

TAMESIDE ELECTORAL REVIEW

COUNCIL SIZE PROPOSAL – DECEMBER 2020

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) have informed Tameside Council they are to undertake an electoral review. The last such review was in 2003 and agreed the size of the council to be 57 councillors across 19 wards (three councillors per ward).

This report is the Tameside Council size proposal (Stage 1) to the LGBCE. In addition, Tameside Council has provided the supporting information requested by the LGBCE.

The report is structured as below:

1. Executive summary
2. Tameside the place and its communities
3. Electoral forecasts
4. Governance and decision making
5. Local and sub-regional arrangements
6. Scrutiny and regulatory functions
7. Representational role of councillors in the local community
8. Other

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Tameside Council proposes a **council size of 57 councillors** across 19 wards (three councillors per ward). No change from the current council size.
- 1.2 In coming to the decision to propose a council size of 57 councillors a range of evidence and a number of factors were considered and balanced. They included:
 - population and elector growth;
 - increasing diversity of local communities;
 - governance and decision making;
 - scrutiny and regulatory functions;
 - changing nature of case work in terms of volume, scope and complexity;
 - representation of individuals and communities beyond the formal governance arrangements;
 - major changes such as Greater Manchester devolution and health and social care integration.
- 1.3 The population and electorate of Tameside has grown considerably since the last electoral review in 2003. 12,800 more population, an increase of 6% (which is above the national average), and 10,600 more electors, an increase of 6.6%. Forecasts suggest a further growth of 5,200 electors from now to 2026. With substantial housing development planned for future years such as Godley Green Garden Village as part of the Greater Manchester Plan for Homes and Jobs that growth is only expected to

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continue and accelerate. Alongside this, the demographic make-up of Tameside is changing with greater numbers of people from diverse backgrounds, many with English as a second language or no English at all. Both growth and diversity increase the need for sufficient representational capacity amongst councillors.

- 1.4 Tameside Council operates the Leader and Cabinet model with the associated range of boards and panels to discharge executive, scrutiny and regulatory functions. It is necessary to have sufficient elected members to fill both executive positions and the scrutiny and regulatory functions. Tameside Council has two scrutiny panels with broad remits, which require working groups to deep dive into key topics. Over recent years the scrutiny function has developed a close but still independent relationship with the executive based on prioritising pre-decision over post-decision scrutiny (albeit with that option still in the toolbox). Key to this has been sufficient panel membership with a breadth of experience and networks within the community.
- 1.5 Outside the formal governance, scrutiny and regulatory settings councillors sit on the committees and boards of an increasingly wide range of local community groups and organisations. These can be formal appointments such as Active Tameside, Stalybridge Town Centre Challenge Strategic Panel and Advisory Group, Werneth Low Management Committee and Hattersley Land Board; or active involvement as community leaders in roles such as school governors or board members of social housing providers. Similarly, councillors are active participants in groups that represent and advocate for particularly communities, or those that support the preservation and development of community assets, and those that provide essential services for some of the most vulnerable in the community. Examples include local town teams; a wide variety of 'Friends Of' groups; local resident's associations; Covid-19 Community Champions; young people's groups (e.g. Scouts and Rainbows); Homewatch; British Legion; credit unions; and others.
- 1.6 Recent years have seen significant changes to the local government landscape in Tameside. Greater Manchester devolution means significant powers devolved from Whitehall to Greater Manchester require scrutiny and challenge from local councillors within Tameside and the other nine boroughs. Major programmes such as the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan and the Greater Manchester Plan for Homes and Jobs are fundamental to the future of local residents. The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) has corresponding executive and scrutiny functions that are discharged by councillors from each of the ten local authorities. In essence, Tameside Council is operating in a quasi-two-tier arrangement but without two tiers of elected members. Alongside that, the integration of health and care in Tameside including the merging of Tameside Council and Tameside & Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group means councillors are more involved than ever in the decision making and scrutiny of health services, with corresponding casework from their constituents in these areas. In addition, Tameside Council is the administering authority for the Greater Manchester Pension Fund (GMPF) and as such provides the greater part of the elected members on the various boards and panels.
- 1.7 In an area of high deprivation with wider socio-economic and health and wellbeing challenges casework is complex. The impact of funding cuts over the past decade and associated changes to services have only added to the complexity of those needs and the volume of them. This has been further compounded by the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic has re-iterated the role of councillors as community leaders providing

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stability and reassurance in a crisis. Residents look to councillors to help navigate service access and problem solve when multiple challenges face an individual or family.

- 1.8 Councillors are seeing increasing and more complex casework. They report that on average they are dealing with between 21 to 25 cases each month. Almost a third deal with more than 30 a month. Over three-quarters of councillors report that the amount of casework they deal with has increased over recent years. Six out of ten say they spend more time on council business than they expected they would when they first became a councillor. While eight out of ten state the amount of time they spend on council business has increased over recent years. In the year to October 2020, over 800 queries were made to the council via the website and customer services for councillors in addition to the casework work they receive independently and directly from constituents. A rising trend over the last few years.
- 1.9 An electoral review size proposal should not work solely based on more or less compared to the current position. It should start from the question how many councillors are needed to ensure effective governance, scrutiny and representation of individuals and the community. However, the current figure of 57 councillors agreed in 2003 acts as a sensible reference point on which to reflect the above key points. Most of the factors above show councillors are seeing increasing volumes of work whether it be part of formal governance (executive, scrutiny and regulatory) in both Tameside and at the Greater Manchester level – plus increased need for representation of individuals and community due to population growth and the changing role of councillors and how their residents look to them as community leaders. To reduce the number of councillors could potentially place an undue burden on those remaining, and dilute effective decision-making, scrutiny and representation. In some ways, technology has helped reduce time burdens and will do more so in the future. However, it in no way nets off the impact of work growth. Of course, while any proposal should consider value for money that should not be at the expense of representative democracy. Increased workloads handled by the current number of councillors speaks to the need for value for money. With all these factors in mind, a proposal of 57 councillors is considered to balance the need for sufficient capacity while being mindful of value for money.
- 1.10 The proposal of 57 councillors across 19 wards (three councillors per ward) creates electoral imbalances based on the current ward boundaries – for both current (2020) and forecast (2026) electors. In particular in Hyde Newton and Longdendale which are more than 10% above and below the average respectively. These imbalances will be addressed at Stage 2 of the electoral review when new ward boundaries are drawn.

2. TAMESIDE THE PLACE AND ITS COMMUNITIES

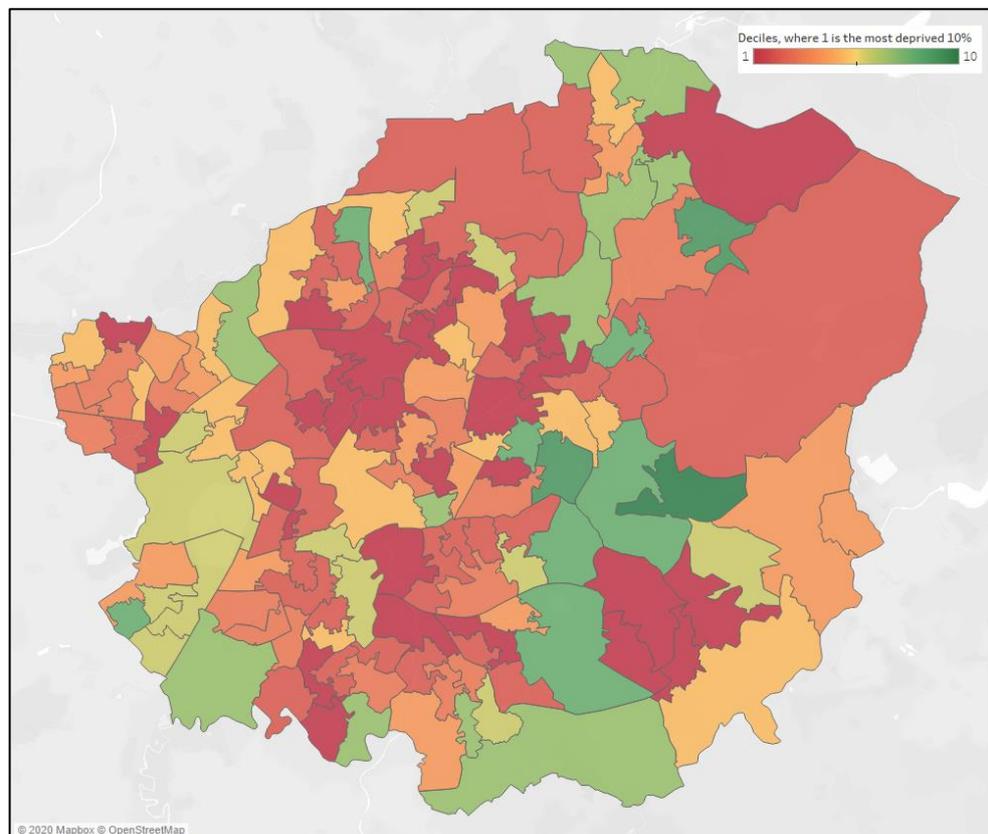
Profile of the Borough

- 2.1 The borough of Tameside is located in the easternmost area of the Greater Manchester city region, with strong strategic connections into Manchester as well as to other nearby cities like Leeds through major rail links, the strategic road network (with the M60 and M67 motorways passing through the borough directly) and

connections to the Greater Manchester Metrolink system for travel within the city region.

- 2.2 Tameside as a whole is made up of nine distinct and unique towns, whose individual identities are fiercely defended by residents of each of these communities.
- 2.3 Tameside is a deprived borough, with the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivations placing the authority area as the 28th most deprived of the 317 boroughs in England, with 11 of our 141 lower super output areas, LSOAs, falling into the most deprived 5% of all areas nationally. In total, around 17% of Tameside residents live in income-deprived households. Deprivation in the borough is not distributed evenly, with areas of greater deprivation generally focused on our town centres.

Map 1: Deprivation levels across Tameside



Source: MHCLG – Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019

- 2.4 Health and wellbeing in Tameside is generally worse than England with heart disease, stroke, cancer and liver disease being significant issues.
- 2.5 Public Health England statistics state that healthy life expectancy at birth is currently 58.3 years for females and 60.4 years for males in Tameside. This is significantly lower than the England average of 63.9 years for females and 63.4 years for males. Life expectancy locally is 7 years lower for females and 6 years lower for males in the most deprived areas of Tameside compared to the least deprived areas. Life expectancy at birth is currently 80.8 years for females and 77.5 years for males in

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Tameside. This is lower than the England average of 83.1 years for females and 79.5 for males.

- 2.6 Reducing the gap in life expectancy that exists between different parts of the Borough by ensuring that all residents have the same opportunities to live and work well is a key priority for the authority. The Care Together programme seeks to address these issues through integration. Tameside Council and NHS Tameside & Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have come together as a strategic commission that works closely with the single care organisation – Tameside & Glossop Integrated Care Foundation Trust (formerly Tameside Hospital) – to shape a place based approach to improving healthy life expectancy. The Strategic Commissioning Board (SCB) brings the Executive Cabinet and clinical leader from the CCG together to make decisions regarding a single health and care budget. Scrutiny and non-executive members provide the same challenge to the SCB as they do the Executive Cabinet.

Economic Investment

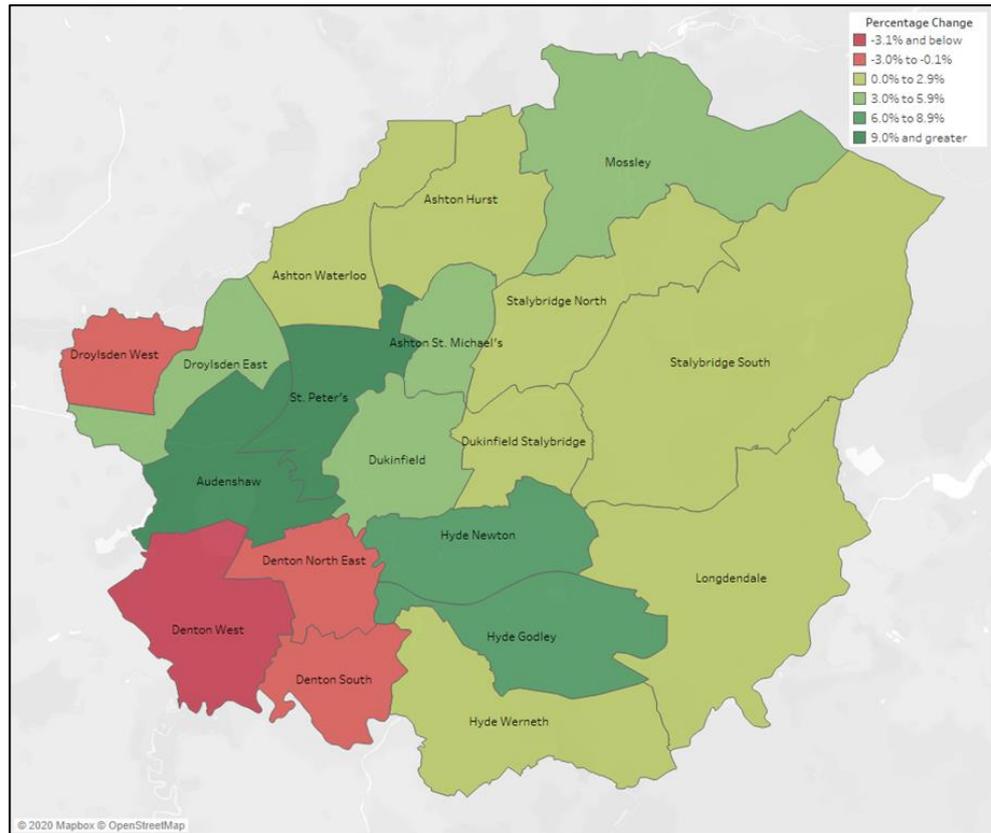
- 2.7 Over recent years a significant amount of investment has been put into towns across the borough, notably including the Vision Tameside project in Ashton-under-Lyne (Tameside's largest town), including the transformation of our higher education facilities, with new facilities built for two of the borough's colleges in the town centre, the replacement of the ageing bus station with a new integrated transport interchange, and the regeneration of public realm space within the town including the market square. Other major developments in the area include the recently completed Tameside Wellness Centre in Denton, a £15 million development integrating a gym, eight lane swimming pool and spa, ten lane bowling alley, and social space.
- 2.8 Other ongoing projects include the expansion of the Ashton Old Baths business hub, to include a dedicated data centre and dark fibre provision, and the ongoing work to regenerate the town centre of Stalybridge through the Stalybridge Town Centre Challenge with High Street Heritage Action Zone funding. A Strategic Board and Advisory Group that both include cross-party elected member representation guides the Stalybridge Town Centre Challenge programme.
- 2.9 All developments and plans in the borough are carried out in line with the council's corporate plan, entitled Our People, Our Place, Our Plan. The plan is a comprehensive set of goals for helping residents as they start well, live well, and age well in a borough with a vibrant economy. As a part of this, the authority is currently developing an inclusive growth strategy to ensure that future economic development in the borough happens in a way that benefits all of our communities, and meaningfully improves the lives of our residents. Councillors whether in their executive, scrutiny or ward member capacity are closely involved in the development of the inclusive growth strategy.
- 2.10 Tameside, as a member of the Greater Manchester city region, is also taking part in the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF), also known as the Greater Manchester Plan for Homes and Jobs, which details large planning developments for the city region for the medium and long term. This plan includes three major developments in Tameside; a commercial and industrial development in the town of Ashton-under-Lyne, and two large residential developments surrounding the town of Hyde. The largest of these, Godley Green Garden Village, will be a purpose-developed new community within the borough to include 2,350 new homes of a range of types

and sizes along with a number of commercial units, schools, and healthcare assets. None of these developments will be completed in the next decade, so there will be no impact on the borough as a result of the GMSF until after 2026, when it will be significant, particularly in the area of Hyde where there are already electoral imbalances.

Population Growth

- 2.11 Tameside’s electoral boundaries were last defined in 2004, when the borough had a population of 213,700 people. In the fifteen year period since then to the ONS mid-year 2019 population estimates, the population of Tameside has increased by 12,800 to an estimated 226,500, an increase of around 6%, greater than the national average population growth of 5.1%. Over the same period, the number of registered electors for local government elections increased by 6.6% to 172,053 electors in the sixteen years to June 2020.
- 2.12 Population growth has not been even across the borough, with four wards losing residents since ward-level population estimates became available in 2011. The largest percentage increase in population was 10.85%, an increase of 1,339 people. The wards showing the largest increase in the number of residents are in the towns of Ashton, Hyde, and Audenshaw while wards with fewer residents now than in 2011 are in the towns of Denton and Droylsden.
- 2.13 Population changes throughout the borough can be seen below in the map.

Map 2: Population change between 2004 and 2019



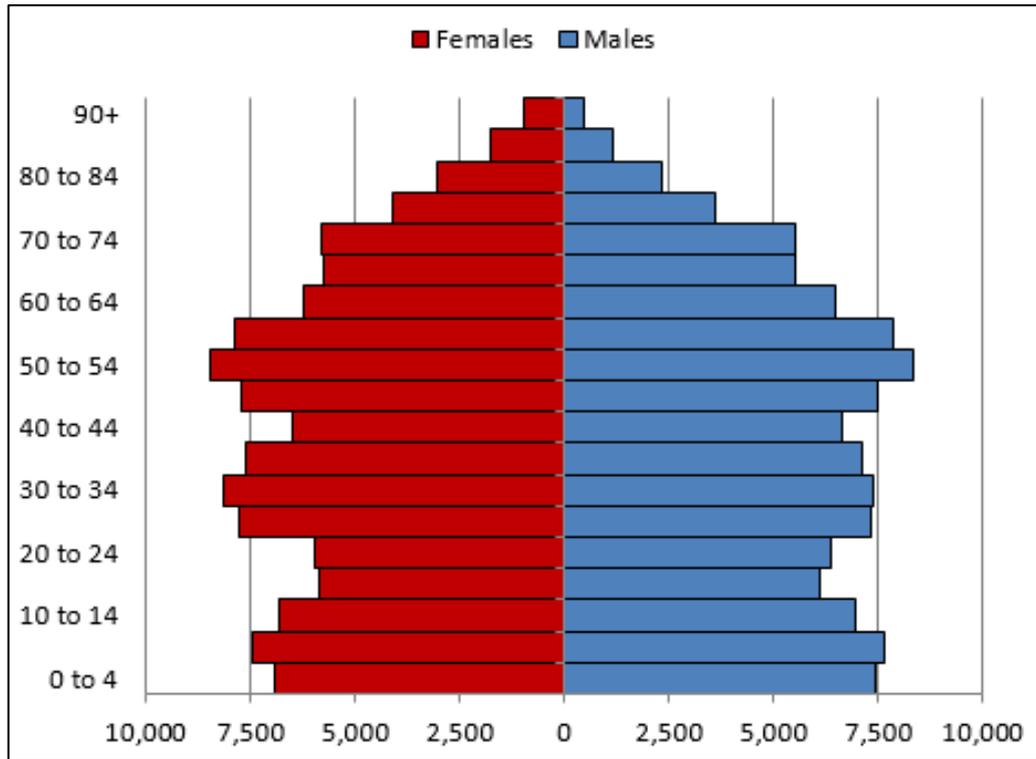
Source: ONS – mid-year population estimates

Demographic Information

- 2.14 Data from the 2011 census tells us that overall, 9.1% of Tameside’s residents are from minority ethnic backgrounds, compared to 9.8% across the North West. The borough’s two largest minority ethnic groups are Bangladeshi and Pakistani. Tameside’s Bangladeshi community is concentrated in the three wards of the town of Hyde, with 70% of the borough’s Bangladeshi population residing there. Three quarters of the Pakistani community in Tameside live in the four wards of Ashton-under-Lyne. The ‘white other’ group has increased by 82% between the 2001 and 2011 censuses, largely due to the growth in Tameside’s Polish community. Insight from our local communities tell us this is likely to have continued when the Census 2021 data becomes available.
- 2.15 The age structure of Tameside’s population is that of an early ageing population, with residents aged 60 and over making up 23.29% of the borough’s population. The borough’s age structure can be seen below in Figure 1. The population of Tameside is relatively balanced between males and females, with the population pyramid being largely symmetrical, but with the lower life expectancy for males becoming visible at the top of the chart.

Figure 1: Population profile of Tameside by age and gender

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Source: ONS – mid-year population estimates 2019

2.16 The relative sizes of age groups varies significantly across the wards in Tameside, with wards such as St. Peter’s (Ashton-under-Lyne town centre), Ashton St. Michael’s, and two of the wards in the town of Hyde being home to significantly larger proportions of residents in younger age groups, as can be seen below in Table 1, where larger groups are highlighted in blue and smaller groups in red.

Table 1: Population profile by age and ward

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Ward Name	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90+
Ashton Hurst	13.46%	12.44%	10.88%	11.91%	11.28%	13.98%	10.74%	10.88%	4.02%	0.41%
Ashton St. Michael's	14.53%	11.18%	13.77%	15.71%	12.90%	12.72%	8.91%	6.33%	3.26%	0.70%
Ashton Waterloo	13.08%	11.39%	11.85%	13.24%	11.71%	14.23%	11.73%	8.47%	3.64%	0.66%
Audenshaw	12.53%	10.65%	11.91%	13.76%	12.83%	15.01%	10.52%	8.11%	3.98%	0.70%
Denton North East	11.66%	10.74%	12.60%	12.82%	12.74%	14.59%	10.72%	9.43%	3.98%	0.71%
Denton South	11.95%	11.18%	11.42%	12.52%	10.97%	15.32%	10.91%	10.12%	5.11%	0.51%
Denton West	10.45%	10.77%	11.02%	11.54%	11.88%	15.56%	11.77%	10.19%	5.90%	0.93%
Droylsden East	12.97%	10.45%	12.33%	13.63%	12.15%	15.09%	10.85%	8.20%	3.91%	0.43%
Droylsden West	12.71%	11.42%	11.93%	13.20%	12.11%	14.98%	10.65%	8.51%	3.90%	0.61%
Dukinfield	13.24%	11.53%	12.80%	14.33%	12.58%	14.09%	10.50%	7.41%	3.10%	0.42%
Dukinfield Stalybridge	10.60%	9.67%	12.16%	11.77%	12.92%	14.88%	11.63%	10.51%	4.65%	1.20%
Hyde Godley	14.77%	11.57%	12.87%	13.92%	12.31%	14.52%	9.61%	7.01%	2.89%	0.54%
Hyde Newton	14.46%	12.04%	12.45%	14.44%	13.08%	13.18%	10.11%	7.36%	2.46%	0.42%
Hyde Werneth	12.21%	12.29%	11.62%	12.36%	13.63%	13.64%	9.94%	8.76%	4.65%	0.92%
Longdendale	12.81%	10.56%	11.00%	11.99%	11.31%	15.47%	12.28%	9.79%	4.14%	0.64%
Mossley	13.28%	10.68%	10.69%	14.37%	14.13%	14.89%	10.76%	8.20%	2.60%	0.41%
St. Peter's	15.17%	12.71%	14.68%	15.81%	13.04%	12.18%	8.63%	5.20%	2.08%	0.51%
Stalybridge North	13.30%	12.40%	11.84%	12.78%	13.05%	14.23%	10.67%	8.07%	3.07%	0.59%
Stalybridge South	12.59%	11.27%	11.49%	12.69%	12.60%	14.91%	11.25%	9.01%	3.34%	0.84%
Tameside	13.01%	11.35%	12.12%	13.38%	12.52%	14.33%	10.59%	8.41%	3.67%	0.63%

Source: ONS – mid-year population estimates 2019

- 2.17 Nearly two-thirds (63.4%) of homes in the borough are owner-occupied- slightly below the national average of 64%. The borough's council tax base is mostly made up of band A and B properties (69.3% compared to 43.7% nationally). In 2011, Tameside had more socially rented properties (21.5%) than both the North West (18.3%) and England averages (17.7%).
- 2.18 As of October 2020, 7.9% of Tameside's residents were claiming out-of-work benefits- this is more than the North West average (6.9%) and the average for England as a whole (6.3%). The proportion of residents claiming out-of-work benefits has increased dramatically over the past twelve months; in October 2019, 4.0% of Tameside residents were claiming out-of-work benefits.
- 2.19 In 2019, 62.9% of Tameside pupils achieved grades 4 or above in their English and Mathematics GCSEs, below the national average of 64.6% but above the North West average of 62.6%. The quality of our schools has been consistently improving over recent years, with 89.5% of primary schools and 92% of secondary schools now rated by Ofsted as good or outstanding.
- 2.20 The authority has had success in recent years in driving down crime rates across Tameside. In the year ending June 2019, the rate of victim-based crime in Tameside was 58.7 per 1,000 population, significantly below the England and Wales average of 77 per 1,000 population.

3. ELECTORAL FORECASTS

- 3.1 As part of the electoral review of Tameside, there is a requirement to determine how the electorate of the borough is forecast to change over the next six years (2020-2026).

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Tameside Council decided to use the forecasting tool provided by the LGBCE. However, in making this decision, forecasts have been created independently by the council in order to provide a broad sense check of those produced by the LGBCE's forecasting tool.

3.2 The sources of data used to create these forecasts are detailed below:

- Electorate statistics for June 2017 – 2020
- ONS mid-year population estimates 2013-2019
- ONS sub national population projections 2020-2026
- Net housing yield from housing development over the last 5 years
- Potential housing growth over the next 6 years

3.3 All population projections produced were based on the aged 17+ population to take account of current attainers. To determine future growth rates in the population and electorate, average growth rates were calculated based on previous trends; these growth rates were then projected forward to 2026 and an overall growth rate calculated. This growth rate of 2.65% was then applied to the current electorate to provide a base forecast of **176,600**, an increase of **4,500** in the electorate.

3.4 The number of net dwellings built in Tameside between 2013 and 2019 is **2,674**. The latest housing land supply details for Tameside have been published as part of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and indicate a further **2,224** dwellings being built between 2020 and 2026. There is wide variation between the numbers of new dwellings by ward ranging from 2 dwellings in Denton South to 425 dwellings in Droylsden East.

3.5 It was necessary to determine how many dwellings to factor in to the overall forecast, as some of the growth produced by new dwellings will already be taken account of in the growth element of the forecast. It was therefore decided to find the average number of dwellings being built over the 19 wards, this equated to **117**. Dwellings were only taken into account for the forecasts where the yield was greater than **117**. The average elector per dwelling value of 1.83 then multiplied the residual number of dwellings. This is similar to the Electoral Commission's value of 1.7. The forecasted growth in the electorate including above average housing is **178,300**, an increase of **6,200** in the electorate. This provided us with a forecast range of between **176,600** and **178,300**; a difference of **1,700**.

3.6 The LGBCE's forecasting tool estimates the electorate will increase to **177,300** by 2026.

3.6 Electoral boundary reviews are triggered by electoral imbalance at ward level. LGBCE data from 2018 shows there are two wards in Tameside with a variance of greater than +/- 10% in comparison with the average. They are Longdendale (-13%) and Hyde Newton (+16%). The baseline electorate data from June 2020 used for this review shows Longdendale at -14.08% and Hyde Newton at +21.11%. The forecasts for 2026 show the same two wards still have a variance of greater than +/- 10% in comparison with the average. Longdendale at -13.42% and Hyde Newton at +18.21%. Table 2 shows the degree of variance across the wards in Tameside as at June 2020 and the forecasted variance if ward boundaries remain the same in 2026.

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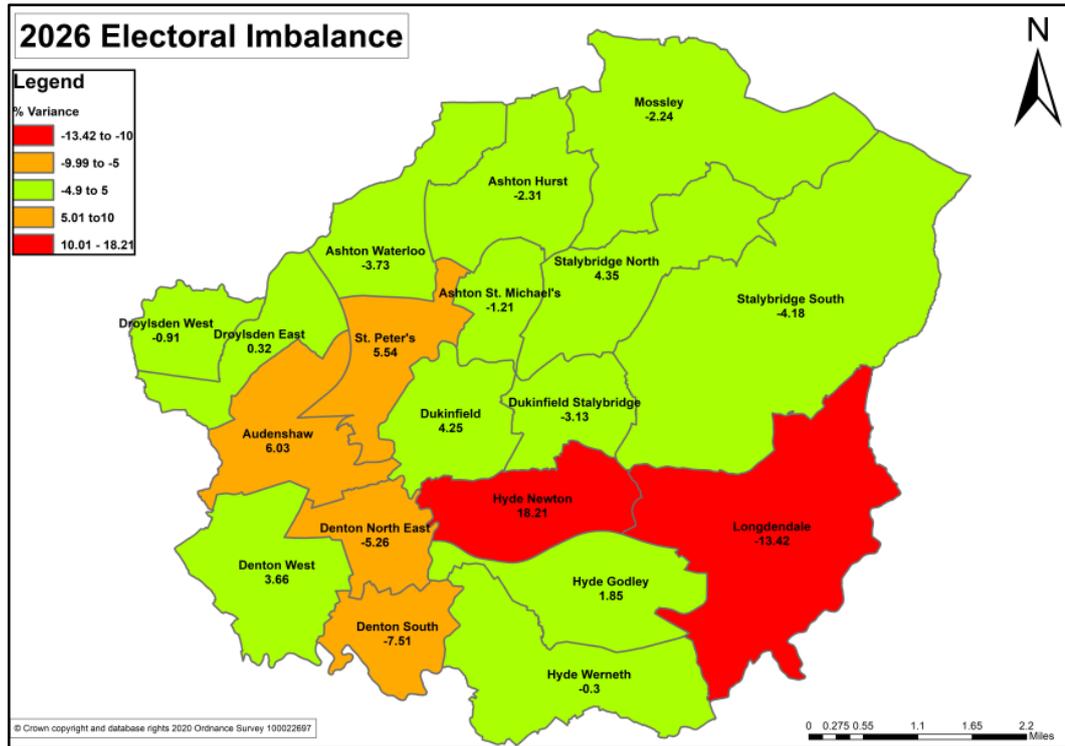
Table 2: Ward level forecast comparisons

Ward	Number of Electors June 2020	Electoral Imbalance June 2020	LGBCE Forecast of Electors 2026	Electoral Imbalance 2026
Ashton Hurst	8785	-2.99%	9115	-2.31%
Ashton St. Michael's	8984	-0.79%	9217	-1.21%
Ashton Waterloo	8670	-4.26%	8982	-3.73%
Audenshaw	9630	6.35%	9893	6.03%
Denton North East	8604	-4.98%	8840	-5.26%
Denton South	8337	-7.93%	8630	-7.51%
Denton West	9260	2.26%	9672	3.66%
Droylsden East	9155	1.10%	9360	0.32%
Droylsden West	8889	-1.84%	9245	-0.91%
Dukinfield	9368	3.45%	9727	4.25%
Dukinfield Stalybridge	8687	-4.07%	9038	-3.13%
Hyde Godley	9331	3.04%	9503	1.85%
Hyde Newton	10967	21.11%	11029	18.21%
Hyde Werneth	9040	-0.17%	9302	-0.30%
Longdendale	7780	-14.08%	8078	-13.42%
Mossley	8806	-2.75%	9121	-2.24%
St. Peter's	9680	6.90%	9847	5.54%
Stalybridge North	9427	4.10%	9736	4.35%
Stalybridge South	8652	-4.45%	8940	-4.18%
Totals	172052	-	177275	-
Average electors per ward	9055.4		9330.3	
Average electors per councillor	3018.5		3110.1	

3.7 Map 3 shows the degree of variance across the wards in Tameside based on the 2026 forecast that will be used to draw ward boundaries at Stage 2.

Map 3: 2026 forecast variance in the electorate by ward

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Source: LGBCE forecasting tool

3.8 Over the next six years, there will be less housing development than seen in the previous six years. The major housing developments proposed in the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework will not have an impact on population until post 2026. The wards that are likely to see the most growth due to housing development in the next six years are: Droylsden East (425 units), Longdendale (284), Hyde Newton (243) and St. Peter’s (224). Taking the housing into account; forecasting electoral imbalance will remain in Longdendale and Hyde Newton but would not impact on the remaining 17 wards.

3.9 The difference between our upper growth forecast including housing and the LGBCE’s forecast is +0.6%. The lower growth forecast is -0.4% below the LGBCE forecast. It was therefore decided that the forecasts produced by the LGBCE were within expected ranges based on local understanding so have been used for this size proposal.

4. GOVERNANCE AND DECISION MAKING

4.1 Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council has 57 councillors across 19 wards, with a ratio of three councillors per ward. The Council elects its councillors by thirds, with elections held over a four-year cycle, with the fourth year being a fallow year with no local election held.

4.2 At 26 May 2020 (Annual Council) the political makeup of Tameside Council is as follows:

Table 3: Tameside Political Structure (May 2020)

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Political Party	Number of Councillors
Labour	50
Conservative	5
Green	1
Vacant seat	1
Total	57

4.3 The Tameside Council constitution states that all Councillors will:

- Collectively be the ultimate policy-makers, and carry out a number of strategic and corporate management functions.
- Represent their communities and bring their views into the Council's decision-making process, i.e. be the advocate of, and for, their communities.
- Deal with individual casework, and act as an advocate for constituents in resolving particular concerns or grievances.
- Balance different interests identified within the ward and represent the ward as a whole.
- Be involved in decision making
- Be available to represent the Council on other bodies.
- Maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics.
- Take part in member development and training.

The Council

4.4 There are five meetings of Full Council scheduled for the municipal year. The first meeting is the Annual Business Meeting of Council held in May, shortly after the local elections. Full Council appoints members to the Cabinet, committees and various outside bodies. The role of the Council is to agree a budget, Council Tax and Business Rate base, establish a policy framework in which the authority can operate and to determine responsibility for the execution of its statutory and discretionary functions.

Leadership – Executive Arrangements

4.5 The Leader will be a Councillor elected to the position by the Council. In 2018, Councillor Brenda Warrington became the Executive Leader of Tameside Council. The Executive Leader will hold office until him or her:

- resigns from the office;
- is suspended from being a Councillor under the Local Government Act (although may resume office at the end of the period of suspension);
- is no longer a Councillor; or
- is removed from office by resolution of the Council.

4.6 The Leader shall determine all delegations of executive functions, appoint a cabinet and determine portfolio holder arrangements and responsibilities. The Council's Executive carries out a wide range of decision making functions, whether by law or under the Council's constitution.

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4.7 In addition, the Executive Leader of Tameside Council holds additional responsibilities in the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and associated committees; the Association of Greater Manchester Executive Board and Greater Manchester Pension Fund (hosted by Tameside Council). GMCA works with its constituent authorities and local services, businesses, communities and other partners to improve the services and opportunities for residents at a regional level. The Executive Leader is also a member and non-clinical vice-chair of the Strategic Commissioning Board, the joint decision making committee of Tameside Council and Tameside & Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group.

Cabinet

4.8 The Cabinet consists of the Council Leader and seven councillors appointed from the majority party. The Cabinet makes decisions in line with the Council’s overall policy framework and budget. The Leader allocates a portfolio of responsibilities to each Cabinet member. A councillor allocated such a portfolio shall be referred to as an Executive Member. The Chair of Council Business also sits on Executive Cabinet as a Lead Member rather than a formal Executive Member.

Cabinet Members

4.9 Each Cabinet member holds responsibility for individual service areas. They have delegated powers assigned to them by the Leader of the Council to make decisions on matters relevant to their particular portfolio as set out in the Council’s constitution. The portfolios for Cabinet members including the Leader of the Council are set out in the table below.

Table 4: Cabinet and Portfolios (2020-21)

The Cabinet
Executive Leader of the Council
Deputy Executive Leader – Executive Member for Children and Families
Executive Member – Finance and Economic Growth
Executive Member – Housing, Planning and Employment
Executive Member – Health, Social Care and Population Health
Executive Member – Lifelong Learning, Equalities, Culture and Heritage
Executive Member – Neighbourhoods, Community Safety and Environment
Executive Member – Transport and Connectivity

4.10 Cabinet Members hold positions on regional committees and partnership meetings, specific to their portfolio. In addition, each member will fulfil a range of commitments with officers, community organisations, businesses and partners. Role expectations and obligations for Cabinet Members is high, with a significant amount of time allocated for the preparation and attendance of meetings, requiring their knowledge and active contribution.

4.11 The Council Leader also appoints Assistant Executive Members for each portfolio. The assistant may carry out such responsibilities considered appropriate by the Executive. The assistant does not have voting rights. Each Cabinet Member is responsible for the actions of their assistant.

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- 4.12 For the 2020/21 municipal year, eight Assistant Executive Members were appointed to support the Executive Leader and Cabinet. Assistant Executive Members may act as a substitute and attend to such matters on the Cabinet Member’s behalf. However, they may not make decisions on behalf of the Cabinet Member. They can be members of a Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Appointments

- 4.13 The Council approves a list of appointments for committees and membership of outside bodies, to discharge Council functions, at both an Executive and Non-Executive level. Councillor appointments are listed below in tables 5, 6 and 7.

Table 5: Tameside Council Committees (2020-21)

Committee	Membership (Tameside Councillors)	Meetings per year
Board	8	11
Cabinet	8	11
Strategic Commissioning Board	8	11
Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel	9	4
Health and Wellbeing Board	4	5
Speakers Panel (Planning)	12	11
Speakers Panel (Licensing)	12	6
Speakers Panel (Liquor Licensing)	10	1-11
Speakers Panel (Employment Appeals)	5	1-11
Corporate Parenting Board	3	6
Education Attainment Board	6	4
Audit Panel	8	4
Overview Panel	12	4
Carbon and Waste Reduction Panel	11	4
Democratic Processes Working Group	11	4
Standards Committee	5	3
Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel	20	6
Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel	15	6
North Strategic Neighbourhood Forum	12	4
South Strategic Neighbourhood Forum	12	4
East Strategic Neighbourhood Forum	15	4
West Strategic Neighbourhood Forum	18	4

Table 6: Meetings of Greater Manchester Pension Fund (2020-21)

Meeting	Membership (Tameside Councillors)	Meetings per year
Pension Fund Panel	12	4
Policy and Development	1	4
Investment Monitoring and ECG	1	4
Administration and Employer Funding Viability	1	4
Local Pensions Board	2	4

Northern LGPS Joint Committee	2	4
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Table 7: Appointments to Outside Bodies (2020-21)

Meeting	Membership (Tameside Councillors)
GMCA	1
AGMA Executive Board	1
Police and Crime Panel	1
GM Planning and Housing Commission	1
GMCA Scrutiny Committees	6
GM Health Scrutiny Panel	1
GM Health and Social Care Strategic Partnership	1
GM Joint Health Commissioning Board	1
GM Reform Committee	1
Transport for Greater Manchester Committee	1
GM Waste and Recycling Committee	2
AGMA Statutory Functions Committee	1
GM Culture and Social Impact Fund Committee	1

Broader decision-making processes

4.14 There are a number of other committees and boards that while not part of the constitutional arrangements as above are an important part of wider governance and the broader decision-making process. They involve councillors either as representatives of the council itself as an organisation or the communities of Tameside. Examples include:

- Schools Forum (two executive members)
- Corporate Parenting Board (one executive member, one assistant executive member and chair of relevant scrutiny panel)
- Children’s Services Improvement Board (Executive Leader, executive member and assistant executive member)
- Active Tameside Board (Chair – nominated councillor)
- Stalybridge Town Centre Challenge Strategic Board and Advisory Panel (Executive Leader, two executive members, ward members including opposition)
- Werneth Low Country Park Joint Management Committee (7 councillors).
- Hattersley Land Board (one Executive Member, plus Longdendale and Hyde Godley ward councillors)
- North West Employers (one councillor)

5. LOCAL AND SUB-REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 Tameside Council is part of sub-regional arrangements that place additional requirements on councillors – both executive and non-executive. Greater Manchester devolution, health and care integration, administration of the Greater Manchester Pension Fund and membership of STAR procurement all need input from executive

members and appropriate challenge from non-executive members (e.g. through scrutiny) to ensure local residents are represented and effective decisions are made in their interests. These responsibilities are additional to standard local government arrangements in most areas and could in some way be said to be similar to two-tiers, albeit without two tiers of councillors.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

- 5.2 The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) is made up of the ten Greater Manchester councils and the Greater Manchester Mayor, who work with other local services, businesses, communities and other partners to improve the city-region. The ten councils have worked together voluntarily for many years on issues that affect everyone in the region, like transport, regeneration, and attracting investment. The GMCA gives local people more control over issues that affect their area. It means the region speaks with one voice and can make a strong case for resources and investment.
- 5.3 The GMCA is run jointly by the leaders of the ten councils and the Mayor of Greater Manchester. A chief executive and officer core supports them. A variety of boards, panels and committees look specifically at areas like transport, health and social care, planning and housing. The GMCA is the police and crime and fire authority for Tameside and the other nine councils. It is also the transport authority – Transport for Greater Manchester – and the waste disposal authority for nine of the ten local authorities including Tameside. The GMCA works closely with the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership. The Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership is the devolved arrangements from NHS England for the sub-region. The leader of Tameside Council is a member of the Greater Manchester Health and Care Board, which provides strategic oversight including the delivery of 'Taking Charge' the 5-year health and care plan, published in 2019.
- 5.4 The boards, panels and committees of the GMCA are:
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority
 - Greater Manchester Combined Authority Standards Committee
 - Greater Manchester Combined Authority Resources Committee
 - Greater Manchester Audit Committee
 - Greater Manchester Planning & Housing Commission
 - Greater Manchester Transport Committee
 - Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership
 - Greater Manchester Health and Care Board
 - Greater Manchester Health and Care Joint Commissioning Board
 - Greater Manchester Waste & Recycling Committee
 - Greater Manchester Culture and Social Impact Fund Committee
 - Greater Manchester Police, Fire and Crime Panel
 - Independent Police Ethics Committee
 - Greater Manchester Green City Region Partnership
- 5.5 As with local authorities, the GMCA is supported by a number of overview and scrutiny bodies that check and challenge the decisions of the executive. They are:
-

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- Greater Manchester Corporate Issues & Reform Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Greater Manchester Economy, Business Growth and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Greater Manchester Housing Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny
- Greater Manchester Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

5.6 The number of Tameside councillors sitting on these bodies is outlined in section four. Alongside this the vast majority of the proposals and plans outlined by the GMCA then also have to go through local governance, and the local scrutiny function also provides additional input to that of the GM wider overview and scrutiny committees.

5.7 A number of cross-cutting and thematic arrangements are in place at the Greater Manchester level with corresponding provision at a local level. The Executive Leader is the chair of the Greater Manchester Inequalities Board that brings together outputs from various working groups including Women & Girls Panel, Faith & Race Panel. The Executive Leader is the Chair of the former. Aligned to this Tameside has established an Inequalities Reference Group chaired by the lead executive member for equalities and including four non-executive councillors plus community representatives.

Tameside & Glossop Strategic Commission

5.7 Tameside Council and NHS Tameside & Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group have come together to form one organisation, Tameside & Glossop Strategic Commission. The transformation and integration programme has delivered a range of additional responsibilities for elected members, at both an executive and non-executive levels. All members now have a closer connection between council services, health provision and commissioning at a neighbourhood level. Details within tables 5 and 7 shows the commitment for councillors at a local and regional level in respect of health integration.

5.8 The Strategic Commissioning Board is the decision making body for health and care related spend and is comprised of councillors from the Executive Cabinet and the clinical leaders of the Governing Body of NHS Tameside and Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group. Alongside the SCB, there are a number of supporting mechanisms that involve councillors. For example, the Executive Member for health and social care sits on the Quality and Performance Assurance Group (QPAG). Likewise, the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Panel takes a direct role in constructive challenge to the integrated health arrangements. For example, recent activity includes a review of the annual GP Patient Survey results and a Covid-19 assurance session with the chief executive of Tameside & Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust (formerly Tameside Hospital).

Greater Manchester Pension Fund

5.9 Greater Manchester Pension Fund is administered by Tameside Council, which involves the responsibility for fund management, strategic oversight, and administration and governance arrangements. This presents a range of additional role requirements for elected members from both the executive and non-executive.

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- 5.10 The Executive Leader of Tameside Council is appointed the Chair of the Pension Fund, with additional appointments to committees, as detailed within Table 6, most notably twelve Tameside councillors appointed to meetings of the Pension Fund Panel.

STAR Procurement

- 5.11 Tameside Council participates in a shared procurement service with Rochdale, Stockport and Trafford Councils, known as STAR Procurement. STAR supports each council with the broad range of procurement services for supplies, services or work contracts. The Executive Member for Finance and Economic Growth represents the Council at STAR Procurement at a strategic and board level. The scrutiny function provide appropriate challenge of these arrangements through their regular budget updates.

6. SCRUTINY AND REGULATORY FUNCTIONS

Scrutiny

- 6.1 The Council's scrutiny function forms an integral part of the Council's decision-making process. Scrutiny acts as a critical friend to the Executive by reviewing policy development and performance, with the aim to improve outcomes for residents. All Councillors, except members of the Executive Cabinet, may be members of a Scrutiny Panel. However, no member may be involved in scrutinising a decision in which she/he has been directly involved.
- 6.2 Scrutiny plays an important role in reviewing Council policies, matters of general concern, and seeks to make recommendations to the Executive. The general role of the Scrutiny Committees as set out in the Council's constitution is as follows:
- Review and scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's Executive functions.
 - Make requests or recommendations to the Overview Panel in connection with the discharge of any Executive functions in accordance with the Council's Call In Procedure.
 - Consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants.
 - Exercise the right to call in for reconsideration, executive decisions made but not yet implemented by the Executive.
 - Examine whether the Council is meeting its objectives set through the budget and policies, and if this is not so suggest ways in which the Council may achieve this.
- 6.3 Tameside Council appoints the Scrutiny Panels listed below, with membership from different political parties to maintain political balance. The Council's Overview Panel will oversee the co-ordination and reporting of activity.
- Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel (15 members)
 - Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel (20 members)

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- 6.4 The Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel is the Council's Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee. The Integrated Care and Wellbeing Panel is the Council's Health Scrutiny Panel and shall undertake the scrutiny function in relation to:
- Education matters set out in Section 499 of the Education Act 1996 (as amended by Section 9 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998).
 - Matters relating to the Children Act 2004 and 'Every Child Matters'.
- 6.5 At the start of the municipal year, each Scrutiny Panel develops and agrees an annual work programme, which is monitored and updated, on a regular basis. Separate working groups may be established to conduct and review activity outside of the calendar of meetings. The working group will produce a report of findings and recommendations to the overarching panel and tabled at Overview Panel.
- 6.6 Scrutiny activity adopts a combination of approaches to review service and performance updates, respond to formal consultations, focus reports of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and areas in need of more in-depth review. Where deemed appropriate, the wider development of scrutiny may include project support and service development work undertaken at the request of the Executive (while maintaining the independence of the scrutiny function). This includes a responsibility for:
- Engagement and consultation – to provide responses to pre-decision activity
 - Research and insight to a particular issue
 - Review of decisions and recommendations
- 6.7 Twice a year both scrutiny panels come together for a joint budget update with the lead Executive Member for finance. Following that, a formal response is made to the executive for consideration in the budget setting process. This activity aligns closely with the public budget conversation process. In recent year's scrutiny has taken an active role in strategic learning from complaints. Taking relevant in-focus reports from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) the relevant panel seeks assurance from the executive that the learning identified by the LGSCO from their review of all complaints in that topic area is adopted in Tameside. Recent topics covered include SEND; Housing Benefit payments; Armed Forces Covenant and homelessness. Scrutiny in Tameside is very much focused on pre-decision work as the best way of gaining positive influence and improving decision making in a Leader and Cabinet system. To this end, both panels regularly review proposals and make formal submissions to open consultation. Both local consultations and national and regional consultations that are likely to have a profound effect on Tameside residents. Recent submissions include: Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan, Over the Counter Medicines, New Rent Standards, Doing Buses Better and Safer Streets (walking and cycling). Scrutiny continues to undertake in-depth reviews on topics of concern to the community and/or priorities for the council. The two most recent reviews have been private rented sector and fostering.

Regional Scrutiny

- 6.8 There are seven appointments made for Tameside Councillors to form membership of regional scrutiny committees. This involves an additional responsibility to attend the regional committees listed below on a frequent basis.

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- Greater Manchester Corporate Issues & Reform Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Greater Manchester Economy, Business Growth & Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Greater Manchester Housing, Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Greater Manchester Health Scrutiny Panel

Regulatory, Statutory and Overview functions

- 6.9 The Council appoints Committees to discharge regulatory matters. These matters are not Cabinet responsibilities and therefore considered by committees appointed by the Council.
- 6.10 Speakers Panel Planning is responsible for exercising the development control and regulatory powers and duties of the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts (and any Regulations or Orders thereunder) including considering planning applications. Meetings of Speakers Panel Planning are often lengthy and require significant preparation, attending briefing sessions, routine training and sites visits where deemed necessary.
- 6.11 During the previous two municipal years 2018/19 and 2019/20, Speakers Panel Planning has considered a total of 138 planning applications and 22 traffic regulation objections / rights of way objections.
- 6.12 Speakers Panel (Licensing) and Speakers Panel (Liquor Licensing) exercise all functions of the licensing authority that relate to the Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005, Regulation of taxi and private hire legislation. The following considerations were made during the previous two municipal years 2018/19 and 2019/20.
- Speakers Panel (Licensing) – 13 reviews
 - Speakers Panel (Liquor Licensing) – 13 reviews

Audit Panel

- 6.13 A range of functions are delegated to the Council's Audit Panel. The remit of the panel is to approve the authorities' statement of accounts and to work closely with both internal and external audit functions.

Overview Panel

- 6.14 The Council's Overview Panel acts as a mechanism to facilitate dialogue between the Executive and Scrutiny. The panel undertakes a constant review of activities and oversees the Council's service improvement programme and budget elements.
- 6.15 The panel reviews and approves future priorities and work programmes of the Scrutiny Panels, providing an important link for policy review and development. It will also receive and consider final reports from Scrutiny Panels and co-ordinate the scrutiny process. The Overview Panel also provides oversight to the council's complaints function in particular reports from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

(LGSCO). Meetings provide an effective platform for representatives of the executive, non-executive and political opposition to deliver a critical improvement role for council business.

7. REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE OF COUNCILLORS IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Councillor profile and survey

- 7.1 A survey of all councillors was undertaken to understand some key aspects of them and their work. All councillors responded to the survey.
- 7.2 Almost a third of councillors (32%) have caring responsibilities for children and / or adults with a disability or frailty needs. Almost a third of councillors (32%) have been in their role for between 1 – 5 years. Just over a fifth have been in the role for over 20 years (23%).
- 7.3 In addition to being a ward councillor, elected members hold a range of other council related roles. A third of councillors (34%) are a Chair (or Vice-Chair) of a committee or panel (e.g. planning, scrutiny, strategic neighbourhood forum). Almost half of councillors (48%) hold an appointment on an outside body. Over two-thirds (68%) of Councillors chair or are members of non-council groups within Tameside.
- 7.4 There are over 150 groups / meetings councillors report attending that sit outside of the council's committee structure. These vary greatly in terms of remit and responsibility. Some meetings are at a national and regional level including Local Government Association Councillors Forum; Greater Manchester Combined Authority; Greater Manchester Waste Panel; Greater Manchester Police and Crime Panel; Transport for Greater Manchester; Manchester Airport Consultative Committee; and STAR Procurement. Others are at a local level with examples including Active Tameside; boards for local Housing Providers (Jigsaw and Ashton Pioneer); local town teams; a wide variety of 'Friends Of' groups; local resident's associations; Covid-19 Community Champions; young people's groups (e.g. Scouts and Rainbows); and others.
- 7.5 The median number of case numbers that elected members report working on each month is between 21 to 25 cases. Almost a third of councillors (30%) deal with more than 30 pieces of casework per month on average. Over three-quarters of councillors (77%) report that the number of casework they deal with has increased over recent years. Six in ten (60%) report that they spend more time on council business than they expected they would when they first became a councillor. Eight in ten (80%) councillors report that the amount of time they spend on council business has increased over recent years.
- 7.6 Councillors indicated the periods when they were busiest on council business. The vast majority, nine in ten (91%), said a weekday evening. This was followed by three quarters (78%) who said weekday daytime.

Casework

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- 7.7 The most popular method of community engagement has been face to face, by telephone and email, with councillors undertaking ward walks and holding routine surgeries. Councillors get casework in a variety of ways, with a large proportion received directly from constituents.
- 7.8 Residents can also contact councillors via the council's customer relationship management (CRM) system. The platform enables a range of issues and complaints to be brought to the attention of ward councillors. Support mechanisms are in place to deliver this service on behalf of members, ensuring residents and complainants receive a structured and timely response. Examples include concerns raised relating to fly tipping, refuse collection, highways, anti-social behaviour and social care.
- 7.9 Councillors receive a large number of contacts via CRM. From November 2019 to October 2020, Tameside councillors received 829 direct contacts, for which all required a coordinated response. An increase on the previous two years.

Neighbourhoods and towns

- 7.10 Tameside is made up of nine towns, all of which are proud of their heritage and unique identity. The nine towns of Tameside are Ashton under Lyne; Audenshaw; Denton; Droylsden; Dukinfield; Hyde; Mossley; Longdendale; and Stalybridge.
- 7.11 Tameside has a diverse and community based approach to neighbourhood working. The council facilitates four Strategic Neighbourhood Forums – north (Ashton), south (Hyde and Longdendale), east (Dukinfield, Mossley and Stalybridge) and west (Audenshaw, Denton and Droylsden). Their focus is on establishing local input to the decision-making process with the forums acting as a primary consultee on matters considered by the council. Appointments to the forums is determined by electoral ward location based on Tameside's four points of the compass neighbourhoods (which align with health, children's and police neighbourhoods). All councillors from the designated wards form membership of each forum, which meet four times a year.
- 7.12 The main commercial town centres have town teams. These are business and community led but include relevant ward councillors. There are a wide range of other community led area groups that involve councillors as community leaders and representatives. Examples include Denton South Partnership; Ridge Hill Big Local; and St. Peter's Community Gathering.

Community involvement and participation

- 7.13 Councillors act in the public interest and facilitate an important link between communities and the council. Working closely with residents and representing their views and concerns is a significant part of the role. In addition to the formal appointments made by the council, members carry out an active role working with a range of partners and outside bodies, including the community and voluntary sector. These range from groups that represent and advocate for particularly communities, to those that support the preservation and development of community assets, to those that provide essential services for some of the most vulnerable in the community.
- 7.14 Examples of the type, range and scope of groups councillors are involved in is given below.

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- Residents Associations
- Homewatch
- Community Centres (e.g. Werneth, Broadoak, Bennett St)
- Friends of parks, war memorials, worship and heritage (e.g. Ryecroft Hall, Werneth Low)
- Sports clubs and facilities – e.g. bowling, football.
- Armed Forces / British Legion
- Charities – e.g. Willow Wood Hospice
- Ridgehill Big Local
- Cashbox Credit Union
- Diversity Matters North West (DMNW)
- Homestart Tameside
- Citizen's Advice Bureau
- Grafton Centre
- Foodbanks and pantries (e.g. Trussell Trust, Sandwich Angels, Town House)

7.15 Information from registers of interest, the councillor survey response and other sources show councillors are involved in over 100 outside bodies, community / residents associations and other groups in the community.

7.16 Councillors also represent their communities through two key areas of housing and education. Councillors sit on the boards of two of the largest registered social landlords (RSLs) in the borough – Jigsaw Homes (formerly New Charter Homes, which was established from the Tameside Council stock transfer) and Ashton Pioneer Homes. Approximately a quarter of councillors are school governors.

8. OTHER

Engagement and consultation

8.1 The Tameside and Glossop Partnership Engagement Network (PEN) is the council's strategic mechanism for engagement with public and patient groups, voluntary and community sector groups, partners and stakeholders across Tameside. PEN is a tri-organisational structure established jointly by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council (TMBC), NHS Tameside and Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group (T&GCCG) and Tameside & Glossop Integrated NHS Foundation Trust (ICFT).

8.2 Elected Members are a key stakeholder of PEN – directly engaging with residents and service users via our regular PEN conferences and events that focus on key projects affecting residents across Tameside & Glossop. Elected Members act as community leaders, supporting residents to play an active part in shaping local public services by proactively feeding issues and ideas to decision makers. Councillors are active participants for the engagement network and the Big Conversation (the consultation platform) maximising the number of responses from individuals and groups by using their extensive networks and connections.

8.3 Since January 2019, the PEN has facilitated 50 thematic engagement projects; received 4,753 engagement contacts (excluding attendance at events / drop-ins); supported 39 engagement projects at the regional and Greater Manchester level; and

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delivered four Partnership Engagement Network (PEN) conferences attended by over 280 delegates. Most recently, activity has become exclusively virtual due to Covid-19 but that has not stopped active involvement in a range of key topics at recent events. Topics include:

- Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan
- Inclusive Growth Strategy
- Trans-Pennine Upgrade (Mottram Link Road)
- Environment Strategy
- Access to Primary Care
- The Future of Personalised Care in Tameside & Glossop

Elected Member Development

8.4 Tameside Council delivers an accredited development programme for elected members. The attendance of members is compulsory at each session and is facilitated by the relevant Executive Members, with direct support from the Council's Organisational Development service. Approximately ten sessions take place during the municipal year and topics will aim to increase general awareness and to support councillors in their role as decision makers and community representatives. Recent topics include:

- Finance and budget update
- Corporate Parent
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and complex vulnerabilities
- Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan (CAP) and taxi minimum licensing standards (MLS)
- Brexit preparedness
- Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) and Local Plan
- Covid-19 and Test and Trace
- Ofsted inspection and children's services improvement
- Vision Tameside and public realm improvements
- Cooperative working
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
- Walking and cycling

Coronavirus pandemic / Covid-19

8.5 The coronavirus pandemic has re-iterated the role of councillors as community leaders and community reassurers. Councillors report a growth in casework because of Covid-19 and are increasingly involved in community based provision. Alongside this, governance systems have been put in place to ensure appropriate Covid-19 response decision making.

8.6 Alongside the existing council Board, a dedicated Living with Covid Board has been established to give sufficient space and focus on coronavirus related decisions. The Executive Leader chairs the Board with all executive members also on the board. In addition, the Leader chairs a Covid-19 Impact and Recovery Group that looks to the longer term and feeds into the Living with Covid Board.

- 8.7 The Tameside Community Champions network empowers residents and workforces with the information they need to lead the way in the community. Community Champions have a vital role to play and are well placed to act as key message carriers and to lead by good example. The council ensures that timely and accurate information is shared with our champions to support them to respond to and reassure the residents within their community. Armed with the latest advice and guidance, champions can help family, friends and other community members to understand the latest facts about the virus and what we can all do in order to protect ourselves, each other, and prevent the spread of Covid. Two thirds of elected members are signed up as Covid-19 Champions.

Cross-cutting / thematic working groups

- 8.8 Outside of formal governance, effective decision making and service delivery is enhanced by working groups and steering groups on that inform from best practice and lived experience. Tameside has sought to establish such groups with input from elected members in their capacity as community leaders and representatives. Two such examples are the Cooperative Tameside Steering Group and the Tameside & Glossop Inequalities Reference Group
- 8.9 In late 2019, Tameside Council became a cooperative council on joining the Cooperative Council's Innovation Network (CCIN). In 2020, the council has taken part in the CCIN Policy Prototype projects including input from the lead executive member for health and care. A Tameside Cooperative Steering Group has recently been established. The Steering Group is chaired by the Executive Leader and includes the lead executive member for cooperative working (who also sits on the CCIN Executive Oversight Committee) plus three non-executive members. The role of the Steering Group is to continue to assess how the council can improve and increase its working relationship with the CCIN, identifying new projects for cooperation across the borough, and to support and integrate them into the overall cooperative strategy for the borough.
- 8.10 Tameside has established an Inequalities Reference Group chaired by the lead executive member for equalities and including four non-executive councillors plus community representatives. The IRG provides a forum for the sharing of ideas and thoughts on carrying out responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty – with the ultimate aim of reducing inequality across Tameside & Glossop. While the group is not a decision-making body, it makes recommendations for action via existing governance structures, and contribute to and steer overarching action to address inequalities. By listening to and advocating for communities of interest, the IRG provides constructive challenge in an advisory role to providers.