

Report To:	OVERVIEW (AUDIT) PANEL
Date:	13 February 2019
Reporting Officer:	Sandra Stewart, Director – Governance and Pensions Sarah Dobson, Assistant Director – Policy, Performance and Communications
Subject:	SCRUTINY UPDATE
Report Summary:	To receive for information, a summary of the work undertaken by the Council's two scrutiny Panels for the period November 2018 to January 2019.
Recommendations:	That Overview (Audit) Panel are asked to note the content of the report and summary of scrutiny activity.
Links to Corporate Plan:	Scrutiny work programmes are linked to the Council's corporate priorities. Scrutiny activity seeks to support effective decision making and priorities across Tameside.
Policy Implications:	The work programmes comprise activity that seeks to check the effective implementation of the Strategic Commission's policies and if appropriate make recommendations to the Executive with regards to development, performance monitoring, outcomes and value for money.
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)	There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report. Any costs incurred by the Scrutiny Panels must be met from existing budgets.
Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)	<p>Overview and scrutiny committees were established in English and Welsh local authorities by the Local Government Act 2000. They were intended as a counterweight to the new executive structures created by that Act (elected mayors or leaders and cabinets). Their role was to develop and review policy and make recommendations to the council.</p> <p>Today, the legislative provisions for overview and scrutiny committees for England can be found in the Localism Act 2011. Those for Wales are in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, and those for Northern Ireland are in the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014. There are no legislative provisions for overview and scrutiny in Scotland, though many Scottish local authorities do operate scrutiny committees alongside executive structures.</p> <p>Local authorities also manage processes of 'external scrutiny', where their committees look at issues which lie outside the council's responsibilities. In England, specific powers exist to scrutinise health bodies, crime and disorder partnerships, and Police and Crime Commissioners. Combined authorities are also required to establish overview and scrutiny committees.</p> <p>A helpful parliamentary note can be found here</p>
Risk Management:	Regular updates to Overview (Audit) Panel provide assurance that scrutiny is progressing with an effective work programme

that supports good decision making and service improvement.

Access to Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Paul Radcliffe, Policy and Strategy Lead by:



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1. INTRODUCTION

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

2.0 SCRUTINY ACTIVITY

- 2.1 It remains a priority to ensure that each Scrutiny Panel delivers on the agreed levels of oversight and monitoring activity, as set out in the annual work programmes for 2018/19. In order to fulfil the 'critical friend' role in supporting the Executive of the Council to improve service delivery and outcomes, the work of scrutiny is categorised within two specific areas. These are:
 - 'Check and Challenge' undertaken at the formal meetings
 - In-depth reviews undertaken by a working group outside of the formal meetings
- 2.2 Previous reports presented to Overview (Audit) Panel have made reference to the need for scrutiny activity to be both responsive and timely. Notable improvements have been made to the way that information is both presented and received at the formal panel meetings. The instruction of members has been to ensure that updates are no longer received solely for information purposes and to improve the way that key messages and findings are shared with the Executive. The primary aim is to prevent any delay in reporting and to inform and influence future decision making.
- 2.3 Based on the information received, the Scrutiny Chair will act on the behalf of panel members to determine whether a formal response letter is required. If deemed appropriate, all discussion points will be reviewed to provide a summary of the themes and future monitoring requirements. Recent response letters are included at appendix 1, 2 & 3.
- 2.4 Scrutiny in practice will continue to be mindful of the suitability and appropriateness of timings with regards to the impact and value of planned activity. This includes the selection and order of topics and updates to be received during the year ahead. The tables below provide a summary of activity undertaken at the panel meetings held in November 2018 and January 2019.

Figure 1: Breakdown of activity at the formal Scrutiny Panel meetings

INTEGRATED CARE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY PANEL	
8 November 2018	10 January 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met Cllr Oliver Ryan, Executive Member (Children and Families); and Richard Hancock, Director of Children’s Services, to receive information specific to the most recent Ofsted monitoring letter, improvement priorities for the remainder of 2018 and new children’s safeguarding arrangements. A Children’s Working Group was established for the remainder of the 2018/19 municipal year. To consider matters relevant to Children’s Services and Education. Presentation received on the impacts of welfare reform. Information to inform future lines of enquiry, with a joint working group established, to include members of both panels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met Trish Cavanagh, Chief Operating Officer, Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust, to receive a progress and performance update. The Panel discussed the formal response submitted to the Executive Member for Children and Families and the Director of Children’s Services on 20 November 2018. See APPENDIX 1. Children’s Working Group – The Scrutiny Panel was updated on a meeting held on 28 November 2018 and planned activity going forward, with a focus on reading and attendance in Tameside schools The Chair advised members that a report on Suicide Prevention had now been shared with the Executive to respond. The Chair to meet the Executive Leader on 24 January 2019, with final papers to be presented at the joint meeting of Executive Cabinet and Overview (Audit) Panel on 13 February 2019.
PLACE AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS SCRUTINY PANEL	
6 November 2018	8 January 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met Cllr Bill Fairfoull, Deputy Executive Leader; and Tom Wilkinson, Assistant Director of Finance, to receive information on Tameside procurement arrangements and delivering value for money. Presentation received on the impacts of welfare reform. Information to inform future lines of enquiry, with a joint working group established, to include members of both panels. Agreed plans for activity relating to air quality to remain a priority and to explore ways for this work to further complement that of the GMCA and TfGM. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met John Gregory, Head of Community Safety and Homelessness to receive an update on community safety and priorities for the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). As a result of the discussions a formal response letter was sent to the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services and the Assistant Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods on 23 January 2019. See APPENDIX 3. The Panel discussed the formal response submitted to the Deputy Executive Leader and the Assistant Director of Finance on 3 December 2018, which relates to STAR Procurement. See APPENDIX 2.

Keeping Scrutiny Informed

- 2.5 All scrutiny members receive a regular email titled 'Scrutiny in Tameside'. The purpose is to raise awareness of available materials to support their scrutiny role and to provide members with the opportunity to contribute and share all open consultations and engagement tools. This continues to include a wide variety of topic areas.
- 2.6 The update email is circulated at the end of each month and also includes links to work undertaken outside of Tameside. Particular attention is placed on scrutiny activity of the GMCA and Pennine Care, for which the Council appoints a councillor representative. The update emails sent from November 2018 to January 2019 can be viewed at **APPENDIX 4, 5 & 6**.

Scrutiny Annual Budget Briefings

- 2.7 In order to further develop the scrutiny budget briefings, the invitation for attendance was extended to all councillors with a scrutiny position. This is the first time that the meeting has been extended to all panel members and was previously attended by only the Chair and Deputy Chair of each Panel.
- 2.8 In order to meet the availability of members a decision was made to hold two separate sessions at 1pm and 6pm on Monday 28 January 2019. It was important for members to reflect on all information received during the municipal year and to inform future work programme priorities. Support to this process was provided by the Assistant Director of Finance, with discussions from the meetings collated in a formal response letter. The letter was submitted in a timely manner to the Council's Section 151 Officer for consideration in development of the final budget report.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

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

APPENDIX 1**Chair of the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel****Councillor Gillian Peet**

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Email: gillian.peet@tameside.gov.uk

Phone: 0161 342 2199

Ask for: Paul Radcliffe

Date: 20 November 2018

Councillor Oliver Ryan
Executive Member (Children and Families)

Richard Hancock
Director of Children's Services

Dear Cllr Ryan and Mr Hancock,

Children's Services Improvement

I write on behalf of the Council's Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel. Members would like to thank you both for attending the meeting of 8 November 2018, at which a progress update was provided on the most recent Ofsted Monitoring Visit and future improvement priorities.

The Scrutiny Panel has maintained regular oversight and contact with Children's Services since the initial inspection, and members are now mindful of the stage the Council is at within the improvement journey, the level of improvement still require and future expectations and timescales for the next Ofsted Monitoring Visit and re-inspection.

As Chair, my aim has always been to ensure that the Scrutiny Panel is able to support services to improve and deliver significant advancements to the quality of provision. The primary focus throughout all scrutiny activity has been that of a 'critical friend', by putting children first to achieve better outcomes for young people and families in Tameside.

By taking time to reflect on the information presented on 8 November 2018, I would now like to share the views of the Panel with you. This letter therefore aims to provide a summary of discussion points and to relay any issues or concerns. I hope this is something which you will find useful, with its possibility to inform future decision making and evidence the future working relationship between Children's Services and the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel.

I would also like to inform you that a fixed Children's Working Group has been established for the remainder of the 2018/19 municipal year, with agreed terms of reference. I have included the document for information and I sincerely hope that this is something your management team is able to support, with regards to the identification of priorities and provision of information at the group's request. The working group is to be chaired by Councillor Teresa Smith, in her capacity as Deputy Chair to the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel.

I have listed some of the main discussion points below, which are to be viewed as individual responses from panel members, under the collective of the main panel. The Scrutiny Panel acknowledges all work undertaken and improvements to date.

It was both encouraging and positive to hear that:

- Plans to achieve greater stability and consistency are being addressed, with the permanent appointments to the Director of Children's Services, Assistant Director and Heads of Services. Members are extremely keen for a strengthened and more stable leadership team to be delivered, which in turn should become a catalyst for improved social worker retention and the Council's ability to attract good quality social workers and managers.
- Despite recurrent Ofsted findings to improve the pace of improvement, the information presented provides a greater level of assurance and expectation that 2019 will be a year of rapid and sustained improvement. The Panel are aware that the pace has indeed already increased from the slow start in 2016.
- Children's governance arrangements have been strengthened by sight of the review paper presented to Executive Cabinet on 25 July 2018. This includes a strengthening of the Council's Corporate Parenting Board, as well as an engaged Youth Council and Children in Care Council. Members were pleased to observe the comments of a renewed direction and commitment expressed by Councillor Ryan, supported by the new Director of Children's Services (DCS).
- Plans are afoot for new safeguarding arrangements, enabling Tameside to be considered somewhat of a pathfinder in this area with regards to stakeholder involvement and delivery.
- Work has been undertaken to develop a new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (Mash).

The Panel would like to thank you both for the honest acknowledgement of the challenges faced and the improvement work that remains. I have done my best to articulate some of the main discussion points and views where it is felt that change and progress is still needed. These include:

- The continued poor quality of social work practice (recordings) and supervision remains a worry for the Panel. This includes concerns around the lack of quality in the assessments and plans observed by Ofsted, given that two years have now passed since the initial inspection.
- The Panel was pleased to hear that the high caseloads which have been a consistent factor now appear to be coming down (on average). The high workforce ratio and reliance on agency social workers and managers does stand out as a problem that needs to be addressed, especially with the aims to achieve greater consistency and quality of practice.
- The Panel has previously received projections for what numbers should or could look like in Tameside for both referrals and the total of looked after children, when compared with statistical neighbours. I am aware that we remain in a situation where both are much higher than we would expect or like, and that this ultimately provides a knock-on effect to overall caseload numbers and the need for higher staffing levels.
- On behalf of the Panel I can reaffirm your ambitions to reduce the workforce ratio of agency workers to that which would seem fitting for an authority such as Tameside. I do however recognise that this will ultimately be achieved and determined by overall caseload numbers and the future application of thresholds and successful step downs from social care intervention.
- The safety of children is quite clearly a priority for Children's Services. The Panel are aware that high numbers of children are in contact with social care, whether that is children in need,

child protection or looked after children. In the longer term the Panel would like to see evidence of earlier intervention work to strengthen families and support networks, leading to better outcomes for children and families.

A final reflection is that the Panel does have a 'going concern' for the total number of caseloads and the possibility that there may actually be too many children receiving social care intervention at this time. This is not something that appears to be sustainable and in some cases may not be right for the children and families concerned.

The mechanisms that the Council puts in place to support the social care system can also play a huge roll in this and the Panel would like to see how improved outcomes can be achieved through better use of the MASH, permanence planning, accessible and effective early help for struggling families and appropriate and safe step down arrangements, underpinned by the need to strengthen families and their coping mechanisms.

This hopefully provides you with insight to the views of the Scrutiny Panel and I hope this is received in the manner in which it is intended, that is, to support the work of services to improve outcomes for Tameside children and families. I do not consider this letter to require a formal response, but would like regular contact to be maintained and key plans and messages shared with the Scrutiny Panel on an on-going basis.

If any further clarity is needed on any of the above points, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Gillian Peet
Chair – Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel

APPENDIX 2

Councillor Bill Fairfoull
Deputy Executive Leader

Tom Wilkinson
Assistant Director of Finance

**Chair of the Place and External
Relations Scrutiny Panel**

Councillor Mike Glover

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Ask for: Paul Radcliffe

Date: 3 December 2018

Dear Cllr Fairfoull and Mr Wilkinson,

STAR Procurement

I write on behalf of the Council's Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel. Members would like to thank you both for attending the meeting of 6 November 2018, at which information was provided on procurement arrangements and delivering value for money.

Having read and familiarised myself with the report presented to Executive Cabinet on 20 June 2018, titled Future Provision of Procurement Support, I am aware of the past decision to review operational procurement arrangements and the need to develop effective solutions for the function going forward.

The Panel very much appreciated the honest appraisal of the challenges faced, resource pressures and the need for greater professional and qualified oversight of procurement activity in order to improve compliance and remove associated risks. It was clear that significant change was needed given the position the Council found itself in and the need for improvement.

The Panel are supportive of the decision for Tameside to enter into the STAR procurement collaboration. I am however mindful that future monitoring is required to consider the Council's ability to deliver effective and sustainable procurement solutions, in the way that future spend is planned and savings are achieved in order to account for the recurrent costs of the commitment.

The primary focus throughout all scrutiny activity is that of a 'critical friend', to support continued improvement and effective decision making. As agreed at the meeting, I have taken time to reflect on the presentation, the points raised by members of the panel during the item and also the discussion which ensued.

This letter provides a summary of discussion points and general concerns of the Panel. I hope this is something which you will find useful and can be used to inform and support future decision making.

I have listed some of the main discussion points below, which are to be viewed as individual responses from members, under the collective of the main panel. The Scrutiny Panel acknowledges all work undertaken and improvements to date.

It was encouraging and positive to hear that:

- The Council made a decision to review internal procurement arrangements and consideration was given to five future delivery options. With the final decision to join the shared procurement service with Stockport, Trafford and Rochdale councils (STAR).
- The Council has acknowledged and accepted the failings headlined in the review findings, which included:
 - Insufficient overview of spend
 - An incomplete contracts register and missed savings opportunities
 - Limited social value and local market spend
 - Little early engagement with the market and support for suppliers
 - Officers without the necessary knowledge or professional qualifications undertaking complex procurement methods
 - Collaboration opportunities were not maximised
 - Risks of non-compliance to public procurement regulations
- That STAR procurement had made significant savings for original partners of £20m since 2015/16, with prudent projections for Tameside's achievable savings at £1.25m per annum. The STAR membership would create additional running costs of £185,000 on top of the existing budget and with the total annual cost now standing at £435,000, this a viable and positive 'invest to save' option.

The Panel has identified a number of areas where future monitoring would be deemed appropriate and I have listed the specific concerns of members below.

- On reflection, the Scrutiny Panel would have liked to have been informed of findings from the initial review and for scrutiny to be considered as a consultee in the process to support the decision as to a future delivery option.
- That going forward and when deemed appropriate, the Scrutiny Panel is kept informed of any substantial variations to service delivery.
- That the net savings achieved from STAR is closely monitored, given associated costs and the need to continually identify future collaborative opportunities for the shared service to add value.
- Panel members are extremely keen for the Council to achieve improved levels of social value within contracts and for increased levels of local spend to remain a priority. In particular the desire to increase the number of suppliers required to pay the Living Wage, if not all.
- It feels appropriate for improved mechanisms to be put in place to support local suppliers and to generate improved market engagement. Attention to be placed on the potential barriers local businesses and the voluntary and community sector face when applying for contracts.
- There is a need for greater awareness and understanding of the local contracts register and improved oversight of spend. The Panel would consider it appropriate to undertake a comprehensive spend analysis and for this to inform an effective forward plan and timetable for contracts.

This hopefully provides you with insight to the views of the Scrutiny Panel to support the work of the service. I do not consider this letter to require a formal response, but would like regular contact to be maintained and for key plans and messages shared on an on-going basis.

It was noted that a further procurement report, with specific attention to the contracts register, will be taken to Executive Cabinet in the near future. I hope that the discussion at scrutiny is something you are able to reflect within the report and that findings can be shared with the panel in due course.

If any further clarity is needed on any of the above points, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Mike Glover
Chair – Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel

APPENDIX 3

Councillor Allison Gwynne
Executive Member
Neighbourhood Services

Emma Varnam
Assistant Director
Operations and Neighbourhoods

**Chair of the Place and External
Relations Scrutiny Panel**

Councillor Mike Glover

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Phone: 0161 342 2199
Ask for: Paul Radcliffe
Date: 23 January 2019

Dear Cllr Gwynne and Ms Varnam,

Community Safety

I write on behalf of the Council's Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel. Members would like to thank Mr Gregory for attending the meeting of 8 January 2019, at which information was presented on local community safety arrangements.

The initial request for information was made to ensure the Scrutiny Panel is brought up to speed on recent developments; the Council's ability to deliver on statutory responsibilities; the wider partnership; and to gain greater understanding of emerging issues and priorities.

A past review was undertaken in 2017 to explore the 'Approach to Community Safety Partnership Working', with a report presented to Overview (Audit) Panel on 30 July 2018. I am aware of the subsequent organisational and political changes that have taken place since then, which also includes my appointment as Scrutiny Chair at the start of this municipal year.

I would like to thank Cllr Gwynne for the acceptance and support of a past recommendation to ensure activity of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is reported to the Scrutiny Panel on an annual basis. I must also add that panel members were pleased with Mr Gregory's approach to presenting this information and gained reassurances from his personal commitment and ambitions for the partnership.

In order to truly fulfil the 'critical friend' role in supporting the Executive to improve service delivery and outcomes, the work of scrutiny is categorised within two specific areas. These are:

- 'Check and Challenge' undertaken at the formal meetings
- In-depth reviews undertaken by a working group outside of the formal meetings

The 'Check and Challenge' activity is conducted as a decision of the panel, based on the information received, to determine whether a formal response letter is required to communicate positive messages and to raise any concerns with the Executive of the Council.

Having had time to reflect on points raised at the meeting of 8 January 2019, I would now like to share the views of the Panel with you. I do hope this is something which you will find useful and can be used to inform and support future decision making.

It was encouraging and positive to hear that:

- There is a commitment from the Council and partners to further develop and strengthen local community safety arrangements. Promoting the engagement of partners will remain a priority in order for the CSP to effectively provide direction for interventions.
- It was agreed at a recent CSP meeting that Tameside's strategic priorities are to include:
 - Reducing violent crime and domestic abuse
 - Preventing and dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB)
 - Reducing harm caused by drugs and alcohol
 - Preventing the exploitation of children and vulnerable people
 - Improving community confidence and cohesion
- The partnership is to place significant attention to issues that include extremism and the recent emergence of violent crime.
- Greater Manchester Police are soon to introduce a new online reporting system. Panel members recognise a need to raise awareness of this tool and the way it will complement existing contact methods such as calls to '999' and '101'.

I would like to raise your attention to a number of discussion points, which the Panel have deemed appropriate for future monitoring. I have listed the points below.

- There is currently no elected member representation on the CSP. Having made the positive decision to expand membership past the minimum statutory requirement, the Scrutiny Panel would like the partnership to consider benefits to appoint a councillor representative at meetings and/or sub-groups.
- The Panel noted and raised concerns that there is currently no strategy in place for community safety. It was further noted that immediate plans are in place to address this in the short-term. Members commented on the need to deliver a long-term strategy from 2020 onwards and to ensure engagement and consultation requirements are met.
- That the Scrutiny Panel be considered as a formal consultee to support predevelopment stages to the creation of a long-term Community Safety Strategy from 2020 onwards.
- Questions were raised on the partnerships ambitions and ability to increase the engagement that takes place with residents and communities. It was acknowledged that this had reduced over recent years and improvements are required.
- As part of the approach to build greater sustainability and resilience within Tameside communities, the Panel supports a need to reduce the current levels of service reliance. Members are conscious of the resident perception and acceptance of such an approach in asking residents to help themselves and others, and that this will need to be planned and delivered effectively.
- That attention is focused on how to address some of the most challenging behaviour and statistical outliers. An example being the prevalence of alcohol misuse and related harm. The

separation of a combined drug and alcohol service to accommodate this appears appropriate and the Panel wish to be kept informed of the impact on community safety outcomes.

This hopefully provides you with insight to the views of the Scrutiny Panel to support the work of the service and wider partnership. I do not consider this letter to require a formal response but would like to request that information is routinely shared with panel members on the following areas:

- Community safety initiatives
- The consultation and implementation of a short-term Community Safety Strategy
- Methods sought to engage communities and improve local intelligence

If any further clarity is needed on any of the above points, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Mike Glover
Chair – Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel

November 2018

Welcome to the November 2018 Scrutiny Update.

The regular updates aim to keep you informed of upcoming activity, including engagement and consultation with regards to local, regional and national decision making. All of the open consultations listed below are available for you to access and complete, with the opportunity to raise greater community awareness and participation where possible. For further information and to have your say please follow the relevant links below.

I hope this is something you will continue to find useful and please let me know if you require any further information.

Open Consultations

Since the last update email sent on 25 October 2018, there are currently no additional local consultations to report. I have therefore included those previously reported that are still open and available for you to complete.

[Same Sex Accommodation on In-Patient Mental Health Wards \(Local/Regional\)](#) – Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust is to reviews its approach towards managing the privacy, dignity and safety of patients on in-patient mental health wards. The Trust is considering the move towards Same Sex Accommodation from the current arrangement of Mixed Sex Accommodation. Before any decisions are made the views of involve patients, staff, families, carers and stakeholders will be sought through an online survey. Closing date: **26 November 2018**.

[Gambling Act Policy \(Local\)](#) - In accordance with the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005, Tameside Council is required to publish a Statement of Principles (also known as the 'Gambling Policy'). The statement provides guidance on the approach the Council, as the Licensing Authority, takes on gambling licensing matters. The Council is required to review its policy at least every three years. The existing statement is due to expire in February 2019. Before the revised statement can be adopted, the Licensing Authority must consult with a wide variety of individuals and businesses that may have an interest in licensed premises within the area. Closing date: **4 January 2019**.

[GM Big Alcohol Conversation \(Regional\)](#) - The Big Alcohol Conversation is being led by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership, set up to oversee the devolution of health and social care services. Evidence shows how drinking too much alcohol can affect our people and our communities. This consultation is seeking what these numbers really mean for Greater Manchester and what role alcohol plays in daily life. Have your say by following the link. Closing date: **28 February 2019**.

National Engagement and Consultations

There are currently a number of pieces of work being led by government departments and agencies that you may wish to take part in. For further information and to have your say please follow the relevant links below:

- The Cabinet Office is seeking views on the [Proposed Reforms to the Annual Canvass](#). Closing date: **30 November 2018**.

- [Consultation on proposals to ban the sale/distribution of plastic straws, stirrers and cotton buds in England](#) – The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs is seeking views on proposals to ban certain plastics with the overall aim of protecting the environment from plastic pollution. Closing date: **3 December 2018**.
- [Changes to Planning Policy and Guidance Including the Standard Method for Assessing Local Housing Need](#) - The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is seeking views on new proposals to update planning practice guidance on housing need assessment to be consistent with increasing housing supply. Closing date: **7 December 2018**.
- The Department of Health & Social Care is seeking views on making [places that serve food and drink outside of the home show calorie information \(calorie labelling\)](#). Closing date: **7 December 2018**.
- [Equality & Human Rights Commission Draft Strategic Plan](#) - The Equality & Human Rights Commission are seeking views on their draft strategic plan. They work to monitor human rights, protecting equality across a wide range of grounds including age, disability, race and more. The draft strategy sets out their goals and priorities, and the views of those who take part in this consultation will help shape their work. Closing date: **7 January 2019**.
- Department for Education is seeking views on plans to improve [Adult Basic Digital Skills](#). Closing date: **10 January 2019**.
- [Planning Reform: Supporting the High Street and Increasing the Delivery of New Homes](#) The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government is seeking your views on proposals that will allow greater change of use to support high streets to adapt and diversify, support extending existing buildings upwards to create additional homes, and speed up the delivery of new homes. Closing date: **14 January 2019**.

All live and past consultations are available for viewing at the [Big Conversation](#) pages on the Council website.

Greater Manchester Scrutiny

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) has a number of Scrutiny Panels tasked to monitor specific areas. Each panel is made up of a councillor representative from each of the GM authorities. The links below provide you with access to the most recent meeting papers for each of the panels.

[Corporate Issues & Reform Overview & Scrutiny](#)

[Economy, Business Growth & Skills Overview & Scrutiny](#)

[Housing, Planning & Environment Overview & Scrutiny](#)

Scrutiny Resources

In addition to the past training events, I will look to share any available material with you. This will range from general information from the Centre for Public Scrutiny ([CfPS](#)) and any material to support you in your role during the course of the year.

Recent publications include:

- [Providing a Lifeline: Effective Scrutiny of Local Council Strategies to Prevent or Reduce Suicide](#)
- [Tackling Gambling Related Harm – A Whole Council Approach](#)
- [Local Partnership Working for A Vibrant Night Time Economy](#)

December 2018

Welcome to the December 2018 Scrutiny Update.

The regular updates aim to keep you informed of upcoming activity, including engagement and consultation with regards to local, regional and national decision making. All of the open consultations listed below are available for you to access and complete, with the opportunity to raise greater community awareness and participation where possible. For further information and to have your say please follow the relevant links below.

I hope this is something you will continue to find useful and please let me know if you require any further information.

Open Consultations

[Budget Conversation 2019/20 \(Local\)](#) – Tameside Council and NHS Tameside and Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group have come together to form Tameside and Glossop Strategic Commission. It is expected that over the next 5 years the Strategic Commission will need to identify up to £70 million of savings in order to balance the combined budget. The views of local people are important in helping to inform the budget setting process. Please click on the title link to find out more about the Budget Conversation, and to access the online survey. In addition, any comments can be emailed directly to bigconversation@tameside.gov.uk. Closing date: **29 January 2019**.

[Gambling Act Policy \(Local\)](#) - In accordance with the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005, Tameside Council is required to publish a Statement of Principles (also known as the 'Gambling Policy'). The statement provides guidance on the approach the Council, as the Licensing Authority, takes on gambling licensing matters. The Council is required to review its policy at least every three years. The existing statement is due to expire in February 2019. Before the revised statement can be adopted, the Licensing Authority must consult with a wide variety of individuals and businesses that may have an interest in licensed premises within the area. Closing date: **4 January 2019**.

[Council Tax Charge on Empty Dwellings \(Local\)](#) - New legislation in the Local Government Finance Act 1998 gives local authorities discretion to increase the council tax charge on empty properties. Tameside Council is therefore considering increasing the charges where the property has been empty for a long period of time in line with new legislation. Although the change only affects owners of empty properties, Tameside Council are seeking views and comments from the public on the proposals. Closing date: **18 January 2019**.

[Housing Assistance Policy Consultation \(Local\)](#) - The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order 2002 (known as the RRO Policy) gives local authorities a general power to introduce policies for Private Sector Housing to provide assistance to individuals with renewals, repairs and adaptations. Tameside Council's current policy was created in 2003 and has remained generally unchanged, but some of the policy schemes are no longer appropriate due to changes in the way local government is funded. In order to continue providing help and assistance to residents and in order to take advantage of the changes made by government Tameside Council need to change their policy. Closing date: **25 January 2019**.

[GM Big Alcohol Conversation \(Regional\)](#) - The Big Alcohol Conversation is being led by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership, set up to oversee the devolution of health and social care services. Evidence shows how drinking too much alcohol can affect our people and our communities. This consultation is seeking what these numbers really mean for Greater Manchester and what role alcohol plays in daily life. Have your say by following the link. Closing date: **28 February 2019**.

National Engagement and Consultations

There are currently a number of pieces of work being led by government departments and agencies that you may wish to take part in. For further information and to have your say please follow the relevant links below:

[Equality & Human Rights Commission Draft Strategic Plan](#) - The Equality & Human Rights Commission are seeking views on their draft strategic plan. They work to monitor human rights, protecting equality across a wide range of grounds including age, disability, race and more. The draft strategy sets out their goals and priorities, and the views of those who take part in this consultation will help shape their work. Closing date: **7 January 2019**.

Department for Education is seeking views on plans to improve **[Adult Basic Digital Skills](#)**. Closing date: **10 January 2019**.

[Regulating Basic Digital Skills Qualifications](#) - Basic Digital Skills Qualifications form part of the government's plans to improve adult basic digital skills. The purpose is to provide learners with core digital skills that will enable them to operate confidently in life and in employment or study. This consultation sets out a proposed approach to regulating Basic Digital Skills Qualifications and is seeking views on their design, deliver and awarding. Closing date: **13 January 2019**.

[Planning Reform: Supporting the High Street and Increasing the Delivery of New Homes](#) - The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government is seeking your views on proposals that will allow greater change of use to support high streets to adapt and diversify, support extending existing buildings upwards to create additional homes, and speed up the delivery of new homes. Closing date: **14 January 2019**.

[Williams Rail Review](#) – The government's vision aspires to have a world-class railway, working as part of the wider transport network and delivering new opportunities across the nation. The review invites written contributions to inform its work on the review principles which can be found on the consultation page. Your evidence will inform the review and will be considered alongside other evidence received. Closing date: **18 January 2019**.

[Extremism in England and Wales: call for evidence](#) – The independent Commission for Countering Extremism is carrying out a first-of-its-kind study into extremism that aims to improve understanding of extremism and its impact on individuals, communities and wider society. They are keen to hear from people with a wide range of views and insights including people with personal experience of extremism, faith and community groups, counter extremism activists and practitioners. Closing date: **31 January 2019**.

[Strategy for our veterans: UK government consultation paper](#) – On 14 November, the UK wide Strategy for our Veterans was published. The strategy set the principles and aims needed to continue to meet the needs of older veterans as well as the wider Veteran community over the next ten years, and set the right conditions for society to empower, and support, them for the next 100 years. It seeks broad public views on focused questions, to build on the research and engagement conducted to produce the strategy. Closing date: **21 February 2019**.

All live and past consultations are available for viewing at the **[Big Conversation](#)** pages on the Council website.

Greater Manchester Scrutiny

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) has a number of Scrutiny Panels tasked to monitor specific areas. Each panel is made up of a councillor representative from each of the GM authorities. The links below provide you with access to the most recent meeting papers for each of the panels.

[Corporate Issues & Reform Overview & Scrutiny](#)

[Economy, Business Growth & Skills Overview & Scrutiny](#)

[Housing, Planning & Environment Overview & Scrutiny](#)

Scrutiny Resources

In addition to the past training events, I will look to share any available material with you. This will range from general information from the Centre for Public Scrutiny ([CfPS](#)) and any material to support you in your role during the course of the year.

Recent publications include:

CfPS

- [An update on Scrutiny Guidance](#)
- [Scrutiny as a Friend to Chaos](#)
- [Strategies for Success](#)
- [Decline and Fall: Understanding how and why local government fails, what leads to central government intervention, and what comes after](#)

LGA

- [A Councillors Guide to Civil Emergencies](#)
- [Tackling Gambling Related Harm: A whole council approach](#)
- [Self-Care: Councils helping people look after themselves](#)
- [Winter Weather Survey 2018](#)
- [A Better Start: Supporting child development in the early years](#)

January 2019

Welcome to the January 2019 Scrutiny Update.

The regular updates aim to keep you informed of upcoming activity, including engagement and consultation with regards to local, regional and national decision making. All of the open consultations listed below are available for you to access and complete, with the opportunity to raise greater community awareness and participation where possible. For further information and to have your say please follow the relevant links below.

I hope this is something you will continue to find useful and please let me know if you require any further information.

Open Consultations

[**A Review of Local Authorities' Relative Needs and Resources \(National\)**](#) - This consultation seeks views on the approach to measuring the relative needs and resources of local authorities, which will determine new baseline funding allocations for local authorities in England in 2020-21. This consultation:

- Proposes to simplify the assessment of local authorities' relative needs
- Considers the type of adjustment that will be made to an authority's relative needs assessment to take account of the relative resources available to them to fund local services
- Proposes a set of principles that will be used to design potential transitional arrangements and examines how the baseline for the purposes of transition should be established

Closing date: **21 February 2019**.

[**GM Big Alcohol Conversation \(Regional\)**](#) - The Big Alcohol Conversation is being led by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership, set up to oversee the devolution of health and social care services. Evidence shows how drinking too much alcohol can affect our people and our communities. This consultation is seeking what these numbers really mean for Greater Manchester and what role alcohol plays in daily life. Have your say by following the link. Closing date: **28 February 2019**.

[**MEC SCN Children and Young People Increasing Confidence Survey \(Regional\)**](#) - Greater Manchester and East Cheshire (GMEC) Strategic Clinical Networks (SCN) want to make sure that children and young people across Greater Manchester who have long term conditions such as asthma, diabetes or epilepsy feel that they are able to manage their own condition, or conditions, well and are supported to do so by their doctors, nurses, family or carers. They are looking at how well supported children, young people and their families are, how confident they feel and that they have the right knowledge and help. Children, young people and parents are invited to complete the anonymous survey. Closing date: **28 February 2019**.

[**The Greater Manchester Plan for Homes, Jobs and the Environment \(Regional\)**](#) - Greater Manchester's Plan for Homes, Jobs, and the Environment (the "spatial framework") has been put together by Greater Manchester Combined Authority, which comprises the Mayor of Greater Manchester and the leaders of Greater Manchester's ten local councils. This plan is about providing the right homes, in the right places, for people across our city region. It's about creating

jobs and improving infrastructure to ensure the future prosperity of Greater Manchester. Local people are the driving force behind Greater Manchester's success. It's important that you have your say on the future of the place you call home, and help shape its transition into a world-leading city region. Closing date: **18 March 2019**.

National Engagement and Consultations

There are currently a number of pieces of work being led by government departments and agencies that you may wish to take part in. For further information and to have your say please follow the relevant links below:

[Extremism in England and Wales: call for evidence](#) – The independent Commission for Countering Extremism is carrying out a first-of-its-kind study into extremism that aims to improve understanding of extremism and its impact on individuals, communities and wider society. They are keen to hear from people with a wide range of views and insights including people with personal experience of extremism, faith and community groups, counter extremism activists and practitioners. Closing date: **31 January 2019**.

[Developing a Patient Safety Strategy for the NHS](#) – NHS England is developing proposals for a new national patient safety strategy to support the NHS to be the safest healthcare system in the world. The strategy is being developed alongside the NHS Long Term Plan and will be relevant to all parts of the NHS, be that physical or mental health care, in or out of hospital and primary care. To make sure the strategy works for patients, NHS staff and providers, they are consulting on our proposals. Your opinions will help shape and refine the final version of our national patient safety strategy, which is intended to be published in Spring 2019. Closing date: **15 February 2019**.

[Strategy for our Veterans: UK Government Consultation Paper](#) – On 14 November, the UK wide Strategy for our Veterans was published. The strategy set the principles and aims needed to continue to meet the needs of older veterans as well as the wider Veteran community over the next ten years, and set the right conditions for society to empower, and support, them for the next 100 years. It seeks broad public views on focused questions, to build on the research and engagement conducted to produce the strategy. Closing date: **21 February 2019**.

[Items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: an update and a consultation on further guidance for CCGs](#) – In 2017, the cost of prescriptions dispensed in the community over £9 billion. This cost coupled with finite resources means it is important that the NHS achieves the greatest value from the money that it spends. Set out in the consultation document are proposals for a review and update of Items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs, published in Nov 2017. The aim of this consultation is to provide you with information about the proposed national guidance and to seek your views about the proposals. **Closing date:** 28 February 2019.

[Improving Access to Social Housing for Members of the Armed Forces](#) – The government is committed to ensuring that those who serve in the Armed Forces and their families, and those who have served in the past, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services. This consultation sets out proposals for new statutory guidance for local authorities to assist members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their families, to access social housing. Closing date: **8 March 2019**.

All live and past consultations are available for viewing at the [Big Conversation](#) pages on the Council website.

Regional Scrutiny

The Council appoints councillor representations to each of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Scrutiny Panels and also scrutiny arrangements for Pennine Care. The links below provide you with access to the most recent meeting papers for each of the panels.

[Corporate Issues & Reform Overview & Scrutiny](#)

[Economy, Business Growth & Skills Overview & Scrutiny](#)

[Housing, Planning & Environment Overview & Scrutiny](#)

[Joint Scrutiny Panel for Pennine Care \(Mental Health\) Trust](#)

Scrutiny Resources

In addition to the past training events, I will look to share any available material with you. This will include any material to support you in your role during the course of the year.

Recent publications from LGA include:

- [National Child Measurement Programme: Briefing for Elected Members](#)
- [Developing an Approach to Mandatory CCTV in Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles](#)
- [Supporting Carers: Guidance and Case Studies](#)
- [Fit for and During Pregnancy: A Key Role for Local Government](#)