

**Report to:** EXECUTIVE CABINET

**Date:** 2 November 2020

**Executive Member/Clinical Lead/Reporting Officer:** Cllr Brenda Warrington – Executive Leader  
Cllr Oliver Ryan - Executive Member – Finance and Economic Growth  
Dr Ashwin Ramachandra / Dr Asad Ali – Co-chairs (Tameside and Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group)  
Sarah Dobson –Assistant Director of Policy, Performance and Communications (Governance and Pensions)  
Tom Wilkinson – Assistant Director of Finance (Finance)

**Subject:** BUDGET CONVERSATION 2021-22

**Report Summary:** It is important that Tameside and Glossop Strategic Commission (Council and CCG) understand the priorities of the public – local residents, businesses, patients and service users. This report outlines a proposal to engage with the public in autumn 2020 on their priorities for spending within the context of the financial challenges facing public services, including the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Engagement will take place through an online survey, attendance at virtual meetings, in-person meetings (where Covid-19 restrictions allow), social media and email. Engagement will be supported by an extensive communications campaign which will include digital methods such as websites, social media and email and non-digital methods such as newspapers, radio, and partner organisation networks. The public will be provided with the opportunity to leave comments and feedback including ideas and suggestions for saving money and improving services.

**Recommendations:** Executive Board notes the content of the report and agrees the proposal is taken forward to seek approval to proceed from Executive Cabinet and Strategic Commissioning Board.

**Links to Corporate Plan:** An effective conversation with the public will inform the budget setting process and ensure the budget aligns with the priorities of local people and the Strategic Commission’s Corporate Plan.

**Policy Implications:** The budget reflects the policy choices that the Council and CCG intends to pursue. The outputs from the conversation with public will inform the budget setting for 2021/22 and in turn that budget will have implications for future policy.

**Financial Implications:** In February and March 2020, the Strategic Commission agreed 2020/21 budgets for the Tameside and Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Tameside Council. When the 20/21 budget was set, projections for 2021/22 estimated a funding gap of just over £19m. This gap has increased significantly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, mainly due to a number of key income sources being reduced or eliminated in the short or medium term.  
Work is ongoing to assess the most likely impact for 21/22 but

early modelling suggests a gap of between £36m and £61m depending on a number of scenarios. Whilst there remains a significant degree of uncertainty over the financial impact of COVID-19, and whilst some additional government funding has been provided in 20/21, initial indications are that this is far from sufficient to cover the additional costs and significant loss of income resulting from the pandemic in the medium term. The funding shortfall facing the Strategic Commission in 2021/22 remains significant. In the absence of further additional funding, reprioritisation of resources and identification of significant budget savings will be needed to enable a balanced budget to be set.

**Legal Implications:**

As set out in the main body of the report the Council has a legal duty to both undertake and consider the outcome of consultation.

Failure to do both could leave the Council budget decisions vulnerable to challenge.

Particular care needs to be taken when undertaking consultation at this time to ensure that residents are able to engage in consultation whilst complying with all covid related requirements especially regarding social distancing.

**Risk Management :**

The Council and CCG have statutory duties to engage and consult with the public. Failure to engage on the spending priorities and proposed changes to the budget could lead to challenge and negative public attitude.

**Access to Information :**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Simon Brunet, Head of Policy, Performance and Intelligence, Governance and Pensions.



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## **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Tameside & Glossop Strategic Commission (Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council and NHS Tameside & Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group) continue to face major financial challenges, which have been further impacted by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.2 The council has a statutory duty to consult with business and other representatives of non-domestic ratepayers on our annual spending proposals which has taken place when the draft budget has been prepared. Since 2018 the Strategic Commission has undertaken a joint budget conversation with residents and businesses across Tameside and Glossop in the form of two broad, open-text questions. These were conducted in late 2018/early 2019 for the 2019/20 budget and in winter 2019/20 for the 2020/21 budget. It is proposed that a budget conversation will take place again between 28 October 2020 and 6 January 2021 seeking public input on the 2021/22 budget.
- 1.3 It remains important that we understand the priorities of local residents and service users, particularly following the unprecedented health, financial and societal impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. This report outlines a proposal on how we will engage with the public in autumn 2020 / winter 2021 on the budget challenges facing Tameside & Glossop Strategic Commission.

## **2.0 BUDGET CONVERSATION**

### **Engagement**

- 2.1 It is proposed that this year's engagement will take the form of a conversation with the public on providing sustainable public services for the future and their priorities including the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2.2 Due to changing national and local Covid-19 social distancing restrictions, engagement may take place at in-person meetings if safe and practical, but the majority of engagement is likely to take place through virtual engagement. Methods of virtual engagement may include Skype or Zoom video meetings, an online survey and social media. Engagement will be supported by an extensive communications campaign that will include digital methods such as websites, social media and email and non-digital methods such as newspapers, radio, and partner organisation networks
- 2.3 The conversation will be used to educate and inform the public on the Strategic Commission's budget and its financial challenges whilst also allowing feedback and ideas from the public on how services can be improved and savings made.
- 2.4 The conversation with Glossop residents will relate to health services commissioned by Tameside & Glossop Strategic Commission only. Engagement material will be tailored accordingly.
- 2.5 It is proposed that the Budget Conversation will cover the following topics:
  - Where the Strategic Commission's money comes from: business rates, council tax and government grant.
  - Change in funding over time
  - Financial impact of Covid-19
  - How the Strategic Commission currently spends its money: broad spending areas including general spend (wages, buildings etc) and service spend
  - Examples of how the Strategic Commission has provided support to residents during the Covid-19 pandemic
  - Invite any views and comments on the information outlined above
  - Invite any ideas or suggestions on how we can make further savings

- 2.6 A set of draft slides outlining the proposed content for the Budget Conversation is included at **Appendix 2**.

### **Communications**

- 2.7 To support the engagement activity, a full programme of communications will be undertaken. This will include a full suite of infographics that can be used to help explain the Strategic Commission's budget and spend. These infographics will be used in the presentation to make it easier for the public to digest the information. This can then also be used on social media, websites, and other promotional material.

- 2.8 Web pages dedicated to the Budget Conversation will be created explaining all aspects of the conversation with links to the feedback form. These will be hosted on the Council and CCG websites. A dedicated email account will also be provided to enable public / service users / businesses to make any comments.

- 2.8 The following channels will be used for communicating to the public (including staff) that the engagement is taking place:

- Websites: Tameside Council, Tameside & Glossop CCG, Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust.
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Instagram
- E-News
- Leader's blog
- Leader's weekly column (Report & Weekly News)
- Tameside Radio
- Tameside Reporter
- Stalybridge Correspondent
- Tameside Advertiser
- Tameside Citizen
- Press release
- Members and Staff Portals
- Staff e-mail signature and screensavers
- Chief Executive's brief
- LiveWire
- Public access TV – GP surgeries
- Public sector partners' newsletters, emails, websites etc.
- Partnership Engagement Network mailing list
- Big Conversation mailing list
- Equalities, Consultation and Engagement Champions mailing list
- Purple Wifi
- Information Ambassadors Network
- Head Teacher E-Newsletter
- Use of VCSE networks and channels

### **2.9 Target Audience**

- Tameside and Glossop Residents
- Service Users (both TMBC and T&G CCG)
- Patients
- Local Stakeholders.
- TMBC and T&G CCG staff
- Elected Members.
- Businesses
- Voluntary & Community Sector
- Strategic and Community Partners, including:

- Tameside & Glossop Integrated Care (NHS) Foundation Trust
- GP Surgeries.
- Sixth Form Colleges
- Tameside Youth Council
- Patient Neighbourhood Groups
- Patient Participation Groups
- Representatives of different protected characteristic groups e.g. Tameside Carers Group, Age UK, People First Tameside, Diversity Matters North West etc.

## 2.10 Key messages

- TMBC and T&G CCG are responsible for a range of services from bin collections through care for the elderly to the provision of GP surgeries.
- The total amount of money spent by both organisations combined is £974 million.
- Both TMBC and T&G CCG are legally required to set a balanced budget for 2021/22.
- Over the past year TMBC and T&G CCG have faced significant financial challenges due to ongoing cuts from central government funding.
- The impact of the coronavirus pandemic has significantly reduced our income (potential challenge to collect business rates and council tax) and increased demand for services.
- We must find increasingly new and innovative ways to provide the services local people want – particularly as we look to build back better post-coronavirus.
- The Budget Conversation aims to explain where the money we spend comes from, where we spend it then ask for your views that will help us set out budget for 2021/22.
- Go to our Budget Conversation webpage (*link to be included*) to find out more and tell us what is important to you.

## 3.0 TIMELINE

3.1 The table below sets out the engagement timetable for the Budget Conversation.

ACTIVITY	DATE
Initial Report & Presentation to SLT	6 October 2020
Initial Report to Executive Board	14 October 2020
Initial Report to Strategic Commissioning Board and Executive Cabinet (Approval to launch)	28 October 2020
Engagement begins	28 October 2020
Launch of communications campaign including social media	28 October 2020
Press release Executive Leader's blog	2 November 2020
Events / Engagement period	28 October 2020 – 6 January 2021
Ongoing messaging through all communication channels	28 October 2020 – 6 January 2021
Engagement ends	6 January 2021
Final Report to SLT	19 January 2021
Final Report Executive Board	3 February 2021
Final Report to Strategic Commissioning Board and Executive Cabinet	10 February 2021
Budget Report (including Budget Conversation results) to Full Council	23 February 2021

3.2 The table below sets out the timetable for the statutory budget consultation with business rate payers.

ACTIVITY	DATE
Executive Board	3 February
<u>Commencement</u> of statutory consultation with business ratepayers on the draft budget – i.e. when papers for Executive Cabinet (joint meeting with Overview (Audit) Panel) and Strategic Commissioning Board are published.	To commence when Executive Cabinet / SCB papers are released
Statutory budget consultation with business rate payers	Date Executive Cabinet / SCB papers are released to Day prior to Full Council papers being released
Executive Cabinet	10 February 2021
<u>Close</u> of statutory consultation with business rate payers on the draft budget – i.e. day before papers issued for Full Council	Day prior to Full Council papers being released
Full Council	23 February 2021

# APPENDIX 1

## LIST OF EVENTS

A1. The following groups will be used to engage with residents and businesses in Tameside and Glossop. This list is not exhaustive. Service areas will be requested to submit ideas for groups that can be engaged to ensure coverage across all council and CCG areas of responsibility. If Covid-19 restrictions allow these meetings to take place in-person we will look to do so, alternatively we will look to engage with these groups virtually.

- Elected Member Scrutiny Sessions (x2)
- Tameside & Glossop Partnership Engagement Network
- Employee Engagement Group
- Ashton Sixth Form College
- Clarendon Sixth Form College
- Tameside College
- Youth Council
- Tameside Carers Association
- Derbyshire Carers
- Patient Neighbourhood Groups including Glossop/Patient Participation Groups
- Action Together
- The Bureau – Glossop
- High Peak CVS
- Heathwatch (Tameside and Glossop branches)
- Tameside & Glossop MIND
- Volunteer Centre Glossop and District
- Other local voluntary organisations networks
- Poverty Action Group
- Grafton Centre
- RSL networks
- Countryside volunteers
- Age Concern Tameside/Glossop
- Residents Associations
- Stroke Association
- Dementia UK

Subject to Covid-19 social distancing restrictions, drop- in sessions may also be arranged in key locations across Tameside & Glossop for residents to access. These could be held at locations such as civic buildings, libraries, children's centres, markets etc.