

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

HELD AT 3.02 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 20 MARCH 2024

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, WHITECHAPEL

Members Present:

Mayor Lutfur Rahman (Member)	Councillor Peter Golds (Member)
Councillor Faroque Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Iqbal Hossain (Member)
Councillor Kabir Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Kabir Hussain (Member)
Councillor Leelu Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Asma Islam (Member)
Councillor Saied Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Sirajul Islam (Member)
Councillor Shafi Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Ahmodul Kabir (Member)
Councillor Suluk Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled (Member)
Councillor Sabina Akhtar (Member)	Councillor Ahmodur Khan (Member)
Councillor Amina Ali (Member)	Councillor Sabina Khan (Member)
Councillor Nathalie Bienfait (Member)	Councillor Amin Rahman (Member)
Councillor Mufeedah Bustin (Member)	Councillor Rebaka Sultana (Member)
Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury (Member)	Councillor Maium Talukdar (Member)
Councillor Jahed Choudhury (Member)	Councillor Abdul Wahid (Member)
Councillor Abu Chowdhury (Member)	

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Councillor Musthak Ahmed
- Councillor Asma Begum
- Councillor Rachel Blake
- Councillor Bodrul Choudhury
- Councillor Marc Francis
- Councillor Kamrul Hussain
- Councillor James King
- Councillor Amy Lee
- Councillor Abdul Mannan
- Councillor Ana Miah
- Councillor Abdul Malik
- Councillor Bellal Uddin
- Councillor Abdal Ullah

It was noted that due to the time of day of the meeting, not all Members were able to attend. The following Councillors joined the meeting online and were therefore not formally in attendance and not able to vote.

- Councillor Ohid Ahmed
- Councillor Maisha Begum
- Councillor Mohammad Chowdhury
- Councillor Shubo Hussain

Apologies for lateness were received for:

- Councillor Leelu Ahmed
- Councillor Amina Ali

2. **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests declared by members.

3. **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

3.1 **Pay Policy Statement 2024/25**

The Speaker of the Council agreed the reasons for the exempt appendix which were that it was restricted through Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as it contained information relating to an individual and the financial affairs of that individual.

Councillor Saied Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Resources and Cost-of-living introduced the report. Councillor Ahmed **moved** an amendment which was **seconded** by Councillor Kabir Ahmed. In respect to the Pay Policy Statement, Councillor Ahmed clarified that the consultation with the Mayor referred to disciplinary procedures at paragraph 3.2 of the main report rather than pay policies. He asked that the amendment be noted.

Members had no questions for Councillor Saied Ahmed.

Council unanimously **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note and agree the Pay Policy 2024-25 set out at Appendix 1 to the attached report to the Human Resources Committee, subject to the amendment proposed by Councillor Saied Ahmed.

3.2 **Statutory Officer Disciplinary Procedure**

Councillor Maium Talukdar, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Youth and Lifelong Learning introduced the report. Councillor Maium Talukdar **moved** an amendment which was **seconded** by Councillor Saied Ahmed. Councillor Ahmed referred to the recommendations in the main report and stated that the wording ought to state 'informed' rather than 'consult' the Mayor in the Disciplinary Procedure.

Members had no questions for Councillor Maium Talukdar.

Council unanimously **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the new Statutory Officer Disciplinary Process document presented to the Human Resources Committee attached as Appendix 1 to this cover report subject to the amendment proposed by Councillor Saied Ahmed.
2. Agree the consequent changes to the Officer Employment Procedure Rules of the Constitution attached as Appendix 2 to the cover report.

3.3 Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference

Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury, Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Social Care introduced the report. He stated changes had been made to the terms of reference for the Health and Wellbeing Board and asked Council to approve and agree the changes.

Members had no questions for Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury.

Council unanimously **RESOLVED** to:

1. Agree the new Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference and Constitutional changes.

4. OTHER REPORTS

4.1 Agreeing Early Retirement / Voluntary Redundancy Exit Payments

The Speaker of the Council accepted the reasons for urgency set out in the report and the reasons for the exempt appendix which were that it was restricted through Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as it contained information relating to an individual and the financial affairs of that individual.

Councillor Saied Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living introduced the report and stated the report sought approval for the payment of voluntary redundancy exit packages which exceed the £100,000 threshold as required under the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 40 of the Localism Act.

In reference to the restricted appendix of the report, it was explained that the Human Resources Committee would receive updates they could monitor to confirm if the savings were achieved.

There were no further questions from members.

Council unanimously **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note and approve the ER/VR related exit payments, including redundancy, additional severance pay and the strain cost of early payment of pension benefits. This agreement is recommended on the grounds that the costs can be recouped within the 3-year period of the MTFS through the deletion of the posts.
2. Note that the redundancy payment is part of the contractual terms and conditions of employment and the requirement for early payment of pension benefits relates to the Local Government Pension Scheme regulations.

4.2 Members' Allowances Scheme 2023-24 and 2024-25

Councillor Saied Ahmed, Cabinet Member for Resources and the Cost of Living introduced the report. He said the report set out several matters for consideration before stating the reasons why an increase in members allowance was not favoured by the Administration. He urged members to support this position that there be no increase in allowances in 2023-24 or 2024-25.

Councillor Maium Talukdar seconded this proposal and Councillor Sirajul Islam, Leader of the Opposition stated his party were happy to support this too.

Council unanimously **RESOLVED** to:

1. Review and consider the report of the London Independent Remuneration Panel.
2. To agree that all allowances will remain frozen for the years 2023/24 and 2024/25.
3. Subject to Recommendation 2 agree to adopt the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Members' Allowances Scheme for 2024/25 as set out at Appendix 2 to the report.
4. To agree that the General Purposes Committee lead on any requested engagement with the London Independent Remuneration Panel, report back to Council as required.

4.3 Committee Calendar 2024-25

The Speaker of the Council, Councillor Jahed Choudhury said the updated Committee Calendar tabled at the meeting set out the proposed dates of meetings for the Municipal Year 2024/25. He noted the adjustments made to

the calendar for Ramadan 2025 as well as the further amendment to move Human Resources Committee from 23rd September to 26th September 2024. He asked members to approve the committee calendar.

Following a request, it was agreed to add the Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education to the report in future years.

Council unanimously **RESOLVED** to:

1. Approve the proposed calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 1 (as amended by the tabled papers), subject to the moving of the Human Resources Committee from the 23rd to the 26th September 2024.
2. To delegate to the Monitoring Officer the authority to agree meeting dates for any new Committees or Panels that are set up subsequent to this report being presented to Council, subject to appropriate consultation with Members.

The meeting ended at 3.30 p.m.

Speaker of the Council