incidents reported to Children's Social Care 876 incidents were reported in Quarter 3, up 13.9% from the 769 incidents reported to the service in the same quarter last year.

It was also reported that the number of Tameside children and young people aged 10 to 17 years old, who entered the criminal justice system for the first time had increased significantly over the previous year. In October 2022- Sept 2023 there were 59 young people (a rate of 257 per 100,000 10-17 year olds) compared to 39 young people in October 2021- Sept 2022 (a rate of 170 per 100,000 10-17 year olds). This was partly attributed to the renewed focus of GMP as part of their improvement plan, to conduct more stop and searches, make more arrests, and detect more crime. Further analysis was required to truly appreciate the opportunities to reverse this trend.

In regards to Place, the median annual gross income of full-time workers living in Tameside was £30,909 in 2023, below the national average of £35,100. The percentage increase in Tameside median wages was 6.1% from the 2022 figure, compared to a headline Consumer Price Index (CPI) annual inflation rate of 8.7% (Office for National Statistics consumer inflation estimates, April 2023).

The percentage of Tameside residents in employment in the 12 months to June 2023 was 71.3%, down from 75.8% in the 12 months to June 2022 and below the national average employment rate of 75.8%.

It was reported that the number of Tameside residents receiving Universal Credit was increasing, with 28,498 residents with open cases in October 2023, up 10.4% on the same month in 2022. In the same month, 38% of Universal Credit recipients were in work, down from 39% on October 2022 and below the national average of 38.7%. The percentage of Tameside residents working in skilled employment (standard occupation classifications 1, 2, 3, and 5) had fallen slightly, from 50.8% in the 12 months to June 2022 to 50.4% in the 12 months to June 2023. Tameside residents were significantly less likely to work in skilled employment than across England, with the national average sitting at 61.3%. The number of households homeless or at risk of homelessness, and consequently owed a prevention or relief duty from the Council was 3.43 per 1,000 chargeable dwellings in Quarter 1 of 2023/2024, up from 2.99 in Quarter 1 of the previous year and higher than the national average of 2.98 per 1,000 chargeable dwellings.

**RESOLVED**

**That the contents of the report and scorecards Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 and the glossary of indicators Appendix 3 are noted.**

**129 CORPORATE PLAN 2024-27.**

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Leader / Chief Executive. Members were reminded that Tameside Council’s current corporate plan was agreed pre-Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis. Reflecting on those significant events and other changes it was timely to undertake a review and refresh of the corporate plan. This report summarised the process undertaken for that review and refresh.

It was explained that Tameside Council’s current corporate plan was agreed in 2019 as a joint plan between Tameside Council and Tameside & Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group (CGG). Priorities were arranged across the life course with a heavy focus on health and wellbeing. The plan was well adopted by the workforce, being cited as the start point for strategy and service development. The CCG was disbanded in 2022 and became part of the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership (GMIC). There had also been significant leadership changes at the council – both political and officer – since the plan was agree. Reflecting on those significant events and other changes it was agreed to undertake a review and refresh of the corporate plan in 2023 with an ambition to have a new plan in place by the start of the 2024 municipal year.

The evidence gathering stage had been completed and a new set of proposed aims, objectives and priorities developed by officers. The next stage was for Executive Cabinet to review, comment and amend. It was also proposed to get some LGA support to review the draft for discussion – through a facilitated workshop and then the LGA peer challenge. Once these stages were completed it was proposed to bring a further report brought to outline a process to finalise and agree the new corporate plan.

The evidence sources outlined in the report identified a range of objectives and priorities that officers recommend should be reflected in the new plan. These was a mix of key issues identified from data such as needs assessments; through feedback from residents, elected members and partners; and areas for action in key strategies. A tiered approach was proposed as shown below.

<b>Vision</b> <i>“A place where everyone can achieve their hopes and ambitions”</i>
<b>Priorities</b> (see below)
<b>Objectives</b> (see below)
<b>Strategies</b> (list on the website alongside the corporate plan)
<b>Key Delivery Projects</b> (listed within the corporate plan document)

The five priorities were:

- Best start in life.
- Opportunity to learn and earn.
- Safe, green and supportive communities.
- Healthy and active lives.
- Financially sustainable public services (underpinning priority).

The report detailed the 24 objectives covering the Best Start in Life, Opportunity to Learn and Earn, Safe Green and Supportive Communities and Healthy and Active Lives.

A draft corporate plan document for discussion for member input was attached at Appendix 1.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the new Corporate Plan for the period 2024-27 be approved.**

### **130 HYDE TOWN CENTRE - MASTERPLAN**

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member for Town Centres Communities / Director of Place. The report provided an update on the final Hyde Town Centre Masterplan including the results of the public consultation. Along with Hattersley and Godley Green, Hyde Town Centre is one of Greater Manchester's Growth Locations known as Hyde Triangle. The town centre Masterplan was a key component in ensuring that these major drivers for change support the wider regeneration of Hyde.

It was reported that following the success of the fact-finding exercise, over 1600 people responded with their views and thoughts on the draft vision and Masterplan for Hyde Town Centre. The focus of this phase of the consultation was set out into two key sections: to understand the public's views on the Masterplan vision and vision principles and to better understand people's thoughts on key interventions proposed within the Masterplan. A key focus of the consultation was understanding residents support for the key vision principles that were proposed to support the overall delivery of the Masterplan vision. All vision principles were positively received by the public with all receiving over 66% support. The most positive response from the public was for the principle of Celebrating Hyde by bringing heritage buildings into use, improving the look and feel of the town centre with high quality public and shopfront improvements. This principle received over 88% positive response.

It was explained that in general, the feedback and consultation responses re-enforced the draft Masterplan ideas and vision for Hyde particularly around the proposed role for Hyde Town Hall, principles to re-develop Market Square and the potential for new town centre living. Other recurring messages within the consultation feedback included a strong public support for the former Hyde Library Building, the desire to improve links to Hyde Park and the need to support existing community groups.

Members were advised that the objective of the High Street Accelerators Pilot Programme was for local stakeholders to work in partnership to support the long-term revival and regeneration of declining high streets. At its core, a High Street Accelerator was a partnership intended to empower and incentivise residents, businesses, community groups and other stakeholders to work together with the local authority to develop and deliver a long-term vision to revive and regenerate the high street.

It was stated that following the successful involvement of the High Street Task Force, Hyde had been nominated as the town centre for the Accelerator Programme. Running until March 2025, the aim of the programme was to offer local places the initial support and seed funding to establish the partnership structures and begin delivering projects, but a crucial component of the programme would be assisting partnerships to transition into a durable and long-lasting structure. The

Programme would therefore also support each Accelerator to explore funding options that may help the partnership transition towards a financially sustainable model.

Initial seed funding of £237,000 would be made available to all local authority Partnerships taking part in the programme. The funding was to be used to establish a vision and Partnership for Hyde. Tameside was in a fortunate position in having recently established a Town Centre Delivery Group as well as an agreed vision outlined in this report as part of the master planning process. It was for the Partnership to agree how this funding would be spent.

It was proposed that the existing Hyde Town Centre Delivery Group membership was incorporated into the Hyde Accelerator Programme Delivery Group, with responsibility for oversight, delivery and performance management of the Accelerator Pilot Programme. A non-local authority Chair of the group would be appointed and the Council would act as Treasurer. The Group would also change to a delivery body with decision-making powers. A draft Terms of Reference was included attached at Appendix 3 to the report.

Each Accelerator pilot would also be able to apply for up to £500,000 of additional funding (majority capital funding) to be used for greening projects within the Town Centre. An expression of interest to apply for this funding must be submitted to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities by 1 March 2024. The Accelerator Programme Delivery Group would need to agree the basis for the submission.

## **RESOLVED**

**That Executive Cabinet agree to:**

- (i) Note the findings of the 4-week public consultation;**
- (ii) Note the next steps for delivery and implementation of the Accelerator Programme and UKSPF;**
- (iii) Approve to adopt the Masterplan for Hyde. The Masterplan will steer regeneration in the town and will be a material consideration in determining planning applications in the town;**
- (iv) Approve the establishment of the Hyde Town Centre Accelerator Programme Delivery Group (the Accelerator Partnership), subject to advertising the position for independent chair, and by repurposing the existing Hyde Town Centre Delivery Group. The Partnership will be responsible for the submission of an expression of interest to apply for up to £500,000 of green space improvement projects.**

## **131 LONG TERM PLAN FOR TOWNS FUNDING AND ASHTON TOWN BOARD**

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member for Inclusive Growth, Business & Employment / Director of Place / Assistant Director for Investment, Development and Housing. The report provided an update on the selection of Ashton as one of the 55 towns nationally to receive £20m to invest in local regeneration priorities over a 10 year period, subject to confirmation of further details from Government. Approval was also sought for the formal establishment of the Ashton Town Board and commencement of the draft Ashton Town Plan. A further decision by the Executive Member for Inclusive Growth, Business & Employment to formally accept the funding would be required once the full terms of the Grant Funding Agreement were available.

It was reported that the Long Term Plan for Towns was a new government regeneration programme to support improvements to towns in the UK with a ten year commitment of funding and the creation of new local decision making bodies, Town Boards. The guidance released on 18 December 2023 set out a requirement to establish the Towns Board by April 2024 with a Town Plan prepared for submission to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) by 1 August 2024. The government would then make funding available to support the interventions set out in the Town Plan, subject to assessment of the Plan by DLUHC.

It was explained that within the financial year 2023/2024 the Council would receive £50,000 of capacity funding to support establishment of the Town Board by 1 April 2024 and commence the

planning and initiating of community engagement. On 1 April, DLUHC would provide a further £200,000 of capacity funding to support the development of the Long-Term Plan, including additional community engagement activity to support the submission of the Town Plan before 1 August 2024.

The £20m revenue and capital funding (split 25% revenue and 75% capital) would be awarded to the local authority, acting as accountable body on behalf of the Town Board, and be released over a seven year period with flexibility to spend it over a ten year period. Town Board would need to be properly constituted to assure good governance and respect for the purpose and objectives of the fund. The Levelling Up Funds Local Authority Assurance Framework would apply, requiring the Council's s.151 Officer to provide assurance updates around the proper administration of the funding, including in regard to conflict of interest, subsidy control, procurement, counter fraud and risk.

Additional support would be provided by the Towns Taskforce that will be established as a unit of DLUHC to support the delivery of Town Plans. The Towns Taskforce will report directly to the Secretary for State for Levelling Up and the Prime Minister.

It was stated that the Town Board will be responsible for developing the Town Plan and reviewing this prior to submission to DLUHC. The local authority were required to act as secretariat to the Town Board.

There was a requirement for the Town Board to be established by 1 April 2024 and be responsible for:

- Identifying the issues and priorities to focus on within the Town Plan, including supporting a process of ongoing community engagement.
- Working with the Council to develop the Town Plan, setting out how local partners will use their knowledge, powers, assets and new funding to deliver for their communities.
- Identifying opportunities for Board members to utilise specific powers to deliver the Town Plan.
- Identifying opportunities to bring in additional investment.
- Overseeing the delivery of projects set out in the Town Plan.

Due to the requirement that the Town Board should be established by April 2024 and the impact of local elections and the associated pre-election period, it will be necessary to hold a first meeting in March 2024 where the proposed Terms of Reference (Appendix 2) can be considered for approval.

## **RESOLVED**

### **That Executive Cabinet:**

- (i) Note the allocation of £20m from the Long Term Plan for Towns for Ashton;**
- (ii) Approve entering into the formal agreements for the receipt of funding, subject an Executive Decision Notice once the full terms of the Grant Funding Agreement are available;**
- (iii) Approve the proposed governance arrangements for the Ashton Town Board and the programme of works associated with the preparation of a draft Ashton Town Plan;**
- (iv) Enable the Director of Place to manage the programme of works associated with the preparation of a draft Ashton Town Plan to inform the first meeting of the Ashton Town Board.**

## **132 STALYBRIDGE STREET FEST 2024**

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member for Inclusive Growth, Business and Employment / Director of Place / Assistant Director for Investment, Development and Housing. The report sought approval to continue Stalybridge Street Fest in 2024 with future delivery brought in-house to support a more financial sustainable delivery model.

It was reported that the Stalybridge Street Fest events were now a well-established events that had delivered on its aim of engaging residents and businesses, increasing footfall in the town centre, supporting local SME traders and increasing the profile of Stalybridge as a desirable location to visit. Demand throughout the programme in the last three years and there was a clear opportunity for the Council to continue to deliver this event for the benefit of the local economy in Stalybridge.

Feedback from attendees had included the high quality offer available, and the social value of having an opportunity to get out and meet friends and family as being significant factors of the events success. In respect of economic growth, footfall and visitor spend was being spread to other town centre businesses who had reported an increase in their own activity and takings. The analysis of footfall data for Street Fest dates showed an average increase of 36% more people in the town centre during Street Fest than compared to the same day at other times of the week. The success of Street Fest had acted as a catalyst for businesses who have taken the opportunity to develop their offer (such as Magpie's Nest), extend their opening times (such as Florence & Amelia's), and establish a new customer base.

Based on success and experience of delivering these events over the last three years, it was proposed that a total of eight Street Fest events be delivered in 2024. The first would be held in April followed by monthly events up to October and a further festive Street Fest at the end of the year.

## **RESOLVED**

**That Executive Cabinet:**

- (i) Approve the delivery of eight Stalybridge Street Fest events in 2024.**
- (ii) Approve the proposed delivery model and a maximum budget of £31,592 via the repurposing of UKSPF (Communities and Place) funding from projects delivered under budget.**
- (iii) Approve the purchase of ten gazebos for Stalybridge at an estimated cost of £9,000 (ex VAT) from the Capital Regeneration Project grant funding.**
- (iv) Note the intention to work towards a sustainable offer following the expiry of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) revenue grant.**

## **133 DETERMINATION OF SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR SEPTEMBER 2025**

Consideration was given to a report of the Deputy Leader (Children's and Families) / Interim Director for Education. The report set out the proposed admission arrangements for Tameside community, and voluntary controlled schools for admission in September 2025.

It was reported that there were no proposed changes to the admission arrangements for September 2024. The latest information on school place planning was presented which concluded that there were currently sufficient places to meet expected demand for mainstream primary and secondary schools with rising levels of surplus capacity in primary schools due to the current birth rate pattern in the borough.

It was explained that the report concluded that there was a need to continue to develop capacity for specialist places given the predicted continuing rise in demand set out in the SEN Sufficiency Strategy.

## **RESOLVED**

**That Executive Cabinet approve the determination of admission arrangements for all Tameside community and voluntary controlled schools for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.**

## 134 ADULT SOCIAL CARE FEES 2024-25

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Homelessness and Inclusivity / Director of Adult Services. The report outlined proposals in relation to revised prices to meet the increasing cost of providing adult services for 2024-25.

Members were advised that Demand for service provision had been rising - the increasing number of older people and younger adults with complex and life limiting conditions and disabilities continued to add further pressure to services provided. As would be expected the increasing complexity of care needs did mean an increasing number of staff was required to support individuals and therefore an associated increase in costs to the Council.

It was explained that in line with Councils across the country the period of the Covid pandemic and the time since had seen increasing numbers of people requiring care and support – seen most acutely in services supporting people to remain living in their own homes. To illustrate this point in domiciliary care, in February 2020, the Council commissioned 9,958 hours per week to support 947 people: In October 2023 this figure had risen to 14,938 hours for 1,202 people which was an increase of 50% in hours and 27% in numbers of people. In staffing terms an increase of 4,980 hours equated to an increased requirement of 135 full time equivalent (FTE) staff members.

It was further explained that the rise in the demand for care and support had not been matched by an increased ability to attract sufficient numbers of staff to keep pace with the demand for support. The sector had seen a significant number of workers leaving the profession for a number of reasons – primarily rates of pay, attractive pay in other sectors (including the retail and hospitality sectors), and general illness and fatigue brought on by the intensity of working through the pandemic and supporting people with increasingly complex needs.

The concerns in relation to workforce needed addressing to ensure that the social care sector was able to offer roles that were attractive in terms of pay and conditions, had positive recognition, and were valued employment options. An increased supply of workers in the sector would be essential in meeting both the current and projected future demand of an aging population for care and support.

It was explained that affordability of fee increases for the Council was a critical consideration given the financial pressure it was under but given the pressures the adult services providers were facing the balance of restrictive fee uplifts could mean that an adequate supply of care and support cannot be maintained to meet the level of demand required. In developing proposals for fee uplifts for providers for 2024-25 a number of options had been considered. The report proposed that fees be increased from 1 April 2024 that include the increase for Real Living Wage and non-pay inflation based on the average inflationary increase of 3.6%. Appendix 1 provides the proposed rates for 2024/25.

### **RESOLVED**

**That Executive Cabinet note the content of the report and approves the**

- (i) proposed new rates for care home placements as detailed in appendix 1 table 2 of this report.**
- (ii) increase in Nursing & Nursing with Dementia fees (appendix 1 table 2) by the increase to the Funded Nursing Care weekly rate effective from 1 April 2024 once confirmed by the Department of Health. There is no additional cost to the Council for this increase as it is fully funded by the NHS.**
- (iii) proposed new rates for Support at Home and Standard Home Care as detailed in appendix 1 table 3 of this report.**
- (iv) spot purchase rates for sleep-in and waking nights as detailed in appendix 1 table 3 of this report.**
- (v) proposed uplifts of Adult Services commissioned contract prices highlighted in appendix 1 table 4 of this report**
- (vi) proposed revised rate for additional hours commissioned in Extra Care of £19.24 per hour. Please refer to paragraph 4.13 of this report.**

- (vii) proposed revised rate for additional hours commissioned in Active Day Services contract of £16.19 per hour. Please refer to paragraph 4.16 of this report.
- (viii) revised Direct Payment rates as detailed in in appendix 1 table 5 of this report
- (ix) rate increases for Shared Lives Carer payments detailed in appendix 1 table 6 of this report
- (x) increase of any fee not included in appendix 1 by 3.6%
- (xi) delegation to the Director of Adult Services to increase any fee in excess of those stated in appendix 1 by a greater percentage rate with supporting evidence.
- (xii) all payment rates detailed in the report to be effective from 1 April 2024.
- (xiii) related impact of care package fee increases on the financial assessment of the service user is from 1 April 2024.

### **135 CONTRACT AWARD FOR THE PROVISION OF AN E-CONTRACT PERFORMANCE SYSTEM**

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Homelessness and Inclusivity / Director of Adult Services. The report sought approval to award the contract as detailed in the report with a contract commencement date of 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2026 with the option to extend for one year.

It was reported that PAMMS had previously been demonstrated to GM Heads of Commissioning, as well as being implemented by Bolton Council, Salford City Council and Oldham Council in 2019 and Stockport MBC in 2023. Tameside MBC was also considering adopting PAMMS in 2019 but the impact of the pandemic delayed this.

A group was established to view PAMMS and Sundown which consisted of people involved in overseeing contracts performance within the Adults Commissioning and Homes for All Team as well as colleagues from NHS GM ICB (Tameside). Overwhelmingly, those who viewed both products preferred the PAMMS system.

Following an in-depth review of the available systems and advice from STAR Procurement, it was recommended that Executive Cabinet approve the direct award via a call off contract from the UK Government G-Cloud Framework to the Access Group, for the procurement of the Provider Assessment and Market Management System (PAMMS) for a period of 2 years from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2026 with the option to extend for one year.

#### **RESOLVED**

**That Executive Cabinet approve the direct award of the contract to the Access Group to procure the Provider Assessment and Market Management System (PAMMS), as a call off contract, procured via the Government G-Cloud Framework.**

### **136 URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

**CHAIR**