

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**MINUTES OF THE CABINET**

**HELD AT 5.42 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2008**

**M71, 7TH FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE CRESCENT,  
LONDON, E14 2BG**

**Members Present:**

Councillor Lutfur Rahman (Chair)	(Leader of the Council)
Councillor Rofique U Ahmed	(Lead Member, Culture and Leisure)
Councillor Alibor Choudhury	(Lead Member, Employment and Skills)
Councillor Marc Francis	(Lead Member, Housing and Development)
Councillor Clair Hawkins	(Lead Member, Children's Services)
Councillor Sirajul Islam (Vice-Chair)	(Deputy Leader of the Council)
Councillor Joshua Peck	(Lead Member, Resources and Performance)
Councillor Abdal Ullah	(Lead Member, Cleaner, Safer, Greener)

**Other Councillors Present:**

Councillor Shahed Ali	(Labour)
Councillor Abdul Asad	(Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee)
Councillor Peter Golds	(Leader Conservative Group)
Councillor Ahmed Hussain	
Councillor Denise Jones	

**Others Present:**

**Officers Present:**

Menara Ahmed	– Step up Now and Aspiring Leaders Programme
Andy Algar	– (Service Head Asset Strategy, Capital Delivery and Property Services, Development & Renewal)
Abul Khayar Ali	– Social Work Positive Action and Aspiring Leaders Programme
Lutfur Ali	– (Assistant Chief Executive)
Nasima Begum	– Hamlets Youth Training
Afiya Begum	– Graduate Training Scheme
Halema Begum	– Hamlets Youth Training
Rachel Bielby	– (Leader's Executive Assistant, Democratic Services, Chief Executive's)
Mark Burgess	– (Learning Manager, Corporate Learning and

	Development, Resources)
Aaron Cahill	– (Interim Housing Strategy Manager, Development & Renewal)
Isobel Cattermole	– (Service Head, Resources, Children's Services)
Lara Cerroni	– (Communications Officer, Communications, Chief Executive's)
Deb Clarke	– (Joint Director of Human Resources)
Kevan Collins	– (Corporate Director, Children's Services)
Linda Crawford	– (Manager Learning and Development, Human Resources, Resources)
Megan Crowe	– (Legal Services Team Leader- Planning, Chief Executive's)
Paul Evans	– (Interim Corporate Director Development & Renewal)
Alan Finch	– (Service Head Corporate Finance, Resources)
Julian Francis	– (Political Adviser to the Conservative Group, Democratic Services, Chief Executive's)
Isabella Freeman	– (Assistant Chief Executive [Legal Services] and Monitoring Officer)
John Goldup	– (Corporate Director, Adults Health and Wellbeing)
Mark Grimley	– (Joint Assistant Director Organisational Development, Human Resources, Resources)
Stephen Halsey	– (Corporate Director, Communities, Localities and Culture)
Chris Holme	– (Service Head Resources, Development & Renewal)
Afazul Hoque	– (Acting Scrutiny Policy Manager, Scrutiny and Equalities, Chief Executive's)
Laura Howard	– (Housing Development Consultant, Development & Renewal)
Lorraine Husbands	– (Cabinet Support Officer, Chief Executive's)
Helen Jenner	– (Service Head, Early Years Children and Learning, Children's Services)
Farhana Khan	– Hamlets Youth Training
Farida Khanom	– (Graduate Trainee, Scrutiny and Equalities, Chief Executive's)
Goulshana Kidir	– Graduate Training Scheme - Occupational Therapy
Paul McDermott	– (Service Head Revenue Services, Resources)
Chris Naylor	– (Corporate Director, Resources)
Jackie Odunoye	– Service Head Strategy, Regeneration and Sustainability, Development and Renewal)
Jamie Ounan	– (Strategic Planning Manager, Development and Renewal)
Abdi Setti	– Hamlets Youth Training
Charles Skinner	– (Service Head Communications, Chief Executive's)
Martin Smith	– (Chief Executive)
Ann Sutcliffe	– (Service Head Building Schools for the Future, Children's Services)
Angus Taylor	– (Executive Team Leader, Democratic Services,

	Chief Executive's)
Clare Wall	– (Strategic Planner, Strategic Applications, Development & Renewal)
Owen Whalley	– (Service Head, Major Project Development, Development & Renewal)
Rujina Yesmin	– Hamlets Youth Training
Kazim Zaidi	– (Political Advisor to the Labour Group, Democratic Services, Chief Executive's)
	–

### COUNCILLOR L. RAHMAN (CHAIR) IN THE CHAIR

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of:

- Councillor O. Ahmed, Lead Member Regeneration, Localisation and Community Partnerships.
- Councillor A. Ali, Lead Member Health and Wellbeing.

**Noted.**

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

**Councillor Rofique U. Ahmed** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7.1 “Draft 2009/12 Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy” (CAB 069/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that:

- The report contained recommendations relating to the Olympic Park and Councillor Ahmed was a Board Member - Olympic Delivery Authority - Planning Decision Team.
- The report contained recommendations relating to the Ocean Estate and Councillor Ahmed was a resident of the Ocean Estate.

**Councillor J Peck** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7.1 “Draft 2009/12 Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy” (CAB 069/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to housing strategy and initiatives with housing associations and Councillor Peck was a member of the governing body of the Gateway Housing Association.

**Councillor S Islam** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7.1 “Draft 2009/12 Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy” (CAB 069/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to housing strategy, including potential partnership between the Authority and Tower Hamlets Community Housing in a Local Homes Initiative Pilot Project, and Councillor Islam was a representative of the Authority on the governing body of Tower Hamlets Community Housing.

**Councillor S Islam** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7.2 “Local Homes Initiative - Pilot Project” (CAB 070/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to Tower Hamlets Community Housing and Councillor Islam was a representative of the Authority on the governing body of Tower Hamlets Community Housing.

**Councillor Rofique U. Ahmed** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7.4 “Local Development Framework: Annual Monitoring Report 2007 – 2008” (CAB 072/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to Roman Road which was partly located in Mile End and Globetown Ward and Councillor Ahmed was one of the Ward Councillors for Mile End and Globetown Ward.

**Councillor S Islam** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7.5 “Responses to the Scrutiny Working Group - Choice Based Lettings Scheme” (CAB 073/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to the Authority’s Choice Based Lettings Scheme and Councillor Islam was a tenant of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

**Councillor Rofique. U. Ahmed** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 8.2 “Ben Jonson & Arnhem Wharf Primary Schools - Proposed Expansion” (CAB 075/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to the expansion of Ben Jonson Primary School and Councillor Ahmed’s daughter attended Ben Jonson Primary School.

**Councillor A. Choudhury** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 8.2 “Ben Jonson & Arnhem Wharf Primary Schools - Proposed Expansion” (CAB 075/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to the expansion of Ben Jonson Primary School, located in St Dunstons and Stepney Green Ward and Councillor Choudhury was one of the Ward Councillors for St Dunstons and Stepney Green Ward.

**Councillor Rofique U. Ahmed** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 11.3 “Sale of Bishop Challoner School site - Revised Contract Terms” (CAB 079/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that Councillor Ahmed was a former Chair of the Planning Committee/ Strategic Development Committee which had considered aspects of this matter relating to planning consent.

**Councillor S Islam** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 11.3 “Sale of Bishop Challoner School site - Revised Contract Terms” (CAB 079/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to the future delivery of social housing, Tower Hamlets Community Housing was a potential delivery partner for this and Councillor Islam was a representative of the Authority on the governing body of Tower Hamlets Community Housing.

**Councillor Rofique U. Ahmed** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 21.1 "Sale of Bishop Challoner School site - Revised Contract Terms" (CAB 084/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that Councillor Ahmed was a former Chair of the Planning Committee/ Strategic Development Committee which had considered aspects of this matter relating to planning consent.

**Noted.**

### **3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES**

The Chair **Moved** and it was: -

#### **Resolved**

That the unrestricted minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Cabinet held on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2008 be approved and signed by the Chair, as a correct record of the proceedings.

### **4. DEPUTATIONS & PETITIONS**

The clerk advised that the Assistant Chief Executive had received no requests for deputations or petitions in respect of the business contained in the agenda.

### **5. WORKFORCE TO REFLECT THE COMMUNITY IN ACTION - PRESENTATION**

The Chair welcomed a group of participants in the Council's Workforce to Reflect the Community Positive Action Schemes, in attendance to make the presentation to the Cabinet.

Councillor S. Islam, Deputy Leader of the Cabinet and Vice-Chair of the Cabinet, gave a brief introduction prior to receipt of the presentation, commenting:-

- That the Authority's Workforce to Reflect the Community Policy had been in place for over 10 years and remained a priority to which he and the Administration were committed.
- There were a number of positive action schemes which had performed well but the Cabinet had not as yet heard from the young participants regarding how the schemes had personally assisted them, and this was the purpose of the presentation.

Nine exemplar participants in the Authority's Workforce to Reflect the Community Positive Action Schemes, as detailed below, then individually addressed the Cabinet:

*Hamlets Youth Training:*

- Abdi Setti
- Halema Begum

- Nasima Begum
- Farhana Khan
- Rujina Yesmin

*The Graduate Scheme:*

- Afiya Begum

*The Graduate Scheme – Occupational Therapy:*

- Goulshana Kidir

*Social Work Positive Action Scheme and Aspiring Leaders Programme*

- Abul Khayar Ali

*Step Up Now and Aspiring Leaders Programme*

- Menara Ahmed

The Individual addresses comprising the presentation focused on the following points:-

- Why the positive action scheme was important for them.
- What they have got out of the programme so far.
- What benefits they expect to derive in the future
- The emphasis was on the journey of each positive action scheme participant: where they are from, why they are here, where they want to get to.

A short question and answer session followed comprising the following:-

Questions from those making the presentation:

- What does the Workforce to Reflect the Community Strategy mean to you as a Councillor?
- As a leader yourself, what do you think are the qualities of a good leader?
- We know that Tower Hamlets Councillors are younger than most local councillors. Can you tell us how to you bring young people's perspectives to your work?
- As trainees we get lots of support from our mentor's, Human Resources and colleagues. What sorts of support can we get from Councillors?

Questions from member of the Cabinet to those making the presentation:

- What do you, as trainees, feel you should be giving back to the Community?
- How do you represent the Council in your every day life?
- Where do you want to be in five to ten years?

A booklet containing a brief profile of the Workforce to Reflect the Community Positive Action Schemes and associated exemplar candidate profiles was Tabled for information, a copy of which will be interleaved with the minutes.

The Chair **Moved** and it was: -

**Resolved**

That the presentation from participants in Workforce to Reflect the Community Positive Action Schemes be formally received and noted.

**6. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****6.1 Chair's advice of Key Issues or Questions in relation to Unrestricted Business to be considered**

The Chair informed members of the Cabinet that Councillor Asad, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, had **Tabled** a sheet of questions/ comments arising from the deliberations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2008, in respect of the unrestricted business contained in the agenda for consideration, a copy of which would be interleaved with the minutes.

Councillor Asad, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:-

- Thanked Councillor Peck, Lead Member Resources and Performance, for attending the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the previous evening to respond to the “Call In” of the provisional decision of the Cabinet, taken in November 2008, in respect of “Disposal of Grenfell School Site, now known as the Madani School, Myrdle Street E1”. Continued by informing members of the Cabinet that after lengthy deliberation of the “Call In” the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had endorsed the decision previously taken by Cabinet, but requested that the Authority supported the school in becoming a mainstream voluntary aided school.
- Thanked Councillor Francis, Lead Member Housing and Development, for attending the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the previous evening for the “Scrutiny Spotlight” and outlined the key issues on which this discussion focused including:
  - Noting excellent work undertaken to achieve a two star rating in relation to the ALMO (Arms Length Management Organisation or Tower Hamlets Homes), improvement to Housing Management and increased supply of affordable housing for local residents.
  - Concerns raised regarding homelessness services particularly for single young people, the future of the Ocean Estate with the Ocean Regeneration Trust, and the need for improved performance from Registered Social Landlords.
- Informed members of the Cabinet of the Committee’s consideration of a report on the agenda before them (Agenda Item 11.4) regarding Strategic Plan and Corporate Revenue Budget Monitoring 2008/09. Progress in performance against targets was welcomed, however concerns were raised about a large overspend in Facilities Management and the need to ensure adequate resourcing of

Children's social care in the context of both an overspend in this area and the implications of the "Baby P case" in the London Borough of Haringey.

- Informed members of the Cabinet that he had nothing to add to the questions/ comments raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out in the tabled paper regarding: -
  - Item 7.1 Draft 2009/12 Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy (CAB 069/089)
  - Item 7.4 Local Development Framework: Annual Monitoring Report 2007–2008 (CAB 072/089)
  - Item 8.3 Arrangements for Corporate Match Funding 2009-10 (076/089)
- Formally introduced the findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny Working Group on Choice Based Lettings Scheme and welcomed the positive response from the Cabinet to the recommendations on the agenda before the Cabinet (Agenda item 7.5).

The Chair thanked Councillor Asad for presenting the contribution of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and then **Moved**, and it was: -

### **Resolved**

That the questions and comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted, and that these be given consideration during the Cabinet deliberation of the items of business to which the questions and comments related.

## **6.2 Any Unrestricted Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

The Clerk advised that no provisional decisions taken by the Cabinet, at its meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2008, had been referred back to Cabinet, by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, for further consideration.

## **7. A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE**

### **Variation of Order of Business**

At this juncture the Chair informed members of the Cabinet that Councillor Francis, Lead Member Housing and Development, had requested that the order of business be varied to allow concurrent consideration of three reports within the detailed in the "A Great Place to Live" part of the agenda, because of their interlinkage in terms of Housing Strategy.

Accordingly the Chair **Moved** the following motion for the consideration of members of the Cabinet, and it was: -

### **Resolved**

1. That the order of business be varied to allow for concurrent consideration of the following Agenda items: -



- Agenda item 7.1 “Draft 2009/12 Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy” (CAB 069/089)
  - Agenda item 7.2 “Local Homes Initiative - Pilot Project” (CAB 070/089)
  - Agenda item 7.5 “Responses to the Scrutiny Working Group - Choice Based Lettings Scheme” (CAB 073/089)
2. Subsequently the proceedings be conducted as detailed in the order of business, commencing with Agenda item 7.3 “Regeneration of 1-94 Cotall Street and Bartlett Park” (CAB 071/089)

### **7.1 Draft 2009/12 Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy (CAB 069/089) To Follow**

**Councillor Rofique U. Ahmed** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7.1 “Draft 2009/12 Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy” (CAB 069/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that:

- The report contained recommendations relating to the Olympic Park and Councillor Ahmed was a Board Member - Olympic Delivery Authority - Planning Decision Team.
- The report contained recommendations relating to the Ocean Estate and Councillor Ahmed was a resident of the Ocean Estate.

**Councillor J Peck** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7.1 “Draft 2009/12 Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy” (CAB 069/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to housing strategy and initiatives with housing associations and Councillor Peck was a member of the governing body of the Gateway Housing Association.

**Councillor S Islam** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7.1 “Draft 2009/12 Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy” (CAB 069/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to housing strategy, including potential partnership between the Authority and Tower Hamlets Community Housing in a Local Homes Initiative Pilot Project, and Councillor Islam was a representative of the Authority on the governing body of Tower Hamlets Community Housing.

The Chair informed members of the Cabinet that the special circumstances and reasons for urgency associated with the proposals were detailed on the front page of the report. The Cabinet subsequently agreed the special circumstances and reasons for urgency as set out on the front page of the report and also set out below:

- The report was unavailable for public consultation within the standard timescales set out in the Authority’s Constitution, because of the expected publication of the Mayor’s Draft London Housing Strategy in late November 2008. The Mayor’s document will eventually be a statutory document that local housing strategies will need to broadly conform to. It was considered necessary to delay the release of the

Committee Report and the Draft Housing Strategy in order to gain an early appreciation of the Mayor's overall intentions, including any significant announcements that might impact on the Council's proposed approach. The Mayor's document was published on 20 November 2008 and has necessitated some changes to both the Committee Report and the Draft (Tower Hamlets) Housing Strategy itself.

Councillor Francis, Lead Member Housing and Development, in introducing the three reports (Agenda item 7.1 "Draft 2009/12 Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy", Agenda item 7.2 "Local Homes Initiative - Pilot Project", Agenda item 7.5 "Responses to the Scrutiny Working Group - Choice Based Lettings Scheme", summarised the salient points contained therein:

- Commenting that:
  - Tower Hamlets needed to have in place a strategy to tackle the current housing issues in the Borough.
  - The Draft Housing Strategy set out in the report had been brought forward alongside the Local Development Framework which provided a planning framework for the Authority and both were intended to be congruent.
  - The ambition of the Draft Housing Strategy was huge and no other local authority in London or of comparable size was endeavouring to bring forward anything of similar significance. However he considered that the scale of the ambition matched the scale of recognised need in Tower Hamlets for example homeless single people, highlighted by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the large numbers of households trying to get a foot on the housing ladder and especially those living in overcrowded conditions.
  
- Highlighting the following key elements:
  - *Delivering Decent Homes*
    - ◆ The former Deputy Prime Minister had set an ambitious Decent Homes standard and target approximately 10 years previously for local authorities, and the Authority had endeavoured to meet this through Stock Transfer and Housing Choice.
    - ◆ There had been some successes resulting in some estates with social housing of a high standard, and some of these were now moving on to achieve environmental improvements as well.
    - ◆ However there had been some failings with Housing Choice and the Authority was now endeavouring to address this through the ALMO (Arms Length Management Organisation or Tower Hamlets Homes).
    - ◆ Huge levels of resources, approximately £400 million, were required to achieve the Decent Homes Standard across all housing estates in the Borough.
    - ◆ As Lead Member he acknowledged that there was a shortfall even though it had submitted bids for £250 million from

Government. Also these resources for capital investment would only be released to the Authority if there was a significant improvement in Housing Management performance and the achievement of a two star rating from the Audit Commission. Significant work is needed to secure this, although there were some encouraging signs of improvement from Tower Hamlets Homes for example the caretaking service.

- ◆ The Draft Housing Strategy set out what could be achieved if the Authority improved its housing management performance and the resources for capital investment in housing stock was unlocked.
- *New Housing Supply*
  - ◆ As Lead Member he recognised that this posed a challenge for the Authority particularly in the context of the current downturn in the housing market. Over the past decade the Authority had operated in a benign environment and the relationship between the achievement of objectives by property developers and securing of funding for the achievement of the Authority's objectives had proven productive. Although Tower Hamlets was fortunate to have the advantage of the 2012 Olympics and Docklands, the economic downturn was causing property developers to abandon development projects and this would impact on the Authority.
  - ◆ In this context the Draft Housing Strategy shifted the Authority's approach with Social Housing Grant from Government now to be applied to delivering social housing. Bids in partnership with Housing Associations had been made to Government for approximately £200 million to deliver affordable housing for social rent and also for ownership: 5000 homes altogether.
  - ◆ Councillor Francis noted the recent inflation of the targets for new supply for places such as Tower Hamlets by the Mayor of London without an evidence base and commented that to achieve the new target additional funding would be required.
- *Reducing Overcrowding*
  - ◆ It was estimated that there were currently 9000 overcrowded households on the Authority's waiting list for housing. This had acute implications for children: with infectious illness and disease known to spread in such conditions also a detrimental impact on their educational attainment with no space for quiet study and disturbance of sleep impacting on sustained concentration levels. There was also known to be a negative impact on the wellbeing of parents for example stress and depression.

- ◆ Members recognised the issues because of the volume of such cases encountered at their advice surgeries and acknowledged that more needed to be done.
  - ◆ The Draft Housing Strategy included significant initiatives to mitigate overcrowding:
    - ✓ Releasing small sites in partnership with Housing Associations such as Tower Hamlets Community Housing and Poplar HARCA to provide family sized social housing, and it was anticipated this would deliver 100 new homes in the next 18 months.
    - ✓ Buying back properties bought under the “Right to Buy” legislation with this initiative focusing on 3 to 4 bedroom family sized units.
    - ✓ Reform of the Choice Based Lettings Scheme: a detailed and positive response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Working Group which Councillor Heslop had led.
  - ◆ Other local authorities in London such as Newham, Hackney and Islington were now starting to explore a similar approach to prioritising overcrowding.
  - ◆ It was anticipated that the new approach of refocusing priority on overcrowding would help 500 overcrowded households, and if successful consideration would be given to repeating this again in future.
- Addressed the matters raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2008, in relation to the report; as set out in the tabled sheet of questions and comments presented by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee earlier in the proceedings:

The Authority has a successful track record of securing funding from Government, including gap funding, although the Authority remained uncertain as to the final amount it would secure. New Social Housing Grant would support an ambitious package of housing initiatives and the Authority had been given notice that it had secured £33 million of such funding for affordable housing providers (mainly housing associations) to deliver more new housing. There would be further opportunities to bid for the unused allocation of other local authorities and Councillor Francis was optimistic that Tower Hamlets would secure the most part of the funding it had sought.
  - Formally extended his thanks to Mr Cahill, Interim Housing Strategy Manager, and Ms Odunoye, Service Head for Strategy, Regeneration and Sustainability, together with their team of officers for their contribution to producing the draft Housing Strategy.
  - Concluded by remarking that the scale of the ambition within the draft Housing Strategy compared very favourably to the limited ambition of the housing strategy of the new Mayor of London. He considered that this allowed Conservative-led Outer London Boroughs to fail to address housing need and instead to put public resources into the hands of those aspiring to home ownership at the expense of social housing. He

gave an assurance that Tower Hamlets would not follow this approach but would chart its own course which delivered housing which met the needs of its community.

A discussion followed, during which the draft Housing Strategy and in particular the scale of its ambition and potential positive impact was universally welcomed, the vision of the Administration commended, thanks extended to Councillor Francis, Lead Member for Housing and Development, for his commitment in taking this agenda forward over recent months and to both him and the Officer team for their contribution to the production of the draft Strategy. The Local Homes Initiative Pilot Project and Response to the Scrutiny Working Group on Choice Based Lettings Scheme were also broadly welcomed. The following points were also made:-

#### *Housing Strategy and Local Homes Initiative – Pilot Project*

- The level of housing need and in particular overcrowding in the borough, as reflected in levels of casework brought to Ward Councillor surgeries, was acknowledged.
- The detrimental impact of overcrowding on children and family wellbeing was noted.
- The initiative to buy back properties bought under the Right to Buy was welcomed, particularly in the context of owners living elsewhere and sub-letting such properties with a consequent correlation in anti social behaviour.
- Partnership with housing associations such as Tower Hamlets Community Housing and Poplar HARCA to deliver family sized homes was welcomed. The anticipated positive outcome for St Dunstan's and Stepney Green Ward was noted.
- The significant level of resources required for initiatives within the draft Housing Strategy such as the buy back of family sized properties bought under the Right to Buy was noted and an assurance sought that confirmation of available funding, understood to be approximately £20 million, would be expeditious.
- Whilst recognising the Local Homes Initiative as an extremely positive initiative and noting the positive outcome it would deliver for Mile End and Globetown Ward, concern was expressed in respect of the proposed number of two bed units as opposed to three and four bed units given acknowledged needs.

#### *Choice Based Lettings Scheme*

Councillor Hawkins, Lead Member Children's Services, speaking in her capacity as Chair of the Corporate Parenting Steering Group, the remit of which was to safeguard the interests of Looked After Children in Tower Hamlets:

- Noted that there were currently approximately 350 such children and 75 per cent of these were looked after outside the borough. Councillor Hawkins considered this to be of great concern in the context of the Authority's goal to improve their outcomes, as they were isolated from their social networks and unable to benefit from the excellent and improving Children's Services in Tower Hamlets.

- Commented, with reference to Recommendation and Response 8 within the Action Plan at Appendix 1 to Agenda item 7.5 "Responses to the Scrutiny Working Group - Choice Based Lettings Scheme", [prioritising housing for foster carers], that she understood there were a number of families approved to foster babies and older children if adequate housing space was available, and more work and innovative thinking was required to address this issue.
- Accordingly Councillor Hawkins proposed an amendment to the recommendation set out in paragraph 2.1 of the report, for the consideration of members of the Cabinet, as follows:-

"That the Action Plan be approved subject to the revision of Response to recommendation 8 to include that the work between Children's Services and Development and Renewal Directorates continue with a view, after consultation with the Lead Member Children's Services and Lead Member Housing and Development, to identifying housing solutions that accommodate more Looked After Children."

The Chair summarised with the following comments:

- Having grown up on a housing estate in an overcrowded household he had a good understanding of the conditions faced by many of his constituents who continued to live in overcrowded conditions, and this had been reinforced by a recent visit with the Interim Service Head, Housing Strategy and Development, to an overcrowded household to see conditions first hand.
- He considered the Labour Government was to be commended for investing additional resources in housing.
- The Labour Administration in Tower Hamlets had, since 1994, invested a huge level of resources in bringing housing stock up to standard and he considered it was appropriate that the work of the past 10-12 years continued, although he recognised that the current problems could not be resolved overnight.
- The Lead Member Housing and Development was to be commended for his vision and the scale of the ambition contained in the draft Housing Strategy to expedite the delivery of decent homes and mitigate overcrowding in the Borough.
- The innovative reform of the Choice Based Lettings Scheme was to be welcomed.
- The initiatives to relieve overcrowding were also welcome particularly the buying back of larger property, bought under the Right to Buy, to house overcrowded families.
- The Draft Housing Strategy alongside the Local Homes Initiative Pilot project and Choice Based Lettings Action Plan would, he considered, yield transformational change in housing provision.
- Extended his thanks and those of the Cabinet to the Officer Team's contribution to the proposals in all three reports.

The Chair then **Moved**:

- The recommendations set out in the report “Draft 2009/12 Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy” (CAB 069/089).
- The recommendations set out in the report “Local Homes Initiative - Pilot Project” (CAB 070/089).
- The recommendations set out in the report “Responses to the Scrutiny Working Group - Choice Based Lettings Scheme” (CAB 073/089), taking account of the proposed amendment from Councillor Hawkins.

**Resolved:**

1. That the structure, content, policy commitments and timelines proposed in the Draft 2009/12 Housing Strategy (CAB 069/089) be noted; and
2. That the consultation approach and provisional timeframe set out in section 5.12 of the report (CAB 069/089) for the final Housing Strategy to be returned [to Cabinet] for decision, be agreed.

## **7.2 Local Homes Initiative - Pilot Project (CAB 070/089)**

**Councillor S Islam** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7.2 “Local Homes Initiative - Pilot Project” (CAB 070/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to Tower Hamlets Community Housing and Councillor Islam was a representative of the Authority on the governing body of Tower Hamlets Community Housing.

Please note that the order of business was varied by resolution of the Cabinet earlier in the proceedings to allow this item to be considered concurrently with agenda item 7.1 “Draft 2009/12 Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy” (CAB 069/089), and agenda item 7.5 “Responses to the Scrutiny Working Group - Choice Based Lettings Scheme” (CAB 073/089). The deliberations of the Cabinet are detailed at Agenda item 7.1, but subsequent decisions taken, are set out below in the order detailed in the agenda for ease of reference.

**Resolved:**

1. That the proposed arrangement between the Authority and Tower Hamlets Community Housing (THCH) to deliver affordable homes on small sites in the borough be approved in principle;
2. That the schedule of sites proposed to be subject of the Local Homes Initiative pilot approach, set out in Appendix A to the report (CAB 070/089), be noted; and
3. That a further report be submitted for Cabinet consideration in March 2009 comprising detailed proposals for the delivery of affordable homes and addressing disposal, planning and development issues.

### 7.3 Regeneration of 1-94 Cotall Street and Bartlett Park (CAB 071/089)

Mr Evans, Interim Corporate Director Development and Renewal, at the request of the Chair, in introducing the report; briefly summarised salient points contained therein, in particular highlighting positive outcomes anticipated from the scheme including housing deliverables, as summarised in the table contained in paragraph 3.7 of the report, major improvements to the nearby park and increased open space.

A discussion followed, during which the proposals were broadly welcomed and which focused on the following issues:-

- Concern was expressed that the proposals hinged on a level of development entirely dependent on the granting of planning consent; and it was considered that clarity was required as to the options available should planning consent for a certain density, height, level not be granted.
- Concern was expressed that should the site be levelled that it was not left in that condition without any development and delivery of receipts; and it was considered that work could still be undertaken and development completed to a standard.
- Recognition that the park had been scarred for a lengthy period, by the block proposed for demolition, but uncertainty regarding viability of the scheme, public safety issues linked to demolition, and resulting uncertain timescales were also noted.
- Requested that when the further report regarding the scheme was submitted for Cabinet the proposals should reflect the aspirations of the Administration regarding affordable housing and tenure mix.
- Consideration that the crucial element at the heart of the scheme was not the building development but improvement to the park and should the building be demolished the opening of access from the park to the Limehouse Cut (canal) should be expedited to improve the environment for those living in the locality. Confidence was expressed by the Lead Member Housing and Development that the Poplar HARCA was committed to the scheme and that reasonable proposals would be worked up in an acceptable timescale.

The Chair **Moved** the recommendations as set out in the report, and it was: -

#### **Resolved:**

1. That the Authority proceed with the demolition of 1-94 Cotall Street;
2. That the Corporate Director, Development and Renewal, after consultation with the Corporate Director, Communities, Localities and Culture, be authorised to progress work with the Poplar HARCA / East Thames Group Partnership which will carry out second stage feasibility work on regeneration proposals for future Cabinet consideration;



3. That the disposal of land required for development (described in paragraphs 8.1 and 8.2 of the report [CAB/071/089]) to the Partnership be agreed in principle, on the basis that the final decision to dispose would be subject to a further report to Cabinet;
4. That it be noted that any disposal of sites to the Partnership for development would form a negotiated disposal to a public sector partner in accordance with the Asset Management Strategy, where it can be demonstrated that additional benefits to the council are provided, as explained in paragraphs 8.5.1 to 8.5.8 of the report (CAB/071/089);
5. That the Key Project Requirements set out in paragraphs 4.3.1 to 4.3.7 of the report (CAB/071/089) be noted; and
6. That it be noted that an extensive programme of community and stakeholder consultation will be carried out by the Partnership, in conjunction with council officers, as part of the detailed second stage feasibility study.

#### **7.4 Local Development Framework: Annual Monitoring Report 2007 - 2008 (CAB 072/089)**

**Councillor Rofique U. Ahmed** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7.4 "Local Development Framework: Annual Monitoring Report 2007 – 2008" (CAB 072/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to Roman Road which was partly located in Mile End and Globetown Ward and Councillor Ahmed was one of the Ward Councillors for Mile End and Globetown Ward.

Mr Evans, Interim Corporate Director Development and Renewal, at the request of the Chair in introducing the report:

- Briefly summarised the salient points contained therein, informing members of the Cabinet that the report provided a snapshot of the Authority's performance against a series of indicators, used to measure implementation of the Local Development Scheme and achievement of policies within the Local Development Documents, for of the period to end of March 2008.
- Addressed the matters raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2008, in relation to the report; as set out in the tabled sheet of questions and comments presented by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee earlier in the proceedings.

A discussion followed which focused on the following points:-

- In referring to Appendix A "Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report April 2007 to March 2008" paragraph 2.29 clarification was sought as to why there appeared to be no measure or

capture of data relating to child mortality. This was of particular concern in the context of a recent visit to the Garden of Peace Cemetery in Hainault Essex where Members had been informed of and shown burial space anticipated as adequate for twenty years but utilised in ten years; a significant proportion of which had been utilised by residents of Tower Hamlets. The Corporate Director Children's Services was requested to examine this matter, obtain comparative data and subsequently circulate a briefing note to members of Cabinet.

- Clarification was also sought and given as to the level of officer confidence in relation to the submission of the Annual Monitoring Report to the Secretary of State and if any problems were anticipated

The Chair **Moved** the recommendations as set out in the report, and it was: -

**Resolved:**

1. That the contents of the report (CAB 072/089) and the Annual Monitoring Report 2008 for the period April 2007 - March 2008, attached at Appendix A to the report (CAB 072/089), be noted;
2. That it be noted that the Annual Monitoring Report for the period April 2007- March 2008 will be submitted to the Secretary of State before 31 December 2008; and
3. That the Interim Corporate Director of Development and Renewal be authorised to make minor amendments relating to factual matters prior to submission to the Secretary of State.

**7.5 Responses to the Scrutiny Working Group - Choice Based Lettings Scheme (CAB 073/089)**

**Councillor S Islam** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7.5 "Responses to the Scrutiny Working Group - Choice Based Lettings Scheme" (CAB 073/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to the Authority's Choice Based Lettings Scheme and Councillor Islam was a tenant of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

Please note that the order of business was varied by resolution of the Cabinet earlier in the proceedings to allow this item to be considered concurrently with agenda item 7.1 "Draft 2009/12 Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy" (CAB 069/089), and agenda item 7.2 "Local Homes Initiative - Pilot Project" (CAB 070/089). The deliberations of the Cabinet are detailed at Agenda item 7.1, but subsequent decisions taken, are set out below in the order detailed in the agenda for ease of reference.

**Resolved:**

1. That, subject to (a) below, the Action Plan attached at Appendix 1 to the report (CAB 073/089) in response to the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group on Tower Hamlets Choice Based Lettings Scheme, be approved:
  - (a) Response to recommendation 8 be revised to include the following: "That the work between Children's Services and Development and Renewal Directorates continue with a view, after consultation with the Lead Member Children's Services and Lead Member Housing and Development, to identifying housing solutions that accommodate more Looked After Children"; and
2. That the contents of the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group on Choice Based Lettings Scheme, attached at Appendix 2 to the report (CAB 073/089), be noted.

## 8. A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY

### 8.1 Consultation on the Admission Arrangements to Sixth Forms (CAB 074/089)

The Chair **Moved** the recommendations as set out in the report, and it was: -

**Resolved:**

That consultation be undertaken on admissions to sixth forms at community and voluntary controlled schools for the 2010/11 academic year [as set out in the body of the report (CAB 074/089)].

### 8.2 Ben Jonson & Arnhem Wharf Primary Schools - Proposed Expansion (CAB 075/089)

**Councillor Rofique. U. Ahmed** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 8.2 "Ben Jonson & Arnhem Wharf Primary Schools - Proposed Expansion" (CAB 075/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to the expansion of Ben Jonson Primary School and Councillor Ahmed's daughter attended Ben Jonson Primary School.

**Councillor A. Choudhury** declared a personal interest in Agenda item 8.2 "Ben Jonson & Arnhem Wharf Primary Schools - Proposed Expansion" (CAB 075/089). The declaration of interest was made on the basis that the report contained recommendations relating to the expansion of Ben Jonson Primary School, located in St Dunstons and Stepney Green Ward and Councillor Choudhury was one of the Ward Councillors for St Dunstons and Stepney Green Ward.

Mr Collins, Corporate Director Children's Services, at the request of the Chair, in introducing the report; briefly summarised salient points contained therein, highlighting in particular:

- The growing need for additional primary school places, with reference to the table contained in paragraph 5.2 of the report which summarised.
- The rationale for locating these at Ben Jonson and Arnhem Wharf Primary Schools in the context of forthcoming proposals for similar expansion at Marnier Primary School and at Culloden Primary School.
- That there had been overwhelming support for the expansion proposals during the initial consultation process.

Councillor Hawkins, Lead Member Children's Services welcomed the proposals for additional primary school places in the context of recognised need both in terms of the number of places and their location. Longer term there was a need to build new schools.

The Chair **Moved** the recommendations as set out in the report, and it was: -

**Resolved:**

1. That the contents of the report (CAB 075/089) be noted;
2. That statutory proposals be published for the enlargement of Ben Jonson Primary School to admit 90 pupils in each year from September 2009; and
3. That statutory proposals be published for the enlargement of Arnhem Wharf Primary School to admit 90 pupils in each year from September 2010.

### **8.3 Arrangements for Corporate Match Funding 2009-10 (CAB 076/089)**

Mr Evans, Interim Corporate Director Development and Renewal, at the request of the Chair in introducing the report:

- Briefly summarised the salient points contained therein, informing members of the Cabinet that this funding provision was a mechanism through which the Authority supported projects/organisations that needed a guarantee of co-financing in order to secure applications for wider funding. The arrangements proposed were broadly the same as those in 2008/09 but were subject to the Authority's Budget setting framework.
- Addressed the matters raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2008, in relation to the report; as set out in the tabled sheet of questions and comments presented by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee earlier in the proceedings.

Clarification was sought and given in relation to the eligibility criteria for Corporate Match Funding, with particular reference to the Isle of Dogs Foundation.

Councillor Choudhury, Lead Member Employment and Skills, in referring to paragraph 5.2 of the report, which outlined three employment related themes emerging from the Community Plan and Local Area Agreement priorities which would inform the prioritisation of projects/ organisations for Corporate Match Funding (CMF) in 2009/10, commented that the Authority was optimising the use of Working Neighbourhood Fund resources to achieve these employment related outcomes. Councillor Choudhury considered that the allocation of CMF should have a broader remit and accordingly proposed that following amendment to the recommendations set out in the report, for the consideration of members of the Cabinet:

“Inclusion of other Council priorities as an additional theme for prioritising the allocation of CMF”

The Chair concurred commenting that significant resources had already been allocated by the Authority to address the need for improved employment outcomes for the Community and consequently CMF should include wider dynamics than employment led priorities.

Mr Holme, Service Head Resources Development and Renewal, responded that CMF had always had a wide remit but was primarily a mechanism to secure inward investment. This was currently focused around the European Regional Development Fund and European Structural Fund Programmes and their foci: mainly business development and worklessness. However there was scope to broaden the scope for CMF by examining other national and sub regional funding programmes.

Mr Smith, Chief Executive, advised that the main objective of CMF should be leverage of external resources into Tower Hamlets, but this was congruent with the inclusion of other priorities set out in the Local Area Agreement as an additional theme for prioritising the allocation of CMF funding.

The Chair **Moved** the recommendations as set out in the report (taking account of the proposed amendment from Councillor Choudhury and the advice of the Chief Executive), and it was: -

**Resolved:**

1. That, subject to (a) below, the role of Corporate Match Funding, as set out in paragraphs 5.1 to 5.3 of the report (CAB 076/089), be noted:
  - (a) Paragraph 5.2 addition of fourth bullet point:
    - Other key themes and priorities of the Local Area Agreement 2008/11; and
2. That, subject to the decisions arising from the Authority's budget setting processes and resolution 1 above, the priorities and arrangements for 2009/10 as set out in paragraphs 6.2 to 6.8 of the

report (CAB 076/089), be agreed, [including the funding priorities set out in Table 1 within paragraph 6.8 of the report and set out at (a) and (b) below]:

- (a) One year extended contracts of appropriate currently match funded projects.
- (b) Financing projects and initiatives that aim to develop and maintain a thriving third sector.

## 9. A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

The Clerk advised that there were no business to be considered under this section of the agenda.

## 10. A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

The Clerk advised that there were no business to be considered under this section of the agenda.

## 11. ONE TOWER HAMLETS

### 11.1 Revised Guidelines for Awarding Business Rates Relief to Charities and Other Non-Profit Making Organisations (CAB 077/089)

Councillor Peck, Lead Member Resources and Performance, in introducing the report at the request of the Chair, summarised as follows:

- It was proposed that the Authority adopt revised guidelines for awarding discretionary relief from National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR or Business rates).
- The rationale for the revision was that prudent management of the Authority's finite resources required that discretionary relief was targeted at organisations working to provide a genuine benefit to the Community in Tower Hamlets, and the proposals would have no negative impact on such organisations.

The proposals were welcomed by Cabinet members.

Clarification was sought and given as to whether religious organisations were exempt from paying NNDR.

The Chair **Moved** the recommendations as set out in the report, and it was: -

#### **Resolved:**

1. That that determination of eligibility for mandatory relief is a question of fact and should remain delegated to an Officer of the Authority as part of the normal administration of national non-domestic rates;

2. That the revised criteria for awarding discretionary relief to charities and other non-profit making organisations, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report (CAB 077/089), be approved;
3. That the Service Head – Revenue Services be authorised to determine the award of discretionary relief with a right of appeal to an Appeal Panel and that it also be noted that the Service Head – Revenue Services will operate within the approved guidelines and the Appeal Panel will consist of the Corporate Director of Resources or their nominated representative and The Assistant Chief Executive (Legal) or nominated representative, and that this Panel is responsible for setting the criteria for and hearing of appeals in relation to determinations made by the Service Head – Revenue Services; and
4. Agree the future review of both mandatory and discretionary relief in respect of national non-domestic rates at 3 years intervals in conjunction with a review of the associated guidelines.

### 11.2 The Customer Promise - refresh (CAB/078/089)

Councillor Peck, Lead Member Resources and Performance, in introducing the report at the request of the Chair:

- Summarised that it was proposed that the Authority agreed an updated Customer Promise which comprised an agreed set of standards for service delivery and in a sense formed an informal mutual contract between the Authority and its residents in respect of the treatment that each could expect from the other. Much work had been undertaken to improve the service for the customer at the Authority's frontline whether in person, over the phone or by letter and the refreshed promise reflected this.
- Highlighted the fourth bullet of the refreshed Customer Promise, attached at Appendix A to the report, "we will resolve your enquiry the first time that you ask us to" as a golden standard that could result in efficiency savings by reducing the numbers of further enquiries and related work. Also commented that in this regard the Authority was currently achieving 84 per cent performance against a target of 84 per cent, as reported elsewhere on the agenda [Agenda Item 11.4 Strategic Plan and CRBM 2008/09, Appendix 3 "Tower Hamlets Index Performance Charts"]. Advised that the Authority was now focusing its efforts on a channel strategy to improve performance for customers still further.

The proposals were welcomed by Cabinet Members.

The Chair **Moved** the recommendations as set out in the report, and it was: -

#### **Resolved:**

That the refreshed Customer Promise, attached at Appendix B to the report (CAB/078/089), and subsequent promotion throughout the Authority be

agreed; and that it also be agreed that the refreshed Customer Promise be publicised to the Authority's customers.

### **11.3 Sale of Bishop Challoner School site - Revised Contract Terms (CAB 079/089)**

Councillor Peck, Lead Member Resources and Performance:

- Informed members of the Cabinet that Commercial negotiations between the Authority and Bellway Homes Limited regarding the sale of the Bishop Challoner School site were ongoing and because these had not yet been concluded, he considered it inappropriate for the Cabinet to consider a report regarding the matter at this juncture. The commercial negotiations had been lengthy and in the context of a downturn in the property market the amount the Authority might receive for the site had changed, however the negotiations had almost reached a point where it would not be in the Authority's interests to negotiate further. He considered it appropriate that this matter be concluded, by Chief Officers after consultation with appropriate Lead Members, prior to the meeting of the Cabinet in January 2009 and also that the outcome be reported to that meeting for information.
- Accordingly **Moved** the following motion for the consideration of members of the Cabinet:

"That the Service Head, Asset Strategy Capital Delivery and Property Services, after consultation with the Lead Member Resources and Performance and the Leader of the Council, be authorised to conclude commercial negotiations between the Authority and Bellway Homes Limited ("Bellway") and to enter into contractual arrangements in relation to the sale of the Bishop Challoner Site."

Councillor Rofique U. Ahmed requested that Ward Councillors be kept informed of progress.

and it was:-

#### **Resolved:**

That the Service Head, Asset Strategy Capital Delivery and Property Services, after consultation with the Lead Member Resources and Performance and the Leader of the Council, be authorised to conclude commercial negotiations between the Authority and Bellway Homes Limited ("Bellway") and to enter into contractual arrangements in relation to the sale of the Bishop Challoner Site, identified in the map (revised version circulated in supplemental agenda one) attached at Appendix 1 to the report (CAB 079/089).

### **11.4 The Council's Strategic Plan and Corporate Revenue Budget Monitoring report 2008-09 Performance to 30th September 2008 (CAB 080/089)**



Mr Naylor, Corporate Director Resources and Mr Ali, Assistant Chief Executive, at the request of the Chair, in introducing the report summarised the salient points contained therein, highlighting in particular:-

That the overall forecast was that the Authority would underspend by £1.9 million by the end of the financial year 2008/09, a position similar to that reported at the last Cabinet and in line with the Authority's three year Budget Strategy.

On first examination the Authority's performance against Strategic Plan activities was not as strong as had been anticipated, but analysis indicated that most targets would be achieved by the end of January 2009. However there were areas of concern and Directorates had been requested to note underperformance where appropriate and take mitigating action. Some red traffic indicators should also be seen in the context of extremely ambitious targets set for itself by the Authority, whilst others which were green merited further examination.

Councillor Peck, Lead Member Resources and Performance, commented that he had been present at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the previous evening, and noted the concerns raised regarding the Authority's safeguarding work and the need to ensure that Children's Services Social Work Services were adequately resourced. He considered this to be a considerable challenge in the context of the level of need in the Borough and the growth in this area, given ongoing work to identify children at risk and also to the need to make provision for any recommendations/ work arising from the outcome of the Baby P case in Haringey. He had also noted the concerns raised in the discussion regarding the significant overspend in Facilities Management.

Nevertheless the overall projection was an underspend in 2008/09. However, this masked a series of overspends within Directorates and Councillor Peck reminded Corporate Directors that the Cabinet expected them to control their expenditure within the limits set for them by the Council.

With regard to performance extraordinary achievements were reflected in the report, but it was clear that some targets had not been met. He considered it better to set an ambitious target and not achieve it whilst still making considerable progress, rather than to set a narrow target and achieve far less, however Corporate Directors must examine performance against target in order to drive performance, maintain four star status as an authority and accelerate progress.

Councillor Francis, Lead Member Housing and Development, in referring to Appendix 3 "Tower Hamlets Index Performance Charts August to September 2008/09" and the red traffic indicators for strategic indicators 208 "Affordable homes delivered" and 223 "Number of social rented housing completions for family housing" were inevitably indicative of the downturn in the property market and the impact of that to deliver social housing, but he was optimistic that the measures agreed elsewhere on the agenda would bring performance back on track if not this year then over the term of the Local Area Agreement.

Mr Collins, Corporate Director Children's Services, outlined the immediate steps taken by the Authority in the context of the Baby P case in Haringey including working to support staff and boost morale particularly amongst social workers.

Councillor Peck commented that the demonisation of social workers in the Baby P media coverage had been appalling given the difficult role they undertook daily, and that this could only make their jobs more difficult and potentially put children at greater risk. Accordingly Councillor Peck **Moved** and it was **Resolved** that the Cabinet formally recognise the good work being undertaken by social workers in Tower Hamlets and place on record the high value placed on them and the role they undertook by the Administration.

The Chair **Moved** the recommendations as set out in the report, and it was: -

**Resolved:**

1. That the progress against Strategic Plan activities and milestones, as set out in Section 3 and Appendix 1 of the report (CAB 080/089), be noted;
2. That performance against targets for Strategic Indicators, as set out in Section 4.3 and Appendix 2 of the report (CAB 080/089), be noted;
3. That performance against targets for Priority Indicators, as set out in Section 4.10 and Appendix 3 of the report (CAB 080/089), be noted;
4. That the projected outturn for Directorate service budgets and for the total General Fund net expenditure budget for 2008/2009, as set out in section 5.2 and Appendices 5A-G of the report (CAB 080/089), be noted;
5. That the projected outturn for Directorate Trading Accounts for 2008/2009, as detailed in Section 6.2 and Appendix 6 of the report (CAB 080/089), be noted;
6. That the virements over £250,000, as referred to in paragraph 7.1 and detailed in Appendix 7 of the report (CAB 080/089), be approved;
7. That the budget target adjustments, as detailed in Section 8 and Appendix 8 of the report (CAB 080/089), be agreed;
8. That performance against Service Improvement Growth targets, as set out in Section 9.1 of the report (CAB 080/089), be noted;
9. That the projected spend against Area Based Grant (ABG), as detailed in section 10.1 of the report (CAB 080/089), be noted; and
10. That the 2008/09 performance against savings targets, as detailed in section 11 and Appendix 9 of the report (CAB 080/089), be noted.

## 12. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

### 12.1 Building Schools for the Future - Procurement and Programme Update (CAB 085/089)

The Chair informed members of the Cabinet that the special circumstances and reasons for urgency associated with the proposals were detailed on the front page of the report. The Cabinet subsequently agreed the special circumstances and reasons for urgency as set out on the front page of the report and also set out below:

- This report was unavailable for public inspection within the standard timescales set out in the Authority's Constitution, because of the continuation of negotiations with the Selected Bidder over the urgent procurement matters. This cannot wait until the next month's Cabinet meeting.

Mr Collins, Corporate Director Children's Services, at the request of the Chair, in introducing the report; briefly summarised salient points contained therein, highlighting in particular that:

- The Building Schools for the Future Programme (BSF): £300 million of capital investment over two funding waves would result in the transformation of the school estate with all schools either refurbished or new build. The first two schools to benefit from the BSF funding would be St Paul's Way Community School (SPW ) and Bethnal Green Technology College (BGTC).
- The report sought confirmation of an Early Works Agreement for Bethnal Green Technology College and authorisation of an Early Works Agreement for St Paul's Way Community School, to guard against delay to the BSF construction programme and ensure a start on site at BGTC and SPW in January 2009.
- The Early Works Agreements would create a cash flow commitment for the Authority from January 2009, in the event that contractual close was not secured by 23 December 2008. However financial close with the Authority's BSF partner was on track for 22 December 2008 and once financial close with the Authority's BSF Partner was achieved risk to the Authority would end.

Councillor Hawkins, Lead Member Children's Services, commented that the Building Schools for the Future Programme would bring transformational change to all secondary schools in Tower Hamlets and deliver on commitments made to children, families and the wider community. The additional investment would facilitate the achievement of the Community Plan priority of supporting lifelong learning for all the Community. The lead in period had been lengthy and the anticipation great, but the start of building work would commence in January 2009 and Councillor Hawkins looked forward to its completion.

The Chair **Moved** the recommendations as set out in the report, and it was: -

**Resolved:**

1. That the completion of an Early Works Agreement for Bethnal Green Technology College on 25 November 2008, in order to secure a start on site 5 January 2009, be confirmed; and
2. That the completion of an Early Works Agreement for St Paul's Way Community School by 17 December 2008, in the event that contractual close is not secured by 23 December 2008, be authorised; and
3. That the Authority's current programme to proceed to contractual close by 23 December 2008 be noted.

**13. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR INFORMATION****13.1 2008/09 Capital Programme: Capital Monitoring Report as at 30 September 2008 (CAB 081/089)**

Councillor Peck, Lead Member Resources and Performance, reiterated that the Cabinet had agreed a policy that any slippage on Local Priorities Programme projects of over two years would result in the cancellation of the project, and expected Chief Officers to scrutinise areas of slippage and take any required mitigating measures to ensure that expenditure remained on track.

The Chair **Moved** the recommendations as set out in the report, and it was: -

**Resolved:**

1. That the contents of the report (CAB 081/089) be noted; and
2. That the Directors delegations, as set out in Section 4.2 of the report (CAB 081/089), be noted.

**13.2 Corporate Revenue Budget Monitoring 2008/2009 - Second Report - Housing Revenue Account (CAB 082/089)**

The Chair **Moved** the recommendations as set out in the report, and it was: -

**Resolved:**

That the projected outturn in respect of the 2008/09 Housing Revenue Account, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report (CAB 082/089), be noted.

**13.3 Exercise of Corporate Directors' Discretions (CAB 083/089)**

The Chair **Moved** the recommendations as set out in the report, and it was: -

**Resolved:**

That the exercise of Corporate Directors' discretions, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report(CAB 083/089), be noted.

**14. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

As a consequence of the resolution relating to Agenda Item 11.3 "Sale of Bishop Challoner School site - Revised Contract Terms" (CAB 079/089), detailed above, the Clerk advised that Cabinet consideration of Agenda Item 21.1 "Sale of Bishop Challoner School site - Revised Contract Terms" (CAB 084/089), circulated in the Section Two Agenda (business containing information defined as exempt or confidential in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government, Act 1972) was no longer necessary. There was therefore no requirement to exclude the press and public, under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, to allow for consideration of such business prior to the conclusion of the meeting.

**15. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

Nil Items.

**16. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Nil Items.

**16.1 Chair's advice of Key Issues or Questions in relation to Exempt / Confidential Business to be considered.**

Nil Items.

**16.2 Any Exempt / Confidential Decisions "Called in" by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

Nil Items.

**17. A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE**

Nil Items.

**18. A PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY**

Nil Items.

**19. A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY**

Nil Items.

**20. A HEALTHY COMMUNITY**

Nil Items.

**21. ONE TOWER HAMLETS**

**21.1 Sale of Bishop Challoner School site - Revised Contract Terms (CAB 084/089)**

As a consequence of the resolution relating to Agenda Item 11.3 "Sale of Bishop Challoner School site - Revised Contract Terms" (CAB 079/089), detailed above, Cabinet consideration of Agenda Item 21.1 "Sale of Bishop Challoner School site - Revised Contract Terms" (CAB 084/089), was no longer necessary.

**22. ANY OTHER EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT**

Nil Items.

**23. EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 7.35 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Lutfur Rahman  
Cabinet